

HELP AND FOOD

FOR THE

Household of Faith.

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Help and Hood

FOR

THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.



LED IN TRIUMPH.

“But thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in the Christ.” (2 Cor. ii. 14.)

SUCH is the improved rendering of the verse. Victory, triumph, not through ourselves, but through God.

David won the victory over the giant. A mere stripling—as such, type of One who took the place of weakness—with only such weapons as he could get from the brook, he meets the giant and lays him low. So our David too for us met the foe, for us won the victory. Sin was there as having had dominion over man since the fall; Satan was there with the power of death; the world was there, with all its hatred of Him. He met all, He conquered all, by His very death. “Having spoiled principalities and authorities, He made a show of them publicly, leading them in triumph by it.” (Col. ii. 15, new version.) The cross, which speaks of His shame, of His woe and death, was that by which He triumphed. And now the Victor has come forth from the grave—the Captain of our Salvation. He is the Leader of His people. He has gone up with a shout, passed through the heavens, and as an overcomer sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. That victory was won for us.

How blessed it is to dwell on that precious fact, to look calmly, again and again, at all that was against us, and to know that all those foes were vanquished. Take the matter of our sins—we were guilty, waiting but for judg-

ment. By His death, He took that guilt and bore its consequences, bore them so perfectly that there is no wrath for us—simple truth this, so familiar, one might say, that there is danger of its being worn threadbare; but can there be such a danger? Is not the danger rather that we forget these things—lose the joy of them and the sense of victory.

Again, take Satan's power and authority over us. Man had put himself in Satan's hands as being willing to believe him rather than God; hence he was under his power. Satan was the strong man, we were his goods, held with a grasp which nothing could relax. But a stronger One came, and now we no longer belong to Satan: we are free through the One who has won the victory for us.

But let us look forward a little—a very little while. "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 57.) This is the shout of victory in anticipation of the resurrection at the Lord's coming. These bodies, bodies of humiliation (Phil. iii.) are to feel the quickening power of that *shout*. (1 Thess. iv. 6.) That which has been the sad witness to the ruin brought in by sin will then be witness to the blessing brought in by Christ. No longer will weakness, nor even suffering be the position of His people, but victory enjoyed away even from the presence of the conquered. Christ will then be the object before all. He will be the Victor, but we will share in the results with Him who thus loves to have His people associated with Himself. What joy there will be then! How complete the triumph!

What are to do meanwhile? Are we victors when we look back at the cross, or when we look forward to the glory, only to be defeated in the time between? Are we to run from the enemy or to hang our heads in shame

now when in a little while we will be joining in the song of victory? Our verse gives the answer, "Who *always* leads us in triumphant." Israel's journey should have been a triumphal procession from Egypt to Canaan. So should ours. The apostle—oppressed, opposed, mistrusted and persecuted—his walk through the world was a triumph. Wherever he might be, whatever his surroundings, *always*—in the jail at Philippi, on the sinking ship, before the Roman Emperor, he was a victor. Are we different from Paul? Surely, his being an apostle did not make him victor,—he had no grace of which we too cannot make use. As Elijah, he was a man of like passions with ourselves. Then if he conquers, so can we. This verse can be true of us. The stages of our lives can be so many milestones in the path of our triumphant progress.

Let us illustrate a little. Take the serious matter of sin. As we well know, provision has been made for us to walk in freedom from it, "sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under law, but under grace." How familiar are the words—alas! do we in any good degree practically realize their truth? Here we go on, year after year, and one must ask himself the question, "Is there any progress—any growth in holiness?" Or, again, as we consider our circumstances, can we say we are led in triumph through them. Trials in our business, in our homes,—all such things as would give us opportunity of testing God's grace for us—how are we meeting these? Every thing that comes,—sickness, bereavement, poverty,—all should but furnish occasion for the truth of our verse to be shown. Especially in our intercourse with one another are we permitted to exemplify this truth. Differences will arise, and misunderstandings too. The question is, Are we to be conquered by these things or to be led in triumph through them. Alas! Satan has too often been allowed to see discord and permanent weak-

ness brought among God's people, instead of a little self-denial, which would have overcome all the difficulties. Satan triumphs over these ruins of once happy fellowship and confidence. Shall he continue to do so?

But how was Paul always led in triumph? It was the way of the cross. He followed the Master, and in bearing about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, His life was manifested in his poor body. May the Lord give us to know more of this way of triumph—this lowly way—passing through this world with a song in our hearts and on our lips as well.

CONFESSIONS OF THE "HIGHER CRITICISM,"

AS CONTAINED IN

DR. SANDAY'S LECTURES ON "THE ORACLES OF GOD."

2. *The Human Element in the Bible.*

DR. Sanday's text for his second lecture is 2 Cor. iv. 7—
 "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." His application of it is not at all that which the apostle makes, but a sad perversion. As a specimen of unfair handling of Scripture, it deserves to be looked at; for in just this way is the Bible continually made to sanction principles which it disowns and condemns utterly.

For what purpose does a "professor of *exegesis*" use the apostle's words? Clearly to advocate the possibility of mistake in the inspired writings. This is the first great effort of his whole book. Nor are we raising question of his motives at all in saying this. No doubt, he would tell us, that the mistakes being in Scripture, his desire is, to show how we may have faith in it nevertheless; nay, even,—strange and impossible as the thing may look,—how that faith may be cleared and strengthened by the recognition. But is this in the least what the apostle means?

Is his subject "The Mistakes of Moses," or his own mistakes? We have only to read the passage to find that he is speaking of very different things. I give it in another version somewhat more literal than the common one.

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassingness of the power may be of God, and not of us: every way afflicted, but not straitened; seeing no apparent issue, but our way not entirely shut up; persecuted, but not abandoned; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in our body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body: for we who live are alway delivered unto death on account of Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh."

Here is the earthen vessel—a humanity capable of suffering, of inward trial and perplexity, of depression and fear; but unfailingly sustained by more than human strength. Death working upon the human frame made only more evident the divine life which had been enkindled, and which the hand of persecution could not touch. What has this to do with mistakes in Scripture? Where does any inspired writer own such, apologize for them, or intimate indeed that it was a matter of thanksgiving that he had been left to write error for truth,—that the God of truth is better served by a certain mixture of falsehood than He would be by unerring truth itself? Is not the whole doctrine of the Word the reverse of this?

We have now, however, to consider the human element in the Bible, and in this shall follow Dr. Sanday point by point. By this means the real contention will be better seen, and the truth as a whole find more complete development. He says,—

"This we may start with, that there is a human element even in the Bible; and the tendency of the last fifty or a hundred years of investigation is, to make it appear that this human element is larger than had been supposed. The freedom of the human agent made use of in the Bible was less restricted than those who argued from an antecedent view of what was to be

expected in a divine revelation would have imagined it to be. *That is the first point.*"

This is all vague enough, even to the "fifty or" twice fifty "years of investigation;" and does not sufficiently accredit the well-known father of the "higher criticism," the infidel physician, Astruc, whose view was published in 1753. The child, a weakling at its birth, waited fifty years for adoption, which it received at length at the hands of the extreme rationalists of Germany. With them it grew rapidly, was taught by degrees a more Christian mode of speech, and now can figure as if of Christian parentage. But this is not the case; and it is important to remember that it is not the case: for who can believe that God inspired an infidel to give the direction to Christian thought after this manner? Certainly no "investigation" of any believing kind had any thing to do with it, but the suggestion of an enemy, which the infatuation of restless minds too little under the control of the Word has admitted, to the dishonor of Christ and their own undoing.

The "human element" is indeed everywhere in Scripture; true: nor is "the freedom of human agents" *in the least* "restricted" by their being "moved by the Holy Ghost." If God uses His creatures for His blessed purposes, His delight is, to lead them freely, and in accordance with the nature He has bestowed on them. To enlighten their minds, to enkindle their hearts, to reveal to them His truth, is surely in no wise to take away from them any "freedom" which is worthy of the name; not even if this be carried so far as to make error on their part impossible in the communication of His mind to men. Is *God* less free because He cannot do evil or be in error? and shall man be less free the more he is raised up to God?

"*That is the first point,*" continues Dr. Sanday; "but the

second, which seems to me to be equally clear, is, that, in spite of the enlarged scope which is thus given to human thought and human action, the divine element which lies behind it is not less real and not less divine."

Why *should* it be? The enlargement of man's faculties, the clearing of his spiritual sight,—all that which makes him the more joyfully subject to God, the more fully in communion with Him,—all this must needs imply the operation of God in it to be proportionately full and mighty. That is, if the freedom meant be what is rightly to be called freedom. "Freedom" to make mistakes and go astray,—the freedom of the blind to fall into the ditch,—we shall only call such when it is demonstrated for us.

"The third point is, that we make a mistake in attempting to draw a hard and fast line between the two elements. The part which comes from man and the part which comes from God run into and blend with each other. We think of them best, not as acting separately, but as acting together. And this intimate and organic union only serves to bring home the message which God has condescended to bring home to man with greater force and greater reality."

All true, from the point of view which we have indicated, by which the "higher criticism," however, is entirely annulled and set aside. For suppose there be in what we receive as Scripture but one demonstrable error, can we think of the divine element being in "intimate and organic union" with the human in this case? Are we not bound, if there be error, "to draw a hard and fast line" here, and to say, the error is human merely? But then, indeed, it is impossible to tell just *where* the line is to be drawn; because it is impossible to say what is the extent of the error, and into what region it may not intrude. If history, chronology, cosmogony, authenticity of the books, etc., be all more or less open to it, why not the more important "things unseen"? Especially as the Saviour's own words must at the start be given up, and we must allow that Scripture *can* be broken, and *many* a

"jot and tittle pass from the law" without fulfillment!

The sting is in the tail, however, and very cautiously and darkly as the professor expresses himself, it is yet to be discerned in his final proposition:—

"Lastly, I think it will be seen that the *application* which we in turn make of that message *may need to be somewhat modified*. We may find our view of the *motive forces* in religion *somewhat altered*."

Just so; but let not any timid one get alarmed. Dr. Sanday is pretty sure there is no cause; and he, if not in this special line much of an authority, has access to the specialistic workroom where these surprises are manufactured for us, and he does—

—"not *think for a moment* that we should find them less powerful or less effectual than they have been."

Very comforting, no doubt; and the age is accustoming us to have "motive forces" altered, and all for good! Seriously, does our kindly teacher imagine that he can destroy our faith in what for us at least have been Christ's own teachings, and with a smile seat himself in the empty seat?

But the language is too dark for us to attempt to interpret without anticipating what is to be brought out afterward, or exposing one's self to the suspicion of mere false accusation. It is evident, however, that it is not the *power* of the "motive forces" that we need to be assured of merely,—*"forces"* we suppose will be effective,—but rather their *quality*,—that is, the line in which they will be found effective. Our "view" of them may be somewhat altered. All seems very doubtful, spite of the tone of assurance that is maintained. But there is no need for doubt. Must not the "application" be altered of a text which has once been proved so largely fallible, nay, deceptive? Shall we not take leave to apply it, as we think reasonable? and where we think well, "apply" it to some

idiosyncrasy of the writer—his little enlightenment, the manners of the age, and what not beside? And of the "motive forces" it will be easily seen how many may work, indeed, and be effective, which another view of inspiration would entirely shut out. It would spoil much good reasoning to accept absolutely such assertions as that of the apostle, that "the things that I speak unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

In what follows, the history of the doctrine of inspiration is taken up, briefly enough, but in a way which seems really to prejudice the question rather than fairly meet it. What avails it to remind us that some have thought the Masoretic vowel-points of the Hebrew text to be inspired? or that "less instructed" Protestants have "pinned their faith" to their respective versions? Nor is it right to mix up the question of the integrity of the text as transmitted to us with the much more important and very different one of original inspiration. Granting the last to be complete, the errors that have crept into manuscripts are comparatively trivial, mere motes and specks in the sunrays. Refusing its perfection is to bring in twilight obscurity at once.

Again, Dr. Sanday, after his manner, in a few easy words about the "conflict," as he is pleased to call it, between the Bible and Natural Science, awards the victory, as a thing of course, to the latter. While he joins together "Galileo, Newton, Darwin," as representing three stages of this successful conflict. But neither of the first two ever was, or intended to be, in opposition to Scripture, as the last was and meant to be. And evolution remains to-day, in spite of the wide adherence to it, a plausible guess, and nothing more. It was put forth to show how species might have originated without special creation. But specific creation according to plan, accounts for everything at least as well. The only neces-

sary evolution is that of the plan in the Creator's mind. And Mr. Wallace, who at the same time with Mr. Darwin, originated the idea, still contends that as to man, evolution cannot account for *him*. Here what is most sufficient is the simplest thought.

He returns to the internal evidence :—

“Neither, again, were the biblical writers exempted from some, at least, of the general characteristics of their contemporaries: they shared the literary peculiarities of men of their own nationality and station: they were not supernaturally raised above the level of knowledge to which their contemporaries had attained in matters of science. Even in the things of religion it is becoming every day clearer that there is a growth and progression running through the New Testament as well as the Old. No one generation reached the limits of truth all at once: there was a gradual withdrawing of the vail *at different times and in different portions.*”

As to language and literary peculiarities, it is no defect to the Word of God that it should not speak with the tongue of the learned. As to science, I suppose the first chapter of Genesis *is* yet superior to its Assyrian representative, and may fairly challenge comparison with any other account of creation, perhaps not excepting Haeckel's. And as for the progressive character of revelation, that is fully declared in Revelation itself. While it makes only the more miraculous, for those that have eyes to see, the way in which even the history of those past generations shines in the light of the complete declaration with type and prophecy and manifold anticipation of that full-orbed glory which had not yet dawned. So that Genesis locks hands with the Apocalypse, and Scripture is rounded off into a luminous cycle, the orbit of truth obedient to the divine voice from which it came. Surely, for him who knows this, the inspiration of Scripture has a witness which no consent of all the graduates of all man's colleges could give it, and which can be affected by none of the

demurrers of a science born but yesterday, and which has scarcely yet attained intelligible speech.

All this Dr. Sanday omits in his estimate of Scripture-inspiration. Can he be ignorant of it? It is evidence of the complete permeation of the human element by the divine, of which we may say, adopting the words of the evangelist, that if it could be fully written out, we may well suppose that the world could not contain the books that should be written.

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

OUTLINES OF SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE.

2.—MAN AS HE WAS AND AS HE IS.

“Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.”
(Eccles. vii. 29.)

LET us now, in the light of God's infallible Word, see what the answer, in part at least, to the question, “What is man?” is. It is well, at the beginning of our study, to get right views of Scripture teaching as to man, for these will go with us all through. Wrong views of man will distort our views of all other truth, for truth is a whole; it hangs together—or, rather, fits together—like a wonderful piece of machinery. If one part is out of order, the whole is affected. So with Scripture doctrine,—a faulty or wrong view of man's condition will give a correspondingly incorrect one of Christ's work. Wrong thoughts as to man's nature, his constitution—materialistic thoughts, for instance,—affect in the gravest manner—rather, deny altogether—the solemn truths as to future existence. Satan here, as everywhere else, is seeking to introduce the “little leaven that leavens the whole lump.” He is aiming at the person and work of the Son of God, at the destruction of men.

Man was God's crown on creation: all that preceded was to prepare the earth for his habitation. When the time came for his creation, there is, as it were, a pause—a consultation: "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness" (Gen. i. 26), thus distinguishing him from every other creature. But this pause, this break, only prepares for the more marked difference between man and all other creatures. The earth brings them forth, but "God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." (Gen. ii. 7.) Other creatures were living souls, but man only had his life breathed into him from God. This prepares us to expect the difference which is brought out in the other scriptures. But, first, it would be well to see how man's constitution is described in Scripture: "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. v. 23.) Here we see he is a threefold being, composed of spirit, soul, and body. God is a Spirit: the angels are ministering spirits. Man, then, is, as to his spirit, akin to God and the angels, who are called the sons of God (Job xxxviii. 7). God is the God of the spirits of all flesh (Num. xvi. 22); He is the Father of spirits (Heb. xii. 9). It is as having—rather, as *being*—a spirit that man is called the offspring of God; as in Paul's speech at Athens (Acts xvii. 28, 29), where the contrast with the body is insisted on. So, in our Lord's genealogy in Luke, Adam is the son of God. But what does this teach? The spirit is doubtless immortal,—“Neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the angels.” This immortality is entirely apart from any question of eternal life. Whatever his future, man will exist forever—must do so, because he was created in the image of God, is the offspring of God, is like the angels. The spirit is also the seat of the indowment—the mind; it is the man

himself really : "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" (1 Cor. ii. 11.)

But man has a soul as well as spirit. This includes his affections and feelings, and may be controlled by the spirit or, as in the beasts, by the body ; for, in his body, man resembles the beasts,—“Man that is in honor and understandeth *not* (whose spirit does not control) is like the beasts that perish.” (Ps. xlix. 20.) It is his body which makes man an inhabitant of the earth, and which fits him to be such, which also distinguishes him from the angels,—“Thou madest him a little lower than the angels.” (Ps. viii. 5.)

Having seen in some measure his constitution, we come back to man as he *was*. He was created in the image, after the likeness, of God,—that is, he resembled Him. We have seen this resemblance in constitution ; but there was, in a measure, a moral likeness as well—such a resemblance as the creature can bear to the Creator. This was negative rather than positive. God is righteous : man was innocent. His righteousness is a positive, inherent characteristic. Man’s moral character was rather negative ; it consisted rather in the absence of evil than in the presence of good. Not that there was no excellence in him : surely, he was, as a creature, perfect ; but it was creature-goodness, creature-perfection. His mind, his spirit, was mature,—capable of discernment and judgment, as we see from his giving names (doubtless names which described them,) to all the beasts. He was also capable of understanding and enjoying communion with God, as we see from the very charge given to him. His soul, his affections, had full scope for exercise both toward his help-meet—“bone of his bone”—and toward Him whose perfect goodness spoke everywhere ; while, as to his body, he was a stranger to sickness, suffering, and death. It was a vehicle in which he could give exercise

to the faculties of his mind and soul as an immortal being, yet an inhabitant of the earth. In dignity, he was lord over all; he had dominion over all. Such, in some degree, was man. Of the simplicity, happiness, moral elevation of that state we know but little. All was good, and God's benediction rested over all.

We come now to the second part of our subject. Man as he *is*. In passing to this we cross a narrow but deep and dark gulf. So deep that none can ever cross back; that gulf is the *fall*. We have seen that man's innocence was negative—perhaps untried would be a better word,—that his goodness was that of the creature; hence unstable. He was like the angels, many of whom have fallen and thus shown what creature excellency is. Man was innocent, but untried: as yet there was a possibility of sinning. He was kept, as far as one with freedom of will could be kept, from all tendencies to evil. He was placed in Eden, the garden of the Lord, surrounded by all that spoke of wisdom, goodness, and care. He had occupation for his hands. He was in immediate communication with God on whose power and strength he could have drawn had he so desired. Every thing was on his side, in his favor, in the test that followed. Only one command was given, and the temptation was presented by the serpent (Satan allowed to take the form of a creature beneath man, and not of an angel of light), and that temptation of such a character that it might have been repelled at once—a temptation to doubt the good- and love of the One who had surrounded them with every blessing. The woman, man's helpmeet, listens to the tempter, and is beguiled—type of the danger of allowing the affections and feelings to lead—while the man with open eyes follows her, thus deliberately severing the link which bound him to God. His eyes are opened, conscience speaks, and man knows his true condition. He

knows also his relationship to God, for he hides from Him at once. He receives the sentence now. Sin has come, and death by sin. Man was alienated from God, the breach was as complete as it was impossible to recover his former condition. The driving out from Eden was the natural result, and man has been there ever since, outside that happy place—the cherubim of justice ever between him and the tree of life. Such was the fall, and man is now just what the fall left him.

Let us now look at this condition. A positive factor has been added—sin. This is no mere absence of good, but a positive state—a state of lawlessness (1 Jno. iii. 4, where the correct translation would be, “sin is lawlessness”), where under the guise of being his own master, man is the servant, the slave of sin. His constitution has not changed, he is still spirit, soul, and body, but his nature has changed. What was once good, in subjection to God, is now alienated from Him; and this is seen in the whole man.

His spirit, his mind, is now the “mind of the flesh” (that which links him with the beasts, giving its name to the whole fallen nature), and as such it is “enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” (Rom. viii. 7.) The desires of the flesh and the mind are in direct and irreconcilable opposition to the will of God. (Eph. ii. 3.) Man has not lost his reason, his faculties are clear, his judgment in exercise. We have but to notice the mental activity about us: activity devoted, not to God, but to self-interest, by men of science, by so-called philosophers, and even theologians, men with unquestioned powers of intellect devoting their faculties to Satan,—we have but to notice this to see that man has not lost his reason by the fall,—that it is by *wisdom* that the world knew not God. (1 Cor. i. 21.) True it is that his reasoning faculties have

become warped, and doubtless cramped and dwarfed by the fall, still they are there.

The same is seen in the soul, the affections are there, but they are "vile affections" (Rom. i.); even true love centering on the creature, and leading man oftentimes to hate the One who is the source of all love. This is one of the saddest proofs of the fall, that the gentler qualities, amiability and the like, when tested, are found to be not inconsistent with deadliest hatred and determined rejection of Christ. The rich young man in Luke is a sad example of this. God is left out, and the world fills the heart, and His presence there would be an intrusion. This is why in the law the state of man is tested and shown by the command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart." He must be the *sole*, not merely the chief object of the affections. He must control all else. Man's affections are completely alienated, and he sees in God one to dread, one to doubt, but never one to love.

Finally sin has entered in and death by sin. The body, once but the link with earth, and which would lead man to realize his dependence upon God, has now become the fruitful field from which spring disease and deformity and death. Death has stamped it for its own, so that its name is now "mortal body." (Rom. viii. 11.)

This then is the nature which man now has—a sinful nature—which pervades and gives character to his whole being. Sin is no partial thing, reaching to some of the faculties and leaving others untainted; it is a complete perversion of the whole man.

This too is the nature transmitted from father to son, as we read, "Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his own image." (Gen. v. iii.) Such a state may well be termed death, in which there is no motion toward God whatever. But as in physical death corruption follows,

so also from this state of alienation from God all forms of actual disobedience in thought, word, and deed flow. Man is born in sin, "shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. li. 5); and we see it as soon it can manifest itself. "They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." (Ps. lviii. 3.)

Here we have the distinction between sin and sins—a truth familiar to many, and important for all to understand. Sin is the nature, or rather what controls the nature; sins are the manifestations of that nature. Sin is the root from which spring the fruits, sins. Man is guilty before God, not because he has a sinful nature (*that* he inherited), but because he has sinned.

Hence it would not be right to say that infants are guilty—that they are under the wrath of God, or that they will be punished. There is no question that they are born in sin, and have a depraved nature. Having this, they of course need regeneration—the impartation of eternal life in Christ, secured by His death and resurrection; but it is entirely foreign to scripture to speak of them as under wrath, still more so to speak of them, or any one but himself, as being guilty of Adam's sin. Adam stood for himself, sinned for himself. Man inherits the nature, the condition, but not the guilt. "The soul that sinneth *it* shall die." (See the whole connection, Ezek. xviii. 1–4, etc.) Therefore man cannot repent of Adam's sin, but of his own sins, though the sin of Eden is our common shame, because the sin of our common father.

Such being man's condition, and such being the fruits of it, wrath is that which awaits him for "all ungodliness and unrighteousness," "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil" (Rom. ii. 8, 9),—a wrath still withheld in long-suffering mercy, but none the less sure to come. It

remains but to add the universality of this condition—and of the fact that all have sinned. “All have sinned and come (do come) short of the glory of God.” (Rom. iii. 9–19, 23.) Man’s responsibility is measured by the light he has enjoyed; the Gentile is not judged by the law—the heathen by the light of Scripture.

Such, then, imperfectly given, is the state of man. How should such knowledge affect us? In the newly awakened soul a sense of guilt, corresponding in some measure to the true standing, will be pressed by the Holy Spirit. In the Christian, a sense of the utter corruption and helplessness of his nature will lead him, first to cry out, “O wretched man that I am!” and then, thankfully seeing the way of escape through the One who has passed through death and is risen now, to learn to reckon himself to be “dead indeed unto sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.” (Rom. vi. 11.) Let us ever remember what an awful thing sin is.

HOW PRAYEST THOU?

Once I prayed—
 [I knew not what I said,]
 “Show me *myself*, O Lord.”
 Alas! I did not dread
 The hideous sight,
 [Which now I shudder to behold,]
 Because I knew not self aright.

And I was led,
 In answer to my prayer,
 As step by step, to see
 My wretched heart laid bare.
 Then I prayed,
 “Stay, Lord, I cannot bear the sight!”
 And pityingly His hand was stayed.

Now I pray—
 [I know the prayer is right,]
 “Show me *Thyself*, O Lord.
 Be to my soul the bright
 And Morning Star,
 To shine upon the grave of self,
 And lead my heart from earth afar.”

Oh, to behold
 None other, Lord, than Thee.
 E'en in 'Thine own, to seek
 For that which looks like Thee.
 'Transfixèd by
 Thy glorious beauty, Lord,
 We'll learn to sing 'Thy praise, and thus
 Forget to weep and sigh.

Plainfield, Dec. 5th, 1891.

H. McD.

GOD'S WORD ABOUT PRIDE.

BECAUSE the king of Egypt said, “The river is mine, I have made it,” judgment was pronounced. “It shall be the basest of kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations.” (Ezek. xxix. 9–15.) And so it has come to pass.

Because the heart of the prince of Tyre was “lifted up” and he said, “I am a god,” he was brought down to the pit. “I will scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets . . . for I have spoken it saith the Lord God.” (Ezek. xxviii, xxvi.)

“The Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon, with fair branches and a shadowing shroud, and of high stature. . . . Therefore, thus saith the Lord God; because thou hast lifted up thyself in height . . . and his heart is lifted up in his height . . . I have driven him out for his wickedness . . . to the end that none of all

the trees by the waters exalt themselves for their height." (Ezek. xxxi.)

As the king of Babylon walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon, he spoke and said, "Is not this great Babylon which I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty." In "the same hour" God spoke to him, "the kingdom is departed from thee," and he was driven out from men and eat grass like an ox. At the end of the days, he "lifted up his eyes to heaven," and his understanding returned to him, and he blessed the Most High. A beast looks *downward*. When the king looked *upward*, to heaven, he was restored; he came to himself, like the prodigal son. He was no longer an idolater, but a worshiper; he praised and honored Him that liveth forever. "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment, and those that walk in pride He is able to abase." (Dan. iv. 37.)

Thus we see the fall of these empires came through pride, and that pride will bring judgment upon all nations and establishments at last. When the Lord comes we find in Is. ii., "Enter into the rock (hid themselves in the rocks, Rev. vi. 15.) and hide thee in the dust for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His Majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." Notice the terms that are heaped together in this and following verses: "lofty looks"—"haughtiness"—"proud and lofty"—"lifted up"—"cedars of Lebanon"—"oaks of Bashan"—"high mountains"—"high tower"—"hills that are lifted up." This is God's announcement of man's condition at the second coming of Christ to reign over the earth.

To some who were choosing the best places at an en-

tainment the Lord uses almost the words of the king of Babylon, "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased." (Luke xiv.)

Are we aware that in seeking honor from one another in a small company, or at any time, we are on the road that led to Nebuchadnezzar's humiliating abasement?

Humility is the only road to honor. The Lord is our example.

How impressive the connection between secret thoughts of the heart and far-reaching results: "Is not this great Babylon that I have built" has its end in this,—“Babylon the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there: neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and (ostriches) shall dwell there, and wild goats shall dance there, and jackals shall cry to one another in their places, and wild dogs in the pleasant castles.” “I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.” (Is. xiii.)

Survey the ruin of Tyre—a place bare like the top of a rock (Ezek. xxvi. 4), and link it with Tyre's pride and exulting over Jerusalem's distress; and contemplate Egypt's condition—the basest of kingdom's, and connect this with the thought “The river is mine, I have made it.” The proud thought indulged was the seed and root of centuries of humiliation. “Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.”

He who “humbled Himself” has been “received up into glory,” His word is, “follow thou Me.”

E. S. L.

THOUGHTS ON SERVICE.

THERE are some very profitable and comforting thoughts in the eleventh chapter of Ecclesiastes.

Take the first verse, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days." To the natural man casting bread upon the restless expanse of water seems very foolish indeed, and at times we may say that is the end of it all; but the man of faith knows that it shall be found "after many days." And how often in these days one may think, "it seems to be of no use speaking to those around us." Even so it does "seem," but, "thou shalt find it after many days." If we see no results we are apt to be discouraged, but our Father knows all about us; He knows the effect it would have upon us if *we saw all the results*. Knowing a little of our poor hearts we can realize how often it might puff us up to *see* results. But He will honor His own Word, and whatsoever speaks of His dear Son, and as for us, "the day shall declare it." Then, indeed, we shall see results and receive the reward. What joy it will be then to receive His commendation! Sow on in hope, my brethren, and let it be done from a true heart, true to our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. May all our service be done out of love for Himself!

"He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap." Let us look not at the things which are seen. If we look for encouragement in circumstances, we will also find discouragement there, but we need to find our encouragement in the living God. Then, though all around seem in ruins, and a hardness seems to have come over man's hearts, we will not be cast down, but will sow the precious seed, the living Word of the living God. We know that His Word will accomplish that whereunto He sends it. Often do we realize how powerless our words are, and

that only the word of our God can find an entrance. Most blessed it is too to realize this, for then we will press His Word home, and the entrance of that shall give light. Let there be more of this amongst us—using “the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.”

“In the morning sow thy seed, and in evening withhold not thine hand : for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.” May we “be instant in season, out of season.” At times we may feel more hopeful in speaking to some, than when speaking to others ; but “thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that.” In the parable of the sower we see that the seed falls in some places on good and in some on stony ground, but note, the sower did his work, and *sowed* on all alike. So let us take the lesson home to ourselves and sow in faithfulness to God, leaving results to Him. We know that our labor is not in vain “in the Lord.” True service can only flow from love to our Lord Jesus.

If our hearts are filled with His love there will be little need to trouble about lack of service ; the one will be the result of the other. There are hungry souls around us, hungering for the bread of life. Nothing can satisfy them but that for which they long. Shall we not pray earnestly for deeper love for the person of our Lord Jesus Christ ? Much truth and knowledge we have, but knowledge in itself puffeth up. What we need more at this time than all else, is deep true love for our Lord Jesus Christ. Surely He will give this, and after He has given it will bring us in contact with needy souls, and give us the message. The time is short, “the night is far spent and the day is at hand.” In the little while remaining before He comes may we be very humble.

Our hearts can go out to Himself without reserve ; not so with the things of the world : we must watch, be on guard. But no need of this toward our Lord Jesus. With fullest confidence and love we can let our hearts go

out to Him in praise and adoration. What love indeed is His! It passeth knowledge; yet in a measure we do know it. With longing, yearning hearts we cry, Lord, give Thy people more love for Thyself, that we may find our all in Thee. Amen.

J. G. T.

Oakland, Cal.

NATURE AND FAITH.

2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.

WE wept—'t was *Nature* wept,—but Faith
 Can pierce beyond the gloom of death,
 And in yon world so fair and bright
 Behold thee in refulgent light!
 We miss thee here, yet Faith would rather
 Know thou art with thy heavenly Father.
Nature sees the body dead—
Faith beholds the spirit fled;
Nature stops at Jordan's tide—
Faith beholds the other side;
That but hears farewell and sighs,
This thy welcome in the skies;
Nature mourns a *cruel* blow—
Faith assures it is not so;
Nature never sees thee more—
Faith but sees thee gone before:
Nature tells a dismal story—
Faith has visions full of glory;
Nature views the change with sadness—
Faith contemplates it with gladness;
Nature murmurs—*Faith* gives meekness,
 "Strength is perfected in weakness."
Nature writhes, and hates the rod;
Faith looks up, and blesses God.
Sense looks downward—*Faith* above;
That sees harshness—*this* sees love.
 Oh, let *Faith* victorious be—
 Let it reign triumphantly!
 But thou art gone! not lost, but flown;
 Shall I, then, ask thee back, my own?
 Back—and leave thy spirit's brightness?
 Back—and leave thy robes of whiteness?

Back—and leave the Lamb who feeds thee?
 Back—from founts to which He leads thee?
 Back—and leave thy heavenly Father?
 Back—to earth and sin?—Nay, rather
 Would I live in solitude!
 I *would* not ask thee if I *could*,
 But patient wait the high decree
 That calls my spirit home to thee!

[The above lines were found inside the cover of an old Bible, which had evidently been well used, and on the fly-leaf of which were the following words: “This Bible once belonged to my beloved sister, Mary Fannie, who fell asleep in Jesus Jan. 27th, 1865. And when this frail tent of earth loosens, and shrinks, and falls, may I pass from it as Peter from his prison, wakened by an angel, to find myself standing, in a trance of joy, on the street of the new Jerusalem!”]

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 1.—“I should like light on Heb. vi. and x. These two chapters seem to many minds to come against the truth of Jno. x. 28. I do not believe the Holy Spirit would allow that; but I am not clear, and cannot therefore give evidence to others that the Holy Spirit does not contradict Himself. Can you help me?”

F. B. W.

Ans.—“Concerning the question in your letter lately received, let me first say that as in creation, which is the work of God, not one thing contradicts another, however different it may be, so in revelation, which is the Word of God, not one passage contradicts another, whatever difference there may be between the subjects treated.

“Thus in John the subject especially treated is Eternal Life, introducing Christ Himself as that in the beginning of the book; then how it is imparted in chap. iii.; a case given in chap. iv., with effects following; then further on, fuller details as to the grace that ministers it despite the thieves and robbers, who would gladly hinder it, the eternal security of those to whom He has given it, etc., etc.

“In Hebrews, it is quite another thing. It is a development of what Christianity is as contrasted with Judaism, and a warning as to the consequence of giving up the former to return to the latter. Its present application would be to the vast profes-

sion we call Christendom, a great portion of which gives little or no sign of being real.

“They are all alike—the real and the unreal—‘partakers of the Holy Ghost;’ not, of course, that He *dwells* in them all, but in the sense that Judas partook of all the blessings in the company of Christ just the same as the other apostles, and yet he was all the time ‘a thief’ and ‘a devil.’

“In Matt. xiii. 20, 21, we read of a class which ‘heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he no root in himself, but dureth for a while,’ etc.; so in Hebrews such are mentioned as having ‘tasted the good word of God.’

“In Matt. vii. 21–23, some can say (and the Lord does not contradict them), ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?’ This would seem indeed abounding and final proof that they were children of God, but it is not, and the Lord answers them, ‘I never knew you.’ Of those who are His real sheep He says, ‘I know them.’ But they are not *sheep*, whatever miraculous powers they had, and in Hebrews such are mentioned as having tasted ‘the powers of the world to come.’ All these things may be, and yet the persons to whom they apply be unsaved, and therefore without ‘the fruits which accompany salvation.’

“Again, in Hebrews there is no forgiveness for ‘sin,’ because ‘sin’ there is not the immoral doing of the flesh, but *apostasy*. It is the repetition of Rom. i. 21, with this immense difference, that in Romans it is God as *Creator*; here, it is God as *Redeemer*. Thus as the sheep in John are saved once and forever, the apostates in Hebrews are irretrievably lost, inasmuch as God has nothing else for man after the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. That known and apostatized from leaves nothing but certain damnation. It is closely allied with the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and the ‘higher critics’ of the present day are hastening multitudes with themselves into this terrible sin. At every step now you meet with men who, while they continue in the so-called orthodox bodies, will tell you that they ‘no longer believe’ in those doctrines of atonement and the judgment of sin in which they once professed to believe. Of such, Hebrews says, ‘For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. He that *despised* Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought

worthy who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace.' (Chap. x. 26-29.)

"Mark too that in Hebrews sanctification is never by the Spirit, for that is *inward*, and marks the sheep. It is by the blood: that is *outward* only, and marks, therefore, every professing person. One cannot be wrought into by the Holy Ghost without being a child of God, and such have ever been and ever will be 'kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.' (1 Pet. i. 5.) But a man may have the most perfect creed possible, and fight hard for it too, yet finally be lost.

"But I think I have said enough on the subject. It has been, since I knew the Lord, one of many exercises of soul. It has therefore enlarged the heart, and extended the view of God's wonderful ways, and the end of this is worship in spirit and in truth. What exposes unreality stirs up and thereby the more establishes and strengthens reality." P. J. L.

Q. 2.—"In Acts xvi. 30, 'What must I *do* to be saved,' does the question indicate that the man was on legal ground?" J. V. D.

Ans.—We should say, no. It is the cry of an awakened soul. He sees his danger, he wants to be rescued from the power of God, an exhibition of which he has just seen, and to which he realizes he is exposed. It is not a cool theological question, like that of the Pharisees in Jno. vi. 2, but like the awakened cry of those convicted by the Spirit under Peter's preaching at Pentecost,—“Men and brethren, what shall we do? (Acts ii. 37.) At the same time the anxious one little dreams of the fullness of the precious answer, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” Nothing to *do*, for all has been *done*.

Q. 3.—“In studying the second chapter of John's gospel, we find in the latter part of the eleventh verse, 'And His disciples believed on Him;' then again in the twenty-third verse, 'Many believed in His name when they saw His miracles;' and in the twenty-fourth verse, 'But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men.' Please show the thought conveyed.” J. R. M.

Ans.—The word used is the same in all three verses—“Believe” or “trust.” Jesus manifested forth His glory by changing the water into wine at Cana. The result was, His disciples believed on Him. Their faith was established. This is true faith. Next, the multitudes believed in His name when they saw the miracles which He did. This was evidently an intellectual

faith,—their judgment was convinced, and in a certain way they sincerely believed in His name; but there had been no plowing up of heart, no awakening of conscience, no conviction of sin. New birth was needed, as brought out in the next chapter, in the interview with Nicodemus, who was evidently one of these intellectual believers; for he knew that Jesus was a teacher come from God,—knew it by the miracles He did (Jno. iii. 2). The result is, that such an intellectual faith cannot tempt Him. He does not commit or trust Himself to them. He knew what was in man, and that those who to-day thus in a mere intellectual way believed in Him would the next day turn their backs on Him, and the next would cry out, "Crucify him!" But if He thus is reserved toward mere intellectual believers, how different is He toward those who, like His disciples, truly believe! If we believe in Him, He believes in us: if we trust Him, He trusts us. How beautifully this is seen in His last interview with them before His death! He opens the secrets of His heart to them—"Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you." (Jno. xv. 15.) He takes them into His closet and lets them hear His prayer to the Father—such a prayer! Nor has He changed. He still commits Himself to—trusts those who have trusted Him. His interests, His honor, are in our hands—left there by Him. What a proof of His confidence! and how have we answered this confidence?

Q. 4.—"Kindly explain the word 'driveth' which occurs in Mark i. 12. Is it the same in the original as Matt. iv. 1, Luke iv. 1?"

J. P. M.

Ans.—Three words are used in these three passages, correctly translated in our common version—"Led up," "driveth," "led," in Matthew, Mark, and Luke respectively. There seems but little difference between Matthew and Luke (in Matthew, "Led up from Jordan into the wilderness"). Both indicate the accompanying of the Spirit. In Mark, it is "driving"—the same word as in Jno. ii. 15, where He drove the dealers out of the temple. It need not be said that there is no contradiction in these: both the driving and drawing of the Spirit were true in Him, and in us. There is the impulse, a constraint, as in Paul—"Necessity is laid upon me" (1 Cor. ix. 16), not at all inconsistent with "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you." (2 Cor. xii. 15.) May it be ours ever to yield to both the driving and the drawing of the Spirit, as He did who was perfect in all.

[*Other questions deferred till next month.*]

“ALL THINGS ARE OF GOD.”

GOD reminds us at every meal of Christ as the food of the soul. Meat tells us of death by which we live; bread (the “corn of wheat”), of resurrection; water, of Christ, the living source of refreshment, as of life.

Every thing is based upon atonement. So Israel was taught, and so we are taught, in Lev. xvii. “What man soever there be of the house of Israel that killeth an ox or lamb or goat in the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp, and bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the Lord before the tabernacle of the Lord, blood shall be imputed unto that man.” It was to be offered for a peace-offering to the Lord.

How beautiful the every-day life of the Israelite! Much more, how beautiful the every-day life of the Christian! for that great Peace-Offering has been made by the blood of the cross, and upon that new and holy ground we eat and drink and live. What we eat and drink, the clothes we wear, the air we breathe, the light and sunshine we enjoy, the couch we rest on, the sleep that revives us, the house that shelters us,—all are different object-lessons telling us of Christ.

It was nothing but sin for an Israelite to partake of the beef he had killed, unless he had first offered of it to the Lord. Every part of his life was linked with and had its meaning as part of the life of a worshiper of Jehovah, who had redeemed him to Himself, for His own glory, leading him “by the hand” (Jer. xxxi. 32), providing every thing for him. All this is a type of us. May the truth in its manifold teachings in the Word, and in created things, sanctify us, and fill us with reverence. If we

cultivate a spirit of worship, we shall be filled with joy in the common things of life. Read Lev. xvii. "How blessed would it be for us if nature's real lessons were known and laid to heart after this manner continually, and our common every-day lives thus lifted into higher meaning! Thus would God make Christ to be ever before our eyes, and fellowship with Him to be confirmed and strengthened,—the things seen and temporal to minister to the things unseen and eternal.

"As a provision against the wandering heart after other gods also, there is in all this deep significance. In truth, it is the unoccupied part of our lives, whatever in them is not positively consecrated to God, that betrays us to the enemy. We need to realize that, in an enemy's country as we are,—and not only so, but on a daily battle-field,—there can be no neutral ground. Whatever, as well as whosoever, is not *for* Christ is against Him. There is no place where sin will not gain advantage over us except the presence of God." (*Numerical Bible*, Lev. xvii.)

E. S. L.

CONFESSIONS OF THE "HIGHER CRITICISM,"

AS CONTAINED IN

DR. SANDAY'S LECTURES ON "THE ORACLES OF GOD."

2. *The Human Element in the Bible.—Continued.*

"IT may be asked, then," he says, "independently of any critical inquiries, Where can we draw the line, and say, '*Hitherto, and no further!*'? We admit that the Bible has shared the fate of other books in its subsequent history. May it not also have shared the fate of other books in the circumstances of its origin?"

Surely it is impossible to argue from the one to the other. Are we to refuse to believe in the miracle of cre-

ation because natural law, as men say, rules in what has been created day by day? Must the Bible be written upon paper that cannot tear, or with ink that cannot be blotted, or all its copies be sealed manifestly with the seal of heaven, in order that we may believe in its absolute divinity? Christ was the "Word made flesh;" yet was He in the world with no visible exemption from the lot of other men, with no halo of divine glory to fence Him off from the persecution, the misrepresentation, the unbelief, the misunderstanding, of those around Him.

But we see how easily, if faith fails at one point, it will be forced to yield at every one. Satan knows the value of but one concession, and will not hesitate to press it to the full result. So Dr. Sanday:—

"We admit that the writers spoke and wrote in the language of their contemporaries,—with many at least of the same faults of style and diction, with some at least of the same defects of knowledge. *But if with some, why not also with others? They were not perfectly acquainted with the facts of science: is it certain that they would be more perfectly acquainted with the facts of history?*"

It is absurd to put questions of language side by side with questions of truth and accuracy. The Galilean dialect may serve the divine purpose, just as well as what they spoke at Jerusalem, and Hellenistic Greek convey the truth as accurately as that of Plato or Demosthenes. But even defects of knowledge may be readily owned in Moses or the apostles. We need not suppose the one to be "perfectly acquainted with the facts of science" in order to have written Gen. i. aright; or either of them to be "perfectly acquainted with the facts of history." They needed, and they had, divine superintendence and guidance everywhere, and that where they knew, as well as where they did *not* know. Moses may have known very well Melchisedek's ancestry, the day of his birth and the day of his death, and he certainly did *not* know that to

have put these into his narrative would have spoiled the apostle's argument more than fifteen centuries afterward. Yet it would, in fact, have done so none the less, as we see the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews (chap. vii. 3) building upon these omissions.

But these "defects of knowledge" which Dr. Sanday is determined that we shall "admit," and as to which he emphatically denies that we know where to draw the line, if allowed, as he supposes, to appear in Scripture, would raise questions indeed. The cross and the resurrection are "facts of history;" have they come to us from the hands of ill-informed writers? * And the nativity; as to which, they must have got their knowledge from others,—and indeed Luke tells us so, while he in no wise specifies his informants! All this probably put together after the fashion that the professor believes to have been the mode in which the Bible has been evolved,—that is the correct term to-day,—*evolved* for us. Here is the process:—

"In the secular writings of antiquity, there are many phenomena which are not in exact accordance with the literary practice of our own day. A later writer will incorporate the work of an older writer, often with but slight alteration. The annals that are transmitted from age to age receive gradual accretions in their course, and there is often no external mark to show where the older matter ends and the new begins. Institutions which are well established in one age are assumed to go back to an earlier age than can really be claimed for them. Certain great names stand out in the history round which stray documents and stray incidents appear to crystallize. When a group of writings is collected together, the name which stands at the head of the group is held to cover every member of it. And in like manner laws and customs which grow up by slow degrees are referred to some one great lawgiver who was the first to formulate the leading provisions of the code with which they are associated. *There is no deception about it.* It is the same sort of process that we see going on every day where *oral tradition* is at work. Wherever some notable character has passed over the stage, in after-time things come to be set down to him with which he has no real connection. We must throw ourselves back into an age

when writing is the exception and hearsay the rule. There comes a time when regular histories are written; but before that, tradition has been at work moulding and combining the facts which history records."

So much for the credibility of the Bible. It is a patchwork of old with new, where only our great critics can distinguish the one from the other. All the evils of oral tradition which we had fondly imagined Scripture had been expressly given to preserve us from are found in that very Scripture. And in order that we may not resent this imputation of fiction or forgery, as contradictory to the whole character of purity and truthfulness which shines out everywhere in the Bible, we are gravely assured that there is "no deception about it"! though it must be confessed we have been deceived. We have merely forgotten to "throw ourselves back" into an uncritical age, when pious frauds were no frauds, or at least no harm, and we must not make harm of them.

"The body of proof is weighty, and cannot easily be rejected. *Why should it be rejected? The grounds, when we come to think of it, are mainly those of our own imagination.*"

And Dr. Sanday repeats his misapplied text as perfectly convincing, that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels," and fortifies it with another—that God's ways are not as our ways. Then, growing bolder, he observes,

"We can imagine the Bible in some of its accessories more perfect than it is—what we at least might think more perfect. But if it had been so, it could never have been in such close contact with human nature. *Its message could never have come home to us so fresh and warm as it does.* As it is, it speaks to the heart, and it does so because, according to a fine saying in the Talmud, it speaks in the tongue of the children of men." (!!)

Kind critics! we have been ungrateful, as men indeed have so often been to their best benefactors! But how good it is to have an interpreter such as Dean Ireland's professor to explain this to us! Who could have thought,

simple as it is when you really believe it, that the "mistakes of Moses," or the mistakes of others for him, and the patchwork and pious frauds of his successors, shall make Scripture fresher and warmer to the heart than if all were proved true and perfect! Here, surely, we have a triumph over infidelity such as we could not have dared to imagine. Christian and unbeliever may now go on side by side, emulating each other in joyful discovery of the blunders of inspiration by means of which the freshness and warmth of its message will be continually increased!

A note at the end of the lecture adds more confusion. it is intended to show "the gradual nature of the steps which lead up from questions of what is called the lower criticism (which deals with the text,) to questions of the higher criticism (which deals with authorship, etc.), and the difficulty of drawing a hard and fast line between them." But there is really no difficulty, and his examples prove none. The trustworthiness of a text is one thing; the trustworthiness of the original, when plainly shown to be that, is quite another. No one pretends that the first chapter of Genesis is not genuine; but there are unhappily many who treat it none the less as untrustworthy, as unscientific. Let the Lord's words be believed, that "Scripture cannot be broken," and the disputation as to what is Scripture will be very little serious. But indeed the proofs also upon which the higher criticism relies are little serious also: they are made to seem much only by quantity being made to stand for quality; what is serious in them is but the unbelief of which they are the real and incontestable proof.

F. W. G.

CHRIST MY OBJECT.

“Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth I desire beside Thee.” (Ps. lxxiii. 25.)

LORD JESUS, be 'Thou alone my heart's sole object;
 Fill all its longings with 'Thy precious love,
 'Till I forget its weakness and its sin-stains,
 In 'Thee, who didst Thy love so dearly prove.

Soothe every sorrow with 'Thy sweet consolation,
 Change 'Thou my cry to sweetest songs of praise,
 My close companion e'er, in rest or labor;
 So shall I ne'er complain of lonely days.

And when, at evening, my sun of life is setting,
 Touch 'Thou my sky with gleams from glory's light,
 Then let me rest, as oft in life I've rested,
 On 'Thy dear breast, while faith gives place to sight

Then hushed forever all sounds of sin and sorrow,
 Then nevermore the power to grieve 'Thy heart;
 Then,—oh, the rapture!—earth's poor shackles broken,
 Thee to behold, and nevermore to part.

H. McD.

A FOURFOLD EXHORTATION.

(Prov. iv. 23-27.)

- (1) “Keep thy *Heart* with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.” (v. 23.)
- (2) “Put away from thee a froward *Mouth*, and perverse lips put far from thee.” (v. 24.)
- (3) “Let thine *Eyes* look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.” (v. 25.)
- (4) “Ponder the path of thy *Feet*, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.” (vv. 26, 27.)

THE book of Proverbs is in the *fourth* group of the Old-Testament books,—thus, as the number would indicate, belonging to that part which treats of the way, its trials and experiences. In this group it is *fifth*, a number which reminds us of “God with us” reviewing our path, and supplying us with wisdom for that which is before us—a wisdom which begins with “the fear of the Lord” (chap. i. 7), and keeps Him ever before the reader. God with man—He who was that, and who ever was Wisdom (chap. viii.), now the fullest exhibition of it—made that to us (1 Cor. i. 30). If the book of Proverbs is really wisdom for our path, how important that we should study it, and so receive the benefit of that wisdom—so needed by us in our daily life! How it should illumine our path, especially as we have the added light of *grace* now shining through it!

In the portion before us, we have an exhortation which embraces the whole man as far as his earthly walk is concerned, applied to those parts of him of familiar significance from their frequent use in Scripture—the heart, mouth, eyes, and feet. Four is the number of testing and of walk; so in this which is both a test and an exhortation we have this number, and each section of it also corresponds to the significance of its number.

(1) “Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.” The heart is the source from which the life issues. It is here put for the inner man—“the hidden man of the heart,” as contrasted with the outer man. It is the man himself—that which controls and gives character to all the rest: “as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.” (Prov. xxiii. 7.) How appropriately, then, that this should be *first* in the exhortation—first in importance, because the source and controlling power in man! So the words, “with all diligence,” might be rendered more closely to the original, “above all, thou

guardest." Above all the outward life, careful as we should be as to that,—above our words; as the apostle says to the Philippians, "As ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now *much more in my absence*;" when his eye could not be upon them. Our outward life is largely before the eyes of man: let us remember that more important than what man sees is that which is hidden from him—the heart, and be doubly careful for that very reason. How important this is for the young Christian!

There are two ways in which we can look at this guarding or keeping the heart,—positive and negative, and we will look at the latter first. Scripture tells us that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," and that "he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." While applying in its fullest extent to the unconverted, these words have an important reference to God's children as well: we have a traitor in our hearts who needs to be watched more carefully than an outside enemy. It is through this traitor, the flesh, that the heart is led astray. It is in the heart that declension begins. The evil servant said in *his heart*, "My lord delayeth his coming," before he began to beat his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken. Peter's heart was lifted up with pride and self-confidence which made him neglect the admonition "watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation," before he denied his Lord with oaths and cursings. Coming to our own history, can we not trace a stumble or fall, or loss of communion, back to an unguarded heart. In the nineteenth chapter of Numbers we have a most striking illustration of defilement from an unguarded heart, in the vessel left uncovered in the chamber of death. It was made unclean, but if covered, the same presence of death had no power to defile. We are in a world which is a death chamber, and if the heart

is not guarded, covered by that which excludes the world, how soon defilement results !

But this brings us to the positive way of keeping the heart. We are not set at the hopeless task of merely seeking to expel evil, or even to keep it down. Like a hydra—the more we strove to cut off this or that form of evil, the more quickly fresh forms would arise. No, the way of *grace* is, “overcome evil with good.” A heart filled and occupied with good is one well guarded from evil. Beautifully connected are those two verses in Phil. iv. 7, 8, “And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, *think on these things.*” The heart which casts all its care on God is well guarded by His peace ; but the atmosphere which that peace creates is that described in the next verse : it is occupation with good. No one feeds on poison, however much it may be necessary to know something of it, in order to avoid it. Good food makes the healthy man, and occupation with good is God’s way to keep the heart. How important, then, for the young Christian, nay, for all, to be daily feeding upon God’s precious Word, that Word of His grace, which is able to build him up, and to be asking in the words of the psalmist, “Search me, O God, and know my heart : try me, and know my thoughts ; and see if there be any wicked way (literally, the way of grief,) in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

(2) “Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.” “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” Next, then, to the source,

and depending upon it, is the expression of the thoughts through the lips. Second place, then, naturally belongs to the words. He who was the expression of God's nature was the second person in the Trinity and is called the *Word*. Two is the number of testimony, which is given by the lips. Salvation is another thought, and the *word* of truth is the gospel of our salvation. (Eph. i. 13.) In a bad sense, two speaks of discord, strife, waywardness, the thoughts conveyed by froward and perverse in this verse. The exhortation to put away perverse lips is appropriately in a second part, where the thought of severance is conveyed by the number. How needful is this admonition! What is more common than an unruly tongue? The meekest man spake unadvisedly with his lips. The great apostle Paul reviled God's high-priest. The apostle of love would call down fire from heaven. Only One ever trod this earth whose words were ever and only "words of grace." "Never man spake like this Man." "When He was reviled, He reviled not again." Words of love, words of truth, words of justice and of stern denunciation fell from his lips, each in their proper time, but perverse words, never. No matter how severe the test, how awful the anguish, even to the anguish of the cross, His words were perfect. Alas! that peerless One stands alone in His unsinning perfection. "In many things we all offend. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man and able also to bridle the whole body." (Jas. iii. 2.) He would, as far as his outward life went, be a perfect man. Controlling the tongue, he would be able to govern the whole body. On the other hand, failing in this, all is vitiated. "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridled not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." (Jas. i. 26.) His *religion*, that which is the fruit of the divine life, his testimony is destroyed. How care-

ful, then, we should be of our words. If for every idle word the unsaved must give an account in the day of judgment, none the less holy and exact will be the judgment-seat of Christ. "The tongue can no *man* tame." Only grace can do that—the grace which could purge unclean lips, and make them God's messengers. There is only one thing to be done with perverse lips—they are to be *put away*. Evil cannot be improved, it can only be judged. Careless, loose speech must be trampled upon, or it will lead into sin. "He loveth transgression who loveth strife." "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin." Ah, many who perhaps pride themselves on having a ready tongue—quick to give the sharp, witty reply—need to heed this exhortation. Specially in the matter of strife is this evil of the tongue to be guarded against. "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water, therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with." The country of Holland is protected from the inroads of the sea by immense dykes which need to be watched, lest the smallest opening be made. Should there be even a little trickle it would soon swell until all embankments were swept away, and the fair landscape be deluged with the salt sea. So with strife. A little thoughtless remark may be made, and resented; arguments arise, and before we are aware of it, "confusion and every evil work" have covered all that a little while before looked so bright and promising. "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth."

Is the reader of these lines given to careless speaking? Will he or she not now begin to ask with the psalmist, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips!" Have the heart filled with good, and put far away perverse lips.

(3) Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids

look straight before thee." (*v.* 25.) "Three" is the number of manifestation—of fullness. It is the number which speaks of resurrection as the manifestation of divine power. The light is what makes manifest, and as the eye takes in the light, it appropriately has the third place in the passage before us. For us it is the eye of faith; "we walk by faith, not by sight." The very things which are said to be not seen are those we are to look upon. (2 Cor. iv. 18.) Faith connects us with the other world—the resurrection side of things. It is the eye which speaks of this to us. Three is also the number of fullness, and it is only when faith is exchanged for sight that we shall "know even as also we are known." Meanwhile, as we have said, the eye of faith links us with these things, and draws us on till we shall no longer "see through a glass (dim window) darkly, but face to face." Now, what are we looking at? Temporal things? They will soon vanish. Are we looking at forbidden things? Remember Eve; to look is often to lust. David was led into the awful sins of adultery and murder by a careless look. Lot looked at the fertile plains of Sodom and the vision blinded his eye to the glorious promises of God, and he sank to the level, below the level of the worldling. The proper object, the only one for the child of God, is the Lord Jesus Christ. "We see Jesus," and having seen Him what else should have power to draw us aside? Two results come from having the eye fixed upon Him: first, sanctification; second, progress. "We all beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." We may struggle against sin, and struggle in vain. We may strive to form our characters, and find our efforts useless. We look upward at that blessed One, crowned with glory and honor, the One who once tasted death for us, and the world loses its attractiveness, sin its power.

More than that, we are transformed into that image; others can see we are growing like Him upon whom we are gazing. But there is more. Seeing Him draws us after Him. "Let us lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race set before us"—how?—"looking unto Jesus." The word is stronger in the Greek: it is "looking off unto Jesus," looking away from everything that could allure, distract, or discourage—unto One who is Himself the leader of faith, the example for us to follow, and the finisher or perfecter of it. This is having the eyes look right on, and this means progress. "The light of the body is the eye; if, therefore, thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light. A *single* eye, means an eye for *one* object. "The eyes of the fool are in the end of the earth," wandering every where, taking in every thing; and the eye is the gateway to the heart. No wonder, then, that it should be filled with vanity. And yet "the eye is not satisfied with seeing." Let the whole world be taken in, the heart is left hungry and empty. Only One can fill the heart. Let the eye be fixed on Him and, like Paul, we will find ourselves blinded to the things down here. This gives power for the path, and keeps from stumbling—forgetting the things which are behind and reaching forth unto those which are before, we will press toward the mark, other things will be baubles to be despised and laid aside as weights. And while thus looking forward, pressing forward, ere we know it faith will change to sight; the One we have been speaking of, thinking of, will at last be before us, and "we shall be like Him." Meanwhile let the words of the hymn be our prayer:—

"O fix our earnest gaze
So wholly, Lord, on thee,
That with Thy beauty occupied,
We elsewhere none may see."

(4) "Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left : remove thy foot from evil." (*Isa.* 26, 27.) When our Lord opened the eyes of Bartimeus He said to him, "Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole." But the way in which Bartimeus went was after Jesus, "he followed Jesus in the way." (*Mark* x. 52.) Where else could a man with eyes opened go? So most appropriately here, the eyes are set right and the feet follow. Four, as we have already seen, signifies testing and the place where that testing takes place, the earth as we walk through it. It is the number which frequently speaks of weakness and failure, because, alas! that is what we manifest in our wilderness walk. And yet why should there be failure? For us, as for Israel of old, eagle's wings are ready to bear us onward over every obstacle to the place of rest. If the feet do tread the desert sands, they do not swell; the shoes, "the preparation of the gospel of peace," do not wear out. Four is the number of weakness, but weakness realized turns to strength if we lean on One who is mighty. And this is God's lesson for us—the secret of the walk. Paul realized his weakness, but he gloried in it because the power of Christ could rest upon him. The earthen vessel is good to show the excellency of the power to be of God and not of us. While four, then, speaks of wilderness walk, testing and weakness, it need not mean failure if we heed the exhortation given here appropriately in the *fourth* place. The word translated "ponder" is by some rendered "make level," perhaps the primary meaning; but both meanings are not inconsistent with each other. If the path be carefully weighed, pondered—looking to one who alone can guide, it will be a level path, though it lead over rough seas, lonely deserts, into Gethsemane, on to Calvary. Our blessed Lord did not rush into His path not knowing

where it would lead. "When the time came that He should be offered up He stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem." When Lazarus died, He would return there where of late the Jews had sought to kill Him. What a path! along which we see scattered nothing but love to man, obedience to God. But He pondered His path, and so has left us an example that we should follow His steps. When there was a famine in the land and Abraham went down into Egypt, he did not ponder his path, and his sin about Sarah is the result. It probably seems an easy path to take, but it had thorns in it which pierced him at last. Pondering conveys the thought of carefully examining the way before we walk in it. "He that hasteth with his feet, sinneth." Joshua and the elders of Israel making a treaty with the Gibeonites show the danger of undue haste. Our ways are to be established, made firm, solid, unswerving. And how great is the need of this! How many lame there are who will be turned out of the way unless we make straight paths for our feet. (Heb. xii.) The saddest part of a loose careless walk is that it leads others astray. Our God would make our feet like hinds feet (Hab. iii. 19), sure and swift.

We have, then, looked at this fourfold exhortation, embracing the heart, lips, eyes, and feet. Linked together, yet distinct, they form a perfect whole, for our guidance and for our testing. May there be in us a heart to heed this exhortation and to prove for our own souls that "wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths peace."

A LETTER.

HOW pleasant it is to live for an end, and for an end so worthy of our life! that 'whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord; so that living or dying, we are the Lord's.'

And in the meantime, what great lessons He is teaching us, even the knowledge of Himself; and He is disciplining us, not only for our place in the Church below, but for the place in the kingdom for which He designs us in futurity. When the mother of Zebedee's children asked Him for the place on His right hand and left in His kingdom, He answers, 'Are ye able to drink of My cup, and to be baptized with My baptism?' as much as to say,—

'The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.'

We have taken up our cross to follow the crucified One. We are to count the cost. To expect any thing else is unbelief. Our capacity of enjoyment, because the proper condition of a creature, consists, not in liberty, but in learning dependence and submission. If we knew it, it is happiness we are called to, in being required to be dependent one upon another. It will be so hereafter. We are called to nothing but what would be happiness could we submit to it. Pride is our misery, our greatest enemy. Blessed be His name! He promises to resist it. Dependence and submission seemed a new happiness obtained by our blessed Master as a man. Not only did He submit to His Father, but see how He leaned on His brethren. 'He looked for some to have pity upon Him.' 'What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?' 'He came to His own, and His own received Him not.' 'I am as a sparrow alone upon the house-top.' 'I looked on the right hand, and there was none; and on the left, no man cared for me.' 'Refuge failed me. Then said I unto the Lord, 'Thou art my refuge and my portion.' Having to rule and reign with Christ, we must come to the same school to learn to govern. He was educated in our necessities. Whence comes all the sympathy we experience day by day, but because He suffered, being tempted? Oh, yes! let us have patience. 'Let patience have her per-

fect work, . . . wanting nothing;’ for ‘the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.’ I do not know if you will care for this, but I think you ought to care for all that concerns the glory of our beloved Lord. We need large hearts,—not only large enough to hold your small house, or your parish even, but to hold, not only the universe, but all the kingdom of heaven,—to hold God, and with Him all dear to Him. What a largeness!—all dear to Him who so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son, etc. ! Do you ever pray for me? I pray for you. It is so pleasant, so profitable, to talk to the Lord about our friends. We send them sweet messages of love, by a faithful messenger. We do not know its sweetness till we try it. It is time well spent, to talk to Him of them, to talk to them of Him. We deprive ourselves of much real happiness by not living in heaven. Believers should be but as variegated lamps, hung out to lighten the feet of passengers from the kingdom of darkness. Our kingdom is not from hence. We should be *looking at earth as from heaven*, instead of *looking at heaven from earth*; as though present things were already past, and future things already present : and so they soon will be, for ‘the fashion of this world passeth away.’ ”—(*From Letters and Papers of Viscountess Powerscourt.*)

A SERMON NUMERICALLY CONSIDERED.

A SEVENFOLD VIEW.

IN his sermon in Acts iii., Peter is led of the Spirit to speak of the Lord in four ways, answering to the four gospels, and then in three ways taken from Old-Testament predictions. The four are these: ver. 13—His “Servant” (not “Son”), as in Mark; ver. 14—“the Holy One,” as in Luke (Luke i. 35—“That Holy thing which

shall be born of thee"); "and the Just," as in Matthew (Matt. xxvii. 19—"Have thou nothing to do with that Just Man"); ver. 15—"the Prince (or Author) of life," as in John. These characters of the One crucified bring home to the people their guilt in a special way. But in ver. 18-22 and 25, He is presented from the Old Testament as the Christ, the Prophet, and the Seed. The fourfold presentation sets forth, as the number indicates, manifestation in the world, the threefold reference, the divine purpose as announced in prophecy. The fourfold presentation begins with words that tell of what God has done—"The God of our fathers hath glorified His Servant Jesus, whom ye delivered up, and denied" (v. 13); the threefold prediction, with "Those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all His prophets" (v. 18),—that is, the announcement of His purpose. This shows the perfection of Scripture—the perfection of the relationship of its parts, and how each word and group of words and titles falls into place, not only with exactness as in what we call the laws of nature, but with precious instructiveness, according to the meaning of numbers, more and more plainly manifest.

E. S. L.

OUTLINES OF SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE.

3.—REDEMPTION.

"In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace."
(Eph. i. 7.)

HAVING seen, in some measure, what Scripture teaches us regarding man as he was when created and as he is now since the fall, and having found him a complete ruin, we come now to see what God's remedy for that state is. We will first seek to get a gen-

eral view of that remedy, in its broad characteristics and far-reaching results; afterward, if the Lord please, we shall go more into detail. Many words applying to a whole or part of this blessed manifestation of the grace of God are used in Scripture,—such, for instance, as “salvation,” “forgiveness,” “justification,” and the like. For a general view, such as is now the object, perhaps the word “redemption” is more suitable than most others, occurring as it does in both Old and New Testaments, and possessing in both a clear and well-defined meaning, and that meaning the same in both portions of God’s inspired Word. As linking closely with the previous subject, which might, indeed, have been called “The Need for Redemption,” we will first consider who are the *objects* of redemption; secondly, the *nature*; thirdly, the *manner*; fourthly, the *person* of the Redeemer; and lastly, the *results* of redemption.

First, the objects of redemption; who are to benefit by it. This, as we have said, links closely with the subject of the preceding paper. Men are the objects of redemption. All men have sinned, all are therefore under the wrath of God—helpless and hopeless. This state is universal. Redemption is *not* a universal thing. Here, at first glance, there might seem to be a contradiction of the universality of the gospel offer, “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” But this contradiction is only apparent. Redemption deals with results. Those who avail themselves of it, and *only* those will secure those results. “Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed.” (Ex. xv. 13.) This people God repeatedly speaks of as *His*—“Israel is My son, even My first-born; and I say unto thee, Let My son go, that he may serve Me.” (Ex. iv. 22, 23.)—“Let My people go.” (Ex. v. 1.) These people were the objects of His choice, and of His oath to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

These, and these only, were contemplated in the redemption from Egypt,—type, as we shall find, of that greater redemption for all His own. If we turn to the New Testament, we find the same to be true: redemption is for God's people. “In whom *we* have redemption.”—“Who of God is made unto *us* redemption.” For none but the people of God are the benefits, then, of redemption. How completely this takes the props away from the universalist, who would make these benefits, sooner or later, apply to all mankind. But is not the gospel for all? some one asks. Unquestionably; and men are besought,—nay, compelled, to come in; but unless they do come, redemption is not for them. The two things—the *exclusiveness* of redemption and the *inclusiveness* of the offer are beautifully brought together when we ask, *Who* are God's people? what are they like? And we find they are sinners, undistinguishable from all other sinners, partakers of the common fallen nature, guilty of untold sins, and therefore under the wrath of God. The offer is made to them in no different way from others,—repentance and faith are necessary for their acceptance of the offered salvation. Let it not be thought that redemption is limited in its value, or that the offer of its benefits is restricted to any number. Should all the world avail themselves of it, it is sufficient,—nay, as much was needed to redeem one soul as to redeem the world. Its offer is, as we have seen, world-wide. “God so loved the *world* that He gave His only begotten Son.” All may become His people if they will. Those who do not, have only themselves to blame: “Ye *will not* come unto me that ye might have life.” The objects, then, of redemption are those among the whole world of lost and guilty men who are willing to accept its benefits freely offered to them.

We have, in the second place, to inquire into the *nature* of redemption: what does it embrace? The verse at the

head of this paper will give us the first answer.—“In whom we have redemption through His blood, the *forgiveness of sins*.” The first need of an awakened sinner is, peace of conscience, which now is impossible, because of his sins. The first requirement likewise of divine righteousness for its action in grace is, the removal of that guilt which insures the righteous judgment of God. Both the need and the requirement are met by the forgiveness of sins, on grounds, as we shall see later, which fully vindicate God’s righteousness. The blessedness of forgiveness! who of God’s children but delights again and again to dwell upon the precious theme? This forgiveness is *immediate*, upon the acceptance of redemption. “I have sinned,” says David. “The Lord hath put away thy sin,” is the immediate reply. “Father, I have sinned” is met at once by “Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him.” It is *full*, embracing all sins. “Having forgiven you *all* trespasses.” “Her sins, which are *many*, are forgiven.” Iniquities more in number than the hairs of our head are all pardoned. This forgiveness is *free*. “When they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both.” It is without works, money, or price. Lastly, it is *eternal*. “Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” (Heb. viii. 12.) Under the law, there was mention made of the same sins year after year. Christ has “entered in *once* into the holy place, having obtained *eternal* redemption.” (Heb. ix. 12.) This means that the sinner *once* forgiven is forgiven forever. After the death of his father, Joseph’s brethren came and prostrated themselves before him, asking again for that forgiveness which he had so freely given long before. Joseph wept. If such unbelief in his brethren grieved *his* heart, how much more does that doubt about eternal forgiveness grieve the heart of our God. And this forgiveness is not of some offenses—of those before conversion, but of all: man is forgiven as

a *sinner*, and it applies to *all* his acts as a sinner, even to the sins (alas that there should be such!) after conversion. This forgiveness means, then, redemption from the curse under which we were. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." (Gal. iii. 13.) This, applying, as far as the law is concerned, to the Jew only, refers to all who, having "sinned without law, shall also perish without law." (Rom. ii. 12.) The type of it is seen in the passover in Egypt. Israel, like the Egyptians, were exposed to the sword of justice—they were sheltered and spared; that was the first step in their redemption. But there was more than this in Israel's redemption, as there is more than deliverance from the curse in ours. Israel was in *bondage* to the Egyptians, and held in their land, away from the land of promise. Sheltered from wrath, they are next delivered from the power of Pharaoh and taken out of the land. This was effected by their passage through the Red Sea. Then redemption's song was sung (Ex. xv.). So for us,—we were in bondage to sin, captives in this world, Satan's servants. Redemption has loosed our chains. "That He might redeem us from all iniquity." (Tit. ii. 14.) "Sin shall not have dominion over you." (Rom. vi. 14.) Satan, our master, has been "bound" and "destroyed" (Matt. xii. 29; Heb. ii. 14). The world has ceased to be a dwelling-place—a home for His redeemed people, and is now a wilderness through which they are to haste. Lastly, redemption applies to the *body*. "The redemption of the body" (Rom. viii. 23) will take place at the "day of redemption" (Eph. i. 14; iv. 30), when "this corruptible shall put on incorruption; this mortal, immortality." (1 Cor. xv.) Such, then, is the nature of redemption; it delivers from the curse, from the bondage of sin, and from death.

Let us next see the *manner* of redemption; how is it effected. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things,

. . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Pet. i. 18, 19.) The meaning of the most common word for redemption, in Hebrew, is purchase, or buying back. For a just and holy God to redeem His people in the manner we have seen, means that there were sufficient grounds, a sufficient price. The price, the grounds, were furnished by the precious blood of Christ, typified in the passover-lamb, allusion to which is made in the verses just quoted. There could be no redemption without the price being paid. All through the Levitical ordinances we find redemption—of persons, of property, of land,—but never without the price. So for us there could be no redemption apart from its price. "The blood of Christ" means His life given up as a curse for us. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." The blood spoke of judgment executed, of wrath visited, of justice satisfied. It tells us that the work is finished. The high-priest entered into the holiest, and there sprinkled the blood upon and before the mercy-seat. So Christ entered, by His own blood, into heaven itself. That blood shed on Calvary speaks forever before God of redemption accomplished, and on the ground of that shed blood all the blessed fruits of redemption are ours. This is the manner of it. There is no other way. Let men sneer,—let them call it "the religion of the shambles," God calls it "the precious blood of Christ." Scripture is full of it. No more useful occupation could there be for a young Christian than to trace this "scarlet line" through Scripture, from the sacrifice of Abel to the chorus of praise which says, "Thou art worthy, . . . for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed to God by Thy blood." (Rev. v. 9.)

We come, in the fourth place, to inquire as to the Redeemer,—the Person through whom the redemption is accomplished. Our verse at the head of this paper shows

us this: "*In whom* we have redemption through His blood." Christ, Son of God, Son of Man, is the redeemer of God's people. The price, as we have seen, was His blood. To shed that, He had to "take part of flesh and blood." He thus became man,—a true and perfect one in all things. It is precious and touching to see the various meanings of the word for redeemer in the Old Testament, remembering that the One who only fully and perfectly exhibits these meanings is our blessed Lord. In Lev. xxv., when a man had, through poverty, lost his inheritance, one who was able could buy it back for him. We had lost all our possessions, and we know well who it is that has bought back more than we ever lost. But this purchaser was to be a *kinsman*. "If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away some of his possession, and any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold." (Lev. xxv. 25.) How precious this reminds us of Him who is "not ashamed to call us brethren." Our redeemer He is; but to become that, He became man, and now in resurrection we are linked with Him. Oh how near He is to us! But more,—the kinsman not only was to redeem the lost inheritance, but he was to marry the desolate widow. See the beautiful account in Ruth iv. An alien, of the condemned nation of Moabites, desolate, poor, a mere gleaner, Ruth is brought, not merely into the possession of vineyards and lands, but into the bosom of Boaz as the partner of his wealth. The bride, the Lamb's wife, is the Church, purchased by the precious blood of Christ, who is not ashamed to call us brethren, and soon to be associated with Him in His glory—partner of His joys! Such is the Redeemer. But there is also a solemn side to this bright picture. The name for *revenger* is the same as that for *redeemer*. "The revenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer; when he meeteth him, he shall slay him."

(Num. xxxv. 19.) The guilty one was to be slain. Our Lord is our avenger; our enemies are His, and soon will He avenge His people. "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them which trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven . . . in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God." (2 Thess. i. 6-8.) He offers Himself to men as redeemer if they but accept the gospel; rejecting that, He will soon be the avenger for them. The lamb reminds us of His death, atoning for sin; but for rejecters of the blood of the Lamb, there is nothing but the "wrath of the Lamb." How imperfect are our apprehensions of this blessed Person! but, at least, we have seen *some* of His characteristics as Redeemer, Purchaser, Kinsman, Husband, Avenger.

Lastly, what are the *results* of redemption? These we have been gleaning up all along. In a word, all blessings, all glories, present and future, are the results of redemption. In the present, we have justification; that is not merely the pardon of our sins, but the positive acceptance of our persons as righteous, so that we can say, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth." But another precious result of redemption is, deliverance from the power of sin; so that, as redeemed to God, we can now walk in newness of life—no longer the servants of sin. Pledge and earnest of the perfectness of redemption, we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, whose blessed work it is to reveal these precious things to us through God's Word. But who shall speak of those glories, those joys, which have been purchased for us,—which await us at the coming of our Lord? All, all has been secured to us "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Well may we sing,—

“It is finished, it is finished,
 Who can tell redemption’s worth?
 He who knows it, leads the singing,
 Full the joy as fierce the wrath.”

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 5.—“How can we reconcile the statement that James, who was the Lord’s brother, was also the son of Alpheus. It appears there were but two Jameses among the apostles, and James the less is the son of Alpheus, and identical with the apostle of that name referred to in Acts xv. 13, xxi. 18, and Gal. i. 19, ii. 9. Who is the James of Matt. xiii. 55 and Mark vi. 3? It appears to the mind very evident that this is the Lord’s brother, referred to by Paul; but how, then, is he the son of Alpheus?”

J. H. C.

Ans.—It is, as you say, evident that the James spoken of in these passages is one person. He is the son of Mary (wife of Cleopas, the Hebrew form of “Alpheus” the Greek word). Mark xv. 40; Matt. xxvii. 56; Luke xxiv. 10. This Mary was the sister of our Lord’s mother (Jno. xix 25); so that, according to familiar Hebrew usage, her children, being near relatives of our Lord Jesus, were called His brethren. Jacob tells Rachel he was her father’s brother; literally, he was nephew to Laban. Lot says to Abram, “We be brethren.” Jude was another of these sons, and he was the brother of James. (Luke vi. 16; Acts i. 13; Jude 1.)

Q. 6.—“How are we to reconcile the call of Andrew and Peter as seen in Jno. i. (as it appears they met the Lord and began their discipleship down by the Jordan,) with that of Matt. iv., where the Lord meets and calls them up by the sea of Galilee?”

J. H. C.

Ans.—The first call, at Jordan, was when John the Baptist had pointed out Jesus as the “Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.” They follow Jesus, and become acquainted with Him. This was their salvation-call. Next, at Galilee, we have their call from their nets, to be “fishers of men.” This was their service-call. All the Lord’s people have these two calls,—first, to Jesus as Saviour—the Lamb of God; second, as Lord and Master. So far from conflicting, they fill out and supplement one another. After the first call, Andrew and Peter

evidently did not give up their former occupation; after the second, they did.

Q. 7.—“How do we reconcile the account of the last passover Jesus kept with the disciples as seen in the synoptic gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, with the account in Jno. xiii.? In Jno. xviii. 28 and xix. 14, it appears the passover had not been observed by the Jews, while Jesus and His disciples had kept it; and the accounts in the three first gospels seem to be clear it was the regular time (14th Nisan) to observe it.” *J. H. C.*

Ans.—There can be no question that our Lord and His disciples ate the passover on the proper night. The Jews also, doubtless, ate it on the same night. The passages referred to in John do not mean that they had not eaten the passover-supper, but refer to the *whole feast* of unleavened bread, as in Luke xxii. 1—“Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the passover.” “The preparation” in Jno. xix. 14 is not the preparation for the passover, but for the Sabbath, following which was “an high day.” (Luke xxiii. 54; Mark xv. 42; Jno. xix. 31.)

Q. 8.—“Does the fact of the Lord Jesus being the first-fruits of the resurrection forbid the thought that the body of Moses was raised from among the dead? How else could his body have been seen on the mount of transfiguration? Could not Moses, and others mentioned in the New Testament have been raised in virtue of Christ’s resurrection not yet accomplished?”—*S. A. C.*

Ans.—It is evident that Scripture is purposely silent with regard to the resurrection of persons before that of our Lord took place. Not that it was impossible that such did take place, but they are not mentioned prominently, because Christ was not yet risen. There are but three cases which could have occurred,—that of Moses, who appeared glorified on the “holy mount” along with Elijah, who typified the “changed” saints, as Moses did the sleeping ones raised. Enoch was translated that he should not see death. He was not, for God took him. In both his case and that of Elijah, it seems a necessary inference that they were “changed,” which answers to resurrection. But, as was said, all is left in obscurity till the resurrection of our Lord. Even those graves which were opened at our Lord’s crucifixion did not yield up their dead till *after His resurrection*. (Matt. xxvii. 51-53.) Besides these, there were in Old-Testament times, but specially in our Lord’s life, many raisings from the dead; but these were only temporary. The persons were still mortal, and in due time again fell asleep.

IN THE PLAINS OF JORDAN.

WE thank Thee, Lord, for weary days,
 When desert-streams were dry,
 And first we knew what depth of need
 Thy love could satisfy.

Days when beneath the desert sun
 Along the toilsome road,
 O'er roughest ways we walked with One—
 That One, the Son of God.

We thank Thee for that rest in Him
 The weary only know,—
 The perfect, wondrous sympathy
 We needs must learn below.

The sweet companionship of One
 Who once the desert trod,
 The glorious fellowship with One
 Upon the throne of God.

The joy no desolations here
 Can reach or cloud or dim,—
 The present Lord, the living God,
 And we *alone* with Him.

We know Him as we could not know
 Through heaven's golden years;
 We there shall see His glorious face,
 But Mary saw His tears.

The touch that heals the broken heart
 Is never felt above;
 His angels know His blessedness,
 His way-worn saints His love.

When in the glory and the rest
 We joyfully adore,
 Remembering the desert way,
 We yet shall praise Him more.

Remembering now, amidst our toil,
 Our conflict, and our sin,
 He brought the waters for our thirst,
 It cost His blood to win.

And now, in perfect peace we go
 Along the way He trod,
 Still learning, from all need below,
 Depths of the heart of God.

A REST-SONG.

“Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty : neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother : my soul is even as a weaned child. Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and forever.” (Ps. cxxxi.)

THE fifth book of which this psalm forms a part is the Deuteronomy of the book of Psalms. Corresponding to the last book of Moses it (in harmony with the significance of its number, five—God with man’s weakness) recapitulates the experiences of the way, applying the principles of divine holiness, and looks forward as well to the end—sure and near—an end of such blessing that praise cannot be withheld, but bursts forth in fuller and fuller strains of music until at last the whole chorus of creation joins in the oft-repeated Halleluiahs. How cheering the thought that we are nearing the time when praise, feeble now, and mingled often with tears and prayers, shall be unhindered, full, and worthy of Him who is “above all blessing and praise.” But meanwhile the lips need not be silent, nor the heart cold. “Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.” So here in this psalm we have something suited for the journey, something we can sing even now.

It is one of a group of fifteen “Songs of degrees, or Ascents.” Whatever may be the opinions as to the exact and literal meaning of this expression, there need be no doubt that the thought to be conveyed is that these were songs which indicated approach, drawing near to God. “Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together : whither the tribes *go up*, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.” (Ps. cxxii. 3, 4.) We see Israel, long estranged from their God, drawing near to Him and each step, as

it were, is marked with a song. In captivity they cannot sing, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" (Ps. cxxxvii. 4.), but now drawing near, "going up," their lips are again opened in song. These songs are fifteen in number, five, the number of the book, God with us, and three, complete manifestation. Such will be the experience of Israel returning to the Lord. Then will be completely manifested the fact that God is with them, the name of the city will be, Jehovah Shammah, the Lord is there. (Ezek. xlviii. 35.) The special psalm before us gives us the state of heart of the once proud and stubborn people, who had so long held out against the Lord with a brow of brass and a neck like an iron sinew. Now, their pride is broken, and in its place the simplicity of little children. In this childlike state they can at last say "Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and forever."

But if we wish to see this state in its perfection, we need only look at One who could truly say, "I am meek and lowly in heart." He who emptied Himself, not of pride and haughtiness, as Israel must, for He had none of these, but of that which was His right, equality with God—equality of glory, as to His person He ever remained equal with God. Here we see meekness in all its perfection. That lowly One, who would have thought, save those with anointed eyes, that He was God over all blessed forever? Obedience, dependence, subjection to the Father's will in all His intercourse with God: gentleness, kindness, sympathy, these characterized His intercourse with man. It was not difficult to approach Him; little children were not afraid to be in His arms. Here was One who perfectly exemplified the spirit of our psalm.

Nor have we here merely that which is prophetic, or which gives us the picture of the Lord Jesus. We have

as well something for our ourselves. This is the spirit for us to have, if we would know what real rest of soul is. "The proud He knoweth afar off." What, then, is a haughty heart? It is one that is satisfied with itself and occupied with itself. A heart whose personal interests are dearer than all else; a heart which will brook no contradiction, allow no correction, for it is always right. Ah! such a heart may seem splendid to its owner, but how lonely and how cold! Now, if we are to enjoy God, the heart cannot be haughty. God has two dwelling-places: "I dwell in the high and holy place,"—heaven, surrounded by "light inapproachable," by seraphim who veil feet and faces before that Majesty. But God has another dwelling-place—"with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." (Is. lvii. 15.) In the fourteenth chapter of John, our Lord speaks of these two dwelling-places: "In my Father's house are many mansions." (v. 2.) "If a man love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." (v. 23.) The word for mansion and abode is the same in the Greek. But how precious is this thought: He who fills heaven with His glory is pleased to dwell in the hearts of His people, who are not haughty! But the childlike spirit does not come to us naturally. The cross must be known, not only as the place where our blessed Lord hung for our sins, but where we were judged and set aside as unfit for God. Then His love and our worthlessness are seen, and we can sing,

"When I survey the wondrous cross,
 On which the Lord of glory died,
 My richest gain I count but loss,
 And pour contempt on all my pride."

Lord, give Thy people this meek and childlike spirit! Having this spirit, the desire to be something, or to strain after what is beyond us, is checked. In one sense,

we are never to settle down satisfied with present attainments. The spirit of Phil. iii. should ever be ours; "not as though I had already attained." But there is a spirit of restlessness, of effort, which so far from indicating true progress, is a hindrance to it. "Not boasting of things without our measure," says the apostle whose motto was forward.

Beautifully exemplified is this spirit in Mary. Her sister Martha was exercising herself in great matters, in things too high for her unaided strength. Mary does nothing but drink in at the Master's feet what He has to say to her. "A weaned child." Isaac was circumcised the eighth day. It was a good while after that he was weaned. Circumcision is the seal of death put upon us, a sign, we might say, that we belong to God, through Christ's death. Weaning is the practical carrying out of that death in the daily life: it is the bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. (2 Cor. iv. 10.) There was a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. Joy had its proper place there. Just as in the case of Israel sheltered by the blood of the Lamb in Egypt, it was not until they were weaned from that house of bondage, at least externally, that the joy of Exodus xv., the song of deliverance bursts forth. Samuel was dedicated to the Lord before his birth, but it was not until he was weaned (1 Sam. i. 24) that he was carried up to the house of the Lord, there to learn from Him.

A feast—the Lord's house—these are the thoughts connected with weaning. It is the giving up of the old things for that which is better. Many of God's children are babes, and remain so all their life. Such, the apostle says are carnal (1 Cor. iii.) not able to eat strong meat. In another sense, we are to be babes always, "as new-born babe, desire milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby." (1 Pet. ii.) We are to be always receivers from the Word,

but we are not to be carnal, such as need the most elementary truths, and never get any further.

This brings us to the other thought about weaning—progress. “That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine . . . but speaking the truth in love, may *grow up* into Him in all things which is the head even Christ.” (Eph. iv. 14, 15.) There is a great difference between being *childish* and *childlike*. When the apostle became a man, he put away childish things; but he ever retained the childlike spirit. In other, words, his soul was like a weaned child.

It is this spirit which enjoys the future, well knowing that with God for us no harm can befall. May we all know more of the spirit of this small but beautiful psalm. There is not the martial ring of conflict and victory in it, but there is the fulfillment of that word which says, “In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.” (Is. xxx. 15.)

OUTLINES OF SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE.

4. JUSTIFICATION.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. v. 1.)

AT the close of the preceding paper, we spoke of justification as one of the results of redemption; let us now look at it a little in detail. It is a subject upon which many Christians are not clear, yet one upon which clearness is most important for settled peace and a true conception of the believers standing. Let us seek to gather from Scripture, first, a *definition* of justification; secondly, the *ground* upon which we are justified; thirdly, the *means*; and lastly, the *effects*.

“It is God that justifieth”—the One against whom man has sinned, the only One competent, or who has any right to do so. But what a view of grace it gives us. The insulted, wronged One declares the justification of those who had wronged and insulted Him. “That justifieth the ungodly”—sinners are the ones justified. It is *as sinners* that grace meets men, and justifies them where they are and *as* they are. A man’s fitness for justification is his need of it, his title to it his sins. How much anxiety, useless efforts, vain struggles would be saved did the anxious sinner realize that he needed no fitness for justification but his sins; that his very struggles and efforts to be something else than a sinner only show that he wishes to justify himself, rather than let God justify him.

Justification is connected with forgiveness of sins, though they are not identical. “Be it known unto you that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things.” (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) Forgiveness of sins is their pardon; it is the removal of the debt; it is an act of mercy, though on just and sufficient grounds. Forgiveness alone would leave one with the stain, the shame of his sins still upon him; justification does more; it declares the sinner to be righteous, to have a positive standing before God as though he had never sinned, nay a more certain standing than if he had never sinned, as we shall see when we come to examine the grounds of justification. The first part of the epistle to the Romans is the great treatise on justification. An ordinarily careful reading of the first five chapters will show how frequently the words “righteousness,” “justify,” and the like occur. First, after a short introduction, in which the theme is given—the righteousness of God—(chap. i. 17), we have the solemn and awful fact brought out that man

has no righteousness of his own. Man is looked at from every point of view. In chap. i., we see the lowest degradation, morally, in those who, not wishing to retain God in their knowledge, were given up to all manner of uncleanness—even linking God's name and professed worship with their vile affections and practices. In chap. ii., we have in the first part, those who are able to judge the evil spoken of in the previous chapter, and yet do the same things, a state of hardness and impenitence that will surely bring down God's judgment. These are Gentiles, and such is their condition. The Jews are treated of next; they had the law, boasted in it, but their own conduct was condemned by it. The very height of privilege to which they had been lifted through the law, outward nearness to and knowledge of God, only made more awful their fall from that place. Thus, after giving an exhibition of man, both as without law, the Gentile, and under law, the Jew, the apostle sums up the whole matter: "We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin . . . Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become *guilty* before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in. His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. iii. 9, 19, 20.) This is the conclusion of the whole matter as to man's righteousness: he has none, whether Jew or Gentile: he is brought before the bar of God, and tested by the light he has had, he is found guilty before Him. This, then, is man's standing before God naturally, without one particle of righteousness. Now comes in the display of another righteousness altogether—that of God. Naturally one would suppose that this righteousness could only be exercised against the sinner, that nothing but judgment could go forth against unrighteousness.

Here comes in, however, not only the grace, but the wisdom of God. He could not lay aside His righteousness, that would be to lay aside His being, an impossibility. *Righteousness is in full exercise*, but, amazing grace! for us—not against us. The very same justice which naturally would demand punishment, now not merely demands the pardon of the guilty, but declares him righteous before God. Pardon gives quietness in view of punishment, a knowledge that we have escaped it; justification enables one to ask, “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect?” One can lift up the head, and look God in the face. God himself declares him to be just, that is,—positively righteous. It is just as if he had always been well pleasing to God. This is imputing righteousness to one who had none of his own. It is God’s righteousness in full exercise, declaring the sinner who stands with closed mouth before Him to be clean every whit. This, then, in some sort, is the meaning of justification.

Next, let us see on what *grounds* so strange and amazing an act can take place. “Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God has forth to be a propitiation (or mercy seat) through faith in (or by) His blood, . . . to declare at this time His righteousness; that He might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” (Rom. iii. 24–26.) The grounds, or the reason why, God’s righteousness is for instead of against the sinner are said here to be “the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,”—“a propitiatory through faith by His blood.” The justice was turned against Him when He, as the substitute, took the place of the guilty. That wrath, in all its fulness and intensity, fell on Him. How well we know this; but oh! do we ever grow weary of it? Blessed Jesus, Thou wast made sin for us, Thou didst bear our sins in Thine own body on the tree. The wrath spent itself on Him. Let

the Christian be clear on this subject. Nothing can be more important than correct views of the atoning work of Christ. We are not saying that many who are saved do not fail to see the fullness and completeness of this work. It is sadly true that faulty or incomplete views of Christ's work are common, and the low state of soul resulting from this are also common. But for settled, abiding peace there must be the knowledge of wrath-bearing by our blessed Lord. We are justified by His blood, on that ground. He has become the propitiatory—the mercy-seat where God meets the sinner. The mercy-seat was the cover of the ark, covering from view the law, preventing it, as it were, from being defiled by Israel and judging them. "Thy law is within My heart," said the Lord Jesus—perfectly loved and kept. But the mercy-seat was the place where the blood was sprinkled. The body of the beast was burned without the camp, as Christ suffered "without the gate," figure of that outer darkness of separation from the presence of God—"My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken Me." The blood of that beast burned at the greatest distance from God is brought within the veil and sprinkled upon the mercy-seat—the place of greatest nearness to God. So Christ entered by His own blood into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us. He is the mercy-seat, the meeting place where all the righteousness of God, instead of condemning the sinner, proclaims him free, nay, righteous. This is our standing,—the blood of Christ. On this rock we stand forever, not only forgiven, but having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.

Thirdly, the *means* of justification. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Rom. iii. 28.) Law, works, wages, death. Such is the down grade for all who seek to be justified by the law. The whole fourth chapter of Rom-

ans is devoted to showing that the means by which we are justified are not works, but faith. Faith is the direct opposite of works. If it is by works, it could not be by faith. Faith is believing the record God has given. It is accepting a free gift. It is the acknowledgment that God is true, that His love is real. Faith takes its stand before the mercy-seat at God's invitation. Many unestablished souls stumble about this simple matter of faith, as though there was something difficult about it. Faith never occupies us with itself. We do not believe in our faith, but in Christ. Faith sees the blood, rests upon it, magnifies it. To be occupied with our faith is only another subtle kind of self-righteousness, which for the earnest soul is self-torture.

Lastly, what are the effects of justification? "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." How could there be any thing but peace when all wrath has been borne, all sins blotted out and forgotten? Peace *with God!* feelings are not here thought of, but the relationship with God. We have now received the reconciliation. (Rom. v. 11.) "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Nearness to God, boldness to enter into the holiest. A standing in grace; the glory our joy, so that the trials by the way are not to be compared with the glory soon to be revealed. But Christ was "raised again for our justification." His resurrection declared God's full acceptance of His death for our sins, and now as risen He stands before God as our righteousness. Not only are we regarded as righteous, but He is "made unto us righteousness," so that He is in the fullest sense our representative before God. A glorified Christ is the measure of our acceptance, of our righteousness. Is there fault, spot, or blemish in Him? Then there is none in His people who

are in Him. "The love of God (God's love to us) is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Justified by faith; sealed with the Holy Ghost. Boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him. Joyful exultation in the bright hope of that glory which even now is our home, to which we shall soon be introduced by Him who has done it all.

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART V.—Continued.

THE VIALS OF WRATH. (CHAP. XV., XVI.)

The Vials of Wrath. (Chap. xvi.)

THE vials of wrath are now poured out upon the earth at the bidding of a great voice from the temple. The wrath of God is no mere ebullition of passion that carries away the subject of it. It waits the word from the sanctuary; and at length that eventful word is spoken. Completing the divine judgments, the range of the vials is not narrower than that of the prophetic earth, and in this, differ from the trumpet-series which otherwise they much resemble. Another resemblance which is significant is to the plagues of Egypt, which were at once a testimony to the world and for the deliverance of Israel. Israel is here also in her last crisis of trouble, and waiting for deliverance, for which these judgments, no doubt, prepare the way, though that which alone accomplishes it, the coming of the Lord Himself, is not plainly included.

The first vial is poured out distinctively, in contrast with the sea and rivers, etc., upon the *earth*, like the first

trumpet-judgment; but the effect is different: an evil and grievous sore breaks out upon those that have the mark of the beast, and that worship his image. In Egypt such a plague routed their wise men so that they could not stand before Moses. According to the natural meaning of such a figure, it would speak of inward corruption which is made now to appear outwardly in what is painful, loathsome, and disfiguring; those who had accepted the beast's mark being thus otherwise marked and branded with what is a sign of their moral condition. As the apostle shows (Rom. i.) idolatry is itself the sign of corruption which would degrade God into creature semblance in order to give free rein to its lusts. Here it is openly the worship of the image of him whom Scripture stamps as the "beast," which those branded with his mark give themselves up to. The excesses of the French revolution, when God was dethroned to make way for a prostitute on the altar of Notre Dame, if they be not, as some have thought them, the fulfillment of this vial, may yet sufficiently picture to us how it may be fulfilled in a time of trouble such as never was before, and, thank God, such as never will be afterward.

The second vial is poured out on the sea, and the sea becomes like the blood of a dead man, and every living soul dies in the sea. Here we have the second trumpet in its effect upon the sea, but without the limitation there. And there seems a difference also, in that the blood is as of a dead man. It cannot be that it is merely dead blood, for all blood shed becomes that almost at once, and the sea turned into blood would by itself suggest death without the addition. Would it not rather seem to be, that the blood of a dead man, while it is indeed dead blood, is also that which has *not* been shed? Life has not been violently taken, but lost through disease or natural decay. Thus in the law that which had died of itself was

forbidden as food, because it spoke of internal corruption, as the life still vigorous when the blood was shed did not. If this thought be the true one, then the state imaged under the second vial is not that of strife and bloodshed among the nations, but of professed spiritual life gone, which the addition, "Every living soul died in the sea," affirms as complete. Life there might be in hunted and outlawed men, no longer recognized as part of the nations; but the mass was dead. This seems to me the only thought that gives consistently the full force of the expressions.

The third vial is poured out upon the rivers and fountains of waters, the sphere affected by the third trumpet; but in the trumpet they are made bitter, now they become blood, which, as owned to be the judgment of God upon persecutors, seems clearly to speak of bloodshed: they are given blood to drink. Where naturally there should be only sources of refreshment, as perhaps in family life, there are found instead strife and the hand of violence. The angel of the waters may be in this case the representative of that tender care of the Creator over the creature-life, which in this case comes to be against the persecutor and applauds His judgments; as the altar does, upon which the lives of the martyrs have been poured out to God.

This seems to consist well with what has been given as the interpretation of the second seal.

The fourth angel pours his vial upon the sun, and it scorches men with its heat; but they only blaspheme God's name, and repent not. Here, as often, the head of civil authority seems to be represented; and Napoleon's career has been taken as in the historical application the fulfillment of it. In him after the immorality, apostasy, and bloodshed of that memorable revolution, imperial power blazed out in a destructive fierceness,

that might well be symbolized as scorching heat. There was splendor enough, but it was not "a pleasant sight to behold the sun:" the nation over which he ruled was oppressed with "glory," and soon manifested how its vitality had been exhausted by its hot-house growth. His career was brief; and briefer still in proportion to its intensity will be the closing despotism, which will be followed by the kingdom of the Son of Man, and the display of a true glory unseen by the world before. Then shall that be fulfilled which is written: "the Sun shall not smite thee by day," and how great will be the joy of this that is added, "thy Sun shall no more go down; . . . the Lord shall be thine everlasting Light." (Is. lx. 20.)

The fifth vial is poured out, and the meteoric blaze is passed. Poured on the throne of the beast, darkness spreads over his kingdom. It is the foreshadow of that final withdrawal of light, the "outer darkness" of that awful time, when they who have so often bidden God withdraw from them will be taken at their word. But who out of hell can tell what that will be? The sun has ascribed to it by the science of the day more than ever was before done; but who at any time could have said to the glowing sun, Depart from me: I desire darkness? Yet this is what they say to God.

Nor does the darkness work repentance: "They gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and sores, and repented not of their deeds." Such is the hardening character of sin; and such is the impotence of judgment in itself to break the heart and subdue the soul to God.

So far, spite of the general character of the vials, they seem to have to do almost entirely with the beast and his followers; and these are, as we know, the principal

enemies of Israel, and the boldest in defiance of God, at the time of the end. Nevertheless there are other adversaries besides those of the new risen empire of the west. The king of the north or of Greece is evidently in opposition at the close to the "king in the land of Israel, who is the viceroy of the beast in Judea. (Dan. xi.) This king of Greece also, if mighty, is so "not by his own power." (Dan. viii. 24.) There is behind him, in fact, a mightier prince, who in Ezek. xxxviii.—xxxix, comes clearly into view as head of many eastern nations, Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal; Persia, Cush and Phut with the house of Togarmah, (Armenia,) being confederate with him. This is not the place to look at the people to whom all these names refer. Magog, the first of them, by common consent, stands for the Scythians, who, "mixed with the Medes," says Fausset, "became the Sarmatians, whence sprang the Russians." Rosh is thus by more than sound connected with Russia, as Meshech and Tubal may have given their names, but slightly changed, to Moscow and Tobolsk. The connection with Persia and Armenia, and with Greece no less, is easily intelligible at the present day.

Here are powers, then, outside the revived Roman empire, which we find in relation with Israel at the time of the end, and which will find their place in the valley of Jehoshaphat ("Jehovah's judgment") in the day when the Lord sits there to judge all the nations round about. (Joel iii. 12.) Accordingly now, under the sixth vial, the way is prepared for this, and the gathering is accomplished. The sixth vial is poured out upon "the great river Euphrates," the effect being that the water is dried up, "that the ways of the kings of the east may be prepared." The Euphrates is the scene also of the sixth trumpet, which would seem to give but a previous incursion of the same

powers that are contemplated here, the door being now set widely open for them by the drying up of the river, the boundary of the Roman empire in the past. In the trumpet there was but an inroad upon the empire; now there is much more than this: it is the gathering for the great day of God Almighty!

Accordingly all the powers of evil are at work: three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet; for they are the spirits of demons, working miracles, who go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God Almighty! . . . And they gathered them together unto the place which is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon."

The frogs are creatures of slime and of the night, blatant, impudent impotents, cheap orators, who can yet gather men for serious work. Here, those brought together little know whom they go to meet; but this is the common history of men revealed in its true character. The cross has shown it to us on the one side; the conflict of the last days shows it on the other. The veil of the world is removed, and it is seen here what influences carry them: the dragon, the spirit of a wisdom which, being, "earthly," is "sensual, devilish" (Jas, iii. 15,); the "beast," the influence of power, which apostate from God is bestial (Ps. xlix. 20,); the "false prophet," the inspiration of hopes that are not of God: so the mass are led.

Har-magedon is the "mount of slaughter." We read of Megiddo in the Old Testament as a "valley," not a mountain; whether it refers to this or no, the phrase seems equivalent to the "mountain of the slain," a mountain of heaped up corpses. To this, ignorant of what is before them, they are gathered.

A note of urgent warning is interjected here: no

need of declaring the Speaker! "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." It is to the world Christ's coming will be that of a thief; for "in such an hour as ye think *not*, the Son of Man cometh." "Blessed is he that watcheth" is, as we see by the closing words, a solemn warning to the heedless. Who will be ready at this time to hear? In any case, wisdom will utter its voice; and none shall go out to meet unwarned the doom of the rebellious. Good it is to find just in this place, whether heeded or not, the pleading of mercy. Not the less terrible on that account the doom that comes.

And now the seventh angel pours his vial into the air. Of "the power of the air" Satan is the prince (Eph. ii. 2), and all Satan's realm is shaken. A great voice breaks out of the throne, saying, It is done; and there are lightnings, and voices, and thunders,—the "voices" showing the lightnings and thunders between which they come to be no mere natural tempest, but divinely guided judgment. There is an unparalleled convulsion; and the great city (Babylon or, as it is applied here, Rome) is divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations generally fall. It is added as to a special object of the divine judgment,—“And Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give unto her the cup of wine of the fierceness of His wrath.” This is in brief what is given presently in detail. Babylon has only once before been named in Revelation; but the two following chapters treat of it in full.

Then "every island fled away:" as I suppose, there is no isolation of any from the storm; "and the mountains were not found:" no power so great but it is humbled and brought low. "And a great hail, every stone about a talent weight, fell down from God out of heaven upon

men : and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail ; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”

In the hail the effect of God's withdrawal from men is seen in judgment. The source of light and heat are one ; and for the soul God is the source : the hail speaks not of mere withdrawal, but of this becoming a pitiless storm of judgment which subdues all, except, alas ! the heart of man which, while his anguish owns the power from which he suffers, remains in its hard impenitency the witness and justification of the wrath it has brought down.

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

DIVERS WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

“THE commandment is holy, just, and good ;” we may expect to find, therefore, even in those ordinances which relate to ceremonial matters, a spirit of righteousness,—indeed it could not be otherwise, proceeding from one whose whole being is characterized by strict justice. When we look at the various ordinances which relate to every-day life, we are struck with this even-handed justice manifested. Judges were to be impartial,—not respecting the rich, nor leaning to the side of the poor because he was poor. The rights of private property were strictly guarded. The person of the slave was protected ; the wages of the hireling guaranteed. True, it was the *law*, and could make nothing perfect, dealing, as it did, with man in his natural state ; indeed, many things were allowed which a full standard of holiness applied to the new man would not permit. Moses, “for the hardness of your hearts,” permitted, under certain restrictions, divorce and a plurality of wives. Still, even here, the natural lawlessness and selfishness of man were curbed by the spirit of justice and fairness in the

ordinance which regulated his conduct in these matters. Living, as we do, under grace, we do not have to turn to the law either for salvation or as a rule of life. But that does not close the law to us as containing principles of holiness for all time,—principles that we do well to examine and in the power of *grace* to act upon.

In Rom. viii., we are told there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, and that by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus we are set free from the law of sin and death,—a law whose chains were only the more tightly riveted when we endeavored to loose them by keeping the commandments (Rom. vii.). We are thus set free—a blessed deliverance!—but for what purpose? “That the *righteousness of the law* might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” That is, the righteous requirements of the law—what was contemplated in it—the *principle* of it, might be carried out in us who are no longer in any particular under its rule, and who are therefore free to show what grace can do. This is most important. We are not under law; are we therefore lawless? “God forbid!” says Rom. vi. What greater proof of the utter and hopeless corruption of our natural hearts could we have than that grace which has pardoned should be used as an excuse to go on in the very bondage from which it has freed us? But, thank God! as born of Him, we do delight in His will, and long to be conformed to the image of His blessed Son. We abhor that sin which has left its defiling trail upon our whole nature, and we long for the time when we shall be freed from its hateful presence. Therefore, so far from desiring to live on in lawlessness because he is under grace, the saved soul yearns for practical holiness, and God has most fully provided for that yearning by the same grace which saved us. Still there remains, as we well know, “sin in our mortal body,” which we are not to obey,

—“members which are upon the earth,” which are to be mortified. And it is by the Word used and applied by the Spirit, that we are to do this. We see, therefore, the connection between the law, as in God’s Word, and our walk. Would that we were more under the power of that Word!

“Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights—a great and a small. Thou shalt not have in thy house divers measures—a great and a small. But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have: that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the Lord thy God.” (Deut. xxv. 13–16.) “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure. Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin shall ye have: I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt. *Therefore* shall ye observe all My statutes, and all My judgments, and do them: I am the Lord.” (Lev. xix. 35–37.)

In the first of these passages we have the results of obedience given as the motive—“that thy days may be lengthened in the land;” in the second, we have redemption, and the nature of God, as the reason for obedience. Grace and government alike constrain us to please God. Before passing to the spiritual application of these laws, may we not pause and look at them in their letter? Is there not great reproach brought upon the name of Christ by some of those who bear it, through their unfair dealings—in buying and selling, and the ordinary transactions in every-day life? It may be in very little things that this dishonesty is seen; but every unfair advantage Christians may take, no matter how small, is deeply grieving to the Holy Spirit. There is no need to specify: each one’s conscience will tell him whether or not he is in every particular walking honestly as in the *day*. When Abraham wanted a tomb for the burial of Sarah, he would buy it

for *as much money as it was worth*,—"current money with the merchant." So David bought the threshing-floor of Ornan for the *full price*. Having One who has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," we need have no fear, need take no unfair advantage of any one.

But this subject has many spiritual applications, which should strongly appeal to our conscience. The *standard* is the shekel of the sanctuary, and the One who acts according to that standard is God Himself. The atonement money (Ex. xxx. 13-15) was according to this standard: not what *they* might deem sufficient, but what God declared was the ransom for their souls. And for each there was the same price; the rich paid no more, the poor no less. We have been bought with a price—"the precious blood of Christ." Not part of the debt we owed has been paid, but *all*—to the very last farthing. The wrath which fell upon the spotless Substitute was just as real, just as full, as that which would have sunk us forever into the lake of fire had we come under its awful power. There were no "divers weights" here—no lightening of the punishment because of the dignity of the Substitute. Blessed be God! Christ bore our *sins*,—not part of them, but all. This gives true peace of conscience, because it meets God's justice. For each one, too, the price is the same. All need the precious blood of Christ,—the moral man needs it as much as the vilest sinner. One weight—the blood of Christ, one measure—the glory of God; and we, who had been weighed and found wanting—had been measured and fallen short, are now, through infinite grace, "*complete* in Him," "perfected forever."

But if the shekel of the sanctuary has been used in atonement, so that through Christ we stand before God according to its full weight, none the less is our personal consecration measured by that same shekel. Lev. xxvii. 3 shows that the dedication of devoted persons was measured according to this standard,—not what they might think sufficient, but the full weight of God's estimation.

Num. vii. 13, etc., weighs all the gifts of the princes by the same holy standard. Ananias and Sapphira (Acts v.) wanted to have their gifts to God measured by a smaller standard, so that it would seem to be all they had. When we would have a less holy standard applied to all our consecration, all our giving up for God, we are unconsciously using some other standard. †

When we have two standards of living—one public, the other private, we are using “divers weights and measures, which are an abomination to the Lord.” (Prov. xx. 10.) Of course, there is the hypocrite, who has entirely lying weights in his bag, his private life completely the denial of his public profession. But even where there is truth, is there not often a great difference between our heart-life, our thoughts, and our outward walk? Thoughts which are permitted to live unrebuked in our hearts, we would be shocked to give utterance to. That is having two weights—one for thoughts, another for words. Every honest person can enlarge much on this subject.

When Peter was at Antioch, before certain folk came down from Jerusalem, he went in and ate with certain Gentile Christians; after those from Jerusalem came, he withdrew himself. (Gal. ii. 12–14.) Here he had divers weights for divers people. And he is not the only one who has acted thus. How is it with us? Before earnest Christians can we speak freely of the things of Christ, only to find ourselves speaking just as freely of the things of the world before the unsaved! Let us be careful. It is in the sanctuary alone that we will learn that unchanging standard to be used before all alike, with, of course, the “meekness of wisdom.” We only suggest what can be followed out in many directions.

Further, we are not to have in our bag two weights, one for our brother, heavy and exact, and another less weighty for ourselves. “Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone,” said our Lord to those who had a weight, heavy indeed, for the wretched woman

found in sin, but none for themselves. He only applies to them the same weight, and how differently they act. Instead of clamoring for her death, they are glad to escape from the testing of those balances which found them, as well as her, wanting. The hardest judge is one who fails to judge himself. Oh, the fault-finding, back-biting, unkind estimates of our brethren! all because we use divers weights and measures. Our brother fails, and we strictly call him to account, we, it may be do the same thing and never think of it. Brethren, let us stop this, this spirit of fault-finding, of criticism. Let us first always judge ourselves, cast out the beam out of our own eye and then shall we see clearly to cast out the mote out of our brother's eye. When we have been dealt with in grace, are we to treat our brother differently? But you say, he must confess his fault: and so perhaps he will when you pour coals of fire on his head, and when he sees that you are moved, not by self-interest, but are yourself walking humbly with your God. Beloved, do we not well to take heed to these things? If when Israel made the ephah small (what they sold) and the shekel great (the price paid for it) God withdrew blessing, does He not act in the same way toward us? Rather do we not ourselves hinder those blessings He would give us?

FRAGMENTS.

I. **I**T was by faith (Heb. xi.) that David slew Goliath;— and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith—in the least things as in the greatest. We are not called upon to slay Goliath, but we need the power that slew him to overcome self, sin, and Satan every day. The one who slew him was little in his own eyes,—but more than that, he was little in the eyes of others too. (1 Sam. xvii. 28.) So God was with him and delivered him.

2. "When thou wast little in thine own sight," Samuel said to Saul. (1 Sam. xv. 17.) These words have a sadly solemn sound. That time was past,—pride had ensued, and destruction was about to follow. From littleness, he was lifted up to a throne: from pride, he descended swiftly to death and judgment. Still the judgment did not come at once. God is slow to anger, and so the kingdom of Saul, with its burden of pretentious religiousness (without power)—pride, envy, and persecution (type of Jerusalem under the Pharisees and of the world,) continued long; but there was no repentance, and the judgment was the more awful at last.

3. God deals in a similar way with His own—not for destruction, but for edification. We trespass on His long-suffering in self-complacency; and when the chastening blow comes, time is required for the stupefied senses to understand what it means, and to discern how far we had drifted. The one who says, "I cannot see why I should suffer this" confesses, not only that he has been drifting, but also that he has not yet recovered himself—is not restored. When the Lord smote Uzzah, David was stunned, and went home displeased, and God waited patiently for the breaking-down time. How great is His mercy! Self-satisfaction may lead us on for a time when things are not right with God, (and God is patient,) but the end must come.

4. David was blest of God, but that only brought him into trouble with men. His kin rebuked him (Eliab; his eldest brother); Saul envied him, and the enemies of Israel watched to destroy him; Satan raised storms to overwhelm him. So "all they that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," and "because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." But if it is so serious a thing to belong to God in Satan's world, then we must have on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand, and we must lay fast hold of the love of God that

we may see, above circumstances and men and Satan, the hand of God. For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth. We must hasten to submit to Him. We need to hold the truth in the heart, and to love it, to escape the power of Satan.

5. What a warning-lesson we have in this, that David, who had slain Goliath, was nearly slain himself long after by a less famous giant, and had to be rescued from peril and shame by his men! Years of court-life had gradually sapped his early vigor and simplicity, and when the "evil day" came, he was not able "to stand." The Lord that delivered him out of the paw of the lion and out of the paw of the bear was not with him; and this had to be learned by failure. The power and the wisdom and the goodness was not in David.

6. In the fortieth psalm, the language of the One who won the mightiest victory, is that of utter dependence and meekness. "I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." This was the spirit of Jesus,— "I waited patiently on Jehovah, and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry." No claim—perfect lowliness. And so the psalm ends as an example to us—"But I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me. Thou art my help and my deliverer." It ends in this way because His own are still in this world, in suffering. We have been called to the fellowship of God's Son. May we feel that we are poor and needy. Let it be sufficient that "the Lord thinketh upon us." If the Lord of glory was poor and needy, let all pride be put to shame.

7. This psalm and the next one (xl. and xli.) end the first book—the Genesis of the Psalms. It is the true Joseph who speaks—the One who knew the power that delivered from the pit, but passed on and died—in weakness, in the midst of His brethren. He has left us the

song of victory, but a path of sorrow and weakness and prayer, with inward joy and peace, awaiting the deliverance to come. So in the end of the gospels—the Genesis of the New Testament, the true Joseph departs from the midst of His brethren, in weakness, publicly (by the cross), while in the power of resurrection and sweet promise and assurance to them in secret, corresponding to Joseph's assuring words to his brethren that Egypt knew nothing of.

May we seek no lifting up and luxury here, but cultivate willingness to suffer—count it all joy. How unwilling often to endure in little things, because the love of Christ has not filled us and given us victory! We forget what this world is, and who we are, and what the cross means, and the great recompense of the reward (Heb. x. 35). “Blessed the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.” (Jas. i. 12.)

E. S. L.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A CORRECTION.—In the answer to Q. 5, February number, let “Greek” and “Hebrew” change places, and for “Cleopas” read “Cleophas.” Both “Alpheus” and “Cleophas” are probably Greek forms of the same Aramaic word, but “Alpheus” is nearer the original.

Q. 9.—“In the tenth chapter of John, what is ‘the fold,’ and who is ‘the porter’?”—*R. H.*

Ans.—A fold is the inclosure, or house, where the sheep are kept. Judaism was that fold when Christ, the true Shepherd, came. Others—false teachers, self-seekers—had come; but the sheep did not hear them; they never entered by the *door*—the way of God’s appointment and His approval. Such were the scribes, Pharisees, and doctors of the law. The porter did not recognize them, neither did the sheep. The porter is the one in charge of the door, and would seem to be God Himself—“He that keepeth Israel.” At our Lord’s baptism, He said, “This is

My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" thus opening wide the door for Him, who entered in, and whose voice the sheep heard, and followed Him. "He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out,"—out of Judaism, into Christianity, where there is no more fold, but where the "other sheep" (v. 16) hear His voice (the Gentiles brought to Him), and there is one *flock* (not "fold"—see *R. V.*) and one Shepherd. Some have spoken of John the Baptist as the porter: such he was in some sense, because he gave utterance to God's thoughts about His Son; but it would seem that he was but the under-porter, to do the bidding of the Higher One.

Q. 10.—"Some inquiries on the Spirit.—*It is said* that Pentecost is the only *baptism* of the Spirit,—that then the Church being formed, that no after-reception of it is the same. Does not Acts x. 44, 45; x. 15, 16 show otherwise the expressions '*fell*' '*poured out*,' '*baptized with*,' being used as to it?

"Is it right to use the distinction '*came upon*' and '*dwelt in*' as distinguishing Old and New-Testament times? Is it not rather (1) the fact of His *abiding* presence instead of transient visits, (2) and that He formed the one body instead of coming upon and filling individuals. John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from the womb. So the prophets—'the Spirit of Christ which was *in them* did signify,' etc."—*B. C. G.*

Ans.—Does not Pentecost mark the beginning of the dispensation, when the Holy Ghost was *sent down* from heaven? and may not the similar expressions in Acts x. and xi. referred to above be because Gentiles were involved for the first time. There is but one *descent* of the Spirit; but surely every Christian is individually baptized by the Spirit into 'the one body, and sealed when he believes. The work of the Holy Spirit in Old-Testament times seems to have been rather official than personal,—fitting men, even unconverted men, as Saul, for some special service or testimony. (1 Sam. x.) Still we have too the personal work, as in David's case (Ps. li.)—"Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me," where also the transient nature of His presence is intimated. The characteristic thought about the Holy Spirit in the New Testament (epistles) seems to be that He is sent down after the Lord entered glory,—He is the witness of a glorified Christ, uniting us to Him as Head of His Church, and so to one another as members of His body.

Will *A. T.* kindly send the paper referred to in his question, before an answer is attempted?

GOD'S FOOD.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, ‘Command the children of Israel and say unto them, My offering and My bread for My sacrifice made by fire for a sweet savor unto Me shall ye observe to offer unto Me in their due season.’” (Num. xxviii. 1-2.)

A DEEPLY interesting and most precious portion of scripture is before us here, one which reveals to us in a remarkable way the gracious and tender character of God's manner of dealing with His children.

The inmost desires of His own heart are also told out; indeed, it is His portion that is specially considered here: “A savor of My rest,” He is pleased to call it (see margin). “My food” (the word here rendered “bread,” is the Hebrew “lechem” commonly translated food) . . . “shall ye observe to offer unto Me.” This is wonderful, truly; that He of whom it is written, “The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof,” should ask His creatures to offer Him food!

What does it mean?

The food here spoken of is unquestionably the Lord Jesus in the many and varied aspects of the “One Offering,” the burnt-offering being by far the most prominent, as a perusal of this and the following chapter will show.

In the burnt offering, we have just what the language of our text indicates, *God's* food, His portion in the offering of Christ, what the Son was in all His intrinsic worth and loveliness to the Father, obedient unto death.

The believer's ability to offer this offering is necessarily measured by his apprehension of Christ in such capacity. He who is content to know Christ only so far as himself and his interests are concerned, never enters into and appreciates this wondrous offering. He has, if

we may so speak, but half a Christ. But he who will "follow on to know the Lord," and, with the apostle, "count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus," such an one often delights the heart of God with the sweet savor of the burnt-offering.

But the question naturally arises, 'Why should "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" desire *us* to point out to *Him* the matchless beauty and infinite and varied perfections of His beloved Son whom *He* has known from all eternity?' Just this: God is so delighted with Christ that He wants some to share His joy, some who are able to converse, so to speak, with Him about the deepest and sweetest and richest things concerning His Son; some to whom He can reveal "All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" that are hid in Him.

Our "new man" is made after the image of Him that created him, and we know how we crave fellowship in the things nearest our hearts, and often do we see the same desire manifested in the Lord Jesus as He walked among men—the manifestation of God.

In Mark ix. 30, we find Him endeavoring, as He walks by the way, to have fellowship with His disciples concerning His sufferings, soon to be accomplished. Doubtless the shadow of the cross at times lay dark upon His soul, and the sympathy of earthly friends would have made His path much brighter. But what do we find? "They understood not that saying and were afraid to ask Him. And He came to Capernaum, and being in the house He asked them, "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?" But they held their peace, for by the way they had disputed among themselves *who should be greatest*. And so the Son of God must bear his grief alone! "His "friends" were too much occupied with themselves and their interests to weep with Him who wept. But He does not reprove

them; in patient grace He concerns Himself with their dispute and solves their question. He had many things to say unto them, but they could not bear them yet.

How often was He thus wounded in the house of His friends, and easily can we understand how refreshing to His hungry heart was Mary's willingness to sit at His feet and *hear His word*.

"Whom," exclaims the prophet, "shall He teach knowledge, and whom shall He make to understand the hearing? *Them that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts.*" Again and again our God expresses His desire that we should "know" (*e. g.*, see Eph. iii. 10-19; Col. i. 9, 27; Heb. v. 11. 14), but He cannot reveal to us "the deep things of God" while we are yet babes, simply because we could not understand them. And as if to tempt us to "Grow in grace and in the knowledge our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," He asks us to "offer" to Him. Himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Thus He gives to him who offers the more blessed place. Who could conceive of a more gracious way of winning our heart's affection and leading us into closer intimacy with Himself? A way well worthy of our God who in His mercy makes it as easy as possible for man to receive His grace, often stooping to take the place of servant rather than of benefactor. (See Matt. xx. 25-28.)

Though Christ is God's free gift to all His children, yet there is a sense in which He must be won by them. (Phil. iii. 8—"that I may *win* Christ.") Just as the whole land of Canaan had been given to the children of Israel. (Num. xxvii. 13.) Yet it remained true that only what the sole of their foot trod upon was theirs. (Josh. i. 3.) Their title to the land was clear, for Jehovah had given the deed, but the Canaanites still dwelt in the land, and only as they were driven out could Israel enter upon the

practical possession of their inheritance. In our land too the Canaanite dwells. Satan and his hosts inhabit the heavenly places, and warfare must be waged with them if we would "win Christ." (Eph. vi. 11, 12.)

Well they know the Son of God, as the gospels frequently bear witness. (*e. g.*, Mark i. 23-27; iii. 11; v. 7; Luke iv. 33, 34) Perhaps before their fall they had enjoyed intimate fellowship with Him, but now, in their enmity and hatred of Him and His, they would fain blind our eyes to His surpassing loveliness, well knowing that had we but open eyes to see Him as He is, "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them" could not turn us from pursuing after Him.

Let us "arise, that we may go up against them, for we have seen the land; and, behold, it is very good. And are ye still? Be not slothful to go and to enter to possess the land." The victory is surely ours, for "if God be for us, who can be against us."

Not until Israel possessed and dwelt in the land could they bring an offering of the fruit of the land unto Jehovah. (Deut. xxvi. 1-27.) Nor can we offer to our God His food until we have in some measure "learned Christ."

The last clause of the Scripture we are considering is of great importance, "In their due season."

This necessitates fellowship with God to enable one to discern *what manner* of food He desires and *when* He desires it. Let us illustrate again from the life of Jesus. In the fourth of John we find Him at the well of Samaria, "wearied with His journey," and thirsty. "Give Me to drink," He says to the despised Samaritan woman. And she gave Him a more satisfying draught than she knew as she heard and believed His words, and let Him reveal Himself to her. To Him it was "a savor of My rest;" and He tells His astonished disciples, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." "My meat is to do the will of

Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." (God rested when He finished the work of creation, and Jesus rested when He accomplished this work.)

Again, in Luke xii. 36, He is in the Pharisee's house. "And behold a woman in the city which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping, and began to wash His feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and did anoint them with the ointment." The Pharisee had made Him a feast, but he had entirely mistaken the kind of food acceptable to Him, but the woman had offered Him a "portion of meat in due season."

When Jesus endured the agony of the garden of Gethsemane, "There appeared unto Him an angel from heaven strengthening Him." Perhaps had the disciples kept the watch with Him, instead of sleeping, *they* might have been privileged to be His ministers, but they neither discerned His need nor the "due season."

Jesus is in the glory now, but He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." He still longs to have us enter into His thoughts, His mind, His ways. Perhaps *to-day*, when it really seems to us that we are "too busy," He wants us to come apart and rest, while He expounds unto us "things concerning Himself."

G. M. R.

NAPHTALI.

NAPHTALI was the son of Bilhah, Rachel's bondmaid, through whom she sought to be fruitful. His name was given to show the spirit of rivalry there was between Rachel and Leah, and the struggle not to be excelled by her more fortunate sister. "With great

wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister and prevailed; and she called his name Naphtali." Emulation, struggle, bondmaid—of these we are reminded in Naphtali. Naturally, we do not wish to be excelled by others, and in spiritual attainments pride has its place as well as elsewhere. "Which should be greatest" was the subject of contention among our Lord's disciples—it did not cease with them. In this emulation there is the struggle, so different from "the peaceable *fruits* of righteousness." Effort speaks of human strength, of human resources. The law is that which is called upon for aid when *natures* strength is used. Nature never calls upon grace. So it is to her bondmaid that Rachel turns rather than to God, and through her Naphtali is born. In him, then, we have the natural man, born of the bondmaid, the law; and how significant is his name! A wrestler. Nature can only *struggle*, the law produces not peace, but wrestling. With all her boasting, Rachel's child was the son of a bondmaid. And all man's boastings of the fruits of his efforts and struggles is only a confession that he is under bondage. Such was Naphtali by birth—by nature, a wrestler,—a stranger to peace—a child of bondage—at least such he was typically considered.

"Naphtali is a hind let loose; he giveth goodly words." (Gen. xlix. 21.) Instead of bondage and struggle, Jacob sees in Naphtali liberty and peace. Great as the contrast was with the literal Naphtali, how much greater is it in the case of the believer. He is no longer looked at according to his birth, a child of bondage; but "according to his blessing." (Gen. xlix 28.) The blessing of grace has altered all for us. But these blessings are "in Christ" (Eph. i. 3), and He is the true Naphtali. Bound to the cross for our sins, He meets their full penalty and with the words, "it is finished" upon His lips, yields up His spirit. He is laid in the grave, redemption fully accom-

plished, unless indeed He is held in the bands of death. But it was not possible that He could be holden of them. The stone is rolled away, the hind, pursued by the unrelenting hatred of man and Satan, wounded unto death, is loosed, the "hind of the morning" (Ps. xxii., title), and comes forth, forever free from the power of death. And what goodly words does He give! "Mary"—personal recognition of His redeemed ("My beloved is *mine*, and I am His"); "My brethren"—association of His own with Him in resurrection, the fruit of the corn of wheat; "Peace be unto you"—the assurance of a relationship established on the ground of His death, which can never be set aside. Such are some of the goodly words given by our risen Lord,—Naphtali, the hind let loose; and all the full and varied revelations of the Holy Ghost are but more of these "goodly words." So we see Christ risen, and hear Him; but in Him we see ourselves, "risen with Christ." If He has been let loose, so have we. "Thou hast loosed my bands," is now our language. Sin no more condemns, the law cannot bind. Sin no more controls, and Satan and the world are like the amazed and helpless soldiers at the open tomb. These things have no power to hold us, we are forever free—"the snare is broken and we are escaped." What "goodly words" of praise and thanksgiving should now be given forth by us! The heart set free—can the lips be silent? Surely not. Stones might well speak our shame did we remain silent. Testimony too follows. Goodly words of gospel to poor sinners; wholesome words of truth to a self-satisfied world.

The liberty wherewith Christ makes us free is thus in fullest contrast to the bondage of nature and the useless wrestlings and struggles of man under law. But there is not merely liberty—there is rest. "O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, and full with the blessing of the Lord; pos-

sess thou the west and the south." (Deut. xxxiii. 23.) The wrestler is now at last satisfied. "Satisfied with favor"—God's favor, which is better than life; that favor shown in His "unspeakable gift." Can we enumerate all that goes with this favor? Can we ever exhaust all the fullness of that blessing of the Lord which indeed "maketh rich and He addeth no sorrow with it"? We can only, like David, sit before the Lord, and praise Him. There is not a need but has been met, not a craving of the renewed soul but has been provided for—more than provided for. "It is enough." Naphtali can hold no more, his wrestlings are over. Have we journeyed from Naphtali in nature to Naphtali in grace? Are we in the enjoyment of all that has been made ours? If so, there is still room for progress: "Possess thou the west and the south"—the salt sea, and desert south being but new fields for yielding more and more of "marrow and fatness."

Let us cease from all creature efforts, let us see our full liberty in a risen Lord, and let us be satisfied with the full favor in which we stand, and thus make daily progress.

REFLECTIONS ON EXODUS XII.

THE blood of the paschal lamb was to be shed to furnish a shelter from death for the people of God "in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation." (Phil. ii. 15.) But the shed blood collected in a basin could do no good while there. It must be applied elsewhere. The blood shed was *for* the people. But to be of any avail they must sprinkle it with hyssop on the lintel and door-posts of their houses. (v. 22.) So the simple shedding of Christ's blood avails naught for those who only hear of it and pass it by as nothing to them.

Its application also is necessary, for each to be sheltered by it.

But what is the precise significance of the sprinkling with hyssop? Let us compare other Scriptures: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean." (Ps. li. 7.) "And for an unclean person they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel: and a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water and sprinkle it upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave: and the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean on the third day and upon the seventh day; and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and shall be clean at even." (Num. xix. 17-19.) "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God." "When Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people. . . . Moreover, he sprinkled likewise with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. ix. 13, 14, 19, 21, 22.)

Hence, we gather the significance of blood-sprinkling with hyssop to be *cleansing from sin*. From 1 Cor. v. 7, we know that the passover lamb of Egypt typified Jesus as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. (Jno. i. 29.)

Israel's start for the land God had reserved for His people had to be made from the spot where the terrible

judgment of death passed over them as cleansed from all sin. And Jno. i. 7, says, "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

The hyssop was that with which the blood was applied as cleansing them. The blood in the basin did no purifying while there. "Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through *faith* in His blood."

So we see that the hyssop bush points forward to faith, laying hold of Christ's blood for our sins. That is, if we have faith, or believe, that He has shed His precious blood for our sins, as He has, then we have applied the blood, and are sheltered by it. Oh, how blessed!

And now we see the mistake of those who think that because His blood was shed *for* all, therefore all will be saved. The Lamb in Egypt might have been slain might—might have shed just as much blood without its doing the people any good, if the blood had been left in the basin. Only when struck on to the door-posts and lintel with the bunch of hyssop, did it prevent death entering. So we are saved only through faith. E. C. W.

"WITHIN THE VAIL."

WITHIN the vail! my blood-bought home!
 Jesus is seated there,—
 With Him I sit; His work is done;
 By faith His rest I share.
 In Him I died; in Him I rose;
 In Him, ascended too,
 I sit within "the heav'lies,"
 In God the Father's view.

He resteth now to show Himself
 For me before the throne:
 Not without blood He entered there,
 Most precious blood, "His own!"
 That blood redemption finished shows,
 Sin "purged" and "put away,"
 Else the sin-bearing Lamb could ne'er
 His blood to God display.

My sins and guilt are in God's thought
 Buried in Jesus' grave;
 A worshiper once purged, by faith
 A conscience free I have.
 And should defilement by the way
 Hinder my access free,
 'Twould cast dishonor on the blood
 Within the veil for me.

But I confess as all forgiven
 Whate'er from *nature* flows;
 Judged and condemned in Jesus' flesh,—
 The blood its failure shows.
 And would I rest within the veil
 Unmoved, in God's own peace,
 From confidence in aught that's mine
 I evermore must cease.

Within the veil He's hidden now,
 And now from human view
 My "life is hid with Christ in God,"
 My risen life, and true.
 That life is His creation new:
 "Christ in me," saith the word,
 Eternal life! It cannot sin,
 Because 'tis born of God.

My place of prayer! no more afar
 From earth to heaven I cry,
 But whisper in the Father's ear
 Through Him who brought me nigh.
 God hears the Spirit's pleading voice,
 He knows the Spirit's mind,
 And I in it the earnest have
 Of what I see and find.

Within the veil! A royal priest—
 Through Christ my lips may raise
 Continually, as incense sweet,
 Their sacrifice of praise.
 A worshiper in spirit there,
 My soul delighteth much
 With God to rest, and feast on Christ:
 "The Father seeketh such."

And, coming from my secret place
 Beneath Jehovah's wings,
 My happy spirit longs to tell
 Of all these precious things
 To those who know no light of life,
 No home with Christ in God,

And of the way within the veil
 Opened by Jesus' blood.

For soon from out the holy place
 Our great High-Priest shall come,
 To bless His waiting Bride, the Church,
 And take her to His home.
 And when in glory He appears,
 His "wife" the Lamb will own;
 "Forever with" and "like" her Lord,
 With her He shares His throne.

PRAYER.

THE great mistake made by many Christians with regard to prayer is that they only bring what they consider important matters to God, and attempt to manage smaller concerns themselves. This is really unbelief and self-confidence; for it is doubting His interest in us, and forgetting that word which says, "Without Me ye can do *nothing*." If we do not bring our little concerns to God, we attempt to bear them ourselves, only to prove our utter helplessness. Many a stumble has come about in this way. Then, too, we too often make the distinction between temporal and spiritual affairs, thinking the latter are proper subjects for prayer, not the former. If we do not bring our temporal affairs into God's presence, we fail to get His mind on them, and too often in this way let self-will have its way. For the root of all prayer is, "Thy will be done." If it is not God's will, it could not but be for our injury to have our prayers answered.

Are all our prayers answered?

Yes, in God's way. The most perfect and earnest prayer—that in Gethsemane—was answered, but the cup was not removed. Paul thrice prayed that the thorn in the flesh might be removed, and had an answer which left

the thorn, but along with it a word which sweetened the trial,—“My grace is sufficient for thee.”

Do we watch for answers to prayer?

Elijah did, and was not disappointed. How needful this is—asking, and then waiting, and looking for the answer. This honors God. Nor must we forget another most important part of prayer—thanksgiving. Do we take our mercies without a word of thanks? How this must grieve our God! How selfish it makes us!

Lastly, for what are we praying most?

Is it for greater practical likeness to Christ, fuller knowledge of self and of Him, a deeper insight into His Word? These, surely, are the great subjects which should engage much of our time in prayer both for our- and others.

“THINGS THAT SHALL BE:”

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART VI. (Chap. xvii.—xix. 10.)

BABYLON AND HER OVERTHROW.

BABYLON is already announced as fallen in the fourteenth chapter, and as judged of God under the seventh vial; but we have not yet seen what Babylon is, and we are not to be left to any uncertainty: she has figured too largely in human history, and is too significant a lesson every way, to be passed over in so brief a manner. We are therefore now to be taught the “mystery of the woman.”

For she is a mystery; not like the Babylon of old, the plain and straightforward enemy of the people of God: she is an enigma, a riddle, so hard to read that numbers of God's people in every age have taken her, harlot as

she is, for the chaste spouse of the Lamb. Yet here for all ages the riddle has been solved for those who are close enough to God to understand it. And the figure is gaudy enough to attract all eyes to her—seeking even to do so. Let us look with care into what is before us in these chapters, in which the woman is evidently the central object, the beast on which she is sitting being only viewed in its relation to her.

It is one of the angels of the vials who exhibits her to the apostle, and his words naturally show us what she is characteristically as the object of divine judgment. As described by him, she is "the great whore that sitteth upon many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

As brought into sharp contrast with the beast that carries her, we see that she is a woman, has the human form, as the beast has not. A beast knows not God; and in Daniel we have found the Gentile power losing the human appearance which it has in the king's dream to take the bestial, as in the vision of the prophet. In Nebuchadnezzar personally we see what causes the change;—that it is pride of heart which forgets dependence upon God. The woman, on the other hand, professedly owns God, and moreover, as a woman, takes the place of subjection to the man,—in the symbol here, to Christ. When she is removed by judgment, the true bride is seen, to whom she is in contrast, and not (as so many think) to the woman of the twelfth chapter, who is mother, not bride, of Christ, and represents Israel.

But the woman here is a harlot, in guilty relation with the kings of the earth. Her lure is manifestly ambition, the desire of power on earth, the refusal of the cross of Christ,—the place of rejection; and the *wine*—the intoxi-

cation—of her fornication makes drunk the "dwellers upon earth." These we have already seen to be a class of persons who with a higher profession have their hearts on earthly things. (Phil. iii. xix.; Rev. iii. 10; xi. 10; xiii. 8.) These naturally drink in the poison of her doctrine.

To see her, John is carried away, however, into the wilderness; for the earth is that, and all the efforts of those who fain would do so cannot redeem it from this. There he sees the woman sitting on a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy; easily identified as the beast of previous visions by its seven heads and ten horns.

The beast is in a subjection to the woman which we should not expect. It is the imperial power, but in a position contrary to its nature as imperial, in this harmonizing with the interpretation of the angel afterward,—the "beast that was, and *is not*." In some sort it is; in some sort it is not; and this we have to remember, as we think of its heads and horns. If the beast "is not," necessarily its heads and horns are not. These are for identification, not as if they were existing while the woman is being carried by it. In fact, *she* is now its head, and reigns over its body, over the mass that *was* and that *will be* again the empire, but now "is not."

What are we to say of the scarlet color and the names of blasphemy? Are they prospective, like the horns? The latter seems so, evidently, and therefore it is more consistent to suppose the former also. The difficulty of which may be relieved somewhat by the evident fact, that of these seven heads, only one exists at a time, as we see by the angel's words: the seven seen at once are again for identification, not as existing simultaneously. The scarlet color is that which typifies earthly glory which is simply that: the beast's reign has no link with heaven. That it is full of *names*, not merely *words*, of blasphemy, speaks of the assumption of titles which are divine, and

therefore blasphemous to assume. Altogether we see that it is the beast of the future that is presented here, but which could not really exist while carrying the woman. She could not exist in this relation to him, he being the beast that he is, and thus the expression is fully justified,—really alone explains the matter—the "*beast that is not, and will be.*"

There is clearly an identification of a certain kind all through. While the woman reigns, that over which she reigns is still in nature but the beast that was, and that after her reign will again be. There is no fundamental change all through. The Romanized nations controlled by Rome are curbed, not changed. And breaking from the curb, as did revolutionary France at the close of the last century, the wild beast fangs and teeth at once display themselves.

But we are now called to the consideration of the woman, who, as reigning as the professed spouse of Christ over what was once the Roman empire, is clearly seen to be what, as a system, we still call Rome: "that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth;" which did so even in John's time, although to him appearing in a garb so strange that when he sees her he wonders with a great wonder.

She is appareled in purple and scarlet, for she claims spiritual as well as earthly authority, and these are colors which Rome, as we know, affects, God thus allowing her even to the outward eye to assume the livery of her picture in Revelation. She is decked too with gold and precious stones and pearls, figures of really divine and spiritual truths, which, however, she only outwardly adorns herself with, and indeed uses to make more enticing the cup of her intoxication: "having a *golden cup* in her hand," says the apostle, "full of abominations and filthiness of her fornications." Now we have her name:

"And upon her forehead was a name written, 'Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth.'"

Her name is Mystery, yet it is written in her forehead. Her character is plain if only you can read it. If you are pure, you may soon know that she is not. If you are true, you may quite easily detect her falsehood. In lands where she bears sway, as represented in this picture, she has managed to divorce morality from religion, that all the world knows the width of the breach. Her priests are used to convey the sacraments, and one need not look at the hands too closely that do so needful a work. In truth it is an affair of the hands, with the magic of a little breath, by means of which the most sinful of His creatures can create the God that made him, and easily new create another mortal like himself. This is a great mystery, which she herself conceives as "sacrament," and you may see this clearly on her forehead then. It is the trick of her trade, which without it could not exist. With it, a little oil and water and spittle become of marvelous efficacy, a capital stock at least out of which at the smallest cost the church creates riches and power, and much that has unquestionable value in her eyes.

"Babylon the great" means "confusion the great." Greater confusion there cannot be than that which confounds matter and spirit, creature and Creator, makes water to wash the soul, and brings the flesh of the Lord in heaven to feed literally with it men on earth. Yet to this is the larger part of Christendom captive, feeding on ashes, turned aside by a deceived heart, and they cannot deliver their souls, nor say, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" (Is. xlv. 20.)

Nay, this frightful system has scattered wide the seed of its false doctrine, and the harlot mother has daughters like herself: she is the "mother of harlots and abomina-

tions of the earth." Solemn words from the Spirit of truth, which may well search many hearts in systems that seem severed far from Rome, as well as those that more openly approach her. Who dare, with these awful scriptures before them, speak smooth things as to the enormities of Rome? To be protestant is indeed in itself no sign of acceptance with God, but *not* to be protestant is certainly not to be with God in a most important matter. This Roman Babylon is not, moreover, some future form that is to be, though it may develop into worse yet than we have seen. It is that which has been (in the paradoxical language which yet is so lively a representation of the truth) seated upon the beast while the beast "is not." It is Popery as we know it and have to do with it; and woe to kings and rulers who truckle to it, or (again in the bold Scripture words) commit fornication with it! "Come out from her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues!"

"And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; and when I saw her," says the apostle, "I wondered with a great wonder."

Romish apologists have been forced by the evidence to admit that it is Rome that is pictured here; but they say, and some Protestant interpreters have joined them in it, that it is *pagan* Rome. But how little cause of wonder to John in his Patmos banishment, that the heathen world should persecute the saints! That this same Rome, professing Christianity, should do it, this would be indeed a marvel. With us it is simple matter of history, and we have ceased to wonder; while, alas! it is true that many to-day no longer remember, and many more think we have no business to remember, the persecutor of old. It was the temper of those cruel times of old, many urge: nineteenth century civilization has tamed the tiger, and

Rome now loves her enemies, as the Christian should. But abundant testimony shows how false is this assertion. Here, just before her judgment, the apostle pronounces her condemnation for the murder of God's saints still unrepented of.

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS AND THE ATONEMENT.

A LETTER IN REPLY TO THEIR CRITICISMS
UPON THAT TRACT.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—Many thanks for sending me a copy of *The Advent Review & Sabbath Review*, for July 14th, '91, containing remarks by the editor (Uriah Smith) on my little tract, which you published, taking up their teaching on atonement. His *personalities* as to myself may be taken for what they are worth. As I read a paragraph, however, in his "Editorial Notes," p. 439, in which he contends for drawing a distinction between men and principles (the very thing I *had* done in my tract); as also the first sentence in his article; I could not help thinking, What a pity the learned editor does not *practice* what he *preaches*! And the words "Physician heal thyself" rose instinctively to my lips. A refutation of my tract *from Scripture* would certainly have been much more weighty than the *personalities* and *assumption* which he so largely indulges in. The perusal of his article made me feel sorry (among other things) for the poor Adventists, if this is the way they are bolstered up in their faith; especially seeing that these leaders are the men who are following "the advancing light" (?) while the rest of Christendom is left in the dark! I only hope they may be led to procure my little tract and read it for themselves.

The editor charges me with "not having discernment enough to understand their position, or, understanding it, not candor enough to state it correctly." And again, of "*misstating* and *perverting* their views." Bold words these are for Mr. Smith to write! But I fear he has made a mistake this time! He has turned his artillery the wrong way, and is blowing his friends to pieces! I did not think he would have treated Mrs. White in such an unkind way. It is really too bad of him after all! I have been led to understand that *she* is *the* great Oracle of the Seventh-Day Adventists; (I don't mean this unkindly); and the way *her* books are pushed by their agents, especially "The Great Controversy," made one infer that it was a kind of text book, or "Confession of Faith," among them, and inferior to none as an exposition of their doctrines; not even excepting the large volumes of Uriah Smith himself, or those of others.

Now, as I not only quoted verbatim from "The Great Controversy," but gave page and line; to be told I am "*misstating* and *perverting* their views" is certainly not very flattering to Mrs. White, who surely ought to know! Moreover, when the editor himself subsequently acknowledges in his own article the correctness of my statements of their views, and which I sought to expose in my tract, and which he contends for as being according to Scripture, and "distinctions generally overlooked in the theological world," the charge of "misrepresenting and perverting" recoils on himself. Intelligent readers can see this for themselves if they read my tract and his article.

But let us briefly glance at what Mr. Smith has to say for himself and his friends. He writes: "What is it he is so disturbed about? Oh, we do not believe the atonement is yet finished. But what is there so terrible in this?" Let him read my little tract again, and he will find his answer. Nay, I will tell him once more, what is

so terrible in this. If atonement is *not* completed, God is *not* glorified as to the question of sin, and therefore *cannot* act in righteousness in blessing sinners—Christ is *not* raised from the dead and could not be—no sinner is saved or ever can be—and the Bible is *a lie*. Jesus said, “I *have* glorified Thee on the earth. I *have finished* the work which Thou gavest me to do.” (Jno. xvii. 4.) And we are told that He “purged our sins, and *forever sat down*,” yea, four times in that epistle to the Hebrews we are told that Christ has “sat down” (see i. 3; viii. 1; x. 12; xii. 2, the everlasting witness of an accomplished work. Indeed the contrast is drawn by the apostle of the earthly priests ever “*standing*,” because the sacrifices which they offered “could never take away sins (chap. x. 11), and the Lord, who has “*sat down*,” because His one sacrifice *has done it*, and gives the worshiper “no more conscience of sin.” (chap. x. 2.) Therefore I say again, if the doctrines of the Seventh-Day Adventists be true, then the Bible is a lie. To Mr. Smith, these of course are “false and foolish conclusions.” But to the simple-minded Christian, they are conclusions which Mr. S. has not met and cannot; and leave my charges of “blasphemous and abominable doctrines” as proved against Seventh-Day Adventists.

If “assumption” were the standard by which to settle who is right, I would at once bow to the editor and his followers. Their assumption is prodigious. Indeed, it characterizes all their writings that I have taken up as yet. They *assume* certain things, and then reason and draw their conclusions and deductions, and set it down as truth which is settled and cannot be gainsaid, without one solitary proof from Scripture; but with plenty of texts worked in to give the semblance of truth to those deductions and conclusions, and thus the more easily deceive those not taught in the Word.

Mr. Smith writes, "This man fails to see the distinction between Christ bearing our sins as a *sacrifice*, which He did upon the cross, and His bearing them as *priest*, which He does as our Mediator before God." This is a sample of what I have just said. And if it is not a piece of the grossest assumption, and a begging of the question, I confess I know not what is. Why has he not told us *where Scripture* makes such a distinction? Simply because it does no such thing. It is all the imaginations of the leaders who have formulated this system of teaching, to bolster up their stupid blunder about the Lord coming in 1844.

Scripture does say of the Lord Jesus that "Once in the end of the world (or consummation of the ages) hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." (Heb. ix. 26.) And as the result of that one offering, God can and does say of believers, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. x. 17.) But where is there such a thought in the New Testament as Christ in His character as Priest bearing our sins? Nowhere! His present priestly service on high is connected with our *infirmities*, and not our sins. (Heb. iv. 15, 16.) The above passages, with hundreds of others, prove that the sin question was once and forever, settled ere Christ ascended. Yea, the reasoning of Paul in 1 Cor. xv. with regard to the question of resurrection puts that beyond dispute, for he says, "If Christ be not raised, ye are yet in your sins; our preaching is vain; your faith is vain." But if He *is* risen, the believer is *not* in his sins. Again, "He was raised again for our justification. (Rom. iv. 25.) But how could God justify any one if the sin question was not settled? It would be impossible! The resurrection of Christ is God's public seal on the settlement of the sin question by His well beloved Son. At the same time Scripture as plainly teaches that Christ now carries on

His present priestly service for us *after* the complete and perfect settlement of the sin question.

Then we are told that I “ignore Christ’s service in the first apartment of the true sanctuary above into which Christ entered when He ascended, and where He was *in the presence of God*, just as much as He is in the second apartment.” But I ask, What “first apartment” did Christ enter at His ascension? why did not the editor tell us from Scripture? Does not Matthew tell us, “The veil was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.” (Matt. xxvii. 51.) How, then, could there be *two* apartments any longer when that which divided them and made them two was rent in twain by God Himself? I may be told I am confounding the earthly and the heavenly, the type and the antitype. But does not the Holy Ghost use this fact in Heb. x. 19, 20 in connection with the heavenly, when he tells us we have “boldness to enter into *the holiest* (not the first apartment) by the blood of Jesus; by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh”? The apostle shows in Heb. ix. 8, that so long as the first apartment stood as such, “the way into *the holiest* was not made manifest.” But now that the veil is rent, the way *is* made manifest and the believer has access to God as a purged worshiper. It is this which characterizes Christianity. We have a finished work—an opened heaven—the Holy Ghost dwelling within us—and liberty and ability to draw near to God, and worship in *the holiest*. Seventh-Day Adventism denies all this. It keeps up the veil and puts Christ only in the first apartment from His ascension till 1844. Afterward, it puts Him in the holiest to cleanse it, but with the veil still standing, shutting God in, and man out. It thus completely denies Christianity, and is in itself antichristian.

And here I should like to ask these people about

another point they *assume*, but give no Scripture authority for ; and one I have never yet seen explained and proved from the Word in any of their writings that I have ever seen. If Christ only entered *the holiest* in 1844 to cleanse the sanctuary ; *how did the sins get there?* Can they tell us this? Mrs. White says, "As the sins of the people were anciently transferred, in figure, to the earthly sanctuary by the blood of the sin-offering ; *so our sins are, in fact, transferred to the heavenly sanctuary by the blood of Christ.*" This assumption, is of course, to be taken as an explanation. What abominable blasphemy ! And this in the face of Lev. xvii. 11 : "It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul ;" and "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son *cleanseth* us from all sin." (1 Jno. i. 7.) God says the blood *makes atonement, and cleanses* from sin. Mrs. White says, and all the Adventists say, No ! It is the means of conveying sins into the presence of God, and then it is the priest that carries them out, and it is the scape-goat (the devil) who takes them away and perishes with them !!

But what I want to know is, How did the sins get there for the priest to carry them out? In the ritual on the day of atonement, no one but the priest went into the holiest once a year, and it was he who took in the blood. Now, if this teaching be true, there were no sins there till the priest took there by carrying in the blood. Then, as Christ is the Priest, there were no sins in the true sanctuary till He took them there. (God forgive the thought!) So we are asked by Adventists to believe that the blessed Lord Jesus defiled heaven by carrying sins there, and then had to cleanse away the defilement He Himself had taken there. Is this not awful blasphemy? The question, however, is still left unanswered : How did the sins get into the holiest if He only entered it in 1844 to cleanse it? If He went

in *to cleanse it*—if that was the object for which He entered, there must have been something defiling already there. The sins must have been there before. How, and when did they get there? The whole thing is a mass of nonsense and contradiction, not to speak of its blasphemous character, and is “a veritable Pandora’s box of confusion,” as Mr. Smith is pleased to term the views of the theologians which have so long “afflicted the religious world.”

Are we to believe that Christ defiled the sanctuary in 1844, by carrying in the sins which He afterward has to carry out? If so, what becomes of the Holy Ghost’s statements in Hebrews, that “Christ by Himself *purged our sins and sat down* on the right hand of the Majesty on high”? (thap. i. 3; viii. 1; x. 12; xii. 2.) Was all this true when it was written to the Hebrew Christians, or was it all a lie? If Adventist doctrine is true, then it *is* all a lie; and no amount of personalities or denial of these conclusions, or calling them “false and foolish,” can make it otherwise. If Christ *purges* our sins, then, how can He be at present in heaven bearing them as the Priest? It is absolute nonsense and contradiction.

Did Christ only go into the *first* apartment at His ascension as Mr. Smith affirms? Then till 1844 Judaism was still existing, with the vail between God and the people, and His claims had never yet been met by the blood *on* and *before* the mercy-seat, and Christianity was a mistake. But Heb. ix 24, says, “Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, figures of the true, but into heaven itself, *now* to appear in the presence of God for us.” “Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into *the holiest* by the blood of Jesus.” (chap. x. 19.) Thus, Scripture says Christ is in *the holiest*—in the presence of God (not in the first place with

the vail shutting God in) and we have boldness to enter *there* also. Could any one enter the tabernacle, even into the first apartment, on the day of atonement before the whole day's ceremony was ended and atonement for the twelve months completed according to Jehovah's command? Lev. xvi. 17 says, No! Read it and see. Could then Heb. x. 19, be true either in Paul's day or at any time till 1844? Nay, it could not be true even *now*, if atonement is not completed, and if the Priest is still inside *doing* the work. Impossible! It is because it is *done, finished, completed*, over eighteen hundred years ago, and Christ seated on high, as the proof of its accomplishment, that we have boldness to enter into the holiest, blessed be God. This alone shows the folly of their views.

Mr. Smith says that I "see no difference between one bearing sins as the priest did, to atone for them and put them away" (though he does not tell where that is taught), "and one bearing them as the scape-goat, *to perish with them.*" True, I do not see the difference. Why? Because it does not exist in Scripture. I have never yet seen such a thing, in Lev. xvi. or in the pages of the New Testament. I *have* read that "Jehovah laid on Him (Christ) the iniquity of us all." (Is. liii. 6.) And that Christ bare our sins in His own body on the tree." (1 Pet. ii. 24.) But where is there in such scriptures, any thing about "perishing with them"? Instead of seeing all these various parts of the atonement fulfilled by our blessed Saviour, we are to believe (according to these new-fangled and blasphemous notions) that the devil is the scape-goat, and therefore he *helps* to make the atonement. Mr. Smith says that I "accuse them of having the devil make the atonement." I beg his pardon; he had better read my tract again, and be more accurate in his statements. I did say, and do still say, with Lev. xvi.

ro, before me, that if their teaching is true, then the devil *helps* the Lord to make the atonement. And that we are indebted, not to the ever blessed Lord (as the true scape-goat), who, as our Substitute, bore our sins away forever; but to Satan, and although he helps to make the atonement, he is to be "blotted out" for his kindness! What a shocking and revolting thought!

Mr. Smith asks, "Are sins atoned for before they are committed, repented of, or forgiven?" Let us turn the question, and ask him, Are sins only atoned for *after* they are committed, repented of, or forgiven? If so, where is the righteousness of God in forgiving a sinner whose sins have not yet been atoned for? What is the use of the epistle to the Romans if this be true? It is quite evident the editor has not yet grasped the difference between the work of Christ as meeting God, and laying the basis for His righteously coming out in perfect grace *toward all*, and the purging of our consciences, and the forgiveness which we receive when we repent and believe the gospel. (Rom. iii. 22.) A most important difference which Romans clearly teaches.

As to the "Ultra doctrine of predestination, election, and reprobation" being true according to my teaching, as the editor remarks; these are conclusions which exist only in his own mind, or in some theological creeds; certainly not in Scripture, nor in the mind of the Spirit-taught Christian. Moreover, if Christ on the cross "bore the sins of the world," as Mr. Smith says (but which Scripture is most careful never to say), then universal salvation *must* be true. But it is only he who says so, not Scripture. And "the atonement coming at the *conclusion*, not at the *beginning*, of Christ's work as Priest," as he remarks, shows plainly he has not grasped either the moral or the dispensational bearing of Lev. 16.

But I can say no more. One cannot take up every

thing they advance; it would occupy too much time. May God in His mercy deliver any of His own who may be exposed to these awful doctrines. It is by grace alone we stand. We need to be clad in the whole armor of God, to be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. May we each be found "holding fast His Word, and not denying His name," not "carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but growing up unto Him in all things," till the summoning shout is heard which call us up to meet Him in the air, to be "ever with the Lord."

W. E.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 11.—"What is the meaning of Zech. xiii. 7—'And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones'?"—A. T.

Ans.—In the first part of the verse, the sword of divine justice falls upon the Shepherd (who is also God's Fellow—His equal), and He is smitten, and the sheep, His people, scattered. This was fulfilled, in an illustrative way, when our Lord was seized and put to death. (Matt. xxvi. 31.) His disciples were left without protection. But it will have its full accomplishment when, during the great tribulation, persecution after persecution will scatter the professed people of God. The "little ones" means, doubtless, the remnant—God's own, upon whom His protecting hand will be laid. "The third part shall be left therein." "I will *turn My hand upon thee*, and will purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin." (Is. i. 25.)

Q. 12.—"What is the meaning of Luke xviii. 8—'Shall He find faith on the earth?'"—A. T.

Ans.—"When the Son of Man cometh" shows that it points to the last days, and to the earth. The question indicates that, spite of all His assurances of willingness to hear and help, the faith that takes hold of Him will be in very few, and in small degree.

THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS AND THE SABBATH.

THE Sabbath question is their pet doctrine, and, according to their views, all Christians should keep the *seventh* day, according to the fourth commandment. Thus they put Christians back on Jewish ground, and set aside Christianity. The whole teaching of Seventh-Day Adventists is far more serious than people generally imagine. It is not a mere mistake as to a minor point of doctrine, but it is a *system of doctrine* which undermines the whole truth of Christianity, and puts its followers not only on Jewish ground, under law, and therefore under the curse (Gal. iii. 10); but it leaves them without a Saviour (though they speak of Christ and His blood), for the Christ they speak of is not the Christ revealed in Scripture; He is for them, merely, the noblest Being in the universe *save One*. While, as we have seen, they have *no atonement*, and no present certainty of salvation. With them, eternal life is not a *present* but a *future* thing; and annihilation is the final doom of the impenitent. These, and other things which they teach, plainly show that it is a system which completely undermines Christianity,—one of the blinding and satanic delusions of the last days (1 Tim. iii. 1; 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4), from which may the good Lord deliver His people.

To turn, then, to the Sabbath. It is not a question of whether the Seventh day is the Sabbath or not. Unquestionably it is. And here, let me add, unhappily many good men have made grievous mistakes by contending that the *seventh* day has been changed to the *first* day of the week; and the Adventist boldly challenges them to show one text from the Scriptures to prove it and they cannot do it.—Of course not. There is no such thing. Then, others lecture on “The Christian Sabbath,” and quote history and the Fathers to show that the first day

of the week is the Christian Sabbath, only to be again challenged and overthrown by the Adventist to the surprise of their audiences, the defeat of themselves, and the success of Adventism. It is all a total blunder; the *seventh* day is the Sabbath, and no other. God *never* changed it, and no one else ever can. The Jews still keep it, and Seventh-Day Adventists so far sail in the same boat. But the root of the whole question is not which is the proper day to keep, but, *Are Christians under law, or not?* This is the real question, which, when settled, settles the Sabbath question. If Christians *are* under law, then the seventh day, not *a* seventh day, but *the* seventh day alone—no other—*must* be kept, according to the fourth commandment. There is no escape. If, on the other hand, the Christian is *not* under law, then to command him to keep the Sabbath is to annul the gospel and deny Christianity.

We see at once that this raises the whole question as to what the Christian state and position is. Whether the Christian is in Adam, or in Christ?—in the flesh, or in the Spirit?—on the ground of responsibility to obtain blessing by keeping the law, or taken up and blessed on the ground of sovereign grace through faith, and therefore responsible to act consistently in the new relationship in which that grace has set him? To set forth the truth in a Scriptural way, I shall have to unfold some of the teachings of the epistle to the Romans, as also that to the Galatians. I shall, however, do it as briefly as possible, and would press upon each Christian reader the necessity of carefully and prayerfully considering with his open Bible before him the truths here set forth.

In the epistle to the Romans, man, both Jew and Gentile, is shown to be "guilty before God." The Gentiles in chap. i. 18–32. Then the educated men—the philosophers, also Gentiles, in chap. ii. 1–16. The Jews are

next taken up in chap. ii. 17 to iii. 9; then the testimony of the Scriptures is given from the Psalms and the Prophets that *all* are guilty, so that "there is *none* righteous, no *not one*" (ver. 10-18). Thus "*every mouth* is stopped, and *all the world guilty* before God" (ver. 19).

Next, we have "the righteousness of God" seen in freely justifying men, proved to be ungodly and guilty sinners, because of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ (ver. 24, 25); *faith* being the principle on which that blessing is received, not works of any kind (chap. iv. 4, 5). This is further seen by our attention being called to the difference between Abraham and us. He believed that God would give him a son (ver. 18); he believed *the promise* of God (ver. 20), and God reckoned him righteous (ver. 22). We believe *an accomplished fact*—that God *has given* us His Son, "delivered Him for our offenses, and raised Him again for our justification" (ver. 25). Not, He *will* do it; but He *has done it*, and righteousness is reckoned to all who believe (ver. 23, 24).

The blessed results of the wonderful action on the part of God are seen in chap. v., and are the portion of *all* who have believed the gospel. "Being justified by faith we have *peace with God*" (ver. 1); so that the *past* is settled *perfectly* and *permanently*, and the believer has peace as to it. Next, as to the *present*, he has a perfect standing before God (ver. 2). Then as to the *future*, he rejoices in hope of the glory of God (ver. 2). Not only so, he glories in tribulation as he learns his lessons on the way home, the love of God being shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto him (ver. 3-5). And lastly, he is able even to joy in God Himself (ver. 11). Thus, the question of the believer's *guilt* is perfectly and permanently settled, and he is justified *by* God, and stands justified *before* God.

But now comes another question. What about his

state? He is a child of Adam and possesses an evil nature. Is what Scripture calls "in the flesh." (Rom. viii. 9.) Is under the power of sin (chap. vi. 20) and of law (chap. vii. 1), and needing deliverance from these things. This, which God has provided for likewise in His grace as the portion of the believer, is next taught in this wonderful epistle. Not that these things are necessarily consecutive. They may all be concurrent. But the subjects are different and taught separately.

Having heard the word of truth, the gospel of his salvation, and having trusted in Christ; the believer is thereupon sealed with the Holy Ghost. (Eph. i. 13.) He is therefore *in Christ*, and Christ is in him. (Jno. 14. 20.) He is no longer in the flesh, but in the Spirit. (Rom. viii. 9, 10.) Now, Christ having died and risen after having glorified God about the question of sins and sin, He has now taken His place as Head of a new race, as Adam was the head of a fallen race. The condition, therefore, of the head is necessarily that of all who form the race. Adam's one act of *disobedience* constituted all his race sinners, and involves them in all the consequences of that act. (Rom. v. 12.) So Christ's one act of *obedience unto death* (Phil. ii. 8) constitutes His race righteous, and makes them sharers in all the blessed results of His act. (Rom. v. 12-21.)

The question of *guilt* having been settled, and that of headship of race clearly set forth, the apostle proceeds to apply this last truth to the question of sin and law. God has, first of all, "*condemned* sin in the flesh." (Rom. viii. 3.) "Our old man has been crucified with Him" (Christ). (Rom. vi. 6.) Thus the evil nature in us has been dealt with by God, and *condemned* in the sacrifice of Christ. God will, therefore, have nothing more to say to *it*. It is still in us, and ready to act if we allow it, but this we must not do, and at death, or the coming of the Lord, we

shall leave it behind forever. But, further, the believer can say *he has died* to sin. (Rom. vi. 6.) This is true of him as in Christ, because Christ actually died to it on the cross, and the believer is now in Him. And he accepts this truth of being dead with Christ to sin, and practices it by *reckoning* himself dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom. vi. 11), he finds a *present deliverance* from the *power* of sin (Rom. vi. 14), and looks forward to the time when he shall be delivered from its very *presence*. (Rom. viii. 23.)

In chap. vii. this is applied to the question of law. The apostle is there speaking to those who were under law (the Jews). The law was never given to Gentiles. (Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20; Rom. ii. 14.) *They* were never under law, though they do put themselves under it now, and it thus becomes very useful to teach them what they are. He says, "I speak to those who know law (Jews), that law has dominion over a man as long as he liveth." (ver. 1.) Then he proceeds to show that the believer *has died to law* by the body of Christ. (ver. 4.) This he repeats in ver. 6. "But now we are *delivered from the law*, being *dead to that* wherein we were held (margin); that we should serve in *newness of spirit*, and not in the oldness of the letter." Then is the law dead and gone, as some affirm? No! Certainly not! Such a thought is not found in Scripture, and we would strenuously resist such an idea. "Is the law sin? God forbid." Do we then set the law aside? No, in no wise. Such a thing would be wickedness! But in the person of our Substitute whom it condemned and crucified when in grace He took our place, it has *set us aside*, for *we have died to it*. And the grasping of this glorious emancipating truth which I shall still further prove, delivers forever from the folly and Judaism of Seventh-day Adventism.

Suppose a man commits murder: we know that the end

of the law for murder is the end of the rope. Now, if the murderer is hanged, is the law set aside? No! It is vindicated! Its claims are established and vindicated in the fullest way by the death of the murderer, and it stands there in its full force the same as ever, forbidding the crime of murder, and pronouncing death as the penalty for committing it. Thus the law is not made void, but established in the way God justifies the believer. (Rom. iii. 31.) The law said, "Cursed be he that confirmeth not *all* the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen." (Deut. xxvii. 26.) This law is used by the apostle in Gal. iii. 10, and also confirmed by the apostle James who writes, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet *offend in one point, he is guilty of all*. For He that said, 'Do not commit adultery,' said also, 'Do not kill.' Now, if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." (Jas. ii. 10, 11.) Were a man suspended over a precipice by a chain of ten links, and one were to break, it would be as fatal as though the whole ten had broken. If, therefore, the least infringement of the law is allowed, whether as to the fourth commandment or any of the ten, it is fatal, and puts the transgressor under the curse. Moreover, it is *law*, and men cannot play fast or loose with it as they please; applying it to what *they* like, or taking such parts of it as *they* choose. It is *law*, and says and means, *do or die*. But the apostle Paul goes on to show that "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.'" (Gal. iii. 13.)

When the Judaizing teachers came down from Judea, and sought to bring the Christians again under law, and thus put a yoke upon their necks which neither their fathers nor they could bear" (Acts xv. 1-10); (the very

thing that Seventh-Day Adventists are endeavoring to do to-day); and even Peter and Barnabas were caught in the snare and carried away by it; Paul withstood them to the face. To him it was another gospel, and he uses the strongest language to denounce such conduct. They are *troublers* of the saints—*perverters* of the gospel—and though he himself, or an angel from heaven, or any man, preached any other gospel than that which he had already preached to them, let them be *accursed*. (Gal. i. 7-9.) How jealous *he* was for the simple but glorious gospel which he had given them. A gospel which gives the believer deliverance from the *guilt* of sin—deliverance from the *power* of sin—from *law* which is the *strength* of sin—and presently from the very *presence* of sin. How jealously *we* ought to guard this precious, emancipating gospel, and not allow it to be spoiled by the introduction again of that which we have been delivered from—the law; whether it be in the form of Sabbath-keeping or in any other way; but “stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage.” (Gal. v. 1.)

He then goes on to show them, that if they again put themselves under law after being justified by Christ on the principle of faith, they build again the things which they destroyed, and make themselves transgressors. (Gal. ii. 15-18.) If they *gave up law*, to be justified on a different principle, entirely on the principle of faith, how could they go back to it? If they were right in giving it up, they would clearly be wrong in going back to it, and would be transgressors. Moreover, he clenches this argument in the strongest manner by saying, “For I through law *am dead to law*.” Not that I might be lawless and and continue to live in sin, no! God forbid such a thought! But “that I might live unto God. *I am crucified with Christ*: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but

Christ liveth in me: and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." (Gal. ii. 19, 20.) How, then, could they be governed in any way by that to which they had died? Christ was now their life, and was to be their rule of life. (1 Jno. ii. 6; Col. iii. 1-3; 2 Cor. iii. 18.)

The story is told of a German who was drawn in the conscription, but whose friend took his place, fought, and was killed. After a time, there was another call for men, and the German was again drawn, but he pleaded, "*I am dead.*" He was not actually dead, of course, but his substitute's death was counted as his, and thus he was freed forever from the military claims of his country. Thus it is with Christians; we have died with Christ, and are "dead to law," but not left to be lawless, but to live unto God. The law spent its full force on Christ as our Substitute when He stood in our place and died for us on the cross.

"The law was our schoolmaster up to (or until) Christ," we read; "but after that faith is come, we are *no longer under the schoolmaster.*" (Gal. iii. 24, 25.) Could any thing be plainer than this: "*We are no longer under the schoolmaster*"—the law! "Law has dominion over a man so long as he liveth." (Rom. vii. 1.) But the believer has died with Christ, and is therefore no longer under law. Is he therefore lawless? God forbid! He is dead and risen with Christ, and stands on the resurrection-side of the grave of Jesus. He has a new *life*—eternal life (Jno. v. 24.); a new *power*—the Holy Ghost (Eph. iii. 16); and a new *object*—Christ in glory. (2 Cor. iii. 18.) He is new creation in Christ (2 Cor. v. 17) and the open grave of the Saviour separates him forever from Judaism and its bondage. The ministration of the law and the ministration of the Spirit are in contrast to each other (2 Cor. iii.); the one being a ministration of *death*

and *condemnation* (mark this: the law which Adventists tell us we must keep is a ministration of *death* and condemnation); the other, being a ministration of life and righteousness. The one was characterized by the fading glory on the face of Moses, which God would not let them see; hence Moses was commanded to veil his face: the other, is characterized by the glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ, never to pass away, and on which we are privileged to gaze. (2 Cor. iii.) Moreover, it is not *the ceremonial law* which Adventists admit *has* passed away; but it is that which "was written and engraven in stones" — *the ten commandments*. Then, as we are occupied with Christ, without being under law and in bondage, "the righteous requirements of the law are fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. viii. 4.)

This, then, is the teaching of Scripture and shows conclusively that the believer is "not under law, but under grace." (Rom. vi. 14.) He is dead to law. To insist, therefore, on his keeping the Sabbath as part of God's holy law is to make him debtor to do the whole law, to put him on Jewish ground, to treat him as in Adam, "in the flesh," on the ground of responsibility to obtain blessing, and thus bring him again into bondage. The Sabbath had, and still has, its place for those under law; the believer has died and is in Christ; governed by a new power; has a new object; and the grace of God which saved him, teaches him how to live. (Titus ii. 11-14.)

Ere closing, I would briefly glance at the place the Sabbath occupies in Scripture. It was *God's rest*. (Gen. ii. 3.) But not one word is said about its being given to man to keep. He was the last work of God on the sixth day. He had as yet done no work and therefore needed no rest. To him it would be meaningless, in his innocence, to tell him to rest from his labor. Yet Mrs. White tells us "it was kept by Adam in his innocence in holy

Eden; by Adam, fallen, yet repentant, when he was driven from his happy estate. It was kept by all the patriarchs, from Abel to righteous Noah, to Abraham, to Jacob, etc.;" but without one particle of Scripture for her assertions. To say that the law was given to Adam is foolish. What place could the moral law have in innocence, and when as yet Adam and Eve were alone? Then twenty-five hundred years or more elapsed before we hear another word about the seventh day. God's rest had been broken by sin, and He began to work again; His first work being to make coats of skins for those who had broken His rest. (Gen. iii. 21.) How gracious of God! Hence, the Lord Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." (Jno. v. 17.) So the first recorded Sabbath—God's rest, was a very brief one, and became a type of one which is still future, and yet remains for the people of God. (Heb. iv. 9.)

When next we hear of it, it is given to a *redeemed* people. (Ex. xvi. 29.) Then incorporated into the law. (Ex. xx. 8-11.) Given as a *sign* that they *were* a sanctified people. (Ex. xxxi. 13, 17; Ezek. xx. 12.) Given to them *because* they *were* redeemed. (Deut. v. 12, 15.) It was a *shadow* of things to come. (Col. ii. 16.) The Lord lay in the grave all the Sabbath day. The whole of that order of thing was set aside for the time being on the rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah by the Jews, until they see Him coming with clouds (Rev. i. 7) and shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matt. xxiii. 39.) Judaism and its Sabbath-keeping is, therefore, set aside till that day when they shall hail their Messiah as their King. Then shall He reign over them, and they shall have their true rest, to which all their Sabbaths had pointed.

The Lord Jesus rose again on *the first day of the week*. The Jews murdered Him, and, after sealing Him in the

tomb, they kept their Sabbath. Their week ended with the murder of the Son of God. The whole system of Judaism was set aside from that point—the rent vail being the witness of it. Then on the first day of the week He rose again, thus inaugurating a new order of things entirely, and this day characterizes Christianity, as the seventh day, or Sabbath, characterized Judaism. Again, when seven Sabbaths had passed, on the *fiftieth* day (not on the forty-ninth, or the seventh Sabbath day), “when the day of Pentecost was fully come,” the Holy Ghost descended. (Acts ii. 1.) This is typified in Lev. xxiii. First, the wave-sheaf was waved on “the morrow *after* the Sabbath” (ver. 11)—Christ in resurrection. Then the two wave-loaves on the morrow *after* the seven Sabbaths (ver. 16, 17)—Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost came, and the Church had its commencement. The two wave-loaves—Jews and Gentiles presented to God. Then, again, we have seven times seven Sabbaths of years, passing over forty-nine years; then on the fiftieth year, the jubilee trumpet was to sound, and things were to return to their original order again. (Lev. xxv.)

How remarkable all this is! Christ did not rise on the Sabbath, but on the first day of the week. Pentecost began, not on the forty-ninth day, which was the seventh—Sabbath—day, but on the fiftieth day, which was the first day of the week. The Jubilee was not on the forty-ninth year, but the fiftieth year. All this shows that there is a new order of things, typified by the first day of the week, Pentecost, and the Jubilee year, and clearly points to the eternal state after the millennium, or the great Sabbath-keeping on earth is over. In the apostle’s days, the Jews still kept the Sabbath, and, as the people gathered together in the synagogues on that day, the apostles took the opportunity to preach the gospel to them, but they keep the first day of the week them-

selves as Christians, and met together on that day to break bread. (Acts xx. 7.) Thus the first day of the week speaks to the Christian of the victory and triumph of his Saviour, and was the day they met together to remember Him and show His death till He come. (1 Cor. xi. 23-26.) The reasonings of Adventists as to the *time* they did it, and how Paul must have walked a long distance across the country to Assos on the same day, and thus desecrated the day, is just a piece of nonsense, and supposes that Christians are under law to keep the first day of the week, as Jews and Adventists are to keep the Sabbath; and that Paul must not do what his Master told him to do on that day. Scripture says it was on the first day of the week, and whether it was morn, noon, or night, it was on that day, and not the Sabbath, the disciples met to break bread.

The Sabbath was at the close of the week's toil—the seventh day—a day of rest after labor. In it, as we have seen, *no work* had to be done, not even a fire lighted. *No work* means *no work*. Not even the servant in the house, and no excuse is valid: It is *do* or *die*. This is Judaism and law as regards the Sabbath. The first day of the week is the commencement of the week and is devoted to the worship and service of Him who inaugurated a new order of things in resurrection. The grave of Christ stands between and separates Judaism from Christianity. The true sacrifice has been offered. (Heb. x. 5, 10.) The true Priest has sat down in the Sanctuary. (Heb. viii. 1, 2.) The Aaronic priesthood has given place to that of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Heb. viii. 12.) The Holy Ghost has come, sent by Christ since He went on high, and by one Spirit believers are baptized into one body. (1 Cor. 12, 13.) The Church of God now exists, composed neither of Jews nor Gentiles, but believers out of both, saved, and baptized into *one*

body. Thus, there are three classes of men now on earth, Jew, Gentile, and Church of God. (1 Cor. x. 32.)

The Lord appeared unto His disciples on the first day of the week when they gathered together. (Jno. xx. 19.) This gives us a picture of the Church period. John says, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." (Rev. i. 10.) The disciples met together on that day to break bread. (Acts xx. 7.) And on that day they were instructed to lay aside their collection, or offering, for the needy saints at Jerusalem. Thus, then, on that day, Christians met together, and do so still to *commence* the week by *giving* to God the praises of full hearts, made by Him at such a cost, and serve Him with gladness, in telling forth the riches of His grace made known in the gospel. Then we go forth to the labor and toil of the week, and whether we eat, or drink, or whatsoever we do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Cor. x. 31) "Let no man judge you, therefore, in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the *Sabbath days*; which are a *shadow* of things to come; but the body is of Christ." (Col. ii. 16, 17.) And "be not entangled in the yoke of bondage." (Gal. v. 1.) Do not give up Christianity with its liberty for Judaism and its bondage, under the antichristian teaching of Seventh-Day Adventists.

W. E.

THE CITIES OF REFUGE.

I SHOULD be thankful to share with the beloved readers of HELP AND FOOD the blessing derived from morning meditations on the Cities of Refuge. I have endeavored to seek out the lessons the Holy Spirit would teach, in dependence upon Himself, and without referring to what others have derived from them.

First, let us read the chapter, Josh. xx., and I will quote the verses (7-9) giving the names of the cities.

“And they appointed Kedesh in Galilee in Mount Naph-tali, and Shechem in Mount Ephraim, and Kirjath-arba, which is Hebron, in the mountain of Judah. And on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh. These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.”

Now, in the first place, it goes without saying to the conscience and heart of every child of God, that our Father did not fill His Word with mere *facts*, and that in learning of these we had attained to all that He would have us get. This would surely be unworthy of a God of all grace, whose very name is Love, in giving a revelation to His creatures who so deeply need far more; therefore we may start with the assurance that there *is* something more in these verses than appears on the surface—something that shall be in harmony with the truth that God is Light and Love, and we His needy creatures, and, I trust, His beloved children through faith in Christ Jesus, with eternity before us. As the Holy Spirit teaches us, in writing to the Hebrews, “he that cometh to God must believe that He *is*;” so the first thing is, to grasp with assurance that in these cities there actually *is* something of infinite moment for us, worthy of Him who tells us of them.

Granting this much, we may fully expect that the names of these six cities will be found expressive of some characteristic or beauty or grace or quality in our Lord Jesus

Christ, or of the salvation in Him. The first is apparently very plain: "Kedesh" is unmistakably "sanctuary;" and is used in Ex. iii. 5—"The place whereon thou standest is *holy*," and so all through. It is more frequently translated "holy," or "holiness," than "sanctuary," and it would be of interest and value to note everywhere that this word is used for "sanctuary," for it would be full of the idea of holiness; *e. g.*, "send thee help from the *sanctuary (kedesh)*" is significant enough in Ps. xx., the *holiness* of the help sought being the great point. Thus, then, if the names of the cities all are full of some beauty of our Lord Christ, or of some characteristic of those there protected, the first is *holiness*. And that is true; for whilst we should expect to find something speaking of salvation or security first, yet we must remember that *that* is found in the very term "city of refuge."

First, we may say, then, these cities speak of *refuge*,—it is the first and broad idea connected with them; but immediately after that—what? *Holiness*. "To you first, God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, *in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.*" The universal lesson of all Scripture,—holiness, consequent on, and immediately following, redemption. The same wall, therefore, that shut *in* the refugee in perfect peace and security, shut *out* all impurity and defilement. *That* is what, I judge, our God would teach us by the foremost place being given to Kedesh. Just as, long afterward, the same blessed Spirit, speaking, not by parables, nor pictures, but plainly, showed that the one death of Christ that delivered us from the judgment of a broken law delivered us also from the power of sin (*cf.* Rom. vii. and Rom. vi.) Here is a by-way along which the natural heart is prone to wander: "Saved from judgment by free grace! then let us give grace an opportunity of abounding by continuing in *sin.*" Ah, the deceitfulness of sin is

well adapted to a heart "deceitful above all things;" hence plain words of solemn warning—"Be NOT *deceived*: God is not mocked: what a man soweth, that shall he also reap." And many a gracious finger-post, in type of various kinds, pointing, at this first by-path, to the straight and narrow way, and saying, "*This* is the way; walk ye in it." Thou art safe, my soul;—thou hast fled for refuge to the hope set before thee in the gospel. Harken to the first word that strikes the saved ear—"Kedesh, Kedesh," nor move a step till the lesson has been in measure impressed upon the heart.

Kedesh was given to Gershom the stranger,—perhaps a further idea of separation and a pilgrim-character attached to it.

Shechem, meaning "shoulder," "back." Exactly the same word, "Shechem," is used in Gen. ix. 23—"laid it upon their shoulders (shechem)"—that part of the body on which burdens or weights are carried. See also Gen. xlix. 15—"He bowed his shoulder (shechem) to bear, and became a servant under tribute. Hence the word seems connected with servitude. Look too at Ps. lxxxii. 6, Is. ix. 4, x. 27; but Is. ix. 6 seems very striking, as also connecting *government* with the "shoulder;" still the idea is the same,—it is that of carrying, bearing, supporting—He shall support, maintain, uphold, the government. (Compare also Is. xxii. 22.) Now these are not human definitions, but those of the inspired Word itself, and, gathering them together, we conclude that "Shechem" first bears the idea of "service;" (Gen. xlix. 15 is conclusive as to this,) and surely this follows in beautiful order after "refuge" and "holiness;" not till the meaning of these two earlier words is practically learned does "Shechem" come in, or is *service* acceptable. But here extremes meet—"he that is *chief* is as he that serves" (Luke xxii. 26), and He who came not to be ministered unto, but

to minister, and was amongst His own "as he that *serveth*," is the only one fit or capable of maintaining *government*, which shall be upon His *shoulder*. Blessed principle! may we learn it, for we too shall, through grace unspeakable, reign with Him. But if so, we must learn that which is so closely connected with government, and must precede it (although never put aside as finished, for He serves ever; and we, in glory, serve) to serve. Blessed principle! see it dwelt upon in the epistles—1 Cor. xvi. 15: the house of Stephanas were far advanced in this school of *service*, hence *rule*, so the saints of Corinth are exhorted to submit themselves to *them*. (So Refuge, Kedesh, and Shechem once more press the lesson of the law of the sin-offering—Lev. vi.—salvation, holiness, service.) Shechem was situated *in Ephraim*,—*i. e.*, "fruitfulness;" was it not well placed? The activities of love are the "fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ."

But let us stop a little at Shechem; "go round about her, tell the towers thereof." How much should we lack, lacking Shechem! Made partakers of the divine nature—Love, and left in a world still lying in the wicked one, where on all sides his prisoners are met,—Shechem lacking, we should have no gospel for them, no deliverance to the captives to preach. The "poor always with" us, without Shechem there would be no ministry of love in doing good to them. The suffering of a groaning creation on every side, but no service of sympathy—weeping with them that weep, as well as rejoicing with them who do rejoice. Ah, should we not miss it were Shechem lacking? Were the outlets of that divine nature stopped, love barred from displaying itself, and shut in upon itself, should we not ourselves be prisoners, and long for the *liberty* of serving;—to have the "freedom" of this glorious city ours, for here the servants are the *freemen*? (1 Cor. vii. 22.)

“My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” It is as if God Himself were hallowing Shechem with His presence, and He who was one with Him in life and nature were delighting to dwell there too. Consider her *palaces*, my soul! And this city is ours. Do we appreciate it? Are we enjoying our citizenship of this “no mean city”? or has the pendulum of our lives swung a little too far on the other side, —from the fleshly energy, restless activity, and legal labor which, alas! so abounds everywhere in Christendom, to what may really largely be slothful ease, fruit of carnal security, whilst precious opportunities never to return are lost, and our ears are dull to hear the Spirit’s call: “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” And we have looked at Mary sitting at her Master’s feet—listening, learning, and approved, till some of us have concluded that this attitude gives the only picture of Christian life; but the same Mary teaches us another lesson in Jno. xi., nor is the service of Martha in that scene checked in the slightest, or out of harmony with it. The “care” and “trouble” of Luke x. showed that she was not then true dweller in Shechem—*her* citizens serve with joy: ’tis liberty and relief. An easy yoke, not cumbersome. Oh to breathe the healthful, bracing air of this lovely city—Shechem!

HEBRON, the third city, means “association, confederation,” hence carries the idea of fellowship, communion. Jacob sent Joseph out of the vale of Hebron (where he was at home—loved, understood,—where heart answered heart in sweet communion,) to Shechem (service), for those who hated him and purposed to slay him. No communion there; “He came to His own, and His own received Him not;”—from the Father’s bosom He came—*the vale of Hebron*. How sweetly, then, this name “He-

bron" speaks to us, when taken in this opposite order after Shechem, of communion *restored*, of "fellowship with us (as John writes), and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." For sent *from* Hebron *to* Shechem is John's gospel (chap. i.), but here Hebron after Refuge and Kedesh and Shechem is John's epistle,—He came from the Father's bosom to serve, He has gone back there—to Hebron; but not alone,—He has taken His redeemed with Him: "Because I live, ye shall live also," He said; and, lo, we are in Hebron too. Fellowship with the Father! understanding, through the blessed Spirit, something of His heart, recognizing in whom that heart delights, and sharing (through that one blessed Spirit), in our feeble way, in that delight; entering a very little way, but still truly entering, led by divine power, into His thoughts of the Son; resting on His finished work, where God rests; gazing on His beauty with joy—a joy perfect in the Father's heart only. The Father's counsels and purposes all determining that He shall be exalted to highest glory, and our voices and hearts saying, "Amen! for He is worthy!"—it is the vale of Hebron in which we are,—fellowship, too, with the Son! What are His thoughts—that blessed Son? What is His delight, in which His people may, in measure, share? *The Father is perfectly glorified*,—where He was dishonored, there far more exceeding glory has been His. The "fifth part" has been added to that which He had lost through sin staining His work—through the robbery of the first man, who sought to be equal with God: *His will has been done*. Blessed, precious, almighty *will!* Love and Light have each been perfectly accounted of, and God is no longer narrowed—straightened, with vail up, but can show Himself unhindered, "able to do exceeding abundantly." We may, too, have fellowship with *His praise*. "We join the praises that He leadeth." "In the midst of

the church will I sing praise unto Thee;" and we learn to say with Him, "*Our God, our Father,*" as He said, "Go, tell My brethren that I ascend unto My God and your God, to My Father and your Father." Yes, He has not gone back alone to that Bosom from which He came;—He has taken brethren with Him back to the vale of Hebron; He has brought us to His Father's house, and (think of it for thyself, my soul!) sinners of the Gentiles are "*fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.*" Yes, as we walk on earth, this is fulfilled. *The path that He trod is ours*: if we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him. And in all these things, and far more, we have fellowship with one another:—no lonely strangers are the Lord's people in Him; they are in sweet companionship; they are of one household; they share each other's joys, trials, burdens, after the pattern of their ever blessed Lord.

Hebron is in Judah—"praise," beautiful for situation again; for John writes, when, as we may say, inviting us to dwell at Hebron, (chap. i. 4), "*that your joy may be full.*" And "full joy" means "melody in the heart," and that, most surely, is "praise." F. C. J.

(To be continued in next number.)

ORGANIZED EVANGELIZATION.

FOR every special object that is sought to be attained to-day, some sort of organization is considered a first necessity. So well is it understood that "union is strength," that to accomplish any end whatever,—political, social, moral, spiritual, men combine. Unions of the most varied kinds are thus multiplying day by day; and that results justify them as a means of doing what

individual effort would be powerless for is so evident that it would be a waste of time to try and prove this.

The character of the ends sought to be accomplished is not what concerns me now ; it is simply the power that is gained by association ; and as an illustration helps largely the clearness of an argument, let us take one from what is before all our eyes to-day, the Salvation Army.

Now, there are, of course, many things beside their organization to be taken into account in such an example as this ; and the peculiarity of the organization itself along with all else. That in little over ten years they have girt the world with their mission stations is a fact not to be denied. "Between 1880 and 1890," says the *Missionary Review*, "this enterprise, beginning with God and nothing in a London slum, went from New Zealand to San Francisco, and from Cape Town almost to the North Cape ; leaped, as if the genii of Arab story, from 400 corps and 1,000 officers, to 4,289 corps, or separate religious societies, 10,000 officers, devoted solely to evangelization, and 13,000 non-commissioned officers rendering voluntary service ; captured 150,000 prisoners from Satan ; created scores of new forms of religious and philanthropic activity ; conquered the respect of the world ; and broached a stupendous scheme for the salvation of society."

A phenomenon of this kind is worthy of respectful attention on the part of those who believe that it is still incumbent upon those who would not incur the Lord's rebuke, as the men of old did, to "discern the signs of the times." Scripture should enable us to see what such things mean, and Christians should be humble enough to learn the lesson they convey. "Scripture," it may be said, "condemns these strange and burlesque methods." But the result, which cannot rightly be questioned, the

salvation of souls from the lowest level of misery and degradation, cannot be the fruit of what is strange or unscriptural. Figs do not grow on thistles; and fruit *is* found in a striking way in most places into which they come. The more we can see of what is unscriptural in their methods, the more it deserves to be considered why God should in this way bless them: for the salvation of souls is from Him. All the real success is not gained or even *helped* by drums and banners and military titles, drill, or discipline: otherwise figs *do* grow on thistles. But without association altogether I think it would be impossible to account for the way they have taken possession of the country,—almost of the world. One cannot attribute it to any remarkable gifts of preaching, to any special fullness of the gospel preached. Devotedness there is and self-denial, in a high degree often; but there are plenty of devoted Christians in any considerable town into which they enter who have nothing of the success of the Salvation Army. Many beside have gone down to the depths of vice and poverty. On the other hand, none perhaps have so thoroughly acted on the principle of organization for evangelistic purposes; and it scarcely needs to be said that apart from this organization the work that has been accomplished could not have been done.

Am I going to urge that we should organize for a similar evangelistic effort? I am going to urge first, that if we had methods wholly scriptural, with a full gospel, and the effect of the truth that God has given us in our souls, we should not be a whit behind the Salvation Army in reaching the masses and bring men to God; and that to deny this would involve just the folly of supposing that God is less wise than man; or that His blessing is less with what is according to His will, than with that which is against it. Neither of these things can be; and there-

fore what I have stated is rather an under- than an over-statement.

What then if *we* have dropped out of the scriptural method, and are really in some respects behind those whom we have perhaps thought unworthy of imitation for their unscripturalness? Can we admit the possibility of such a thing? The Word of God certainly does not give us even a hint of organizing societies. It knows but of one organism sufficient for all purposes, and that is the Church, the body of Christ. Alas! it is broken and scattered: we have found other names under which to gather than that of Christian; and the bonds that unite us to all His members have but little practical recognition. Yet there is room still for faith to act; and God will own that which does so. Two or three gathered to His name can and should act upon the truth of the Church, if they cannot re-gather the Church together; and such assemblies, though ever so few in individuals, yet with the door open for all that are Christ's and with Him, are not sectarian or human associations, but divinely constituted, though necessarily feeling the lack of the many from whom they are, not of their own will, separated.

Here, then, we have still our organization. We have but to avail ourselves of it to find how perfect it is, and entirely beyond all that man could form or imagine. Narrowness and sectarianism are forbidden in the very idea. Our rule is the Word of God, not a mere humanly imposed one. Conscience is thus free, and subjection to the indwelling Spirit gives unity of action and fellowship with one another. That which marks us for what we are is not an external badge, but the seal of the Spirit. We have one Lord to serve, who is Christ,—Love itself, Wisdom itself, and under whom no defeat is possible. We have no name to identify ourselves with but that of Christian.

For what are we organized? For all that which shall glorify Christ, and for mutual help and service to one another. We are to be hands and feet to the Head above, representatives and ministers of Him who "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil;" we are to be "the epistle"—not epistles—"of Christ, read and known of all men,"—as the context shows, His letters of commendation in the world.

Does not this constitute us, then, as a whole, the one great evangelization society of the world? If we are as a whole to commend Christ and represent Him among men, can we do it without representing Him in that love for souls for which He gave Himself to a death of agony? Is not the body to be the servant of the Head in labor for Him on earth? Does its work find its whole accomplishment in the edification of itself?

Such questions have but one answer that can be given them; and there can be no more reason why our service should be simply individual, than why our learning of the truth should be apart from others, or our worship be in our chambers only. Fellowship in worship and mutual edification in the things of God naturally have their issue in corporate testimony, and the widest and fullest co-operation in the work of the Lord.

In all these things there is need, of course, and plenty of room for the maintenance of individuality. Every member of the body has its own place and function. There are special gifts,—evangelists, as well as pastors and teachers; but while special, these are not, even in their own sphere, *exclusive*. The church at Jerusalem, scattered abroad through the persecution that arose about Stephen, "went every where preaching the word." (Acts viii. 4.) In our various ways, with various degrees of publicity, the evangelizing of the world is a duty that lies upon us all. It is withal so blessed a privilege, that if

our hearts are right with God, we shall never be satisfied with doing it by proxy, or seek escape from the responsibility as to it. We shall not ask, What must I do? but what may I be permitted to do, to bring souls from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God? The Lord seeks volunteers; and thus Scripture not so much prescribes a path to us, as leaves the field wide open before us. We do not need commissions according to our ability to relieve poverty, or to minister to the sick before our eyes: and here is a need for which every one who has bread for himself can feed another with it; and where the one remedy we cannot mistake in ministering.

And yet there is need of finding help from one another, and in these living activities we learn that "two is better than one;" and how much combined effort may effect that individuals cannot. We need encouragement in the face of opposition, stimulus to perseverance, the help of example, of suggestion, the supplementing of individual deficiencies, the multiplication of force. Spiritually, as in other ways, our little with the aid of other littles may become much, and we are enabled thus to use with profit what by itself would have seemed useless: the fragments are gathered up, and nothing lost.

Why, then, in every place where two or three are gathered together, should there not be, as a thing of course, the meeting for mutual help in obeying the Lord's command to "preach the gospel to every creature," as it is a matter of course that there should be the prayer or the reading meeting? A meeting, I mean, for counsel with one another, for encouragement, for review of the field together, for all the various purposes for which we shall soon find our need of one another as workers together in the field of the world?

And while, undoubtedly, we should thus most effectually coöperate with the labors of the evangelist and

fill the public halls for those who have special gift, our labor would, above all, be to reach the people with the gospel where they are, and while availing ourselves fully of the most helpful service of tracts and printed matter, yet to make it our aim to come face to face with souls, and to use that personal appeal which, when it is the appeal of divine love to heart and conscience, is what God most of all blesses.

Here is work for every one,—man, woman, and child, among us,—work in abundance to occupy every moment we can spare to it; and work so full of fruit and blessing, so grateful to the heart, so enriching to the life, so adapted to exercise us in all Christian activities, and to develop in us all Christlike affections, that the labor itself is its own abundant compensation, without thinking of those who may be thus our “hope and joy, and crown of rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming.”

For this personal work for the Lord, and with the souls He died for, nothing can be substituted. Neither prayer nor study of the Word, nor aught else. While it will give matter for our prayers, energy to our Word-studies, a realization and application of the truths of Scripture in their practical sufficiency for all human need and cravings, a knowledge of the heart as the true light manifests it, which will make the Bible more than ever that voice of the living God, which it should be felt to be. To scatter our riches is to multiply them; here, prodigality is the wisest economy, and to withhold from others starvation for ourselves. The manna could not be hoarded, and corrupted if it was. Christ dwelling in the heart throws open the doors of His habitation, and if we will entertain Him, we must do His royal errands. The height of His heaven has not put Him at a distance from the penury of earth.

“To the poor the gospel is preached,” was one of the vouchers of His mission. Among the poor, even the degraded, is found most often the misery that needs and opens the door to Him. Do we not often speak of doors not being open, when the truth is, we have not stooped low enough to find the open door? Yet power is manifested in ability to go down: God’s beloved Son, among us as One that serveth, may well endear the lowliest service to our hearts. If it is the nature of truth to sanctify, those who have most truth should exhibit most the mind of Christ.

The object of this paper is a very simple and practical one. It is to urge upon those who are gathered to the Lord’s name the need that we have of such fellowship in the work of evangelization as I have briefly indicated,—need that we have ourselves of it,—need that there is around,—and that the Church of God is really already an organization for this among other purposes. I would press rather the privilege than the responsibility of gathering in this character, seeking to help and encourage one another in united effort to bring the gospel personally before all around us. I am persuaded that there is a lack in this respect, and that it would be for very great blessing every way that this should be supplied. Simply and earnestly acted upon, the test of experience will soon decide the value of an organization, not devised of our own will, but which the Lord has given us, and which we are responsible to Him to put in practical effect.

F. W. G.

"KEEP THY HEART."

"Keep thy heart with all diligence. . . . Put away from thee a froward mouth. . . . Let thine eyes look right on. . . . Ponder the path of thy feet." (Prov. iv. 23-28.)

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Ps. cxix. 105.)

FELLOW-pilgrim, keep thy heart
 With all diligence;
 Let thy Master rule and guide.
 This is thy defense—
 Peace thou canst not understand
 Will thy subject heart command.

Put a guard upon thy lips.
 Many a hurt and smart
 This will spare thee by the way—
 Many an aching heart.
 Teach thee wholesome self-control,
 Many a humbling spare Thy soul.

Let thine eyes look straight ahead
 To the glorious end.
 Though through window dimly now,
 Faith doth comprehend.
 Faith from heavy burdens frees us,
 Links us with the risen Jesus.

Ponder o'er the way He leads thee,
 Seek to know His will.
 Turn not from His gracious guiding,
 For He surely will
 Give thee brightness more and more,
 Till thy pilgrim journey's o'er.

Heart and lips and eyes and footsteps,
 All in sweet accord.
 Subject to His gentle leading
 By His holy Word.
 Thus Lord, if we follow Thee,
 We shall never barren be.

H. McD.

THE CITIES OF REFUGE.

(Continued from page 132.)

NOW, coming to those on the eastern side of Jordan : we have, first, Bezer, nearly always spoken of as "in the wilderness." The word means, apparently, "precious ore." It occurs, and in this identical form, just twice ; and that in Job, chap. xxii. 23-25, where Eliphaz tells Job that if he puts his treasure (bezer) with the dust, and the gold of Ophir among the stones of the brook, (*i. e.*, evidently, trusting not in earthly wealth,) then the Almighty shall be his treasure (bezer),—*i. e.*, true riches (see *R. V.*). It is closely connected with, and is said to be derived from, "Bazar," which is constantly translated "fenced," "fortified." The idea, evidently, in the word is "riches," "treasure," "gold," looked upon as a source of confidence and strength. The verse quoted in Job gives us much help, for it shows that the word is applied, not only to the fleeting riches of earth, but the true riches,—“the Almighty shall be thy ‘precious ore,’ thy bezer, (or defense, or wealth).” Then may we not see in Bezer the resources, the wealth, the redeemed have in their Lord Jesus,—that of which they learn more and more as they go along, proving and experiencing the infinite depth of the wealth they have in Him, and so truly able to put other confidence “with the dust, and among the stones of the brook ?”

Bezer, too, is beautiful for situation. If “in the wilderness,” it forms a lovely oasis therein. The dear apostle dwelt ever within its borders, and knew its language well. Would we hear its speech ? Then listen to him when addressing the Philippians. “Not that I speak in respect of want ; for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound : everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound

and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." And, again, he exhorts us to dwell in Bezer when he says, "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice."

Mark iv. 19 is a strong warning, on the other hand, against wandering from this refuge-city.

Now let us see what we have thus far in these names, and note the admirable correspondence with the summing up of the apostle in the epistle to the Hebrews, in chap. x. The general thought of security in the idea of refuge itself—that thought so carefully wrought out in the epistle, and summed up in the words "By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified," and "Where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sins." Then "Kedesh," the holiness of the place to which we are brought,—“Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the *holiest* by the blood of Jesus."

Then the activities of that place in service, "Shechem,"—"Let us provoke one another to love and to good works."

Then the sweet association thereof in "Hebron,"—"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together;" and lastly, the wealth—the precious treasure there, which, if I through faith grasp, then I can, as the Hebrews, take with joy the spoiling of goods of earth, knowing that I have "a better and an enduring substance." Surely there is some confirmation of the meanings and significance of the names of these cities in this harmony; nor does it conflict with this that Bezer is *in the wilderness*.

"Our whole resource along the road,
Nothing but Christ—the Christ of God."

It is there we realize and are made to realize our needs, and there realize how full and complete the resources—the wealth in Him. Wilderness needs cause us to dig for the precious ore, and then we find we have an inexhaustible "seam" of it. In the land, His people drank the

water from the rills and brooks and fountains with which it abounded ; but in the wilderness their thirst was only quenched by the Rock that followed them ; and so for every need. Mark, with trembling, that in the end of church-days, the professing church forgets this entirely. She says she is “rich, and increased with goods, and has need of nothing,” and knows not that she is “wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked ; she has forgotten the lesson of “*Bezer in the wilderness.*” And, my soul, remember that thou art in these very days,—the spirit of the times in which we live is that : be jealous of any thing that clouds in the least the glory of Christ, or tends to the slightest independence of Him.

Does its being in the “plain” further harmonize with the significance of humility, dependence ?

Ramoth in Gilead out of Gad. The word means, without any doubt whatever, “elevation” or “height,” “eminence.” “Ramoth,” then, must speak to us of the moral superiority or elevation in which the believer in Christ is,—*i. e.*, there is connected with his salvation a moral elevation above the world ; he lives in a higher moral atmosphere,—that is the air faith breathes. Ramoth is, in some sort, the opposite aspect to Bezer ; if the latter speaks of the infinite resources in Christ for the poor pilgrim here in the wilderness, Ramoth speaks rather of his life hid with Christ in God, and of the superiority this gives to all of earth ; hence, to carry on the comparison with the epistle to the Hebrews, of that elevated walk of faith as pictured in Heb. xi. And, my soul, listen to the words of the king of Israel, “Know ye that Ramoth in Gilead is ours ?” Alas ! it gets so quickly into the enemies’ hands, and has been there so long, that we actually forget that it belongs to us at all. But it does. *The heights are OURS!* If a Christian has learned what Bezer is,—has dwelt there till the resources and wealth he has in Christ have put in their

true light all created resources, then is he at Ramoth too, walking, dwelling far above the level of the world in the heights of faith. "Cast not away *such* confidence," or we too may soon have to ask if Ramoth in Gilead be ours.

Shall we climb the hill-side, and examine Ramoth a little closer. As we reach the summit, and enter our city, we become blessedly conscious of a change of air. Our Lord Jesus Himself told us to expect it when He said, "These things have I spoken unto you that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." It is not exactly a *change* either—the tribulation has not gone; it is only unable to affect the quiet heavenly calm of Ramoth. As one of our own poets beautifully expresses it,—

"It is not that I feel less weak, but Thou
Wilt be my strength; it is not that I see
Less sin, but more of pardoning love with Thee,
And all-sufficient grace. Enough! And now
All fluttering thought is stilled; I only rest,
And feel that Thou art near, and know that I
am blest."

Ramoth is certainly not far from Bezer. One can see how near together they are in Gen. xiv., xv.—"I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet," said Abram: *there* is surely the moral elevation—the heights of Ramoth. Ramoth is too high for low, earthly motives to influence its people. "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward:" *there* are the divine resources of Bezer.

Nor can the terrors of the tyrant and persecutor reach the heights of our Ramoth. We see this shown in many of its blessed citizens in the record of God's Word, and we recognize the language of Ramoth in the three Hebrew youths when they said, "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 He will deliver us out of thy hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Glorious language this of Ramoth! But 'tis the privilege of the feeblest believer in our Lord Jesus to speak this language. *Ramoth is ours*—no one must question that. It is not the language of nature, it is learned in faith's school; nor the courage of nature, it is the grace that is in Christ Jesus that gives it. May we too be strong therein. Amen.

Golan, in Bashan, out of Manasseh. The meaning of "Golan" is given by one authority as "Place of Pilgrimage," or "Exodus," from "Gahlah;" but the meanings to this word are very many,—all of them, however, may be reduced to two—"to uncover or reveal," and "to carry away (generally) captive." The word is used in the former sense in such passages as 1 Sam. iii. 21—"The Lord revealed Himself to Samuel;" Is. xl. 5—"And the glory of the Lord shall be *revealed*;" Ex. xx. 26, etc.; and in the latter sense, Jer. xx. 4—"And he shall carry them captive," etc. I think the word points, in connection with its position—the last of the cities, to that end of the goal when, in the full light of that day, all shall be revealed and brought to light; for He comes "who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall each man have praise from God." The end of the pilgrimage! How happy to find there a word that speaks to us of no sorrow for the path run, no complaint for a life wasted, no disappointment at the goal reached; but, whilst all things revealed, every man to receive "praise from God"! We may well credit, then, those authorities who derive "Golan" from a word signifying "joy," for quite in harmony with its position would this be at the

end of the course. The dear apostle longed, therefore, in the language of these cities, to reach *Golan*, when he said, "Neither count I my life dear unto me, that I may finish my course with joy." Nay, more: may we not reverently say that our Lord Jesus, the Perfect Example of the pilgrim's walk of faith, looked forward to "*Golan*" when he passed through the shame and suffering of the cross; despising the one and enduring the other, because of the clearness with which He saw that glorious end—"the joy set before Him"? When we lose sight of *Golan*, hands and knees sink toward earth (Heb. xiii. 12). But he who, through grace, knows his blessed security in his Cities of *Refuge*, and learning the holy lesson of *Kedesh*, in cleansing himself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit in the fear of God, whilst walking in the fruitfulness of *Shechem*, the sweet communion of *Hebron*,—he who joys in his *Bezer* in the Lord Jesus, and consequently knows well that *Ramoth* is his, will be apt indeed to be able to see with a clear eye the *Golan*—the goal of his pilgrimage, and press on thereto with a patient race.

Will any one say that these lessons from these cities are the results of mere ingenuity, and not the distinct intention of the Spirit of God? Surely this would require more credulity than to recognize the divine intention and design. For as each meaning shows its own beauty and harmony with the whole, so is the probability lessened of such meanings being the result of mere coincidence, until this becomes a sheer impossibility. So if we see further beauty and design in the way these cities are placed, (their very position confirming the meanings,)—three on one side and three on the other side of *Jordan*,—without controversy, we may have the comfort of the assurance that it is the finger of God, and we may rejoice in the works of His hands. Now there is very distinctly such

harmony. We are reminded (and who shall question if it be intentional or not?), with the very first city on the east of Jordan, that it is "in the wilderness." Is it strange, then, that all of these cities bear meanings that may be helpful to us in our *journey as pilgrims through the wilderness*,—whether they whisper to our hearts of our resources in Christ, of our peaceful calm elevation in Him amid a restless surging world, or of the blessed joyful goal at the end? But cross the river of death—Jordan, and who will question the design in the gracious reminder of the *character the redeemed shall bear forever*—"He that is holy, let him be holy still" (Kedesh),—of the service *which death itself only perfects*, for there "His servants shall serve Him" (Shechem),—or of that communion only complete when those servants "shall see His face, and His name be in their foreheads" (Hebron)?

F. C. J.

THE FORMATION OF SOCIETIES IN THE CHURCH.

THERE is but one society for the Christian to recognize, and to which he can really belong according to the mind of God. That society is the Church of God—the whole body of believers.

We find in 1 Cor. xiv. an example of a Church-meeting. They met together in a meeting open to any to take part, as led of the Spirit; excluding, therefore, the thought of an official person conducting a service, or of a chairman conducting a meeting. A servant of the Lord may preach to any who come to hear, and is then conductor of a meeting in a sense, as Peter at Pentecost, or Paul in the school of Tyrannus; but a Church-meeting for worship and ministry was open to all. The many members were recognized, and the Spirit indwelling each. Now thus

meeting together, no society is formed. We would meet together in such a case simply as a certain number out of the whole Church in that place, in His name, taking no other; and when we close the meeting, and return to our homes, no new society has been formed, any more than would a few Christians meeting in a hotel-parlor for prayer form a new society by so doing. And whenever Christians assemble in a Church-meeting, to take the Lord's supper, or for any other object, it should never be done as a society, distinguished from other Christians.

As to ordinations and appointments, the Lord prepares and sends forth and guides and governs evangelists and pastors and teachers (Eph. iv.); and as to elders, who were appointed as bishops or overseers (Acts xx. 28), the appointment was by apostolic authority (Acts xiv. 23), which does not now exist. To those who do this service of oversight we should be subject, but the Church never undertook to appoint them. Even deacons, selected on one occasion by the Church at Jerusalem, were "appointed" by the apostles, and even the selecting was by apostolic permission (Acts vi. 3).

Power—authority—is from above, down; not the other way,—not to be usurped by us as we deem expedient.

Christians, therefore, all belong to a society already made by the Spirit, and with ministry provided for as already shown.

We should be led by the Spirit at all times, and so led to assemble together,—and simply in the name of Jesus—no other is needed; and we are commanded to put away from among ourselves any wicked person. Nothing is left to the will of man—nothing in which the way is not marked out plainly for us by the Word. What a liberty we have thus from self-imposed burdens and human regulations!—truly, the liberty of the Spirit in reality. The ignoring of this—of these two things—the

presence of the Spirit of God in each believer, and that He guides us by the Word, and that we must do nothing but what that Word enjoins, has led to confusion in the Church.

The same principles bear upon service. All that can be done by societies can be done in fellowship with other fellow-workers, and with all the aid that such labor in common truly affords, simply as members of the one body of Christ—Christ the Lord as Chief, the Spirit of God as the power and unity. Thus two and two can go forth, or several brothers and sisters together can hold a meeting at a street-corner, or in-doors, and with the sweet and uplifting thought that they have entered into no compact but the one that united them forever to the Lord and to all His own when they first believed. How great is our salvation! and how glorious the Church to which we all belong! how close the tie that forever binds us together, while varied the opportunities and many the members of the one body!

If the special object be to reach young men, what better way than to welcome them in the family circle and in the Church-meetings? but if a room of public resort—a reading-room is called for, opportunity is thus given for a work of faith. Let any one be so led, and others would be certainly led to help him by the same Spirit. And not only would all be done in harmony with the truth—no new society formed, but the exercise of heart, of faith, and all the mingled blessings that accompany such testings would result. The soul would realize more the direct dealings with God that accompany the path of pure faith and individual accountability to God. And help given would be more in the love of the Spirit, and less from human obligations. So also as to special meetings and work to draw out and develop younger brothers and sisters in the churches (as Endeavor societies)—all could

be fully accomplished upon the principles of Scripture, and no new society formed.

If some members of a family were to make a society and compact apart from the rest, the breach would be felt at once. We Christians are all one family. Sadly divided we are, still the way remains open for the individual who would be faithful to the Lord and to His Word—for himself to adhere to the truth, and his reward will be great. (Rev. ii., iii.)

The path of obedience and simplicity is one of obscurity, but it has with it the blessing which obedience brings. There is little show before men, but He “who is holy and who is true” says, “I know thy works.” (Rev. iii. 7, 8.) He commends the one who keeps His word and does not deny His name.

“And if a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully.” Let it be fixed in the heart that we should not do any thing except we have directions for it in the Bible, and we will not “join” any society. We are already joined to the Lord, and to one another as the body of Christ, the Church (Eph. i. 22), by the Spirit, who came from heaven to abide in us at that Pentecost of the second of Acts. By the Spirit we are all baptized into the one body. (1 Cor. vi. 17 and xii. 12, 13, compared with Acts i. 5 and ii. 1, 4 and Eph. i. 22.) God has placed every one of the members in the body “as it hath pleased Him.” (1 Cor. xii. 18.) It is a perfect body—a complete society, and every member fitted in his place by the wisdom of God, to act just as and where they are placed by the power and liberty and wisdom of the Spirit. “One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren.” Any earthly chief, and the bonds of a society, are, however well meant, but something between the soul and Christ—a denial of the perfection we have in the commandments of the Word, and the unction of the Spirit,

and the Lordship of Christ. Nevertheless, may we be forbearing toward those who differ from us, and give thanks to God for good works any where, and maintain love to all saints.

If we say we hold the truth, let us commend the truth by love and good works. It is well if we are walking in the way of obedience, for “every one that hath forsaken houses or brethren or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands for My name’s sake shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life; but many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first.”

E. S. L.

“AT THE LAST DAY.”

“And this is the Father’s will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”

“And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

“No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

“Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise Him up at the last day.” (Jno. vi. 39, 40, 44, 54.)

WE have in these verses four distinct truths, differing from each other, often indeed considered by man to be utterly irreconcilable, yet all converging to one common end—resurrection at the last day. That goal of high blessing, because of God’s glory, is the meeting-point where at last, if not before, all that seems contradictory in the great scheme of redemption will be forever harmonized. Then, to principalities and powers, to the world will God manifest the perfection of His wisdom, power, and grace. But we know that *now* these precious truths should be made manifest by the Church

(Eph. iii. 9, 10), not only to those in the heavenly places, but to *all men* as well. And if these things are to be manifested by the Church, they must also be understood by the Church. Let us, then, seek to gather some of the wondrous truths taught in these four verses.

First, we have the truth of God's sovereign, absolute election. Here the whole mass of His chosen people are viewed as one—"all which He has given Me." The integrity of this mass is preserved; nothing is lost from it. It is to be raised up, in glory, and presented before God in the completeness in which it was given to the Son. How entirely is man set aside here! Before the foundation of the world—ere even sin had brought in ruin—we have this wondrous transaction; a gift to the Son, intrusted to Him, in the assurance that at whatever cost, whatever risk, no portion of that gift, not the most insignificant, should be lost. Sin, and death by sin, are contemplated as in the future, but spite of sin, through death, beyond the fitful rage of Satan's power, and man's rebellion, that gift is preserved, "raised up at the last day," when He to whom this gift was made will say, "Behold, I and the children which God hath given Me." Compared with the certainty of this accomplishment how puny are Satan's mightiest efforts weakest when they seemed strongest, overthrown at the moment when they seemed to have overthrown God's Son! how powerless is sin to set aside this purpose—"the eternal purpose which He purposed in Himself"—sin, black, horrible as it is, working death, bringing in hopeless ruin as far as man is concerned, making an awful gulf impossible for man to cross and regain lost access to God in Eden, erecting barriers mountain high,—how all this is swept aside by the irresistible purpose of God, as the twigs hanging to the grass on the river's bank are borne away by the mighty flood of waters! Far be the thought to despise

Satan's power; he is a roaring lion, mighty and terrible to helpless man; or to have low views of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. But are these to be compared to God? Is Satan stronger than He? can sin thwart His purpose? Through whom is this will accomplished? Through our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Upon Him hangs the fulfillment of this purpose—"I will raise it up at the last day." How certain is the accomplishment of all this. Even now, in anticipation of it, we can triumph. The great doctrine of Election is feared by most—opposed by many well-meaning Christians. But is not God sovereign? Has He left to chance the momentous issues of eternity? All Scriptures answer, No. Is not the dread of, the opposition to, this doctrine to be found in the fact that it takes every thing so completely out of man's hands, and puts it in God's? Man is set aside—he is not even, in the verse we are considering, looked at as an individual: "I shall raise *it* up again at the last day." Not that individuals are not contemplated in election. "He hath chosen *us* in Him"—but all thought of human coöperation in election is set aside. But there can be no ground for fear of this most precious and wondrous truth. If it brings out man's helplessness, it only the more clearly manifests God's love and goodness, giving new grounds for praise and adoration. Let it be remembered, however, that election is *in Christ*. Nowhere is it hinted that God chose men to be lost. The horrible doctrine of reprobation has no place in Scripture, and is utterly opposed to the comforting and God glorifying truth of election. Nor again let it be thought that this is a truth for the unsaved. It could only confuse and stumble them.

Our next verse give us the manward side. The same will, the same end, but not the sovereign gift of the Father to the Son, but the free and simple acceptance of

Christ by all who will. Notice the universality of the truth: *every one*, not the elect; not certain classes, but every one. Still, it is individual, each for himself. Notice, too, the simplicity: "that seeth the Son and believeth on Him." No works, no moral fitness required, no feelings called for. The eye is turned away from self,—no good to be gotten from that defiled source,—to the Son of God incarnate, who came down from heaven to give life to the world. It is faith which sees Christ,—the faith of a sinner taking as a sinner the gifts held out by the Saviour,—eternal life. "He that believeth on the Son, *hath* everlasting life." The last day he can now look forward to with confidence as the time when it shall be fully seen what that little act of faith meant, when he looked away to Jesus and lived. But what does he see, as he looks on to the last day? That God's electing love has brought him there. Here there is no collision between these precious truths. He came as a sinner, lost, guilty, helpless; he saw Christ, he believed on Him, he received life, and now, wondrous to tell, he sees that he was chosen before the foundation of the world.

Our third verse links these two truths together: "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." Faith is the gift of God (Eph. ii. 8); so is repentance (Acts v. 31). Had we been left to ourselves we would never have come to Christ. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." Not all the manifestations of love, nor all the terrors of wrath could have drawn one sinner, were he left to his own will. The fullest gospel, the clearest expositions of truth, are alike powerless unless accompanied by the mighty workings of the Holy Spirit of God. And yet we must be careful to note that this is not something mechanical. Man's reason, conscience, and will are left free, but actuated by divine grace and power,

he is *drawn*, persuaded to believe and be saved. Boasting is excluded. We can no more boast of our faith than of our works—all is of grace.

“ ’Twas the same love that spread the feast
That sweetly forced us in,
Else we had still refused to taste,
And perished in our sin.”

Blessed be the God of *all* grace !

This drawing, too, culminates at the same blessed end, —“I will raise him up at the last day.” From the first moment when convinced of sin, and the anxious cry, “What must I do to be saved!” on till the trembling soul rested on Christ, was the work of God’s Spirit. Having been drawn to Christ, the believer is still drawn after Him till He will find himself in glory, drawn there by the same power which first awakened him. Beloved reader, is there not in all this something which appeals to our heartfelt gratitude, our adoring love ?

But this paper would be incomplete without a consideration of the last verse quoted at the beginning : “Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life ; and I will raise him up at the last day.” In the first verse we have a display of God’s sovereign electing grace, “before the foundation of the world.” In the second, we have the Person of the Son of God presented as the object of faith, and eternal life result of believing. Next, is shown the drawing of the Father through the Spirit, making it plain that faith is the gift of God. Now, we have in the last place, the work of Christ as the *ground* upon which God’s sovereign love in election and calling can act toward guilty sinners. “Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood.” His flesh and His blood were offered as food for the sinner when He laid down His life on the cross. This is the answer to their unbelieving question, “How can this Man give us His

flesh to eat?" In incarnation He was alone, with life in Himself, but the work not yet accomplished by which that life could be imparted to others, save in anticipation. But when He said, "It is finished," when His blood was shed, He was indeed food for the dying sinner. His flesh and blood then speak to us of His death on the cross, which removed every obstacle, satisfied every claim of justice, and forever swept away every barrier to eternal love flowing forth in all its fullness. The eating and drinking are strong expressions for the faith which appropriates that sacrifice. But what a view does the cross of our blessed Lord give us of the amazing love of God! At what a cost have we obtained eternal life!—through the *death* of the Lord of life. Vile, guilty, undone, with nothing to commend us to God, we see Him giving His only begotten Son for us. "The last day" was for us a day of terror, of judgment, of eternal woe; now, on the ground of that death, we hear our Lord, saying, "I will raise him up at the last day." It is a day of joy, of glory, of full manifestation as the sons of God.

Thus are these four great truths linked together by the person of the Lord, and the glory in resurrection fruit of God's electing love and on the ground of Christ's accomplished work, received by faith alone. How beautifully harmonious is God's Word!

HANNAH AND ELI: A CONTRAST.

ELI enjoyed the greatest privilege in Israel—the place of greatest nearness to God, and occupation with His service. As high-priest, all the hallowed associations of the sanctuary, its sacrifices and other worship, were matters of daily even hourly familiarity with him. Nor does it seem that this was lost upon him: a

real attachment to the things of God, and in a sense a zeal for His glory are marked in him, together with a submission to His will under government. Nor was the privilege for Eli alone; his family shared with him in the nearness, the hallowed occupation with the things of the sanctuary. Had there been a state of heart in Hophni and Phinehas answering to the place of outward nearness which they occupied, they would have been men of marked and intelligent piety. But, alas! outward privileges do not change the heart, natural descent does not mean regeneration. Israel as a nation are proofs of this: descended from Abraham, the man of faith, they have shown by the hardness of their hearts that they are not children of Abraham. It is just as true for the sons of godly parents as for those utterly ignorant of God, that "Ye must be born again." Without this, outward blessing only proves a curse. Occupied with holy things, these men instead of being elevated, degrade those things. They made the Lord's offering to be abhorred. Those whose worship they should have guided, they degraded, and all this with the knowledge of their father Eli.

Look on the other hand at Hannah. A woman, and so representative of the feeble; barren and despised, how could she, in the eyes of Israelites, to whom a barren womb was as a curse, glorify God? All seems to be against her according to nature; but this only drives her to one unfailing refuge. Even at the tabernacle and in its worship she could find comfort in prayer and tears, rather than in praise, and Eli the priest of God, who should "have compassion on the ignorant," fails to understand her. Alas! his eyes, so long closed to his sons' waywardness, fail to discern the difference between one of a sorrowful spirit and those who had been debauched by the priests. He is severe where nothing but sympathy is called for. He can admonish an outsider, where none is

needed, while in his own house all manner of evil is allowed. There is nothing sadder in Eli than this evidence of loss of discernment and of power. His own weakness at home has made him incompetent to deal with matters in connection with God's house. He is not alone in this. The apostle in giving the requirements for one to be a ruler in God's house writes, "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God)." (1 Tim. iii. 4, 5.) Doubtless, many cases of mistaken discipline, needless severity, and want of wisdom in general, may be directly traced to the fact that Elis are trying to do in God's house what they have failed to do in their own, and, like the one of whom we are speaking, only manifest their lack of wisdom and of power. Surely this is a most pungent truth for parents to consider. How unspeakably solemn is Eli's position, a wearer of high-priestly robes, with two ungodly sons. How incongruous! But it may be said, Eli rebuked his sons. Yes, and allowed them to go on in their sins. His very rebuke only hardened them, for it showed that with full knowledge of their course he allowed them to continue in the priests' office. How different was this from Phinehas in the time of Baal Peor! No rebuke is sufficient to arrest the flood-tide of evil, and he stands forth with his spear, not to speak, but to *act*,—to act for God at whatever cost, and blessing follows. Surely, parents should admonish and instruct their children, but words alone, unaccompanied by *power*, are of no avail. How did these sons of Eli grow to manhood with such habits? Was it carelessness on the part of their father, a spirit of indulging his children, another name for self-indulgence? Parents are told to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and these two words mean all that is

needful, spiritual food and spiritual correction, administered in power. If parents seek in dependence upon God to carry out this instruction with reference to their children, surely God will give His blessing. Eli is forced to hear the doom pronounced upon his house, *because of his own unfaithfulness*. "His own sons made themselves vile and he restrained them not." It does not say, "he admonished them not," but "he restrained them not." He did not come in with that authority given to him from God,—given to every parent to restrain, yes, by force if necessary, his children. Eli had much in him to commend, doubtless; but he seems to be one of those easy-going people who will not sacrifice ease to duty, who do not hearken to the wholesome words in Proverbs, "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." The Revised Version renders the latter clause, "And set not thine heart on his destruction." This surely is done by those who for the sake of sparing the tears caused by wholesome chastening will allow self-will in the child, which will surely bring it to destruction. With the example of Eli before them, let no parent excuse himself for carelessness in the training of his children. He will reap what he has sown, and the after sorrows will far, far outweigh all the present pain of being firm and faithful with those whom God has placed under his care. For proper correction and discipline at the right time and in the right spirit does not take up the larger part of the parent's intercourse with his children, nor color the whole life. Correction is the exception, not the rule: a uniform firmness, tempered with love, is far better than oft-repeated chastisement.

But let us return to Hannah. Her child is one given in direct answer to prayer, and before its birth it is dedicated to God. He is to be a Nazarite—one separate unto God from much even that passes for good. Let us notice

the one point which makes the great difference between Hannah and Eli. Hannah is in communion with God about her child. She asks him from God, she dedicates him to God. The sanctuary is to be his home. But it might be said, Children ought to be happy, not tied down or made religious. Wait until they get older before putting a yoke upon them. Hannah's way with Samuel is the answer. She might say to any who objected to her giving up her son to God, "In His presence is fullness of joy, at His right hand are pleasures for evermore." Can there be greater joy for children, as for all, than to know God? It is Satan who would keep parents from thus fully dedicating their children to God, and from acting upon it. Like Pharaoh, he would allow the parents to go on pilgrimage, provided the children are left behind in Egypt.

It is just here that great mistakes are made. Under the pretext of allowing for youth, and childish pleasures, associations, habits, and practices are allowed which are of the world. What is the result? The children grow up in the world. The bodily food that is good enough for the parent suffices for the child: so the spiritual food is good alike for both. Milk for babes indeed, but milk does not mean poison. It means elementary instruction in the same truths upon which the parent feeds. The question might be asked, Are harmless sports, etc., to be forbidden? Surely not; yet there is a way of enjoying these, and at the same time taking them from a Father's hand, that will make the child a worshiper. How important, then, to begin where Hannah did. The child belongs to God: it shall be brought up for Him: it shall be a Nazarite. God answered her faith. Her son was all that she expected him to be—all that she asked for him. It is needful to notice this precious fact: God *does* hear believing prayer for children, He does honor the faith that honors Him. But this includes the practical carrying out of the dedica-

tion. Hannah carries Samuel up to the Lord's house. It was not enough that in her affliction she vowed to do so; she accomplished her vow. Many parents are constant, and in a sense believing, in their prayers for their children; yet when action is needed—practical separation unto God, they fail. Some may say, Children are not converted, have not the tastes of the new man, and therefore it would make them legal to require them to act upon principles a Christian alone can understand. To this it is enough to reply, first, Who can say how early in life a child may be regenerated and the new man require proper food? Secondly, the Word is the appointed means to this end, and should therefore be freely, persistently, and faithfully used. Thirdly, the children of believers have a responsibility for walk 'apart from the question of their new birth. All this is intimated in two points in the child-history of Samuel: he was *weaned*, and yearly his mother brought him a little coat, when she came up to the Lord's house to offer sacrifice. The weaning would seem to teach that breaking of the will without which little or nothing can be done for the child. Its desires are curbed, its wishes are checked effectually, begetting a subdued spirit before unknown. How needful it is that children should be taught to surrender their wills! Obedience, absolute, immediate, and cheerful, is the first lesson to teach them. Once effectually learned, it stays with the child through life: partially learned, it crops up again and again in acts and ways of willfulness. But who can truly command obedience but the one who is obedient? Only those themselves as weaned children in God's presence can expect the subject spirit in their own children. How can children honor those who do not command it by their lives? This obedience need not be unintelligent. Of course, a reason cannot be given for every command, and children must be taught to obey unquestioningly. But

conscience should also be instructed, so that as the children grow, they may learn to obey, not with eye-service merely, but from principle.

(*To be continued.*)

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART VI. (Chap. xvii.—xix. 10.)—*Continued.*

BABYLON AND HER OVERTHROW.

THE angel now explains the mystery, and begins with the beast. "The beast that was and is not" is clearly from the point of view of the vision,* as has been said. The rule of the woman necessarily destroys beast-character, while it lasts. But the beast will awake from its long sleep: it is "about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition." This coming up out of the abyss, however, as has been elsewhere said, does not seem to be merely the revival of the empire: the key of the abyss in the hands of the fallen star under the fifth trumpet, and the angel of the abyss being the person who by the two languages of his name is the "destroyer" of both Jew and Gentile, would lead us to believe that there was in it the working of satanic power. This is strengthened by the connection of this ascent with the "going into perdition" of that which comes up.

The previous revival under the seventh head would thus be passed over; and the prophecy hastens on to what is most important, the beast pictured here being identified

* This is contrary, however, to the view taken of it when considering the thirteenth chapter. But the difficulty of the "beast that *is not*" and the "one *is*," spoken of the heads of the beast, seems in this way to find a better solution. The paragraph as to this in the former place may therefore be considered canceled.

in fact, in the prophecy itself, with its own eighth head. (v. 11.) That it has only seven, as seen in the vision, is not against this if the seventh and eighth heads are the same person.

The unhappy "dwellers upon the earth" wonder at this revival, whose names have not from the foundation of the world been written in the book of the Lamb slain. Divine grace is that alone which makes any to differ; and of this we are reminded here. The power that works in the revival of the beast is plainly beyond that of man; and how many in the present day seem to take for granted that what is more than human power must be divine. This is the essence of the "strong delusion" which God sends upon those who have not received the love of the truth that they might be saved. Powers and signs and lying wonders confirm the imperial last head in his pretension; and that they are "*lying*" means, not that they are mere juggling and imposition, but that they are made to foster lies. They shall wonder, "seeing how that the beast was and is not and shall be present [again]."

And "here is the mind that hath wisdom,"—the divine secret for an understanding heart. First, as to the woman: "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth." Surely there need not be much doubt about the application of this; although some would apply it to a new Babylon yet to be built on the Euphrates, and others would make the interpreting word "mountains" to be still a figure of something else. They might indeed easily build Babylon again, that is merely looking at things from a human stand-point; but how could it be said of this new city that "in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all the slain upon the earth"?

That Rome was the seven-hilled city is familiar to every school-boy; and its being a "geographical" mark need not make it unsuited to be one, as Lange believes. It

makes it plain, as God would have it surely for His saints whose blood it would shed, and who would need the comfort of knowing that He was against this "Mother and Mistress of churches," with all her effrontery and the crowd that followed her.

God has even, if one might say so, gone out of the way to give a needed plain mark of identification. For it is not easy as a symbol to understand how the heads of the beast should be the seat of the woman. But this does not make it harder for identification, while it seems to illustrate the more the tender thought of God for His people, of which the tokens can never be too many, and in a place like this, of what special value!

But the heads are also seven kings,—consecutive, not contemporaneous rulers; for five had already fallen, one was, and another was yet to come, only to exist for a short time, the beast himself being the final one. Five forms of government have been given by the historians as preceding the imperial in Rome, this last being evidently the existing one in the apostle's day. "One is" we must take as applying to the apostle's day; for at the time of the vision the beast itself "is not," as we have seen. The only other time present would be the time in which the apostle lived himself.

The imperial head came to an end necessarily when the empire as a whole broke up under the attacks of the barbarians; and to make, as Barnes and others do, the exarch of Ravenna the seventh head of the *world*-empire is either to overlook the plain terms of the prophecy, or else to pervert the simple facts of history. The exarchate lasted about two hundred years, which Barnes considers (comparatively) but a "short time;" and the papacy he considers the eighth head. This falls with the exarchate; for the papacy would then be but the seventh, and nothing would correspond.

The seventh head began, according to Elliott, when Diocletian, already emperor, assumed the diadem,—the symbol of despotic sovereignty after the eastern fashion; and he quotes Gibbon's words, that, "like Augustus, Diocletian may be considered the founder of a new empire." But if this were the seventh head, there was a gap between it and the papacy; and this must have been the time when the beast "was not." This is better in some respects than Barnes, and may be really an anticipative fulfillment, such as we find in the "historical" interpretation generally. But it fails when we come to apply it consistently all through, as where Elliott has to make the burning of the woman with fire by the ten horns to be merely the devastation of the city and the Campagna prior to their giving power to the beast, whereas it is really effected by the beast and the horns together, and is the complete end of the ecclesiastical system which the woman represents. It would be manifestly incongruous to suppose the papacy to hate and consume the Roman Catholic church.

The scheme of prophecy involved in all this, if taken as a whole, would destroy entirely the interpretation of Revelation which has been given in these papers, and is negatived by all the considerations that substantiate this. I do not propose, therefore, to go more fully into it. When the papacy ruled the empire, it had ceased to be in a proper sense, the empire, and then it was that according to the chapter before us, the beast "was not." The true bestial character could not co-exist with even the profession of Christianity.

The beast is necessarily, therefore, secular, not ecclesiastical. When the secular empire fell, the beast was not; though in that contradictory condition the woman might ride it. Since that fall there has been no revival, and therefore as yet no seventh head. The seventh head

is constituted that, as I believe, by the union of ten portions of the divided territory to give him power; and the preponderance of Russia in Europe might easily bring about a coalition of this kind. The new imperial head lasts but a short time, is smitten with the sword, possibly degraded to the condition of a "little horn," is revived by the dreadful power of Satan acting through the anti-christian second beast of the thirteenth chapter, assumes the blasphemous character in which we have already seen him, and thus goes into perdition at the appearing of the Lord.

This is the beast, as Revelation contemplates him generally, identified with the eighth head, but who is of the seventh, in fact, the seventh, which had the wound by the sword, yet lived. Thus seen, all the passages seem to harmonize,—a harmony which is the main argument for the truth of such an interpretation of them.

"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and give their power and authority unto the beast." Alas! they are united against God and against His Christ: "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with Him, called, and chosen, and faithful."

Here we have anticipated the conflict of the nineteenth chapter. These that are with Christ are His redeemed people, as is plain. Angels might be "chosen and faithful," but only *men* are "called;" and when He comes forth as a warrior out of heaven, they, as "the armies that were in heaven, follow Him." The rod of iron which He has Himself is given to His people, and the closing scene in the conflict with evil sees them in active and earnest sympathy with Him.

The waters where the harlot sat are next interpreted as "peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues." With another meaning and intent than where it is spoken of Israel, "her seed is in many waters." Her influence is wide-reaching and powerful; but it is brought to an end: "and the ten horns which thou sawest *and* the beast;"—so, and not "*upon* the beast," all authorities give it now—"these shall hate the harlot, and make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her up with fire." That surely is not a temporary infliction, but a full end; and beast and horns unite in it. She has trampled upon men, and, according to the law of divine retribution, it is done to her. This has been partially seen many times in the history of Rome, and the end of the last century was a dreadful warning of what is soon to come more terribly still upon her. The very profession of Christianity which she in time past used for purposes of gain and power over men will no doubt, by the same retributive law, become at last the mill-stone round her neck forever. And no eye will pity her. For it is God who has "put into their hearts to do His will, and to come to one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God should be accomplished."

How good to know amid all that day of terror that God is supreme above all, *in* all, the devices of His enemies! Still "He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of it He restraineth." And this is the time which will most fully demonstrate this. It is the day of the Lord upon all the pride of man to bring it low. It is the day when every refuge of lies shall be swept away, and all the vanity of his thoughts shall be exposed. "The idols He shall utterly abolish." Yea, those who have been their slaves shall fling them to the moles and to the bats. "And the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." Then the way is prepared for

blessing, wide in proportion to the judgment which has introduced it.

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

VICTORY.

*"In all things, we are more than conquerors through
Him that loved us."*

FROM the mount of victory—
Oh, take care!
Steep is the descent, and rough—
Oh, beware!
Many a child of God hath tripped,—
Through unwatchfulness hath slipped,
And of blessing hath been stripped
Unaware.

When the conquest hath been won,
And the roar
Of the battle—fierce and strong—
Is no more,
Think not on the victory,
But of *Him who fought for thee*,—
Bearing, on th'accursed tree,
Sorrow sore.

Thou art but a *broken vase*
In the hand
Of the *Mightiest Conqueror*
In the land.
Thou hast but to *wait and see*,
With thine armor girt on thee,
How the blessed Lord for thee
Takes His stand.

Take no credit to thyself,
Foolish one,
If in battle or in race
Thou hast won.
Give the glory to *His name*
Who, thy lost soul to reclaim,
Suffered scorn and death and shame,—
God's own Son.

H. McD.

NAZARITESHIP,

INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY.

THE Philistines were not a scourge, a chastisement sent from without; they dwelt in Israel's own territory, in the land of promise. Undoubtedly, before this, other nations, whom the faithlessness of the people had left in the midst of Canaan, had been a snare to them, leading them to intermarriage with idolaters, and to the worship of false gods; and Jehovah had given them up into the hands of their enemies. But now those who had been suffered to remain in the conquered land assumed dominion over Israel. Here, then, that which can give victory and peace to the heirs of promise is the strength imparted of separation from all that belongs to the natural man, and entire consecration to God, as far as it is realized. *This Nazariteship is spiritual power*, or rather that which characterizes it when the enemy is within the land. For Samson judged Israel during the dominion of the Philistines. (Judges xv. 20.) Afterward Samuel, Saul, and, above all, David entirely changed the state of things.

“When the Canaanite—when the power of the enemy reigns in the land, Nazariteship alone can give power to one who is faithful. It is a secret unknown to the man of the world. Christ exemplified it in its perfection. Evil reigned amongst the people. The walk of Christ was a walk apart—separate from evil. He was one of the people, but, like Levi (Deut. xxxiii. 9), He was not of them. He was a Nazarite. But we must distinguish with respect to this. Morally, Christ was as separate from sinners while on earth as He is now; but outwardly He was in their midst; and, as the witness and expression of grace, He was spiritually in their midst also. Since His resurrection He is completely separate from

sinners. The world sees Him not, and will see Him no more save in judgment. It is in this last position, and as having put on this character of entire separation from the world, that the assembly, that Christians, are in connection with Him. Such a High-Priest became us. The assembly retains its strength, Christians retain their strength, so far only as they abide in this state of complete separation which the world does not understand, and in which it cannot participate. Human joy and sociability have no part in it; *divine joy and the power of the Holy Ghost are there.*

The life of our adorable Saviour was a life of gravity, always grave and generally straitened (not in Himself, for His heart was a springing well of love, but because of the evil that pressed Him on every side): I speak of His life and of His own heart. With regard to others, His death opened the flood-gates, in order that the full tide of love might flow over poor sinners. Nevertheless, whatever may have been the Lord's habitual separateness He could say, with reference to His disciples, "These things I speak in the world, that they might have *My joy* fulfilled in themselves." It was the best of wishes: divine joy instead of human joy. The day will come when these two joys shall be united, when He will again drink wine, though in a new way, with His people in the kingdom of His Father; and all will be His people. But at present this cannot be; evil reigns in the world. It reigned in Israel, where there ought to have been righteousness. It reigns in Christendom, where holiness and grace should be manifested in all their beauty. The separation unto God, of which we have been speaking, is under these circumstances the only means of enjoying the strength of God. It is the essential position of the assembly. If it has failed in it, it has ceased to manifest the essential character of its Head, in connection with itself, "separate

from sinners, and made higher than the heavens ;" it is but a false witness, *a proof among the Philistines that Dagon is stronger than God : it is a blind prisoner.*

Nevertheless it is remarkable that whenever the world draws away by its allurements that which God has separated from it to Himself, this brings down the judgment of God upon the world and leads to its ruin. Look at Sarah in the house of Pharaoh, and, in this instance, Samson, blind and a prisoner in the hands of the Philistines; and again also, Sarah in the house of Abimelech, although God, on account of the integrity of his heart, did but chasten the latter.

The Nazarite, then, represents Christ such as He was here below in fact and by necessity, and also such as He now is completely and in full right, seated on the right hand of God in heaven—hidden in God, where our life is hid in Him. The Nazarite represents the assembly or an individual Christian, so far as the one and the other are separated from the world and devoted to God, and keep the secret of this separation. This is the assembly's position, the only one which God recognizes. The assembly, being united to Christ, who is separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens, cannot be His in any other manner. It may be unfaithful to it, but this is the standing given it with Christ. It can be recognized in no other. Samson represents to us also the tendency of the assembly and of Christians to fall away from this position—a tendency which does not always produce the same amount of evil fruit, but which causes the inward and practical neglect of Nazariteship, and soon leads to entire loss of strength, so that the assembly gives itself up to the world. God may still use it, may glorify Himself through the havoc it makes in the enemy's land (which ought to be its own); He may even preserve it from the sin to which the slippery path it treads would lead it; *but*

the state of mind which brought it there tends to yet lower downfalls.

God makes use of Samson's marriage with a Philistine woman to punish that people. Still, in the freshness of his strength, his heart with Jehovah, and moved by the Holy Ghost, Samson acts in the might of this strength in the midst of the enemies he has raised up against him; and, in point of fact, he never marries this Philistine woman.

I have said that God used this circumstance. It is thus He may use this spiritual strength of the assembly so long as in heart it cleaves to Him, although its walk may not be faithful or such as He can approve. For it is evident that Samson's marriage with a daughter of Timnath was a positive sin, a flagrant infringement of Jehovah's ordinances, which is in nowise justified by the blessing which the Lord bestowed upon him when wronged by the Philistines. It was not in his marriage he found blessing, but quite the contrary.

Accordingly, Samson has not Israel with him in the conflicts occasioned by his marriage: the Spirit of God does not act upon the people as He did in the case of Gideon, of Jephthah, or Barak.

Moreover, *where Nazariteship is in question, opposition must be expected from the people of God.* A Nazarite is raised up in their midst because they are no longer themselves thus separated unto God. And this being the case, they are without strength, and will allow the world to rule over them, provided that outward peace is left them; and they would not have any one act in faith, because this disquiets the world, and incites it against them. "Knowest thou not," said Israel, "that the Philistines are rulers over us!" Even while acknowledging Samson as one of themselves, the Israelites desire to give up to the Philistines in order to maintain peace.

But in the part of Samson's life now before us there are some details which require more attention. His marriage was a sin ; but the separation of God's people had no longer that measure of practical application which the mind of God had assigned it. The fact itself was inexcusable, because it had its origin in the will of Samson, and he had not sought counsel from God ; but, owing to the influence of circumstances, he was not conscious at that time of the evil he was committing, and God allowed him to seek peace and friendship with the Canaanite world (that is to say, the world within the inclosure of God's people), instead of making war against them ; so that, as to the Philistines, Samson had right on his side in the contentions which followed. Before his marriage, Samson had slain the lion, and found honey in its carcase. He had strength from God while walking in his integrity.

This is the "riddle," the secret of God's people. The lion has no strength against one who belongs to Christ ; Christ has destroyed the strength of him that had the power of death. By the might of the Spirit of Christ our warfare is victory, and honey flows therefrom. But this is carried on in the secret of communion with the Lord. David maintained this place better in the simplicity of duty ; Samson did not keep himself from these connections with the world to which the conditions of the people easily led. *This is always a Christian's danger.*

But, whatever may be their ignorance, if the children of God make any alliance with the world, and thus pursue a line of conduct opposed to their true character, they will assuredly find disappointment. They do not keep themselves apart for God ; they do not keep their secret with God, a secret which is only known in communion with Himself. Their wisdom is lost ; the world becomes worse than before, and the world despises them, and goes

on its own way regardless of their indignation at its behaviour toward them.

What had Samson to do there? His own will is in exercise, and takes its share in the use of that strength which God had given him (like Moses when he slew the Egyptian). We also carry a little of the world with us when, being children of God, we have mingled with it. But God makes use of this to separate us forcibly and thoroughly from it, making union impossible by setting us in direct conflict with the world, even in those very things which had formed our connection with it. "*We had better have remained apart.*" But it is necessary that God should thus deal with us, when this union with the world becomes an habitual and a tolerated thing in the church. (In this union, when it takes place between the world and true Christians, or those at least who profess the truth, the world always rules; when, on the contrary, it is with the hierarchy that the world is connected, it is then a superstitious hierarchy that rules, for it is necessary in order to restrain the will of man by religious bonds adapted to the flesh).

The most outrageous circumstances pass unnoticed. Think of a Nazarite married to a Philistine! God must break off such a union as this by causing enmities and hostilities to arise, since there is no intelligence of that moral nearness to God which separates from the world and gives that quietness of spirit which, finding its strength in God, can overcome and drive away the enemy, when God leads into conflict by the plain revelation of His will.

But if we are linked with the world, it will always have dominion over us: we have no right to resist the claims of relationship which we ourselves have formed. We may draw nigh to the world, because the flesh is in us. The world cannot really draw nigh to the children of God,

because it has only its own fallen and sinful nature. The approximation is all on our side, and always in evil, whatever the appearance may be. To bear testimony in the midst of the world is another thing. We cannot, therefore, plead the secret of the Lord, the intimate relationship of God's people to Himself, and the feelings they produce; for the secret and the strength of the Lord are exclusively the right and the strength of His redeemed people. How could this be told to his Philistine wife? What influence would the exclusive privileges of God's people have over one who is not of their number? *How can we speak of these privileges when we disown them by the very relationship in which we stand?*

We disown them by imparting this secret, for we then cease to be separated and consecrated to God, and to confide in Him as we can do in no other. This experience should have preserved Samson for the future from a similar step. *But in many respects experience is useless in the things of God*, "because we need faith at the moment; for it is God Himself whom we need."

Nevertheless, Samson here still retains his strength. The sovereign will of God is fulfilled in this matter in spite of very serious faults, which resulted from the general state of things in which Samson participated. Once in the battle-field, he exhibits the strength of Jehovah, who was with him; and, in answer to his cry, Jehovah supplies him with water for his thirst. (Judges xv.)

It is here that this general history of Samson ends. We have seen that the people of God, his brethren, were against him—the general rule in such a case. "It is the history of the power of the Spirit of Christ exercised in Nazariteship, in separation from the world *unto God*; but in the midst of a condition entirely opposed to this separation, and in which he who is upheld by the power of this Spirit, finding himself again in his habitual sphere, is

always in danger of being unfaithful; and so much the more so (unless he lives very near to God in the repose of obedience) from his consciousness of strength."

Christ exhibited the perfection of a heavenly walk under similar circumstances. We see that no one understood the source of His power or His authority. He must have given up all hope of satisfying men with respect to the principles by which He was guided. They must have been like Him to comprehend Him, and then they would not have needed to be convinced. To walk before God, and leave His justification with God, was all that could be done. He silenced His enemies by the well-known principles of God and of all good conscience; but He could not reveal the secret between Him and the Father—the element of His life and the spring of all His actions. If the truth came out, when Satan pushed things so far that nothing else could be said, His enemies treated Him as a blasphemer, and He openly denounced them as the children of Satan. We find this particularly in John's gospel; but at that time, Jesus held no longer the same relationship to the people,—indeed, from the beginning of this gospel, they are treated as rejected, and the person of the Son of God is brought forward.

From the commencement of His ministry, He maintains the place of an obedient servant, not entering on public service until called of God, after having taken the lowest place in John's baptism. This was the point at issue when He was tempted in the wilderness. The tempter endeavored to make Him come out of His place as the obedient man, because He was the Son of God. But the strong man was bound there; to remain in obedience is the only way to bind the adversary. Christ ever walked in this perfect separation of the inner man, in communion with His Father, and entire dependence upon Him in obedience, without a single moment of self-

will. Therefore was He the most gracious and accessible of men : we observe in His ways a tenderness and a kindness never seen in man; yet we always feel that He was a stranger,—not that He came to be a stranger in His relationship with men, but that which lay deepest in His own heart—that which constituted His very nature, and consequently guided His work by virtue of His communion with the Father, was entirely foreign to all that influences man.

This spirit of self-denial, entire renunciation of His own will, obedience, and dependence upon His Father, is seen throughout the life of Jesus. After John's baptism, He was praying when He received the Holy Ghost. Before calling the apostles, He spent the whole of the night in prayer. After the miracle of feeding the five thousand with five loaves, He went up into a mountain apart to pray. If the request is made to sit on His right hand and on His left in His kingdom, it is not His to give, but to them for whom it is prepared of His Father. In His agony of Gethsemane, His expectation and dread of death is all laid before His Father; and the cup which His Father has given Him, shall He not drink it? The effect is, that all is calm before men. *He is the Nazarite, separate from men by His entire communion with His Father*, and by the obedience of a Son who had no other will than to fulfill the good pleasure of His Father. It was His meat to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to finish His work.

But it was when man would not receive Him, and there was no longer any relationship whatever between man and God, that Jesus fully assumed His Nazarite character,—separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens. It is Christ in heaven who is the true Nazarite, and who, having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, has sent Him forth upon His disciples, in order

that, by the power of the Holy Ghost, they might maintain the same position on the earth through communion with Him and with His Father; walking in the separateness of this communion, and capable, therefore, of using this power with a divine intelligence that enlightens and sustains the obedience for which they are set apart unto the glory of Christ, and for His service. "If ye abide in Me," said He to His disciples, "and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

They were not of the world, even as He was not of the world. The assembly which was formed of His disciples should walk as separated from the world, and set apart unto Himself in a heavenly life.

"Christ is, then, the antitype of Samson's history, as to the principle it contains. But its detail proves that this principle of strength has been intrusted to those who were, alas! but too capable of failing in communion and obedience, and thus of losing its enjoyment.

Samson sins again through his intercourse with "the daughter of a strange god;" he connects himself again with women of the Philistines, amongst whom his father's house and the tribe of Dan were placed. But he retains his strength until the influence of these connections becomes so great that he reveals the secret of his strength in God. His heart, far from God, places that confidence in a Philistine which should have existed only between his soul and God. (Chap. xvi.)

To possess and keep a secret proves intimacy with a friend; but the secret of God, the possession of His confidence, is the highest of all privileges; to betray it to a stranger, be he who he may, is to despise the precious position in which His grace has placed us; it is to lose it. What have the enemies of God to do with the secrets of God? It was thus that Samson gave himself up to his

enemies; all attempts were powerless against him so long as he maintained his Nazariteship. This separation once lost, although Samson was apparently as strong, and his exterior as goodly as before, yet Jehovah was no longer with him: "I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that Jehovah was departed from him."

We can scarcely imagine a greater folly than that of confiding his secret to Delilah, after having so many times been seized by the Philistines at the moment she awoke him. *And thus it is with the assembly; when it yields itself to the world, it loses all its wisdom, even that which is common to man.* Poor Samson! his strength may be restored, but he has lost his sight forever.

But who has ever hardened himself against the Lord and prospered?

If the unfaithfulness of the assembly has given the world power over it, the world has, on the other hand, assailed the rights of God by corrupting the assembly, and therefore brings down judgment upon itself at the moment of its greatest triumph,—a judgment which, if it puts an end to the existence as well as to the misery of the Nazarite, destroys at the same time, in one common ruin, the whole glory of the world. *J. N. D*

THE OFFERINGS OF THE TWELVE PRINCES.

(Num. vii.)

IN reading this very long chapter, the question naturally is asked, Why is there so much apparently needless space given to offerings the same in every particular in the case of each of the twelve princes? The simple facts might have been stated in one twelfth the space, and not one item have been omitted. But we well know that here as everywhere else all is perfect; and if we have eyes to see, the very repetitions—never in God's

Word "vain repetitions,"—convey to us lessons in a way more striking and forcible than could have been done by any other means.

The position of this chapter is noteworthy. In the first chapter of the book, we have Israel ranged around the tabernacle in due order,—each tribe numbered and associated with its appropriate companions; next, we have the evil excluded from the camp; then, positive consecration, in the Nazarite; finally, as the crown upon it all, the consecrated offerings of the twelve princes. All this has much that is simple in its application to ourselves. The proper centre is Christ; round Him, in God's eyes, even if we fail to manifest it before the world, we are gathered. Each one numbered,—not one forgotten or left out. "He calleth His own sheep by *name*,"—none so insignificant as to be needless. Each, too, is in his proper position, associated with those to whom he ministers and from whom he receives that which is lacking in each—thus tempered together, "fitly framed together," no part lacking, the "whole body maketh increase unto the edifying of itself in love." Equally simple and important is the exclusion of defilement,—whether defiled *persons*, as in 1 Cor. v., or defiled *things*, as in Col. iii., 1 Pet. ii. Resulting from this putting off the deeds of the old man is the full consecration, in a threefold measure, of the Nazarite, who shows us what the separation of Christ was,—"For their sakes I sanctify Myself," which is the example for us, "that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Now comes the presentation of offerings, acceptable and well pleasing, because in their proper position, springing out of proper relationships and conditions of heart.

The material of the offerings, whether of utensils or sacrifices, spoke of Christ. The bowls and chargers were of silver—the white metal of redemption,—in itself sug-

gesting both the price paid and the effect wrought. This was the first part of the offering of each prince. God begins with redemption: it is for Him the ground upon which He can have to do with us in grace. He would have us remember this, and in our approaches to Him to have the same thoughts. These silver utensils were filled with fine flour mingled with oil. The flour reminds us of Him who as a perfect man walked here for God. Subjected to the grinding force of circumstances and trials, it only the more clearly manifested the fine flour of a perfect humanity. The oil mingled with the flour speaks of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit who was with Him, in Him from the moment of His conception. Here, then, we have the person of Christ. The gold was typical of divine glory, and so of Him who perfectly glorified God in what He was and what he did. He was the brightness—the effulgence of His glory, the express image—the character, the imprint of His person. “I have glorified Thee on the earth.” Fitly following the silver of redemption and the meal of His perfect humanity is this gold which tells how perfectly God was manifested and glorified. The incense was, to God, fragrant of Christ, all of whose garments smell of myrrh and cassia and aloes. “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” God has found His delight in Him. “His name is as ointment poured forth.” Let us ever remember that Christ is inexpressibly dear to God. And how beautifully appropriate is it that the gold of divine glory should contain the incense of a precious Christ! It is so all through. When we see God’s glory manifested, we will find the sweet savor of Christ present. Whether we look back at creation,—nay, before that (Prov. viii.), or at the incarnation, or up into those regions where all is gold, we will find that this gold—this manifestation of glory is, as it were, the receptacle for sweet incense, the means

of presenting to us the value of Christ in God's eyes.

Next come the sacrifices, beginning with the burnt-offering. "One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year." Unity seems to be suggested here, in the *one*, diversity in the three kinds of animals. There is but *one* burnt-offering; it is enough, and it is complete. The bullock, the animal of strength and service, shows us Christ in the perfection of His strength, in the full submission of His service, yielding Himself up wholly to God in death. The ram speaks of consecration—that obedience unto death which could stop at nothing short of that full measure of devotion. The lamb, again, reminds us of that meekness which could say, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Blessed Lord! All, all was laid willingly upon the altar. "I delight to do Thy will" was the language of Thy heart; as the bullock in perfect strength, the ram in devotedness, the lamb in meekness, Thou didst lay down Thy life for God's glory!

For the sin-offering, there is but the single kid of the goats. One there must be, or the view of Christ's work would be incomplete; more than one was not needed, for here the single thought of judgment against sin, borne fully, was presented. There is no multiplication of the sin-offering. It was not a sweet savor unto God, it was a solemn reminder of our sins, and of penalty borne and debt paid; but this thought, while present, does not dominate God's view of Christ, nor should it our worship of Him.

Lastly come the peace-offerings, beginning with *two*, which would seem to remind us of God *and* man—food for both,—and then three series of fives—God with man perfectly manifested. What variety is here! The ox, as we have seen, means service, strength. God calls us to share with Him in that view of Christ's work which is for us as well as for Him. "Five rams" gives us our share in

a devotedness which, while it was *to* God, was *for* us. The goats are not here sin-offerings, but sweet savors to God, yet of those animals which were ordinarily used for sin-offerings. He who was made sin for us was also most perfectly well pleasing to God—never more so than when made sin. He is also our food. How these twos and fives and threes tell us that God would have us “eat,—yea, drink abundantly”! The peace-offerings are not limited—their very numbers tell us this. “God with us” is the only measure of communion.

Such, imperfectly, is the character of these offerings of the twelve princes. Have we not seen, in going over them, why God could repeat each offering over in full at each presentation? Christ is the subject, and He never becomes tedious to the Father. He dwells with delight upon each aspect of the Lord’s person and work. He lingers over their descriptions, He goes back to them with fresh delight. He makes no general summary including all, but enters with keen delight into each detail.

Does not all this speak to our conscience and heart? If God thus protracts the enumeration of the oft-repeated excellencies of His Beloved, shall we not learn to imitate Him, and never grow weary of dwelling upon them and of speaking of them to one another. It is unfamiliarity with the subject which leads one soon to weary of it. The enthusiast never tires of thinking of what absorbs him,—the painter, his art,—the merchant, his business. So let it be with us. Let us learn, from those eighty-nine verses, to be such enthusiasts in regard to our blessed Lord,—so absorbed with Him, that we can truly say,
 “Jesus, of Thee we ne’er would tire.”

Notice, too, that these princes have in their offerings a point of resemblance. Differing in name, each one significant of some special truth needed by their tribe; differing in tribe, each one with special weakness needing

special grace ; they meet in a common point, and that is Christ. Here the need, whatever it may be, has been fully met : the grace, whatever it may be, is "the grace that is in Christ Jesus." They are linked together, and covered over, as it were, by their offerings. How simple the lesson ! Around Christ, occupied with Him, all His people find all their needs met, and themselves knit together by that which occupies them.

But, lastly, in this twelvefold repetition of the offerings, we see how God regards individual devotedness. The offering of each one is noted by itself. This shows us that we *are* individuals. Our service, our trials, our worship, is viewed separately, and "in that day," "every man shall have praise of God."

A SONG IN THE NIGHT.

(Job xxxv. 10; Ps. xli. 8.)

WHEN will the *sighing* be over?
 When will the *groaning* be done?
 When will the *sorrow* and *weeping*,
 And all of earth's *trials* be gone?

When will the *sinning* and *failing*?
 When will the *wanderings* cease?
 When will the *strife* and *division*,
 And all *roots of bitterness* cease?

When will God's saints be united?
 When will their *schisms* all cease?
 When will their love flow unhindered
 In rivers of unruffled peace?

When will the deep "*tribulations*,"
 When will "*afflictions*" be gone?
 When will the *parting* and *dying*
 And *sadness* and *anguish* be done?

When will "our hope" be obtained?
 When will "our faith" merge in sight?
 When will the living "be changed"?
 And dead saints raised into light?

When Jesus our Lord shall return,
 The things that *are not* shall *then be*.
 The things that are *now* shall have vanished
 When "*caught up*" His glory to see.

Then let us keep "*watching*" and "*praying*,"
 And "*waiting*" that glory to share,
 "Be *steadfast*" whilst on earth staying,
 For Him we'll soon "*meet in the air*."

So. Boston, May 26, 1892.

J. W. M.

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART VI. (Chap. xvii.—xix. 4.)—*Continued*.

BABYLON AND HER OVERTHROW.

THE eighteenth chapter gives the judgment from the divine side. The question has been naturally raised, Is it another judgment? There is nothing here about beast or horns,—nothing of man's intervention at all,—and there are signs apparently of another and deeper woe than human hands could inflict. It is this last which is most conclusive in the way of argument, and we shall examine it in its place.

Another angel descends out of heaven, having great authority: and the earth is lighted with his glory. Earth is indeed now to be lighted, and with a glory which is not of earth. Babylon is denounced as fallen,—not destroyed, as is plain by what follows, but given up to a condition which is a spiritual desolation, worse than the physical

one of Babylon of old under which she has long lain, and from which the terms seem derived. She has become the dwelling-place of demons—"knowing ones;" Satan's underlings, with the knowledge of many centuries of acquaintance with fallen men, and serpent-craft to use their knowledge; a "hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird." The parable of the mustard-seed comes necessarily to mind; and without confining the words here to that, it is amazing to see how deliberately filthy and impure Rome's system is. She binds her clergy to celibacy, forces them to pollute their minds with the study of every kind of wickedness, and then by her confessional system teaches them to pour this out into the minds of those to whom she at once gives them access and power over them in the name of religion itself!

What has brought a professing Christian body into so terrible a condition as this bespeaks? We are answered here by reference once more to her spiritual fornication with the nations and with the kings of the earth, and to the profit which those make, who engage in her religious traffic. As worldly power is before all things her aim, and she has heaven to barter in return for it, the nations easily fall under her sway, and are intoxicated with the "wine of the fury"—the madness—"of her fornication." First of all, it is the masses at which she aims, and only as an expedient to secure these the better, with the kings of the earth. Thus she can pose as democratic among democrats, and as the protector of popular rights as against princes. In feudal times, the church alone could fuse into herself all conditions of men, turning the true and free equality of Christians into that which linked all together into vassalage to herself; and so the power grew which was power to debase herself to continually greater depths of evil. Simoniac to the finger-ends, with her it is

a settled thing that the "gift of God can be purchased with money." And with her multiplicity of merchandise, which is put here in catalogue, there will naturally be an abundant harvest for brokers. With these, who live by her, she increases her ranks of zealous followers.

Another voice now sounds from heaven,—“Come forth from her, my people, that ye partake not of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues; for her sins have heaped themselves to heaven, and God hath remembered her unrighteousnesses.”

Even in Babylon, and thus late, therefore, there are those in her who are the people of God. But they are called to separation. Rome is a false system which yet retains what is saving truth. Souls may be saved in it, but the truth it holds cannot save the false system in which it is found. Truth cannot save the error men would ally with it, nor error destroy the truth. There are children of God, alas! that “suffer Jezebel,” but Jezebel’s true children are another matter: “I will kill them with death” is God’s emphatic word. The testing-time comes when the roads that seemed to lie together are found to separate, and then the necessity of separation comes. Truth and error cannot lead to the same place, and he that pursues the road to the end will find what is at the end.

“Recompense to her as she recompensed; according to her works, double to her double: as she hath glorified herself, and lived luxuriously, so much torment and sorrow give her. For she said in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore in one day shall her plagues come on her,—death and sorrow and famine; and she shall be burned up with fire: for strong is the Lord God who hath judged her.”

The government of God is equal-handed, and for it the day of retribution cannot be lacking. “God hath remem-

bered" Babylon at last. In truth, He never lost sight of her for a moment. But the wheels of His chariot seem often slow in turning, and there is purpose in it: "I gave her space to repent," He says pitifully: but pity is not weakness,—nay, it is the consciousness of strength that may make one slow. There is no possibility of escape. No height or depth can hide from Him the object of His search:—no greatness, no littleness. The day of reckoning comes at last, and not an item will be dropped from the account.

Then follows the wail of the kings of the earth for her, while they stand off in fear for the calamity that is come upon her, more sentimental than the selfish cry of the merchants, whose business with regard to her has slipped out of their hands. And then comes the detail of it, article by article,—all the luxuries of life, each of which has its price, and ending with "slaves, and souls of men." If one had skill to run through the catalogue here, he would doubtless find that each had its meaning; but we cannot attempt this now. The end of the traffic is at hand, and the Canaanite is to be cast out of the house of the Lord.

The lament of so many classes shows by how many links Rome has attached men to herself. Her vaunted unity is large enough to include the most various adaptations to the character of men. From the smoothest and most luxurious life to the hardest and most ascetic, she can provide for all grades, and leave room for large diversities of doctrine also. The suppleness of Jesuitism is only that of her trained athletes, and the elasticity of its ethics is only that of the subtlest ethereal distillation of her spirit. But though she may have allurements even for the people of God, she has yet no link with heaven; and while men are lamenting upon earth, heaven is bidden to rejoice above, because God is judging her with the

judgment that saints and apostles and prophets have pronounced upon her.

Finally, and reminding us of the prophetic action as to her prototype, "a strong angel took up a great mill-stone, and cast it into the sea, saying, 'Thú's with a mighty fall shall Babylon the great city be cast down, and shall be found no more at all.'" And then comes the extreme announcement of her desolation. Not merely shall her merchandise be no more, there shall be no sign of life at all,—no pleasant sound, no mechanic's craft, no menial work, no light of lamp, no voice of bridegroom or of bride; and then the reason of her doom is again given: "For thy merchants were the princes of the earth; for with thy sorcery were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth."

Interpretation is hardly needed in all this. The detail of judgment seems intended rather to fix the attention and give us serious consideration of what God judges at last in this unsparing way. Surely it is needed now, when Christian men are being taken with the wiles of one who in a day of conflict and uncertainty can hold out to them a rest which is not Christ's rest; who in the midst of defection from the faith can be the champion of orthodoxy while shutting up the word of life from men; who can be all things to all men, not to save, but to destroy them: at such a time, how great a need is there for pondering her doom as the word of prophecy declares it, and the joy of heaven over the downfall of the sorceress at last.

Heaven indeed is full of joy and gratulation and worship: "After these things, I heard as it were a great voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, 'Halleluiah! salvation and honor and glory and power belong to our God; for true and righteous are his judgments; for He hath judged the great harlot which did corrupt the earth

with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.' And a second time they say, 'Halleluiah!' And her smoke goeth up forever and ever. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshiped God, saying, 'Amen: halleluiah!'"

We may now briefly discuss the question of how far there is indication here of a divine judgment, apart from what is inflicted by the wild beast and its horns. These, we have read, "shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her up with fire." In the present chapter, we have again, "And she shall be burned up with fire; for strong is the Lord God who hath judged her." The kings of the earth "wail over her when they look upon the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment." And so with the merchants and the mariners. And finally we read, "Her smoke goeth up forever and ever." Nothing in all this forces us to think of a special divine judgment outside of what is inflicted by human instruments, except the last. The last statement, I judge, does. It cannot but recall to our minds what is said of the worshipers of the beast and false prophet in the fourteenth chapter, where the same words are used; but this is not a judgment on earth at all: could indeed "her smoke goeth up forever and ever" be said of any earthly judgment? The words used are such as imply strict eternity: no earthly judgment can endure in this way; and the language does not permit the idea that the persistency is only that of the effects. No, it is eternity ratifying the judgment of time, as it surely will do; and it is only when we have taken our place, as it were, amid the throng in heaven, that this is seen.

But thus, then, we seem to have here no positive declaration of any judgment of Babylon on earth, save by the hands of the last head of western empire and his

kings. Yet the eighteenth chapter, we have still to remember, says nothing of these kings: all is from God absolutely, and at least they are not considered. It has been also suggested that it is the "city" rather than the woman (the ecclesiastical system) that is before us in this chapter; but much cannot be insisted on as to this, seeing that the identification of the woman with the city is plainly stated in the last verse of the previous one, and also that the terms even here suppose their identity.

On the other side, there is in fact no absolute identity; nor is it difficult to think of the destruction of the religious system without its involving at all that of the city; nor, again, would one even suppose that the imperial head, with his subordinates, would utterly destroy the ancient seat of his own empire. Here a divine judgment, strictly and only that, taking up and enforcing the human one as of God, becomes at least a natural thought, and worthy of consideration.

Outside of the book of Revelation, Scripture is in full harmony with this. The millennial earth, as we may have occasion to see again, when we come to speak more of it, is certainly to have witnesses of this kind to the righteous judgment of God upon the objects of it. In it, as it were, heaven and hell are both to be represented before the eyes of men, that they may be fully warned of the wrath to come. During the present time, it is objected, there is not sufficient witness; in the millennium, therefore, there shall be no room left for doubt. Therefore while the cloud and fire rest as of old, but with wider stretch, as of sheltering wings, over Jerusalem (Isa. iv. 5, 6; comp. Matt. xxiii. 37), we have, on the other side, the open witness of the judgment upon transgressors which the Lord Himself renders as a type of the deeper judgment beyond. (Isa. lxvi. 23, 24, comp. Mark ix.)

Beside this, Edom remains desolate, and, to come near

to what is before us, Babylon also. (Isa. xiii. 20; xxxiv. 9, 10.) How suitable that Rome, the seat of a power far worse and of far longer continuance should be so visited! Such a judgment would fill out the prophecy most fully and exactly. What a picture of eternal judgment is that of Idumea, in that "year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion"! "And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever." Rome is the great Edom as it is the great Babylon, and it would be really strange if there were not to be in her case a similar recompense. Barnes quotes from a traveler in Italy in 1850 what is only a striking confirmation of the story told by all who with eyes open have visited the country: "I behold everywhere, in Rome, near Rome, and through the whole region from Rome to Naples, the most astounding proofs, not merely of the possibility, but the probability, that the whole region of central Italy will one day be destroyed by such a catastrophe. The soil of Rome is *tufa*, with a volcanic subterranean action going on. At Naples, the boiling sulphur is to be seen bubbling near the surface of the earth. When I drew a stick along the ground, the sulphurous smoke followed the indentation. . . . The entire country and district is volcanic. It is saturated with beds of sulphur and the substrata of destruction. It seems as certainly prepared for the flames as the wood and coal on the hearth are prepared for the taper which shall kindle the fire to consume them. The divine hand alone seems to me to hold the fire in check by a miracle as great as that which protected the cities of the plain till the righteous Lot had made his escape to the mountains."

That Rome's doom will be as thus indicated, we may well believe. And it is in awful suitability that she that

has kindled so often the fire for God's saints should thus be herself a monumental fire of His vengeance in the day in which He visits for these things!

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

HANNAH AND ELI: A CONTRAST.

(Continued from page 162.)

NEXT, Hannah sees to the clothing of Samuel. Clothing, in Scripture, seems to mean those principles and habits according to which a person acts. Thus a garment of mixed texture—woolen and linen—was forbidden, as indicating mixed principles and habits—“neither cold nor hot.” The woman was forbidden to wear a man's clothing, and the man that of the woman,—neither was to act in a manner unbecoming the sex. Leprosy in the garment had to be either torn out or the whole burned,—defilement in habits was to be purged away. The garment spotted by the flesh is in contrast with that pure religion which keeps itself unspotted from the world; while, in glory, the fine white linen in which the saints are clothed is their “righteousnesses”—righteous acts. Thus the care for the clothing typifies that care for the habits, principles, and acts which go to make up the outward appearance of the child. Hannah could not change Samuel's heart; she could see to his outward appearance. Because parents are helpless as to regeneration, there is no reason why they should not be careful as to the conduct of their children. But mark the occasion when Hannah took the new garment to her child. It was when she went to offer sacrifices. As the precious truths of the atonement are set forth in these, so the effects of it are shown in the garment. Doubtless she sought to have the child enter with her into the precious meaning of the sacrifices, and thus he could appreciate that holiness

which becometh God's house. So now, parents should ever connect in their own minds, and in the instruction of their children, these related truths. Constant care as to the behavior, apart from the blessed truths of Christ's redemption, would result in making the child either a self-righteous moralist or drive it to the opposite—extreme looseness and indulgence; while linked with the constraining power of Christ's great love, filling and overflowing the heart, behavior becomes but the natural outcome of that love, seen, believed, and received. For will not God bless His gospel in thus saving and keeping the children of believers?

We come now to see the contrast in these two examples of the parent as last seen. Eli hears the doom of his house from the Lord, still allowing his sons to go on in their course. They are slain in battle, carrying the ark upon their shoulders, thus showing that God will never link His holiness with sin,—that His ark had better fall into the hands of enemies than be defended by defiled priests. Eli, as he hears the message of his own bereavement, but worst of all of what had befallen the ark, falls from his seat and dies. How sad the ending of a life which had such opportunities! And when we ask why, our answer must be, in the words of Scripture, "Because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." We know this marked an epoch in Israel's history, but we are speaking now of the simple but intensely solemn individual application for all parents. Hannah celebrates with a song God's goodness to her, and passes from her own personal joy to the complete victory God would soon secure in the earth. It is a song of triumph, sung by one who had passed through the darkness into the "large place" of deliverance. And what spirit can be so strong to deal with the difficult and real trials of bringing up a child for God as the spirit of exultant

praise?—God has triumphed; He will do so still. And so the last we see of Hannah is thus praising God, still enjoying his blessing, and yearly going up to the house of God to offer sacrifices and see to the apparel of her child. How simple, how happy her life! And what was the key to it all? She took God into her thoughts, plans, and actions for her child.

Of the importance of this subject it is needless to speak. Every Christian parent with an awakened conscience has often thought and prayed about it. Many have the joy of seeing their prayers answered and their children growing up to be a comfort to them and an honor to God. Many, alas! are seeing the reverse, and their hearts are crushed with grief as they think of the ruin that has come into their own homes; and multitudes of others are going on with unconcern, their children growing up in the world and of it. For these latter, surely some word of earnest warning is needed. Will they bring dishonor on God and the blessed name of the Lord Jesus? will they imperil the souls of their children by allowing in them habits or associations which can only bring damage? But what can be said to those who have failed and are conscious of it? It is easy to point out the cause of the ruin, but is there not, in some measure at least, recovery for Eli? The example of Jacob is an encouragement. His sons had made his name to stink among the Gentiles; but God calls him back to Bethel,—back to the place of meeting God, of seeing self in all its helplessness and God in His all-sufficiency. Under the power of that call, Jacob can speak to his family and be obeyed by them. There must be a bowing under God's hand, and owning His chastening. There must also be a thorough restoration in one's own soul to God,—the first love regained, and then taking up the broken and scattered threads of responsibility, the recovered soul is to seek, in God's fear and by His help, to regain that authority over, that respect in, the children which had been lost. God blesses every sincere turning

to Himself, though He does not pledge Himself to undo our misdoings. His holiness,—nay, our own needs require that we should taste some of the wholesome bitterness of that cup which a Father's love hands to us—"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

May our gracious God stir up the hearts of Christian parents to a firm faith in His power to save early in life their children, to a sense of responsibility in bringing them up for God, not for themselves. Were there this spirit of humiliation and prayer, how soon would weeping give place to joy, and Hannah's song be on many lips!

SUBMISSION AND REST.

THE camel, at the close of day,
 Kneels down upon the sandy plain
 To have his burden lifted off,
 And rest to gain.

My soul, thou too shouldst to thy knees
 When daylight draweth to a close,
 And let thy Master lift the load
 And grant repose.

Else how couldst thou to-morrow meet,
 With all to-morrow's work to do,
 If thou thy burden all the night
 Dost carry through?

The camel kneels at break of day
 To have his guide replace his load,
 Then rises up anew to take
 The desert road.

So thou shouldst kneel at morning's dawn
 That God may give thee daily care,
 Assured that He no load too great
 Will make thee bear.

"Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." (Matt. xi. 29, 30.)

FROM AMAM TO BIZIOTHIAH:

A RECORD OF THE SOUL'S PROGRESS, AND A WITNESS TO
THE WORD.

Josh. xv. 26-28.

TO-DAY we are in the presence of a most solemn thing. We see men who are professed teachers of the Word of God giving up the claim that it is really that. They allow that Scripture *contains* the word of God, but deny that it *is* the Word of God, or that its words are in every part from Him. That is what I believe and hold to, that every word is of Him. Of course, no one questions that there are mistakes in our translations, and even in the existing copies of the original. Neither translators nor those who copied from the old manuscripts were kept from the possibility of error in their work. But what *is* meant is that if we could get back to the original, and behind all the copies, we *should* find absolutely flawless accuracy in every part: in that sense, I do assert that we have verbal inspiration; and that its cosmogony, history, geography, as well as spiritual truth, is, one as much as the other, perfect. As the Lord asserts for Himself, so may we for all Scripture, "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" If Scripture fails in truthfulness just where it can be tested, how can it be worthy to be believed in matters where we cannot test it?

I am not to-day going over any of the usual kind of evidence as to these points, however. God has given us, I believe, for these times in which it is so much needed, a new key to the interpretation of His Word, enabling us to realize its complete inspiration more perfectly than ever yet, and to get at its meaning more perfectly also. Mathematics we speak of as what at least is absolute truth. Now it is capable of the fullest proof that God

has, by means of the symbolism of numbers, brought in mathematics as a witness to the certainty and fullness of His Word. He has given it, in short, everywhere, and even, as it would appear, in an almost microscopical way, a *numerical structure*, which certifies it by *illuminating it*. Thus, if there are five books of Moses, there is a reason why there should be just that number, and why each book should stand where it does in its numerical place,—a reason founded upon the meaning of the number itself in Scripture, and the agreement of that meaning with the character of the book itself.

Just so with the divisions of each book, and with the divisions of those divisions, until, in some places, it goes down to *the very words themselves*,—each true division manifests itself as that by the same agreement between the character of the division and the meaning of the number of its place. And this is what I hope to show you now: nine words are all my text; and I believe I can demonstrate to you that each of these words is perfectly in place,—that its place accords with its meaning,—that is, its number declares its nature, the whole combining to bring out of the words a spiritual significance which proves the whole to be divine! And this I would gladly have subjected to the fullest and keenest criticism that can be given to it. I have no doubt whatever that it will stand it all; and that it will not only stand as a proof, not to be gainsaid, of the perfect inspiration of Scripture, but also as a witness that we may and must read our Bibles more closely than ever yet, and that so read, they have an infinite store of blessing for us, which may He use, as He would, for sanctification to our souls!

If we take up the book of Joshua, every one is aware that there are in it whole chapters which consist almost entirely of names,—the boundary-lines of tribes, the cities belonging to them, etc. What are we to think of these

chapters? what is their use? what spiritual significance have they? If you examine the commentaries, you will find literally nothing in the latter way. They will tell you where such or such a place is to be found or not to be found. They will give you criticisms upon the text, linguistic or archæological. But as for any thing that would speak to the heart of a child of God as of something from his Father to him: what, indeed, can you expect of it from a mere list of names?

It is a very serious question. For if indeed it be but a list of names,—if there be in it materials for history, geography,—any thing else you please, but nothing spiritual, then *why should* there be the need of inspiration to record it? To admit this as fact is to give the deniers of verbal inspiration their best possible argument, and liberty to the destructionist critics to do all they please with what, if taken out of our Bibles, no one would regret or miss.

Well, you say, out of Judah's hundred and fifteen cities, how many should we miss? Yes, but whose fault is this? Just having been through the whole, I can say, that with perhaps one doubtful exception, I know of none but stand in their place, figures in a continuous picture or series of pictures, of the greatest beauty, and deepest significance from end to end. Take one away out of any of these, there would be a loss indeed; and this we shall see out of the nine names before us.

Only a list of names? Look in the seventh of Hebrews, and see how much significance is to be found in a few names. "For this Melchisedek, 'king of righteousness,' priest of the Most High God, . . . first being by interpretation, 'king of righteousness,' and after that, 'king of Salem,' which is to say, 'king of peace.'" Notice how the apostle not only translates the names, but how he insists too upon the order: "*first*, 'King of righteousness,' and *after that*, 'King of Salem,' which is, 'King of peace;'"

what a withering contempt would be poured upon us by our fine critics to-day if we dared to insist upon such importance of the order, "first" and "after that"! and yet it can be justified most fully as having spiritual necessity. The Lord will in fact be "King of righteousness," acting in judgment to remove out of the way the evil, before He can become "King of Salem," and bring in peace. But if we were to go through Scripture like that, would it not give us everywhere plenty of matter for research? Would it not make us feel that there was treasure under our feet in every spot we trod upon in Scripture, and show us perhaps, in result, that in just the most barren-seeming spots the mines are? For, assuredly, here as in nature, not all the gold gleams upon the surface; and where it does so, it is witness to the richer veins that lie beneath. And Scripture searched in this way now, with honest, believing, patient industry, with what riches will it not repay us (after all that has been spent on it) to-day!

In this fifteenth of Joshua, the names of the cities of Judah fill a large part of the sixty-three verses. I am merely going to translate a few of them, and show how they read as Scripture puts them together. In such a book as "Pilgrim's Progress," the names are in English, and we are assured by simply reading them that they are intended to have spiritual significance. If we were Hebraists, we should find large quantities of Bible names just as simple as Bunyan's. "Melchisedek" is as clear to one who understands Hebrew, as "king of righteousness" is to us. I do not mean that every word will be as clear as that by any means; yet there is significance all through, and to be found. Vocabularies differ much; but the meaning need not be uncertain if we will attend to the help that God has given us to assure ourselves what is the true one.

A list of names standing separately merely, we might

be in doubt about. Words thus apart, and forming no sentences, might have easily different meanings attaching to them. Grouped in sentences they ought to speak. If God's mind be in them they ought to speak what would be worthy of the mind of God. We shall find that this is what these names really do. They are grouped for us, and as so grouped have evident relation to one another, and form connected lines of thought. I have spoken of them as pictures, and so they are, with their meanings on their faces, as good pictures will have: some of the most beautiful in God's Word, I believe, are to be found in these names. I care very little for what commentators can tell me about them; I care not very much whether they can find the ruins that stand for them to-day: but I do care very much to know that they have admonition, comfort, hope, for me to-day; and that God speaks in in them still in His own blessed way effectively. May our hearts realize this now!

If we look at these cities of Judah, we shall find that they are divided first of all according to the character of the district to which they belong: first, the South; then the vale, or rather, the lowland; then the mountains; then the wilderness. The cities of the south are numbered for us—29: though there is a difficulty about this, which I cannot now enter into; 29 is really the number.

In this large group, we have smaller ones also, which may be discerned by the absence of the usual conjunction thus: "Kabzeel, and Eder, and Jagur, and Kinah, and Dimonah, and Adadah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Ithnan,"—then comes the break,—“Ziph, and Telem, and Bealoth, and Hazor-hadattah, and Kerioth-hezron, which is Hazor”—(so it ought to be read): there we find a second break. The third group is the one we are to look at, and is cut off in a similar manner from the following one.

In this group there is still implied a smaller division ; for 9 seems always to be in Scripture a 3 x 3, 3 multiplied by itself, and thus intensified. Our group is thus a *third* group, and a triple group of threes, and every name will have attached to it its appropriate number.

I need not say much now about the numbers. It is clear that we are only concerned with three of them, and it is enough for the present to remind ourselves that these have largely their significance from the Trinity, and 3 especially from the Spirit and His work.

The tribe of Judah represents the people of God as a worshiping people ; " Judah " means " praise ; " " now will I praise the Lord," said Leah, when she had borne him. But the form of this praise is confession literally, " the fruit of the lips confessing His name." To confess what He has done, what He is, is His sufficient praise ; and what the cities of the South speak of is the power of God in behalf of His people. The first group thus of electing love and care ; the second, of salvation ; the third, with which we have now to do, with the work of the Spirit.

We have three stages, then, of this, and three names in each stage. The first, we would naturally say, must be new birth, for there is no work of the Spirit in us before new birth ; and so it is : the *third* name of the first three is Moladah, " birth." Third, being both the operation of the Spirit and a resurrection, or at least, a quickening out of death.

Can we know more precisely that such a birth is what is meant ? The Old Testament has not the phrase at all : can we be sure that we have here the thought ? Yes, if we will look back at the word immediately preceding. It is the *second* name, and two is the number of sufficient testimony : " the testimony of two men is true," the Lord says, referring to Deuteronomy. The second word is *Shema*, " a report : " " faith cometh by hearing," says the

apostle ; rather, "a report," "and the report by the word of God." But faith comes in only in new birth : where faith is, life is. Of those who receive Christ it is written, "To them gave He authority to become the children of God"—this is the full sense of the Greek,—“who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

Shema, Moladah, give us, then, birth by the Spirit of God and divine testimony, the "report" of the gospel. Yet, strictly, to know that it is *new* birth we must go back to the first word of the three, which as yet we have omitted : it is *Amam*, "mother," or perhaps, "their mother." If we are to hear of new birth, we must first realize the old one, and its nature. For this purpose, "father" would be equivocal : God is our Father in new birth, and even by creation (the fall not being considered) we are "off-spring of God." But our *mother*, poor Eve, through her sin came into the world, and "how can he be clean," asks Job, "that is born of woman?" Save by the special power of God, is the inevitable answer, none ; not one.

Thus all is clear: not one of these names is redundant,—not one could be spared ; each adds a needed thought to the rest ; each in its order, each fulfilling its numerical significance; the whole giving completely what is needed for the truth to be conveyed, and beyond that nothing. The first stage ends with the first spiritual work accomplished—new birth.

A momentous beginning ; and which makes sure the end. Eternal life has begun in the soul : we have become partakers of the divine nature ; God is our Father: in all this there can be no change. Yet is there still within us that which is not of God, nay, which is in opposition to Him. "If Christ be in you," says the apostle, "the body is dead because of sin." Of him in whom the

Spirit of God is, it is said, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit;" and new birth, instead of being the end of conflict, is more truly the beginning of it. The seventh of Romans is the history of a soul born again, with the new desires and affections of a child of God, and yet having to cry, "the good that I would I do not; the evil that I would not, that I do:" a "body of death" lying upon the now living man which he cannot deal with nor throw off. It is to this which the second series introduces us; this struggle and the deliverance which it recounts. The first word here is characteristic: it is—

"Hazar-gaddah," a compound word, meaning "an inclosure of conflict." Why an *inclosure*? Manifestly, an inclosure of conflict would be something shutting one up to this, like the amphitheatre of old for the gladiator slave: and this is a bondage, a slavery: what is it that pens us up to this unutterable misery, and permits no escape? What is it that gives power to the evil, not to the soul that seeks deliverance from it? The answer is simple, if the soul is simple: "the strength of sin is the law;" "sin taking occasion by the *commandment*, deceived me, and by it slew me; and that which was ordained to life I found to be unto death." And so all *do* find who honestly put themselves under it; for man being always the same, and God's principles the same, the experiment works out infallibly to the conclusion, no experiment that science knows can possibly be surer.

Christians, then, ought to be all perfectly agreed about this: it would seem so; alas! the fact is not as it would seem. Many, in terms, know nothing about this conflict, —deny it to be the experience of a converted man at all; many more contradict this with the assertion that it is the continual, proper experience of every Christian man. As to the law, the popular Christian conscience is shocked by the assertion that the "law is the strength of sin,"

and the popular faith is that Moses is the best friend to holiness, and that the rule of law is the only guarantee for conduct.

After all, can we be so sure about the experiment? As sure as we can be about Scripture: for Scripture vouches for the result. And the different experiences can be explained only in this way, that the terms of the experiment have not been adhered to.

If we will keep to Scripture all is plain. The law is "holy, just, and good;" but it is not on that account the strength of holiness. There is no need to doubt the goodness of a plow, because no wheat will be produced by the plowing. The plow is most necessary in order to a harvest, but it is quite as necessary that the plow should depart when it has done its work. The reign of the plow, the constant use of it over the field, would be the surest way of destroying the harvest.

Nothing is plainer in Scripture than that the law and grace are entire opposites; that the law is not of faith; that sin shall not have dominion over us, because we are *not* under the law, but under grace. Nothing is clearer in the apostle's experience than that "without the law, sin was dead;" that he "was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, *sin* revived, and he died;" that so in his experience, the law, which was ordained to life, he found to be unto death. Nothing is plainer than that he gives this experience as in no wise merely his own, but that on this very account we have become "dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we should be married to Another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God."

Observe well: this is no question of peace with God, or of works for justification. That question is taken up, and fully, elaborately answered in the third and fourth chapters of the same epistle. The seventh of Romans

gives us the question so much agitating men's minds now,—finding, I fear, so little right settlement, because the statements here are so little listened to,—the question of holiness. It is a question of how sin shall not have dominion, and how we shall bring forth fruit unto God.

The dominion of law and of grace cannot be together: they are mutually destructive; or, to use the apostle's other figure, as surely as a wife cannot have two husbands at the same time, so the soul cannot be united to the law and to Christ together. But the law came first, and law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth. How, then, can we be delivered? By death, and by death alone: "Ye are become dead to the law." Not, the law is dead, but ye are. How? "By the body of Christ;" Christ as our Substitute having died for us, and died under the law's curse, "made a curse for us," our connection with law as Christians is ended and over. We are free, and belong to Him who has delivered us: we are free to serve in newness of spirit,—to bring forth fruit to God.

The law, then, is for the Christian only Hazar-gaddah. It is an "inclosure of conflict,"—nothing could more truly define it. It is the amphitheatre of the slave, shut up to a most unequal struggle. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" is the cry of despair under it. But before we go on to deliverance, let us notice how the numbers confirm the interpretation here.

Hazar-gaddah is the first name in the second group: its numbers are therefore 2 and 1. But 2 is the number of law as a covenant: it has two parties, and here is the misery of it. God and man have each to fulfill their part. No fear for God; but for man,—ah, who that knows him can trust him? who that knows himself can trust himself? And the number 2 is significantly also the number which speaks of *difference*, of *division* (it is the first number that

divides), and so of conflict. As the number of the group, it confirms the thought that it is the truth as to the Law which occupies us.

And 1 is the number of rule; as an ordinal, the *first* implies supremacy. The "rule of law" thus exactly suits the numbers, as it does the meaning of "Hazar-gaddah;" the rule of law means a shutting up to strife,—an "inclosure of conflict."

But how do we find deliverance practically? This brings us to the second name; and the number 2 has its good side as well as its bad. All the numbers have both. On the good side, it is the number of help. "Two are better than one," says the preacher, "for if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow." (Eccle. iv. 9, 10.) Thus in our language also, to "second" is to help. It is the Second Person of the Trinity who is the Saviour of men. The second book of Moses is Exodus, the book of redemption; and so one might go on.

How, then, do we find deliverance? *Not* by any victory we can attain in the conflict. *Not* by any infusion of strength, by which God helps us to help ourselves. This cannot change the rule under which we are: we cannot struggle out from under law into grace. "*Who shall deliver?*" Why, Christ: there is none other: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." What is the method of this deliverance? It is—

"Heshmon," "quiet reckoning:" that is to say, "faith." Yes, deliverance from the power of sin is attained by faith; holiness is realized by faith. So much is sure. But faith must have God's word to justify it, or it is not faith. What does this faith lay hold of, and find strength in? for it finds none in itself, or it would not be faith. It is in Christ, and in His death as delivering me from law, in His life as my Representative before God, so that I am in Him, "accepted in the Beloved," not only my sins

put away, but my *self* put away from before God, with all that upon which my eyes were just now fixed: "knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed,"—really, "annulled," brought practically to nothing—"that henceforth we should not serve sin." (Rom. vi. 6.)

This is God's method: "Heshmon," "quiet reckoning." "*Reckon* yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (*v. 11, R. V.*) "Reckon yourselves to be dead:" *reckon*, not feel, or find; "reckon that your old man is dead," not because no evil stirs in you, but because Christ has died, and you have died with Him. *Reckon* in the work of the cross: you cannot *feel* the cross; take God's account of what it has done for you, and that you are "*in* Christ," a "man in Christ," identified with Christ where He is. Only faith can realize *that!*

Thus you will have, what comes next here, in the third place, under the resurrection number,—

"Beth-pelet," "the house of escape."

Yes, if you will take God's estimate of what you are, if you will accept Christ for *all* He is to you, then you will have the most blessed "escape" possible—an escape from yourself, an escape from self-occupation, from self-confidence and unprofitable lament over yourself, alike; an escape into the liberty of occupation with Christ, of joy in Him, and power for holiness: for in occupation with Him, and in identifying yourself in faith with Him with whom God has identified you, you will find (if this be real) how the old things that held you lose their power, how the self-interest becomes *His* interests, how even the thought of *your own* holiness will have dropped, whether as a disturbing or a complacent thought. Christ Himself will be the Sun of glory, and what glory may get upon your face it will be but the glow of His brightness. "For

we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. iii. 18.)

This is *Beth-pelet*, the "*house of escape.*" It is home for the heart, an object for the affections, a place of rest and happiness, "quiet from the fear of evil." In His house *He* rules, and rules out disturbance. Winds and waves obeyed Him of old in the open boat in Galilee; and the "house of escape" knows no tempest, no disturbance. Christ is Master: grace is the rule; love the sweet compelling power. *To maintain this place*, here there may be conflict; here the world will bring its attractions to draw you off; but run to your hiding-place—to this place whose door is ever open, where unchanging love has perpetual title to display itself to you: here is your refuge—refuge from *yourself* first of all—refuge from every wind that blows. Christ is Master, and with a sweet imperative infinitely beyond that of Moses,—“Master and Lord” of all.

Thus the second series ends; and again there is nothing in excess, nothing in defect. In this second series, note also that Christ is really as much in relation to it as in the first series it is the Father: children of the Father, in Christ before God, these have been the underlying truths respectively; though it is the Spirit's work which we are really following all through. F. W. G.

(Concluded in next number.)

“THAT WHICH IS BEHIND OF THE AFFLICTIONS OF CHRIST.”

OUR blessed Lord was indeed “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” Rejoicing, as He did, in unhindered communion with His Father, and in the consciousness of ever and only seeking His glory; happy, too, to find here and there a faith which could

recognize Him in spite of the vail of humiliation upon Him—rejoicing as He did in these, it remains true that what gave character to His life was the dark side, the sins and sorrows which so thickly strewed His path—sins, it is needless to add, with which He had nothing to do, sorrows brought in by man alone. It is a wholesome exercise to dwell upon the sufferings of Christ, forgetting for the time our own, which are indeed eclipsed by His. He suffered because He was a perfect man, the only righteous One, in the midst of all manner of evil, selfishness, and worldliness. What pain, constant pain, it must have been to Him, only desiring to please His Father, to find all only desiring to please themselves, and His Father set aside completely; to meet with no desires above this earth, to find no thought of that heaven where all His thoughts were,—these things, to say nothing of the grosser forms of sin, nor of the sad witness of man's alienation from God in the manifold forms of disease and infirmity which oppressed the people, made the world to Him the valley of the shadow of death. We read that He sighed deeply, that He wept: ah! well He knew the sad necessity for sighing and tears in a world like this. But in passing, it is precious to note that neither the sorrows of earth nor its sins drove Him from it. At any moment He could have ascended up to where He was before, but no such thought occurs to Him. The very sorrows, the very sins, were links which held Him here until He had accomplished that which would bring forgiveness and deliverance as regards the sin, and joy in place of the sorrow.

So far, we have been speaking of the sufferings of our Lord from the mere fact that He was in a world like ours. His holy nature shrank from contact with its surroundings. But though exquisitely sensitive, He was no weakling to run away from conflict. He was here as the light to manifest the works of darkness, as the righteous One

to reprove all unrighteousness, and the world hated Him for the testimony He bore, it persecuted Him as Cain did his brother Abel. At Nazareth, they sought to cast Him down from the brow of the hill because He bore witness to God's grace, and intimated that as they would not receive it, it would be presented to the Gentiles; His most wonderful miracles and His most striking teachings, (if we may so speak when all was divinely perfect and in its place absolutely the best to be done or said,) alike provoked enmity, hatred, persecution even unto death. For one view of the cross shows us man's hatred of God's Son. At last, when nailed there and lifted up from the earth, hatred had its full way. But what suffering all this entailed upon Him! Looked upon with suspicion, His words perverted, His life sought,—such was His pathway here, a pathway leading on, through ever-deepening gloom, to the culmination, when, delivered by His own people into the hands of the Gentiles, He was by them crucified and slain.

When we remember who He was—the Anointed of God, the Messiah, with special promises as the head of the Jewish nation; when we see Him associating Himself with His people in their circumstances, and desiring, as only He could desire, their blessing and their glory, to find them unwilling to be blessed, unwilling to receive Him who came in the name of Jehovah, we can understand that outburst of sorrow, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!” the same sorrow which led Him later, as He beheld the beloved city, to weep over it. This hardened state of the nation He well knew would be sure to bring upon them judgment from God, and would necessitate His own cutting off as Messiah. This must

have been an added ingredient of bitterness in His cup of sorrow and suffering, which, present all through His public ministry, was intensified in the garden of Gethsemane when His soul was "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," and He sweat as it were great drops of blood. Here He doubtless was realizing that every earthly prospect was to be sacrificed, and that as Shepherd of Israel He was to be smitten and the sheep scattered. But the shadow of a darker suffering, anguish more awful, was there pressing on Him. He was, in anticipation, entering into the sufferings of the cross, and His holy soul shrank in unutterable horror from the awful prospect.

The sufferings of Christ of which we have been speaking were not atoning. The direct question of sin and its penalty had not been entered into until the darkness which settled down on Calvary left Him alone to bear the full load of judgment, to drink to the last drop the cup of wrath which we deserved, and to accomplish eternal redemption for His people. We are here on most holy ground : reverence is most becoming; but for God's glory, for our own deeper acquaintance with our blessed Lord, let us pause and dwell upon this awful scene. The darkness about Him was but the fitting accompaniment of that more terrible darkness which pressed upon His soul when God withdrew His presence from Him. "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" No answer, no help, no succor. He was made sin, though He knew no sin, and treated with that wrath deserved by the ungodly. It was not now a question of man's hatred, or Satan's either : what were they compared with the wrath of God, all the waves and billows going over His head? Well may we wonder and adore.

But this brings us back to our subject. We have been seeing somewhat what the afflictions of Christ were ; and

is not the question a natural one—Can there be any more of those afflictions? Did not He exhaust them all? The scripture before us tells us that the apostle was filling up that which was behind, was still lacking in the sufferings of Christ. As to atonement, it is only blasphemy to hint that all was not completed when our blessed Lord finished the work on the cross, and was raised in token of God's acceptance of the sacrifice for sin. As to His sorrows as Messiah, and in anticipation of the cross, those were personal to Himself, though in some measure understood by him who once wished himself accursed from Christ for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh (Rom. ix. 3), and by all who know what the fear of wrath is. As to His sufferings for righteousness, all who will live godly in Christ Jesus will taste of that cup. "If they have persecuted Me, they will persecute you." But the afflictions alluded to here are specially for the Church, and in a peculiar way the apostle Paul filled up those sufferings. For as long as the Church is on earth, there is an opportunity for suffering—a necessity. Let us read a catalogue of some of those afflictions which the apostle went through for the sake of the Church:—

"Of the Jews, five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils by the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" (2 Cor. xi. 24-29.)

What anguish there was in connection with the case of discipline at Corinth! The rod with which he smote them, he felt upon himself; sorrow, tears, fears, showed how great was his anxiety, how real his suffering. Indifference to their welfare, to Christ's glory, might have spared him much pain, but he did not choose the easy path. He was here for the Church, and so ready to suffer for it. When the fundamental truth of justification by faith was in danger among the assemblies of Galatia, he lets us see, in the epistle he wrote them, the deep sorrow of soul through which he passed. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." What love he had for that Church which had been purchased with the precious blood of Christ! In his measure, he would take up the work where his Master laid it down, and enter upon that path of unrequited love for the sake of the Church. Our Lord can no longer suffer though He can sympathize with His people, and intercede for them in their constant needs; still He loves them with the same unchangeable love which led Him to the cross for them. Well, then, are the sorrows undergone for the welfare of that Church called "the afflictions of Christ." Does He not Himself say, "Why persecutest thou *Me*?" How edifying it is to see this devoted servant thus suffering for his Lord's Church. We know him as a man of wonderful gift, inspired to present us some of the richest and most important portions of the Word of God; we know him as successful in a marvelous degree, but let us remember him as one who rejoiced to suffer for the Church,—who appreciated the dignity of bearing a part in what he by inspiration calls "the afflictions of Christ." This very epistle to the Colossians, as well as others, was written from prison; and one of its touching sentences at the close is, "Remember my bonds."

And now the question comes nearer home, and we are compelled to ask, if our blessed Lord, after enduring all that fitted us for eternal glory, still left a heritage of suffering for His servant, does there yet remain any thing which can be spoken of as that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ? The question can be answered by another: Is the Church still on earth? and has it needs, sorrows, and failures to be noted and met by us? Then, as long as this is the case, so long will there be something that is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for His body's sake, which is the Church. Let us, then, for our own consciences, see some of these needs, and where, it may be, we too, in our little measure, can be associated with the Great Sufferer.

Here is moral evil in the assembly; alas! that such a thing should be. It is not enough that we should judge it and put away the evil person. What about the confession of it, the bitter sorrow, the earnest prayer for the restoration of the wanderer? But apart from that which requires extreme dealing, there is a vast mass of what needs correction if we are able to reach those affected. Just here do we need to learn how to suffer for the Church. How often do we allow *personal prejudice* or *wounded feelings* to rule us! A brother has gone wrong, but he has misrepresented us, wounded us, and, lo! we forget that he is a member of the body of Christ, and render ourselves utterly unfit to help him because of our personal relation to the trouble. Ah! if we mourned over him,—if we felt in our soul how he had dishonored his and our Lord,—if we dropped the question of *our* rights, how soon would our sorrow melt him, and that hardness, which is visible enough, melt into grief and tenderness! Let us remember that servant who had been forgiven a great debt, and who went out and took by the throat his fellow, demanding full payment of a small

claim. In the light of our forgiveness by God of that great debt, are we going to exact full penalty for every offense? How much more becoming, how much more like our Lord, did we mourn over the wrong—really suffer about it as an injury to the Church of Christ! Did we carry these things with real sorrow to our God, what help there would be!

If this spirit always animated us, we would not err so frequently on the side of legality. "The letter killeth;" and we can no more enforce the letter of some direction in the epistles, if we do it in a legal way, than we could an ordinance from Leviticus. There must be heart work in all these things, or our very righteousness will lead us astray. We are under grace, not only as before God, but in all the relationships of life. That grace is to characterize all our action, and nowhere more than in the assembly of God. How much friction might be avoided, and hopeless entanglements escaped, did we act on the principle of grace, and instead of maintaining our righteous opinions as judges, be real sufferers for Christ's body. But you will be misrepresented, misunderstood; be it so; suffer that, if thereby you save further wandering in some sheep of Christ,—if you thereby heal a breach which otherwise might widen. Let the legend of the Roman patriot, who would close a chasm by leaping into it, find a truthful illustration by our sinking self and being healers of breaches, not makers of them. Oh, what matters it whether or not *we* are thought well of, if only we help the Church?

But it may be asked, How are we to do this? Is righteous principle to be sacrificed, or evil to be winked at? Without attempting to answer definitely, we can only point to our verse and say, Seek to carry that out. Endure sorrow, bear pain for the sorrows of the Church, get into that state of soul, and then you will be able—

not till then—to see what is righteousness and what is self-will.

Apply this truth to the too prevalent habit of criticism. It is easy to find faults. Alas! there are too many in us all, and it needs no great discernment to detect them. But where is the benefit? Is criticism helping to fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ? Can we conceive of Him indulging such a spirit? There is nothing which so enfeebles the soul, and unfits for all helpful dealing with our brother, as this practice. Let us be mourners, not critics, and we will find that thus we will be helping saints, not contributing to the general confusion about us.

Notice, too, that in this we have the common privilege of all saints. No gift is needed to sorrow over evil,—no eloquence, no prominence. The obscurest brother, the weakest sister, have here a place from which none can thrust them but themselves. In times of special trial and distraction, when all seems to be in confusion, if there are sufferers,—those who feel, not anger or excitement or resentment, but grief at the injury done to the feeble flock of Christ, we have in that very fact a promise of recovery and blessing. What a name to give to the troubles and sorrows of the Church—"the afflictions of Christ"! and what a privilege, what a dignity, to be called on to suffer for His sake! To think of any little self-denial, any sinking of our own wishes, any enduring in silence, as being placed along-side the griefs of the Man of Sorrows! Let us dwell upon His woes; and as our hearts are melted by their contemplation, let us anew seek to imitate Him "who when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not."

THE TWO SONGS OF MOSES.

Ex. xv. Deut. xxxii.

THESE two songs give us the two great truths learned in connection with redemption. The first (Ex. xv.) is a celebration of God's victory and the deliverance of His people from the land of judgment and from the hand of the enemy; the second celebrates God's faithfulness and goodness manifested in the midst of a disobedient and faithless people, as a witness against them and for Him. It is significant that whether in grace or in government, in redemption or responsibility, God will be glorified and praise shall flow forth. He inhabits the praises of His people (Ps. xxii.), and all His ways end surely there. He is seeking worshipers (Jno. iv.). His object is not merely to snatch from destruction—from the horrible pit and miry clay—but to put a new song into our lips, even praise unto our God. For He who for our sakes went down into the pit, is also now the leader of His people's praises (Ps. xxii., Heb. ii.)—the leader that we may follow and join in that song. He would have us so to share in His joy that it may find expression in praise. The more clearly His grace and ways are understood, the more intelligent and full will be our praise. Heaven, the place of endless praise, is where God is manifested in unclouded light; and earth only waits for His glory to be revealed here for all "the trees of the field to clap their hands."

The first song, as is well known, celebrates redemption, God's victory over the enemy, sung on the shore of the Red Sea, which but shortly before had been opened for the passage of Israel, and now rolled over their pursuers. As has been frequently remarked, as long as they remained in the land of Egypt, Israel had no heart for praise. Fears, murmurings, doubts, there might be and were in abundance; but not until they were beyond the sea, delivered from the power of the enemy, as well as from the judgment they themselves deserved, could they

know the exultant joy which finds expression in "music and dancing."

"I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously."

Redemption is God's work. There is no room in this noble song for mention of Israel. "All things are of God." What could be said of them save that they had doubted and murmured? So for us, in celebrating God's victory, we have nothing to say for ourselves—all the work was His—to Him, then, be all the praise.

" His be the victor's name,
Who fought the fight alone;
Triumphant saints no honor claim,
His conquest was their own."

The enemy has been destroyed. "Through death He destroyed him that had the power of death." It is when we thus see our enemies cast into that very sea of judgment and death, which we deserved ourselves, and when we see ourselves as "risen with Christ," that we can rejoice in the Lord. "The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation." The God who had wrought such havoc among the enemy is by that very act made known as the God of His people and their Saviour. That right hand, glorious in power, which has dashed in pieces the enemy, has led forth the people whom He has redeemed. The enemy in all his pride and haughtiness is contemplated as ready to destroy the feeble few, and just there where enmity and pride and apparently power are at their height, they are engulfed. It is not hard for the redeemed one to translate this, to use it as expressing that victory over Satan and the hosts of sin, smitten and destroyed at the hour of apparent victory, when our Lord bore death and judgment for us. Well may we say, "Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, . . . glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders."

But in this victory faith sees all victories. The inhabitants of Palestina, the dukes of Edom, the great ones—

fear takes hold of them, and in silence and trembling they see God's people led on from strength to strength, the enemy cast out of the land and they settled there under the protection of their deliverer. So for us, the song of redemption does not merely look backward at the victory over Satan and sin on the cross, but onward to the full realization of all that victory meant—to the time when, in the land, the heavenly land, will be seen what God accomplishes for those whose cause He undertakes.

Throughout the whole song there is no hint of sadness, no word of failure; all is bright and triumphant, for the very simple reason that all is of God from first to last. Well would it be for us if we more constantly sang this song, more constantly lived in the atmosphere of victory and joy which are about it. It is the failure to sing aright the first song which makes the second a necessity.

Turning now to that second song we see at once the contrast. It was given at the close of the wilderness journey, a journey which brought out the two great truths which form the theme of the song. It is a song of experience. God is here celebrated as before, His work is perfect, His ways are judgment, all is faithfulness on His part. He had proved to be same all through, as He had shown Himself at the beginning. But, alas! how is it with the people? They have corrupted themselves. He who had hovered over them as an eagle—developing strength in them while at the same time He bore them on His wings, who provided them the richest of food, and the most constant care, He was forsaken; His very blessings turning away the fat hearts of His faithless people who depart from Him for those who are no gods. The result of this must be to bring the smitings of a rod which would have comforted them; and so they are made to feel what an evil and bitter thing it is thus to requite Him that bought them.

But in the midst of fearful judgments He remembers His name, and for the honor of that He has mercy on

His people. When wrath is apparently at its height, He will remember mercy and bring blessing and peace upon His people and upon the Gentiles as well. One can be but struck by the strange contrast with that early song of triumph. And yet the *end*, blessing and peace, is the same in both songs. But in this second song, His people are seen under responsibility, as in the first, they were seen under grace. Need we wonder at this song, we who know our own history? Can we not read much that is familiar in our own experience in it?—the pride of position leading to heart-wandering from Him who has put us in that position; the very food, spiritual truths, on which we have grown fat, now used to exalt self, at the expense of Christ,—here are things familiar to us all, alas! in our own experience. But how can such things form the theme of a *song*? The answer is, by being linked with the eternal love and patience of an unrepentant God of grace. He never alters His purposes of grace, never gives up those upon whom He has set His love. So there must be praise. But this song was to be a witness against the people, they were to be warned beforehand and taught that warning, that if they still went on in their course, the words of the song they had known so long would condemn them. It was then to be preventive. And can we not, learning from it what foolish and wandering hearts we have, take warning in time that we go not astray, but cast ourselves on Him who, with beautiful appropriateness amidst all the instability of His people, is called the Rock? But all things are hastening on to the great event, when God will be surely glorified, when His ways with His people, as well as His work for them will be seen to be perfect; and when from out the shame of their own follies and wanderings He will bring matter for *praise*. Nothing will taint or mar His glory. But are we to be “foolish and unwise”? shall we be losers then? If not, let this song be a warning, that it be not then a witness.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BELOVED brother,—I have just read the first few pages of an article on “Hannah and Eli: A Contrast,” in **HELP AND FOOD**, which is, I believe, very timely. But there is one thought which I wish to suggest in connection with Eli’s failure: a thought which the experiences of the last twenty years among brethren, or, perhaps more correctly, with my brethren, have intensified in my own soul, to such a degree, that if you consider it worth any thing, I should like to give it to others of your readers.

And I will first introduce the thought by a quotation from “Collected Writings,” J. N. D., on “**GOD IS LIGHT.**” “There is nothing more dangerous than to use the Word when it has not touched my conscience. I put myself into Satan’s hands if I go beyond what I have from God, what is in possession of my soul, and use it in ministry or privately. There is nothing more dangerous than the handling of the Word apart from the guidance of the Spirit. To talk with saints on the things of God beyond what I hold in communion is most pernicious. There would be a great deal not said, that is said, were we watchful as to this, and the Word not so used in an unclean way. I know of nothing that more separates from God than truth spoken out of communion with God; there is uncommon danger in it.”

I would like to emphasize these lines and repeat them! and underscore them and repeat them again: and double underscore them and add a voice—shall I say of thunder, earthquake, fire, and hail and tempest: or of the still small voice which goes home to the conscience with divine power, or both; for sometimes thunder is God’s instrument to open the ear; and without an open ear, the conscience is never reached. Beloved, I only wish this truth could be emphasized in the soul of every one who reads these lines as it has been in my own. There can be no doubt but that the writer of these lines felt and realized the importance of the sacredness of *sacred things*? He could not have intensified the thought as he has in this brief quotation, if it had not been a divine reality in his own soul. Let me appeal to my reader: Have you, in your soul, a proper regard for sacred things? Now, don’t be offended at the direct appeal? I speak as before God. Let us face the question, “For the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts

and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." (Heb. iv. 12, 13.)

If we cannot face it now, how shall we face it when we meet Him, "whose eyes are as a flame of fire"? Beloved, how little we realize what it is to stand in the presence of the living God, *with unshod feet!* (Ex. iii. 1-6.) Compare also with care the nineteenth chapter of Exodus, also Heb. xii. 18-29. But do you say, "Oh, that was the ground of law, and a God of judgment; but we are on the ground of grace"? Yes, thank God we are, but is a God of grace any the less holy than the God of judgment? And are we not in danger of "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness"?

Think a moment, my brother, how do you handle sacred things? Do you say, "Not at all." Think again! Who is it that does not handle them at all? Are you a member of the body of Christ? Are you indwelt by the Holy Ghost? Are you linked up with a risen and glorified Christ in heaven, and thus "made a king and a priest unto God?" And have nothing to do with sacred things? To say that you do not handle sacred things is to betray your lack of heart for your birthright, like Esau.

Beloved, I believe the root of the sin of Christendom is the *confounding of sacred and profane things*; and the result is the complete loss of conscience, even in religious people, many times. And there are no people in greater danger as to this than ourselves—myself and yourself.

Undue familiarity with sacred things, if not consciously in the Lord's presence, is most hardening.

This was the key to the sad failure of Eli; he had lost the sense of sacred things in his own soul; and hence had lost all power to restrain his sons; and this same failure may be read in the atmosphere and deportment of many a household.

Depend upon it my brother and my sister, if sacred things have not power to control you in the presence of your household, Satan will have power to control it and you. It is Christ to be honored or dishonored, just as you will have it: first, in your heart, then in your home, then out among men. Sacred things as herein contemplated are the things of Christ, not the things of religion: sacred things in religion, where the Holy Ghost is ignored and Christ is left out, are but superstition, and have power in the Cathedral and at the confessional, and it is the power of Satan; hence the Priest and the Prayer-book are held in authority, while Christ and the Word of God are left

out, and Protestantism is hastening in the steps of her mother.

But to bring this question home once more in practical power for our own hearts. For there is one place above all others where we shall betray our lack of a proper sense of, and care for, sacred things, and is, *at the Lord's table!*

My reader, have you ever been there? And who did you meet? Your brethren? Yes. And what would you have done if none of your brethren had come? Would you have gone to the window to look out for some one coming, or have gone out to find them? Or would you, on entering the room, in a quiet and careful manner, have gone to your seat, as though in the presence of the King of glory, the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, to receive His recognition of your presence and joy as one who would "keep His word and not deny His name?" and is this a divine reality to you? and from which you could not afford to be absent, unless your responsibility to Him required your absence? Sickness in the family, faithfulness as a servant, or relieving distress of others, where the will of the Lord was plainly indicated, might be just as acceptable to Him and just as precious to you, if taken up in faith. But never to entertain company. To stay away from the Lord's table on account of company, shows a very sad lack of respect for the Lord Himself, and that you are willing to grieve the blessed Lord Jesus to please your company.

But let us take still another view. Did you ever on entering the room sit down or stand and talk awhile with this one or that one, not realizing that your first and best respects belong to Him who is Lord of the feast? Or would you sit down as indifferently as you would in a hotel while waiting for your dinner? Or interest yourself very diligently in studying your Bible or Hymn-book?

Now, my dearly beloved, don't let any of these questions bring you into bondage; but, if there is a needs be, let them wake you up to look carefully after your deportment in the presence of the Lord of glory.

Let them search you out as regards your care for sacred things, and your regard for the Lord's honor. Surely, He cannot be indifferent as to how we behave ourselves in His presence, and not only at His table, but always everywhere He is with us.

Yes, beloved, our estimate of Himself, the value we put upon His company, will surely form our manners on the road. For we always behave the best toward those we love the most.

FROM AMAM TO BIZIOTHIAH:

A RECORD OF THE SOUL'S PROGRESS, AND A WITNESS TO
THE WORD.

Josh. xv. 26-28.—(Continued from p. 209.)

NOW in the third series to follow, it ought to be peculiarly the Spirit Himself that is before us, although as seen in His work, of course. And here, if the first name of the second series speaks of the rule of law, the first of the third may well illustrate the "dominion of the Spirit." Strange and startling will the name be, then, that we find here! it is another "Hazar," "inclosure;" but no more the "conflict;" it is—

"Hazar-shual," the "inclosure of the jackal," the *jackal-pen!*

"Shual" is in our version always taken as the "fox," and this, it is believed, is sometimes the true meaning; but if so, it must at least have a wider significance. Samson's "foxes," of which they collected three hundred, were more likely jackals, which are gregarious, as the fox is not, and could more easily have been found in number. But there is another passage more decisive, where, speaking of his enemies, the Psalmist says (Ps. lxxiii. 10), "They shall fall by the sword, they shall become a portion for foxes;" for the jackal is a well-known carrion-feeder, as the fox again is not. The name "shual," which means "burrower," might apply to either.

But what are we to make of this word, then, with its sinister meaning, coming just where we might expect to find the dominion of the Spirit indicated? is there indeed any kinship between such thoughts? I believe so, assuredly; "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh:" what is that but saying, "Walk in the Spirit, and the jackal-nature is penned?" This unclean creature, with its earth-burrowing, carrion-feeding pro-

pensities, is it not an apt figure of what the flesh is whenever it has leave to show itself? And under the rule of the Spirit, might we not expect that the first thing we should be taught would be the effect upon the evil in us, if it will be allowed that any evil is indeed left?

I know that there are many Christians to-day who deny that in the "perfect man"—the saint in his matured and proper condition—the flesh still exists. Those Galatians, they tell us, of whom it is said, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit," were no good examples of a Christian state. *They* may have had a jackal in a cage, perhaps scarcely so much as that. Had they kept him in, would he not have starved and died there? and why should the noisome beast be kept alive? It may be possible even to answer this. Even if it were not, the prior question to be settled is as to the fact.

Paul the apostle was certainly not himself a "foolish Galatian;" and if any mere man could be proposed for an example to others, he would be the man. Nay, he can even propose himself: three times over he says, "Be followers of me" (1 Cor. iv. 16; xi. 1; Phil. iii. 17); and in the last case adds, "And mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample." Who, indeed, of all the apostles labored so much as he? or who could give such a record of what he had endured in service? "This one thing I do," speaks of the ardor of his concentration; and his "earnest expectation" and his hope is, in his own language, this: "that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, *as always*, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death." (Phil. i. 20.)

This being the man he was, what has he to say for himself of that absence of sin from his life of which many of its advocates can speak quite freely? Of his faithfulness as a minister of Christ, in the very chapter in which he

bids us be followers of him, and while his testimony shows abundantly his spiritual stature, he says, "*For I know nothing against myself; yet am I not hereby justified, but He that judgeth me is the Lord.*" (1 Cor. iv. 4.) That is, where his conduct might seem to himself to be most blameless, he dare not assert it: only the Lord fully knew, and in that sense he protests, "Yea, I judge not mine own self."

When he had been caught up into the third heaven, and heard there unspeakable things, yet because there was still in him a capacity for self-exaltation, "There was given to me," he declares, "a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." (2 Cor. xii. 7.) How plain, then, that there may be in us tendencies which do not even come out, and for which God's dealings with us may be needed lest they should come out,—tendencies which may be hidden too from ourselves! If such remained in this ardent apostle, spite of an activity, a zeal, a love, which had no equal, who shall dare to say that they are not in *him*? But these tendencies are the manifestations of a fallen nature,—of a heritage from her who fell by aspiring to be what she was not, and which were the successful work of him who himself fell by pride—"the condemnation of the devil."

Our rule is, to "walk as Christ walked:" how much here is it safe to claim? How much of any claim may be due to self-ignorance, and little standing in the light of God!

Scripture is clear enough as to the fact: but why the fact?—why merely pen the jackal? Such an inquiry may be reverently as well as irreverently made. It can, I believe, be measurably answered. The living man bound to the carcass would learn at least a horror of corruption. An apprehension of sin in this way, in the very light of

God's grace, may be a lesson profitable to all eternity. And it is surely a triumph over evil to make it thus subservient to holiness. A training in humility, in watchfulness, in the ways of a holy government to which we are ever subject, may be of infinite value in the eternity to come.

Only let us remember! if we have the jackal, our responsibility is, to *have the jackal penned*. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall *not* fulfill the lusts of the flesh." To walk in the Spirit is not to live a mere blameless life: it would be mere meaningless tautology to say, Walk blamelessly, and you will not do evil. To walk in the Spirit is to walk in occupation with Christ,—to "walk *in* Christ,"—to live as identified by grace with Him who is our Representative in the presence of God. It is to walk as separate from the world, because belonging to heaven,—strangers and pilgrims, our hearts where our treasure is, to set our mind on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. With our hearts *there*, our eyes *there*, the world will not attract us, the lusts of the flesh will find no object, the jackal will be penned! And for this we *are* responsible, and for this we have the power. The Spirit of God is surely abundant power, and it is practical infidelity to doubt it.

How much more would one desire to say, but we must go on to the second word in this series—a beautiful and a simple one: it is—

"Beersheba," "the well of seven," or "the well of the oath." It is both, really. The word "to swear" is in Hebrew the word "to *seven*"—to give complete assurance: "an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife." (Heb. vi. 16.) At Beersheba also seven lambs were witness for Abraham that the well was his. For us, a perfect Christ before God has secured to us the well of water,—here, without any doubt, the type of the Spirit of God, the

“living water.” The numerical place is that of witness, as we know, and the Spirit of God as come into the world is indeed the Witness for Him who is gone out of it,—the joy and refreshment and power of the new life in the soul. Here we have, therefore, the positive side of that of which Hazar-shual gave us the negative side.

Blessed be God that we have the well of water! Notice how accurate and beautiful is the figure here. Without water, the tree would die in the midst of abundant food. Water is needed both to prepare the nourishment for the root, and to enable the root to take in the nourishment. And in the human body, no less than in the vegetable, the necessity is similar. Men have, without a miracle, passed through forty days without food, but how long would any one succeed in living without water? Oh that we knew better the infinite need that we have of the Spirit of God!

But notice, again, how man’s responsibility is insisted on in the matter. The earth’s unseen channels may be flooded with what he needs, but the well speaks of energy in getting at it, and of care needed even after access has been got. Desert sands, no less than the hands of Philistines, may choke the well. Men have proved widely how in both these ways the treasures of the Spirit may be sealed up from them again after they have been fully in faith’s possession. But after all, the thing most to be dreaded is our own neglect. Let us remember that we may and do limit blessings which on God’s part He has not limited for us. With all the Scripture-research to-day (thank God for it!), yet, alas! how few of us even think of the abundance which God has made our own! how few claim and realize the possession of the well!

“Water” stands, in Scripture, both for the Spirit and the Word. “Living water” is the Spirit of God acting in and vivifying the Word of God. The Word of God is

the only test of what is of the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God cannot set aside or ignore what He has Himself indited for us. Just as the Word without the Spirit leads to rationalism and the dishonor of the Word, so the claim of the Spirit where the Word is slighted leads to enthusiasm and fanaticism and the dishonor of the Spirit. How many are governed by their emotions, or their sense of the fitness of things! How few of God's people are there that have not some reserve-ground, where tradition, reasoning, and other things are permitted to assume control, and God's voice is hushed before these! Are *we* really "men of one book," proving how thoroughly Scripture can furnish to every good work? Ah, beloved, need we have to study and remember the lesson of Beersheba.

One word more, and we have done. It is in the same line with the rest of this series, of course. It speaks of the Spirit; but not to repeat what we have already had. As the third name of the third series, it ought in fact to give us the fullest and highest thought of all in this direction: so we shall find it does; the name is—

"Biziothiah," and Dr. Young, in his concordance, renders it, "the house of Jah's olives." I think it is more literal, and gives a better meaning, if we render it simply "*among* Jah's olives."

And this ought not to be difficult to interpret either. The olive, in Israel, was that out of which the oil so constantly used and spoken of was obtained; and we have one solemn, blessed word which can never permit us to forget the method of its extraction: that word is, "Gethsemane," "the oil-press." It was the pressure of the cross, now just before the Lord, which wrung out of Him what shows at once the depths to which He was descending, and the absolute submission, even there, of One who had come into the world only to do the Father's will in it. It was under this infinite pressure that His unique glory

was exhibited upon whom the Spirit of God had come "as a dove," the bird of love and sorrow,—of sorrow which was that of love itself, and into which love brought Him. All was according to the Spirit throughout: the sorest pressure only brought forth the oil. It is the invariable type of the Spirit in His work, and that with which the prophet, priest, and king were anointed. But the olive was the home of the oil, so to speak: there was its abiding-place; and if we are "among Jah's olives," then we are those not only ministered to, refreshed and sustained by the Spirit, but in whom the Spirit of God *dwells*: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, and ye are not your own?" "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.'" (1 Cor. vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16.)

Here, then, is the supremest point reached in this series, for it is the seal and crown of all the rest. It was Christ's own peculiar excellency, that, as with the high-priest of old, who was but His type, He could be anointed without blood. For us, as we see in the priests afterward, the oil must be upon the blood. It is the completeness of Christ's work for us, the power of His blood to cleanse us from all sin, the absolute perfection which we have in Him, which enables God to put upon us thus the seal of His Spirit. "Behold, thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." The value of that changeless, perfect work is proclaimed in the power and joy of this abiding Presence. We are not our own: we are bought with a price: and because His who has redeemed us, the Spirit of God has come to take possession of us, to fill us with the brightness of His glory, to be in us the earnest of the inheritance, to display in us the power of the risen Lord our Saviour.

Only, in the mystery which reveals to us at once our height in creation, and at the same time the peril to which this necessarily links itself, it is for *us* still to say how far this blessedness shall be known by us,—*how far* we will yield ourselves to this sweet and marvelous control. Beloved, what do our hearts say to this magnificent grace of God? Shall we yield freely to the compulsion of a love which is satisfied with nothing else than our free yielding? or shall we, by careless indifference and unbelief, do our best to limit the power of Omnipotence, and grieve the Holy Spirit of God by which we are sealed unto the day of redemption? That is the momentous question, which no one of us can settle for another, which we must, each one for himself, decide.

F. W. G.

HEZEKIAH'S INVITATION.

(2 Chron. xxx.)

HZEKIAH began by cleansing the temple of those defilements which had been allowed to accumulate during the reign of Ahaz. In other words, he attended first to those matters for which he was more directly responsible, offering sin-offerings, and sharing with Judah the joy of restored worship at the altar and in the house of Jehovah. It is well to remember that we must be right personally before we can help others. We must remove any thing from the house of God which would bring reproach upon Him before we can, as it were, throw open the doors to the rest of His people. There must at least be the earnest purpose to do this,—its perfect accomplishment should be our desire, however feeble we may be. This cleansing and these offerings, suddenly done, bring great joy to Hezekiah and Judah,—a joy they long to share with *all Israel*. Let us mark this: true purging of ourselves, followed by truly entering into

Christ's sacrifice, brings a joy deep and full,—a joy, too, which makes us long that *all* God's people might share it with us. There is nothing selfish about true communion; he who has his head upon the Lord's bosom longs that others may have theirs there too. An exclusiveness which rests satisfied with a few only knowing and enjoying the good things of Christ, we may be sure is not according to God, however correct as to the letter it may be.

There is no such exclusiveness with Hezekiah and the men of Judah. It is to the passover, the memorial of their redemption, and answering to the Lord's supper for us, that he would invite them. Let us notice his letter. It is a call, first of all, back to *God*. "If thou wilt return, return to *Me*." (Jer. ii. 1.) No passover, no Jerusalem-worship will answer unless there is first the turning unto the living God. Of what use would it be if all the people of God were together, without a single exception, and yet not with God? That would be Rome's unity, tending to foster pride, not to glorify God. It is a mercy saints are kept apart outwardly unless there is truly a return to God. The outward divisions only speak of hearts divided from Him. They are to be mourned over, but let us ever remember that heart-work must come before true union outwardly can take place. Hezekiah's letter speaks of all this. It is gracious, but faithful. It does not gloss over the sad condition of Israel, while at the same time it assures them of blessing if they return—blessing reaching even to those who had been carried into captivity.

Let us notice one thing just here. There is no suggestion of any compromise as to the question of Israel's separation from the kingdom of Judah which had taken place years before. Israel had turned their backs upon God's house, and His order; to these they were now invited to return. Had he been willing to do so, Hezekiah could doubtless have secured a much more general response.

Had he proposed a common basis of union at Samaria, or, dropping both Samaria and Jerusalem, had he been willing to select some third city as their place of worship and meeting. Jerusalem too unpleasantly reminded them of their departure therefrom, so Hezekiah's message of love is treated with scorn and mockery. To-day, God's centre is open for the return to it of all His people. But how is the loving invitation to return to the simplicity of knowing Christ alone received? With scorn and mockery. The feeble few who dare to issue such an invitation to their brethren are called self-righteous, and their enjoyment of the presence and power of the Spirit is mocked at. On the other hand, every compromise, every union, alliance, society, is gladly recognized, and its appearance hailed as a fresh indication of energy and faith. Why is this? The call back to God's centre reminds us of our departure therefrom, is humbling to our pride, and is therefore refused. Union and league foster pride, and are therefore indorsed. Doubtless there is real earnestness and zeal, but that is in spite of, not by means of, these leagues.

A few, not all, respond to Hezekiah's invitation, and are received by their brethren at Jerusalem. It was humbling to them thus to return, but how blessed to be once more on ground where God had put His name,—to worship Him, not "according to the dictates of their conscience," but according to the dictates of His Word.

It was humbling enough for all—Judah as well as Israel—to keep that passover. It was in the *second* month, not the first, and so reminded them of their uncleanness, *their lack of readiness to keep it at the time appointed*. Like those who were unclean in the wilderness, (Num. ix. 10, 11) they came in under a special provision. Here is where all of us are. If in His mercy the Lord has recovered us, and gathered us around His table, is it not as it

were in the second month? Are we not reminded that the freshness and fervor of Pentecost are gone, that centuries of failure and wandering have come in? None can exalt himself above the other in these things: we must all be very quiet, very lowly. Grace, and only grace, has been at work.

But there is more. Some of these people had not cleansed themselves aright for the passover, and yet had eaten it. Strictly, they would have been excluded, or, having partaken unworthily, would have been judged. But here grace again interposes. Hezekiah recognizes the purpose of their hearts to return unto the Lord; and though many things were not as they should be, he prays, "The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary." His prayer is answered, and in peace and joy the people keep the feast seven days. Indeed, in the energy of their newly found joy, they keep seven days more. There is much for us to learn here. Righteousness is needful; but righteousness without pity, without considering past history and present circumstances, will fail of its own object. There may be many things in our brethren we could wish were different, many things in their past lives we could wish cleared up; but can we not, spite of these things, recognize the desire and purpose of their hearts, and take them upon that.

Might we not expect much blessing and great joy did we thus imitate Hezekiah? First, he gets right himself. Second, he invites his brethren to God's centre. Thirdly, he seeks to prevent sorrow coming in through their imperfections.

Let us learn from him. But let us remember he gave up no principle. He would welcome to Jerusalem; he would go nowhere else. In a day of declension like this,

we cannot be too eager to recall God's beloved people to Himself; but if we are on His ground, let us remember that word, "Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them." In the application of these principles there may be, and doubtless will be, difficulty. But that does not affect the principles. Only let there be hearts overflowing with love, and subdued into godly fear, and we will ever be guided aright.

ENLARGEMENT.

"Be ye also enlarged. Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." (2 Cor. vi. 13, 14.)

THESE two exhortations, or rather two parts of one exhortation, occur together as quoted above. Indeed, the second is but explanatory of the first, and taking the two together, we have, as always in the perfect Book, an evenly balanced presentation of truth.

We live in a day of great broadness, so called. Men professing to hold to the divinity of our blessed Lord can be associated in benevolent work with those who deny it. Within the bounds of the same denominational communion can be found those who teach that death means annihilation to the wicked, those holding to their final restoration to blessing, and those who profess to believe that eternal punishment is indeed what Scripture calls it—"everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." These persons remain together, tolerate one another's views, and seem to think it an exhibition of brotherly love, and largeness of heart. There are to-day men who deny the infallible inspiration of God's Word, holding chairs in institutions devoted to instructing young men for the ministry, while the large part of the same denomination hold that the Bible is God's Word. Yet

apparently no violence is done to conscience, and but few voices are raised in opposition to this blending of light and darkness.

Opposed to all such laxity, falsely called "largeness," but in reality treason to God, His Son, His Spirit, His Word, is the simple statement of Scripture. "Be ye also enlarged. Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." Largeness is needed, broad views which take in the whole scope of divine truth; but it must be the broadness of *God*, not man, nor Satan; and what blasphemer will link God's holy name with the infidelity creeping into and fast!destroying the churches of to-day?

Heaven, God's home, is described for us negatively in the main. There is no temple in it, no need for the sun or moon; "There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie." No more sea, no more curse, no more sighing, tears, or death. That blessed home, our home too, is described by what it *excludes*, (not, of course, that it is a negative state, but that the presence of the things excluded would only bring misery,) and thus room is given for the full enjoyment of those blessings ours even now in anticipation, as made known by the Spirit. Would any one think for a moment that heaven is a narrow, constrained place? Nay, it is indeed a "wealthy place." The exclusion of evil, evil persons, evil principles, gives room for the full enjoyment of the liberty of the glory of the children of God. And what is the child of God now if not a heavenly person? Then let the exclusiveness of heaven be true of him here. But it is objected that the rigid application of exclusiveness will separate from God's own children. To this it is enough to answer that if they adopt doctrines and practices contrary to the truth of God, *they* separate themselves; and if we would not go with them in that separation, we must hold fast what we

have. It is needless, however, to dwell longer upon this aspect of the truth, admitted by most, at least, who have a true desire to honor Him who suffered all reproach and dishonor for us. Let us apply the same principle to the daily walk and intercourse of the Christian. If we are to have true largeness of heart, we must keep ourselves unspotted from the world. Lot settled down in Sodom, and lost all power to help that people, or to enjoy communion. He had taken what might be called a liberal step; but, so far from enlargement, nothing but straitness resulted, and wretched failure. Abraham holds himself aloof, and his heart is so enlarged that he can not only enter into God's thoughts about himself, but into that pity and long-suffering which for the time found expression in his interceding prayer for the doomed city. It was so with Israel as a nation; separate, they had power, blessing, enlargement; mixed with the nations about them, they grew smaller and smaller, until God's eye alone could trace them. In this very chapter, the apostle speaks of his own enlargement, and does so in connection with statements which seem to be paradoxical: "As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." To the natural mind, these opposites are not only incapable of being harmonized, but constraint, unrest, and narrowness would result. Faith, however, sees in the outward straitness the hindrance of that which would only bring into bondage—the flesh. As to his condition, the apostle could glory in infirmities, that the power of Christ might rest upon him. Let us learn this lesson too. And as to our associations—whether social, commercial, or ecclesiastical,—if we carry out the principles we have been considering, we will find true enlargement. We will be in a place where God can show

what a Father He is, and share with us His thoughts, which are never narrow. In a day like this, when the tendency is toward union at the expense of truth, let us be on our guard. Let us not fear true unity, which is of God, but learn His heart and ways in separation from that which is not of Him.

No thought is here intended that would cast suspicion upon any, or disparage that love which would unite all God's own. But let us have Him, not His people, before us, and true enlargement will follow.

"GIVE YE THEM TO EAT."

THE incident recorded in Matt. xiv. 13-21 and its parallel passage, Mark vi. 32-44, affords us a fine illustration of the truth that "we are laborers together with God."

Much people had followed Jesus into the desert place where He had taken His disciples to "rest awhile." And, as ever, He was ready to serve them,—“He healed their sick” and “began to teach them many things.”

“And when the day was far spent,” the disciples, no doubt thinking Jesus had surely done enough for the people, come and ask Him to “send them away,” that they might go into the villages and buy themselves food. They saw the need of the people, knew they were faint and hungry, but it did not seem to enter their minds that Jesus could meet that need as well as any other. But Jesus was “moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd;” and, true to His character as a Shepherd, He would not let them depart until their every need had been met, and they could say with David, “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.” More than that, He would waken His disciples

to the fact that *they*, by His grace, were able to be "workers together with Him" in feeding the multitude; so He says, "Give *ye* them to eat." They straightway doubt their ability to do as He bids with their limited supply, and ask, "Shall we go and buy two hundred penny-worth of bread, and give them to eat?" Jesus, answering, asks them, "*How many loaves have ye? go and see.*"

Dear children of God, the multitude who are "coming and going" in our path to-day are as hungry and faint as those who followed Jesus then; for the time has come when there is "a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." And the question comes home to each of us, "How many loaves have *ye? go and see.*"

The believer who knows only the gospel by which he is saved,—“how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,” has at least one loaf, and he need not fear that it is not enough to supply the demand; it is sufficient for the need of a famishing *world*—He “tasted death for every man,” and He has made us “ambassadors for Christ,” “and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.”

Have we not, then, all of us who have believed, a life-giving loaf to give a perishing world? Our own faith in the message we deliver is ample qualification for such ministry, as the apostle writes to the Corinthians, “We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, *I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak.*” He who has made us ambassadors, and given us the message, will hold us responsible for its delivery. May we, then, heed the word, “Give ye them to eat,” remembering the while that we are not “sufficient

of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us *able ministers* of the new testament."

But apart from the world who need to hear the gospel of the grace of God, there is a hungry throng of God's own people who need to be fed, and we will do well to "go and see" if we have not some loaves wherewith to feed them. We do not speak only of those who give their whole time to the "work of the ministry," or those to whom we look as teachers and pastors, but of *every* child of God; for the body is to be "fitly joined together, and compacted by that which *every joint* supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of *every part*. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to *every* man to profit withal (or, to mutually profit)." And again it is written, "As *every man* hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." So no saint is without something to minister to the rest of the family. Each of us is a steward of more or less of God's precious Word; as it is writren, "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." Whatever of truth the Holy Spirit has led us into, to that extent we are stewards; "moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful."

It is so natural for us to be like the disciples,—slow to use what we have, because we think it is only a little—just a crumb, compared with the need we see. But let us not judge too hastily; if it be a portion of God's Word, however small it may seem in our eyes, it is inexhaustible. Its "seed is in itself," and it will multiply. We need never fear to honor the smallest portion of God's Word by speaking it to another; for Himself says, "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and causeth it to bring

forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be *that goeth forth out of My mouth.*"

And this last clause reminds us of the next injunction of Jesus in our narrative. The disciples having searched, and told Him the number of their loaves, He said, "*Bring them hither to Me.*" Apart from Him, they could do nothing. It was in His hands that the loaves multiplied, and straight from Him, through the disciples only as a channel, that the hungry ones were fed.

And so it should be with all our ministry—whatever food we receive from the Scriptures, it is our happy privilege to take it to Him, and commune with Him about it; and we may rest assured that, after such communion, He will sooner or later send us forth with our loaf increased a hundredfold. And He having thus blessed and broken our loaf, our labor shall not be in vain as we carry the message to hungry and thirsty ones; for *from Him, the Head*, "all the body, *by joints and bands* having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God."

Another happy result of their bringing the loaves to Jesus we must not fail to note.

"And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, He looked up to heaven and *blessed.*" It filled His heart with joy and thanksgiving to know that His disciples had a supply, however limited, to disperse abroad; and do we not rightly judge that He is as glad to-day when His children "know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary"? And when we speak "often one to another," like those of old who "feared the Lord," have we not good reason to hope that He still "hearkens," and notes it in His "book of remembrance"? The disciples were not the least profited on that occasion through the loaves and fishes which they bestowed upon others,

for they furnished a means whereby Jesus could reveal Himself to *them* as One who could indeed “furnish a table in the wilderness”—One whose resources were infinite, and thus He often reveals Himself afresh to us through some word we are ministering to another. Thus He rewarded the two at Emmaus as they proffered their loaf to Him, supposing Him to be a stranger,—“He was *known of them in breaking of bread.*”

Jesus had taken His disciples into the desert place to “rest awhile.” To human eyes they had found only a long day’s labor, stretching away out into the evening; but they had *taken His yoke upon them*, and learned of Him, and had they not surely found rest unto their souls?

G. M. R.

JESUS ONLY.

THE Light of heaven is the face of Jesus.

The Joy of heaven is the presence of Jesus.

The Melody of heaven is the name of Jesus.

The Harmony of heaven is the praise of Jesus.

The Theme of heaven is the work of Jesus.

The Employment of heaven is the service of Jesus.

The Fullness of heaven is Jesus Himself.

CAREFUL SPEAKING.

THE Lord let none of Samuel’s words fall to the ground. Every thing that he said made an impression—carried conviction with it. This could never have been the case had he spoken hastily and carelessly. He had a realizing sense of the importance of speaking God’s word faithfully—of bringing home to the consciences of his hearers the message he had for them. We are not prophets, but we are told, “If *any man* speak,

let him speak as the oracles of God." How searching that is! Do I speak as one who has God's mind to deliver? What quietness, deliberateness, that consciousness will beget! How all confusion will be avoided! and even in questions where we are not at one, but are seeking God's mind, all appearance of strife and debate would be absent. Much time would be spent in prayer, quiet pondering all that was before us, and God, who delights to help His children when in conscious weakness, would manifest Himself in a very real and precious way. Blessed be His name! He knows how weak we are, and how easily we slip into the ways of men, and recognizes underneath much apparent confusion a real desire to gain His mind. But let this not make us indifferent to His way. Let remember that "in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin," and so be sober and careful, coveting earnestly that "sound speech" so helpful to all.

SINCERITY.

"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to youward." (2 Cor. i. 12.)

"For we are not as many which corrupt the Word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ." (2 Cor. ii. 17.)

IN the judgment of the world, what is commonly known as sincerity is supposed to cover a multitude of sins. How frequently we hear it asserted that it makes little difference what a man believes provided he is sincere in that belief. The Jew, the Mohammedan, the Romanist, the very infidel himself, is in this way admitted into the ranks of that religious respectability where the test for all is sincerity. Thus the world. But God does not reason in this way. Saul of Tarsus was a most sincere man, but the intensity of his convictions only identi-

fied him the more closely with those who were "the enemies of the cross of Christ." A man may sincerely believe he is on the right road, but if he is mistaken, his sincerity will not prevent his going astray. If this is true in the things of every-day life, it is equally so in the far more important matters of eternity and our spiritual concerns generally. The word translated "sincerity" in the verses quoted at the head of this paper suggests a deeper and truer meaning than mere personal honesty, subjective certainty. It means "*sunlight-judgment*"—a judgment arrived at, not in the dark of our hearts, but in the light of God's own presence. It is not mere honesty, though it includes that. A light has been shed on the matter, and the truth about it revealed, and according to that light, that truth, a judgment has been reached, a decision made, according to which the person acts. We are now on higher ground than that of what is ordinarily called "sincerity,"—a ground to which none, however honest in a subjective sense they may be, can be admitted except those who are also in the sunlight. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This is the sunlight-judgment which gives true sincerity.

Let us look a moment at the quality of this light. It is from God. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." In this light, there can be no calling evil good or good evil,—all is estimated aright. But it is not a cold light; it is "in the face of Jesus Christ"—of Him who manifested the love and grace of God as well as His holiness. Hence it is a light which does not merely convict, but which touches the heart of the one manifested, and makes him realize that while a holiness which hates sin has shown him his true

condition, a love which passeth knowledge yearns over him. The sin is hated, the evil way is abhorred, but the sinner is loved, and feels the constraining power of that love drawing him into paths of truth. It is most important to note this. He who knows God apart from Christ does not know Him at all. The saint who gets light from God must get it as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ, or he will not get it aright, and will fail to be guided aright. The qualities, then, of this sunlight-judgment are truth and grace,—truth tempered by grace, grace in accordance with truth.

The first verse applies this sincerity to the walk of the apostle—"We have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to youward." What characterized his daily life was that it could be judged in the light of God's presence. He did not go blindly ahead following his own inclinations, as many do, meaning well, as people say, but not pausing to ask whether he was seeking God's will or his own. Still less did he follow the wisdom of the world. Worldly maxims, worldly examples, are too often followed by the child of God, the result being worldly conformity. Not so Paul. The sunlight-judgment of God was his test, the light in which his path was chosen. Can we say the same as to ourselves, beloved brethren? Where do we get light for our path? Is the eye single, the heart simple? Surely sincerity with us should be the same as with Paul. But this is heart-searching work. It means that I do what I see to be right,—that I do not give mere assent to it—patronize the truth, as it were, but that I can look God in the face and say, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts."

Let us pause here, and ask ourselves seriously one question—a solemn one. It is this: Do we not well to hesitate to appeal to God as to our motives, our desires,

etc.? He who knows his own heart best knows most of its deceitfulness, and he whose motives are simplest for God's glory will be slowest to appeal to Him. There is something which makes one shrink from hastily or thoughtlessly or too frequently appealing to God for sincerity of motives or truthfulness of statements. Let us let the holy sunlight of God's presence shine into our hearts, and much of self-interest and base motives will be discovered, so that the most devoted will be conscious of feeling with the apostle when he said, "I know nothing against myself, yet am I not hereby justified." He will realize that lurking beyond his discernment are possibilities for evil which he cannot trust. He will therefore be humble, self will be kept in the background, and Christ will be exalted.

But if this is heart-searching work, it is needful work, yielding most blessed results. Apply this sunlight-judgment to our thoughts, our desires, or to our private and family life. Will things be detected by it which our friends or brethren fail to see? The result may be humbling, but how blessed the fruits!—greater carefulness, increased sense of weakness and dependence, more prayer, and less boasting and high thoughts. Apply it to our worship, our prayers and praises; we need not fear that the holy fear will mar or hinder the true spirit of worship. Nor, of course, are we to be legal. The true sunlight prevents all legality,—takes us out of the presence of man and puts us into the presence of the God of all grace.

Why should not we be able to use this verse like the apostle did? We have the same grace, the same exhaustless strength to draw upon. We too might thus walk in and out among the saints and be "ensamples to the flock." The Lord grant it increasingly for us all. The time is short; evil is on the increase; the fear of God seems to

be more and more a thing but little realized. May our God arouse us to this humble, quiet, holy testimony as we go about,—this godly sincerity in our ways.

But this sincerity characterized the teachings of the apostle as well as his walk : “ We are not as many which corrupt the Word of God,”—that is, adulterate it, as an inn-keeper would his wines. We live in a time of adulteration—of mixture of the false with the true ; the leaven has been introduced into the three measures of meal. We have lived to see men calling themselves servants of Christ stand up and deny His sacrificial atonement, the infallible inspiration of God’s Word, the certainty and eternity of the doom of the wicked ; indeed, scarcely a truth is left by them, so thoroughly have they adulterated God’s Word. This is not confined to a few ; many, those who are looked up to as lights and guides, are engaged in this awful work, and it is our duty to cry out, however feebly, against it. For we have a great responsibility here. The time seems to be fast coming when what are called evangelical denominations (unless God grant faithfulness to purge out the wicked teachers,) can no longer be considered that, and when jealousy for God’s honor will require a care in receiving to the Lord’s table those who, by remaining identified with them, sanction their adulteration of God’s Word ; indeed, there are, no doubt, cases now where the work of exclusion should begin. If we wink at the adulterator, we become partaker of his deeds, we ourselves are corruptors of the Word of God.

How differently this faithful servant of God acted ! Whether dealing with saint or sinner, whether a savor of life unto life or of death unto death, he will preserve the integrity of that Word with which he had been intrusted. No subtle opiate is introduced to soothe the careless sinner into slumber, or take the edge off some wholesome rebuke for the saint. He is in God’s presence, and in

that sunlight all that he speaks will be tested. He had to speak words which broke the heart of those who heard him, and his own as well; but nothing would induce him to introduce error, or tone down the truth.

For there are two ways of adulterating a thing. We may put poison in it—positive error, or we may simply dilute it and make it powerless in that way. True sincerity prevents either. Truth will not let us bring in error, nor will grace allow us to soften down the demands of truth. It renders such adulteration needless, because “My grace is sufficient for thee.” The light in the eighth of John is just as strong as that which shone from Sinai in the lightning and divine display. The poor sinful woman is not brought into any twilight, but she *is* brought into the presence of *grace*. We need much to learn what grace is.

Let us, then, learn more what it is to speak, to teach, in true sincerity; not only refusing error, but seeing that we let God’s truth have its full strength. How much this means! In our preaching, our teaching, our administration of warning or correction in discipline,—all is to be done according to this same sunlight-judgment. May we not well say, “Who is sufficient for these things?” and answer the question too—“All our sufficiency is of God”?

May we have more true sincerity in our walk and in our words. We would be weighty men and women.

“BE COURTEOUS.”

THE spirit of Christianity includes all that is beautiful or good in the life and conduct. The polish of the world’s manners is but an imitation of that true courtesy which should characterize the Christian. It is to be feared that too little is thought of that care in our

in our conduct toward one another. The love and joy of the spirit will lead us to have a care for the feelings of others. This can be applied in a multitude of ways. It will show itself in that regard for others, a respectful listening to what they may say, a carefulness not to wound or offend. One may say he has a blunt way, and means no harm. It is not well thus to excuse one's self. A weak brother or sister may be stumbled by that blunt way; one not in communion might be driven off by it. We need to remember this in the heat of controversy. Sharp things are said, which only wound, and do not please God. Let us be courteous. Let us be careful how we contradict one another. How easy it is to accuse of untruthfulness in heat, when we cannot believe that to be the case when we quietly think over the matter! Then, too, we should show proper regard in speaking to one another, especially to those who might feel such a neglect. Does not the apostle tell the saints to greet one another? But it is needless to enumerate. In all our intercourse, we are in constant need of that gracious thoughtfulness perfectly consistent with quiet dignity, which helps and cheers all with whom we meet.

All this is not legality, nor outward form: "friendly *minded*" is the word for "courtesy." Right thoughts, right feelings, a true love, will produce a courtesy impossible to be imitated by the worldling, however polished he may be,—a courtesy common alike to all, even the naturally unrefined, because it has its roots in the renewed heart. In this, as in all else, let us remember that our God would have us *givers*, not receivers. We are not to wait until others act courteously toward us. Let us show courtesy, looking for nothing in return, and how soon will we find ourselves being treated in the same manner!

“TEACH ME, AND I WILL HOLD MY TONGUE.”

(*Job vi. 24.*)

THEY that go down to the sea in ships,
And in great waters reap,
These see the mighty works of God,
His wonders in the deep.

'Tis there we learn His mighty power,
In trial and in sorrow's hour.

For He the stormy wind commands,
Which lifteth up the waves ;
They mount on high, then sink beneath,—
'T would seem they were our graves ;
But here we learn His matchless love,
'Tis here His faithfulness we prove.

When, reeling neath some crushing blow,
We stagger neath the pain,
Our own endeavors all, all, failed,
We turn to Him again,—
Ah, here we learn how far astray
The feet may lead the heart away.

Then as we cry unto the Lord,
All troubled and distressed,
He makes the mighty storm a calm,
And stills the waves to rest,—
'Tis then we learn the faithful hand
That could not let the vessel strand.

And when the stormy sea is crossed,
And wind and wave at rest,
And the desired haven reached,
Deep quiet fills the breast.
The One who kept through stormy days
Shall fill our hearts with love and praise,
“There shall be *no more sea*,” He says.

Plainfield.

H. McD.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 13 —“What is the meaning of the following:—(1) New Birth, (2) Regeneration, (3) Quickening. Is this the impartation of divine and eternal life? (4) What is the difference be-

tween 'the old man' and 'the flesh,' or the old or evil nature, as we commonly call it? (5) Is Rotherham's translation of Tit. iii. 5 a correct one, viz., 'a bath of a new birth'? (6) The meaning of 'the new man.' "

J. A. D.

Ans.—(1) New Birth is the impartation of divine and eternal life by the Spirit through the Word. (Jno. iii. 5.) We are born children of God (Jno. i. 12, 13), and so members of His family. It does not touch the question of position, but of life and relationship, and hence is the common blessing of all God's children in all dispensations.

(2) Regeneration is ordinarily used by people to mean New Birth. In Matt. xix. 28, however, the word so translated refers to the time when our Lord shall sit upon His throne, and His apostles be associated in His rule, during the millennium. Its use in Tit. iii. 5 will be noted later.

(3) Quickening is out of death; New Birth, an additional life independent of the old. In new birth, man is not looked at as dead; in quickening, he is; though the two come close together in their meaning, Forgiveness goes with quickening (Col. ii. 13; Eph. 2. 5), and it is used in connection with Christ. Hence, while it is an impartation of life, we are reminded of Christ's resurrection, and incidentally of His death for our sins. So quickening seems to differ from new birth in this, that it is linked with Christ, new birth with the Spirit. Beyond doubt, it is the same life in either case, only different aspects of it.

(4) The "flesh" is the fallen, evil nature. The "old man" is the person who had that nature,—the responsible man who came to an end, in God's sight, by the cross (Rom. vi. 6), in order that the body of sin—sin as a controlling power—might be annulled. This old man is "put off" when one believes,—that is, he no longer stands in that relationship to God, in which he could only produce evil and be condemned. (Eph. iv. 22; Col. iii. 9.) Note that this is not something to be done constantly as to the old man, as it was done once for all by the cross.

(5) "Washing of regeneration" seems to be the proper rendering of Tit. iii. 5, referring to that washing in the brazen laver which figured new birth; the application of the Word to the whole man corresponding very closely to Jno. iii. 5, as it is also the work of the Holy Spirit.

(6) The "new man" is the opposite of the "old." It is the man as he is in Christ, a new creation, after God, in knowledge and holiness of truth. It is not the new nature, but the person who has the nature, as he stands before God.

“THINGS THAT SHALL BE:”

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART VII. (Chap. xix. 5–xxii.)

THE CONSUMMATION.

The Marriage of the Lamb. (Chap. xix. 5–10.)

THE harlot is now judged. The judgment of the whole earth is at hand. Before it comes, we are permitted a brief vision of heavenly things, and to see the heirs of the kingdom now ready to be established in their place with Him who is about to be revealed. A voice sounds from the throne: “Give praise to our God, all ye His servants,—ye that fear Him, small and great.” It is not, of course, a simple exhortation to what in heaven can need no prompting, but a preparation of hearts for that which shall furnish fresh material for it. The response of the multitude shows what it is: “Halleluiah! for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth.” The power that was always His He is now going to put forth. Judgment is to return to righteousness. Man’s day is at an end, with all the confusion that his will has wrought. The day of the Lord is come, to abase that which is high and exalt that which is low, and restore the foundations of truth and righteousness.

The false church that would have antedated the day of power, and reigned without her Lord, has been already dealt with; and now the way is clear to display the true Bride. “The marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready.” But the Church has been some time since caught up to meet the Lord: how is it that only now she is “ready”? In the application of the blood of Christ, and the reception of the best robe, fit for the Father’s house, assuredly, if any could be, she was *then*

quite ready. Likeness to her Lord was completed when the glorified bodies of the saints were assumed, and they were caught up to meet Him in the air. The eyes from which nothing could be hid have already looked upon her, and pronounced her faultless: "Thou art all fair, My love: there is no spot in thee." What, then, can be wanting to hinder the marriage? A matter of divine government, not of divine acceptance; and this is the book of divine government. Earth's story has to be rehearsed, the account given, the verdict rendered, as to all "deeds done in the body." Every question that could be raised must find its settlement: the light must penetrate through and through, and leave no part dark. We must enter eternity with lessons all learnt, and God fully glorified about the whole course of our history.

What follows explains fully this matter of readiness: "And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure; for the fine linen is the *righteous acts* of the saints." We see by the language that it is grace that is manifest in this award. We learn by a verse in the last chapter *how* grace has manifested itself: "Blessed are they that have *washed their robes* (R. V.), that they might have right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city." But what could wash deeds *already done*? Plainly no reformation, no "water-washing by the Word." (Eph. v. 26.) The deed done cannot be undone; and no well-doing for the future can blot out the record of it. What, then, can wash such garments? Revelation itself, though speaking of another company, has already given us the knowledge of this: "They have washed their robes, and made them white *in the blood of the Lamb*." (Chap. vii. 14.) Thus the value of that precious blood is found with us to the end of time, and in how many ways of various blessing!

It is not, then, the best robe for the Father's house:

that robe never needs washing. It is for the kingdom, for the world, in the governmental ways of God with men, that this fine linen is granted to the saints. Yet they take their place in it at the marriage supper of the Lamb; for Christ's love it is that satisfies itself with the recognition and reward of all that has been *done for love of Him*. This is what finds reward; and thus the hireling principle is set aside.

"And he saith unto me, 'Write, Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" Blessed indeed are they that are bidden now! Alas! they may despise the invitation. But how blessed are they who, when that day comes, are found among the bidden ones! I leave for the present the question of who exactly make up the company of those that form the Bride; but the Bride assuredly sits at the marriage supper, and the plural here is what one could alone expect in such an exclamation as this. There seems, therefore, no ground in such an expression for distinguishing separate companies as the Bride and the "friends of the Bridegroom." The latter expression is used by the Baptist in a very different application, as assuredly *he* had no thought of any bride save Israel.

"And he saith unto me, 'These are the true words of God.'" Of such blessedness, it would seem, even the heart of the apostle needed confirmation. Then, as if overcome by the rapture of the vision, "I fell down at his feet," says John, "to worship him. And he saith unto me, 'See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'" "

All prophecy owns thus and honors Jesus as its subject. All that own Him, the highest only the most earnestly, refuse other honor than that of being servants together

of His will and grace. How our hearts need to be enlarged to take in His supreme glory! and how ready are we in some way, if not in this, to share the glory which is His alone with some creature merely! Rome's coarse forms of worship to saints and angels is only a grosser form of what we are often doing, and for which rebuke will in some way come; for God is jealous of any impairment of His rights, and we of necessity put ourselves in opposition to the whole course of nature as we derogate from these. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

Judgment of the Living at the appearing of Christ.

(Chap. xix. 11-21.)

THE prophecy pauses not further now to dilate upon the blessing. There is needed work to be done before we can enter upon this; and the work is the "strange work" of judgment. The vision that follows is as simple as can be to understand, if there are no thoughts of our own previously in the mind to obscure and make it difficult. And this is the way in which constantly Scripture *is* obscured.

Revelation, as the closing book of the inspired Word, supposes indeed acquaintance with what has preceded it, and the links with other prophecy are here especially abundant. The kingdom of Christ is the final theme of the Old Testament, upon which all prophetic lines converge; and the judgment which introduces it is over and over again set before us. The appearing of the Lord, and His personal presence to execute this, are also so insisted on, that nothing but the infatuation of other hopes could prevail to hide it from men's eyes. In the New Testament, the same things face us continually. As we are not considering it for the first time here, it will be sufficient to examine what is in the passage before us, with whatever connection it may have with other scriptures, needful to bring out fully the meaning of it.

Heaven is seen opened, the prophet's stand-point being therefore now on earth, and a white horse appears, the familiar figure of war and victory. It is upon the Rider that our eyes are fixed. He is called "Faithful and True"—known manifestly to be that—and in righteousness He judges and wars: His warring is but itself a judgment. For this, His eyes penetrate as a flame of fire; nothing escapes them. Many diadems—the sign of absolute authority—are on His head. And worthily, for His name in its full reality—name expressing (as always in Scripture) nature—is an incommunicable one, beyond the knowledge of finite creatures. But His vesture is dipped in blood, for already many enemies have fallen before Him. And His name is called—has been and is, as the language implies,—“The Word of God.” The gospel of John shows us that in creation already He was acting as that; and now in judgment He is no less so.

Is this revealed name any thing else than His incommunicable one? It would seem not. The thought would appear to be in direct refutation of the skeptical denial of the knowledge of the Infinite One as possible to man. We cannot know infinity, but we can know the One who is infinite,—yea, know Him to *be* infinite: know His name, and not know His name. The Infinite One, moreover, Christ is declared here to be,—no inferior God, but the Highest.

In the power of this, He now comes forth; the armies that are in heaven following their white-horsed Leader, themselves also upon white horses, sharers with Him in the conflict and the victory, clothed in fine linen, white and pure. It is this fine linen which we have just seen as granted to the Bride, and which needed the blood of the Lamb to make it white. It is therefore undoubtedly the same company here as there, only here seen in a new aspect, even as the Lord Himself is seen in a new one. It

is communion with Himself that is implied in this change of character. What He is occupied with, they are occupied with; what is His mind is their mind: so, blessed be God, it will be entirely then. None then will be ignorant of His will; none indifferent or half-hearted as to it. Alas! now to how much of it are even the many willingly strangers! and it is this willing ignorance that is so invincible: for all else there is a perfect remedy in the Word of God; but what for a back turned upon that Word?

The Lord comes then, and all the saints with Him. How impossible to think of a providential coming merely here! "When Christ, who is our Life, shall appear," says the apostle, "then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Col. iii. 4.) "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" he asks elsewhere. Judgment is now impending: "out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He may smite the nations." So Isaiah: "He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked." (Chap. xi. 4.) It needs but a word from Him to cause their destruction; while it is judgment no less *according* to His Word: it is that long and oft threatened, slow to come, but at last coming in the full measure of the denunciation. Patience is not repentance.

"And He shall rule them with an iron rod"—"shepherd" them, to use a scarcely English expression. This is, of course, the fulfillment of the prophecy of the second psalm, and decides against the still retained "break them" of the Revised Version. It is the shepherd's rod—this rod of iron, used in behalf of the flock: as He says in Isaiah again, "The day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redeemed is come; and I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore Mine own arm brought salvation unto Me, and My fury, it upheld Me." (Chap. lxxiii.

4, 5.) This is distinctly in answer to the question, "Wherefore art Thou red in Thine apparel, and Thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?" and to which He answers, "I have trodden the wine-press alone." Here also "He treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

Would it be believed that commentators have referred this to the cross, and the Lord's own sufferings there? And yet it is so; though the iron rod, with which the treading of the wine-press is associated in this place, is something that is promised to the overcomer in Thyatira (chap. ii. 27)—"To him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, even as I received of My Father." We have but with an honest mind to put a few texts together after this manner, and all difficulty disappears.

"And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written—'King of kings and Lord of lords.'"

Now, in terrible contrast to the invitation lately given to the marriage supper of the Lamb, an angel standing in the sun bids the birds of the heaven to the "great supper of God," to feast upon earth's proudest and all their following. Immediately after which the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies are seen gathered together to make war against Him who sits upon the horse, and against His army. We are no doubt to interpret this according to the Lord's words to Saul of Tarsus,—“Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” But we have seen the idol thrust into Jehovah's temple, and know well that Israel's persecutors rage openly against Israel's God. They are taken thus banded in rebellion, and judgment sweeps them down; the beast and the false prophet that wrought miracles before him (the antichristian second beast of the thirteenth chapter) being exempted from the common death, only to be cast alive into a lake of fire

burning with brimstone, where at the end of the thousand years of the saints' reign with Christ we find them still.

The vision is so clear in meaning, that it really has no need of an interpreter; and we should remember this as to a vision, that it is not *necessarily* even symbolic, though symbols may have their place in it, as here with the white horses of that before us, while the horses whose flesh the birds eat are not at all so. The "beast and the kings of the earth" furnish us with the same juxta-position of figure and fact, the figure not at all hindering the general literality of fact. In these prophecies of coming judgment, the mercy of God would not permit too thick a veil over the solemn truth. This is the end to which the world is hastening now, and God is proportionally taking off the veil from the eyes upon which it has been lying, that there may be a more urgent note of warning given as it draws nigh. "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear!"

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

MAKING DAVID KING.

1 Chron. xi. 1-3; xii. 23-40.

DAVID did not begin his reign at Jerusalem, but in the ancient and historic city of Hebron, whose origin dated back before that of Egypt's mighty city (Num. xiii. 22). If cities in Scripture are significant both from their names (as Bethel, Gilgal, etc.) and from their associations (as Beersheba, Samaria, etc.), we may expect to find in the one where David was anointed additional light, both from the meaning of its name and the associations connected with it. As has been lately noticed by another, "Hebron" means "communion," and it was situated in Judah ("praise"). David, as we know, was a type of Christ, here at Hebron about to be recognized

publicly as the king whom God had appointed. That appointment had taken place long before, when Samuel, guided by God, poured the oil upon the head of Jesse's youngest son. But he was recognized by none as the king so long as he remained in the house of Saul; only when driven out from his presence, and finding shelter in the cave of Adullam, did he gather to himself that little company who saw in him their king. "Adullam"—"rights of the people"—what a significant name as compared with "Laodicea," its Greek equivalent! In the latter, it is the synonym for lukewarmness and self-sufficiency,—Christ outside, apparently unheeded by those who have enough without Him; in the former, it reminds us of a rejected Christ, and His people *outside with Him*. In Laodicea, we have the rights of the people sought and maintained by themselves; in Adullam, the rights of the people, but only in connection with the rights of David. Without Christ, our rights, our excellences, only render us unfit for God's presence; but merging all in His, having none of our own, we share, not merely His rejection, but His glory. Only a few were with David in Adullam,—men of valor and of faith,—whose names are kept for us, and some of their deeds. But we come now to Hebron, the place of general acknowledgment. Its name and location, we have seen, are significant. Communion, based on a flowing forth in praise; praise, because we see with God's eyes—this is where Christ is recognized. He does not care for that cold acknowledgment of His rights which comes from an intellect convinced, but with heart unsubdued. It is in fellowship with the Father, and in the spirit of joyful praise, that we will give Him the true place claimed by God's counsels for Him, and "crown Him Lord of all."

But if the meaning and location of the city are significant, none the less so are its associations. It was, as we

have said, an ancient place, reminding us, as another has remarked, of the deep roots of that spiritual life and communion which, as it antedates the best this world can give as to its origin, will also outlast it. Here it was that Abraham had his home and spread his tent, content to be a pilgrim in what had been promised him, and to call nothing his own save what spoke of death, apparently the end of all his hopes. But though a stranger dwelling in tents, he finds another Stranger, who is willing to be entertained by him, and who promises all blessings to him who is as good as dead. The recognition of Christ as Lord of all is in proportion as we realize, with Abraham, our strangeness here. The tomb of that which is natural is a fitting place for the proper recognition of Him who can never die. Hebron was Caleb's inheritance. He seemed to have set his heart on it when he went with the twelve men to spy out the land, and all the forty years' wanderings in the wilderness could not obliterate it from his memory, nor the presence of the giants check his faith. God had promised it to him, and he "counted Him faithful that had promised." (Num. xiii. 22; Josh. xiv.) Caleb is the man of faith—faith which lasts, and which overcomes. It is such men that recognize and own Christ as Lord. Hebron reminds us of this. But it was also one of the cities of refuge (Josh. xx. 7), reminding us of Him who first sheltered us from wrath before we could recognize Him as Lord. Thus we see the *place* where Israel gathered to turn the kingdom to David was one fertile in suggestion of truths, both from the significance of its name and from the associations connected with it.

But let us see the subject in the light which applies directly to ourselves. God has glorified His Son Jesus, whom He had appointed heir of all things. He does not wait for us to give our poor sanction to what He has done. Jesus is "crowned with glory and honor." But He does

permit us to see this, to own it, and to rejoice in it. In that sense, we can share in turning the kingdom to Him, in giving Him "the glory due unto His name." To recognize Him as Lord, however, implies subjection to Him. Not one of those who came to David at Hebron to acknowledge his rights but realized that by that very acknowledgment he placed himself in subjection to the king. We talk about Jesus seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high; we sing,—

"O Jesus, Lord, 'tis joy to know
Thy path is o'er of shame and woe;"

may we have grace to show, by the chastened spirit, in true subjection to Him, that we have been to Hebron, telling us of refuge, communion in praise, strangership, and that our hearts have owned Him whom God has crowned as our Lord to serve.

For, as we well know, there is no contradiction between the highest joy and the deepest subjection. He who has clearest views of a glorified Christ will show it in his life. Paul saw Him, and with the knowledge of Him exalted, and the joy of that knowledge filling his heart, could go forth any where, to meet bonds, imprisonment, or death for the name of the Lord Jesus.

Let us, then, come to Hebron to see Him whom man has rejected, but whom God has placed at His own right hand.

"Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh." (1 Chron. xi. 1.) The One on the throne is "not ashamed to call us brethren." He came down from glory to link Himself with us as man, not only by incarnation, but most effectually, and for our salvation, by His death. He is now in the glory as a man, who feels with us, who says of us, "He who sanctifieth, and those who are sanctified, are all of one." Faith recognizes this, and without boasting, without presumption, sees in the exalted Joseph a kins-

man, and claims the relationship. It is one of the marvels of grace,—one of God's wondrous thoughts, to associate poor sinners from the dunghill, made meet by blood, with His spotless, glorified Son, and yet not to degrade Him in our thoughts, nor let us forget who and whence we are.

Next, the people allude to the deliverances and victories wrought by David. We too can do the same. Christ has conquered, and conquered for us, snatched us from Satan's grasp, delivered us from bondage. Faith owns this, and on these grounds owns His rights as Lord, gladly bows to Him. Calvary and the throne are two successive steps in the eyes of His people—and the throne because of Calvary.

So we see the people flocking to Hebron with one object—to exalt David. As we look at them tribe by tribe, their numbers and accoutrements and qualifications, we can learn many things for our own help, and see how that word, "I am glorified in them," can even here in some measure be fulfilled.

First comes Judah—David's own tribe, with shield and spear,—six thousand, eight hundred men. The smallness of this number is doubtless to be accounted for by the fact that already large numbers from that tribe had identified themselves with him. It is significant, however, that so many had up to this time been as strangers to the son of Jesse. "Neither did His brethren believe on Him." Often those nearest as to privilege are slowest to avail themselves of that privilege. "The first shall be last." Even when it is not a question of salvation, but of whole-hearted surrender to Christ, how often are those who have been longest Christians, or enjoyed greater light, far behind the new convert or unlettered child of God. Are *we*, beloved brethren, among these laggards of Judah? These many years, have we known the Lord as Saviour? have we been to Hebron, and there fully seen what He is,

and bowed in our inmost souls to Him and His rule? But if late, they come at last, and doubtless bring great joy to David's heart, as all the Lord's own who, spite of delay, at last fully bow to Him give Him joy. These men come armed, with shield and spear. "The shield of faith, wherewith we quench all the fiery darts of the wicked:" this is the weapon of defense, to be used when attacked, as the spear is the weapon of offense, to be used in attacking the enemy. Our blessed Lord is pleased, not only to accept the homage of our hearts, but the service of our hands. He would have us "endure hardness, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." To be good soldiers, we must be armed both for protection and assault. The enemies of Christ are our enemies. They are ever ready to assault Him. The infidel, the false professor, the secularist: we must be ready to meet these assaults with the shield of faith—faith instructed by and built upon the Word of God. "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith." But it is not enough to resist and to parry blows, we must be ready to assault the enemy, and to drive him out. Many strongholds are held by the enemy. He often will not take the initiative, hence the spear is needful.

Simeon comes next; and if from the fact that he had no well-defined boundaries we might think he lacked in positiveness of character, we at least find here no lack of it. His men are mighty men of valor. Next to faith comes courage (2 Pet. i. 5). One may have armor both offensive and defensive, and yet be a poor soldier from lack of courage. "The children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle." (Ps. lxxviii. 9.) How often was this exemplified in the history of Israel! It was not, after all, the weapons, but the heart behind them:—Shamgar's ox-goad would do if Shamgar's courage wielded it. We live in a day of vacil-

lation, of compromise. We need the courage of the truth to proclaim it, to stand by it at all hazard. When Joshua was about to lead Israel into the land, the oft-repeated admonition was, "Be strong, and of good courage." How could they meet those hosts without courage? and how can we meet the mightier powers of evil if we have not true valor,—not heedless rashness, which thinks not of danger till overwhelmed, but the firm, bold, uncompromising stand for the Lord. Let us take courage too from the fact that feeble Simeon supplies the mighty men of valor. We may be naturally feeble,—our past record may have been poor, but *Hebron* makes great changes.

Priests and Levites are never wanting when Christ has His true place. Service and worship, each in its proper place, and through proper channels, will always then be found.

In Benjamin's three thousand, we see a triumph of grace. All their natural feelings and prejudices allied them with Saul, and after his death, with his family. But the enmity has gone, prejudice has subsided, and here are the men to confess David. We too, like Benjamin, have known other lords,—can say with that one who was also "of the tribe of Benjamin," that we were blasphemers, injurious, persecutors, and yet, like him, have learned in some measure to say, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ."

Ephraim supplies a large contingent of mighty men of valor. Of old, this tribe had furnished the leader in Joshua, and later, it was the centre of that jealousy which culminated in the disruption of the kingdom,—a jealousy which cropped out in the times of the judges once and again. But here, the enmity of Ephraim has departed—a foretaste of the time when it will really depart, as, gathered about the true David, they will vie with Judah in fighting the common enemy—not their brethren. These

were famous men too ; but how good to see them gathering to David !—just as it gives one joy to see the gifted, the wealthy, or the learned laying all their gifts, their reputation, at the feet of Jesus.

Manasseh is not far behind his younger brother in numbers ; and of these eighteen thousand, we have the interesting mention that they were “ expressed by name.” We are units after all ; and in all the innumerable company of the redeemed, there is not one whose name is not in the “ Lamb’s book of life.” “ I have called thee by name.” Then, since He knows me, let me live as under His eye, as though there were none but me.

Issacher sent but two hundred. But two things change this small delegation into a very weighty one ;—they represented all their tribe, and they had knowledge of the times, and knew what Israel ought to do. Representation in secular or ecclesiastical politics is generally only such in name, and many might think there was no such thing as truly representing others. Here, however, we see it, and the reason is plain,—they had the same object as all their brethren—to make David king. When Christ Himself is our object and the object of our brethren, then we can truly represent them, act for them ; then the judgment of the few becomes that of the many,—the decision of one assembly, that of all. But another important principle is to be noted about these two hundred men,—they were *leaders*. Clerisy is one extreme ; a failure to recognize divine gifts, the other. No man or men has authority over us as being “ lords over God’s heritage ;” but we are *bound* to “ know those that are over us in the Lord and admonish us, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake.” In the epistle to the Hebrews, where Christ displaces angels, lawgivers, sacrifices, priests,—the saints are told to “ remember,” “ obey,” and “ salute” their guides. And every right-feeling Christian will rec-

ognize the force of this, and will see in the gift, not the man, but the Lord the Giver, and obey, not the man, but the Lord. On the other hand, the true spirit of leadership is humility. The true leader is like Christ, and only in so far as he is, can he be followed. The moment one begins to presume on his position, on his gift or past record, and expect to be recognized, he is no longer a leader, but the reverse. It is when the man has but one object—to glorify Christ—and is truly in subjection to Him, can say, "I am less than the least of all saints," that he is fit to occupy the place and use the gifts the Lord has given him. These men had knowledge of the times, and knew what Israel ought to do; and oh, how much such men are needed now,—men who understand the difficult times in which we are, and who can in no uncertain way point out the true path for Christ's scattered and wandering sheep. There are such, but, alas! in the heat of controversy, the confusion ever increasing, we are apt to miss what they would tell us.

Zebulon, apparently obscure, when the test comes, throws fifty thousand men into the field, well accoutered, and expert in war. It would be interesting to take up the various instruments of war, and see their significance,—the sword for hand-to-hand conflict, the bow for long range; the javelin, the spear, and all the rest doubtless have their special meaning. But though so many, these men of Zebulon are not a mob; they *keep rank*; each fills his proper place, and all act in unison. It is this which gives beauty to military maneuvers, and adds effectiveness to large numbers of men. Individuality is one side, fellowship the other. There is no such thing as saints acting oppositely if they have the same motives and the same light. The apostle, in speaking of his fellow-servants who had gone to Corinth (2 Cor. xii.), says, "Walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same

steps." With one animating spirit, there could be but one path. Let us remember this; and though it is humbling to us to own it, see in the divergent paths of God's people, not the liberty of the Spirit, but the self-will of the flesh. But how can we keep rank? One object before us, one guide, and, self judged, waiting on the Spirit, who will, as in the time of Pentecost, make all we say or do "with one accord."

Naphtali shows us the place of leaders again.

Dan and Asher, and the tribes across the river, swell the numbers of those who are flocking to Hebron. Oh, to see something answering to all this to-day!

Now we see the results. There is great feasting. For David will not see those who are true to him suffer hunger. We, alas! too often put our needs first and the glory of Christ last. We are selfish, and even in our study of the Word, or service, are perhaps thinking of the benefit to ourselves, rather than the honor done to the Lord. Put Him first, and how soon feasting follows! And with feasting comes joy—the blessed outflow of hearts that have an object, and filled unto all the fullness of God. Lord, gather Thy people to Thyself, occupy them with Thyself. We will not lack then in food or joy.

CONFLICT.

FIERCE and frequent are the conflicts
 Of Thy warriors, O our God;
 But how sweet to know that Jesus
 Ev'ry step the way hath trod.
 Jesus, Captain of salvation,
 Thou our battle-field hast tried;
 Fear we not the foes of darkness,
 Thou our armor hast supplied.
 Thou art with us, thou art for us,
 Thou hast 'gainst the tempter stood.

Thou our feebleness canst pity,—
 Yea, and help, when none else could.
 Many a silent conflict wages,
 Fierce and oft within the breast
 Of some silent saint who seemeth
 Most of all to be at rest.

From the depth of ev'ry trial,
 May our hearts still rest in Thee.
 [Peace amid the fiercest fighting—
 Calm upon the roughest sea.]
 In the heat of hardest battle,
 Look to Thee for victory.
 Find the weapons of our warfare,
 Saviour, all supplied in Thee.

Plainfield.

H. McD.

HIS DWELLING-PLACE.

AT the risk of speaking of what may be quite familiar to many of the readers of *HELP AND FOOD*, I would ask them to consider with me one lovely word of surpassing value to us found in 2 Chron. v. The temple is completed. All that vast store of riches that the beloved king David has collected has been spent in it, covering it with beauty, and filling with wealth its treasuries. The ark has been brought up from Zion and placed in its appointed position under the sheltering wings of the cherubim. Can any thing be lacking in glory, beauty, or wealth to make that temple a fit and acceptable dwelling-place for God? Yes, something is wanting still to make it answer to God's heart as a place where He can dwell and *rest*. It must be filled with *praise*. Oh, sweet and precious word, giving us a blessed insight, as it were, into the very heart of God. For have we not a saying, as true as it is trite, "A man is known by the company he keeps." We can judge a man's character by what he finds his

pleasure in, by what he voluntarily surrounds himself with. Then apply that principle to this scene. As soon as, and not until, there is one sweet sound of melody—the voice of praise and thanksgiving, with no jarring note, “as the trumpeters and singers were *as one*, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord,” then God comes in His glory and says, as it were, Now I can rest. Oh, sweet and precious word, again I say! for it tells us what God is. As long as there is one cry, one groan, one sorrow, that is the effect, or one sin that is its cause, He rests not, He *cannot* rest. Around Him must be full hearts—so full of bliss and joy as to overflow in song. Then, and only then, can He find a dwelling and resting-place that is suited to Him. Ah, may we not know Him by the company He keeps. Yes, *He inhabits the praises of His people*. Surely this scene, then, through which we are passing affords Him no rest. Sin-stained, sorrow-filled;—groans, tears, sighing, and death on every hand. “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work” is the divine word for such a scene,—a scene to which even the redeemed are still connected by their unredeemed bodies, and they groan amidst a groaning creation. But there is a temple to-day. “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” “Ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, ‘I will dwell among them and walk among them.’” Yes, there is one place still covered with the glory and beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ, and where the voice of harmonious, melodious praise may be heard, fitting it for His dwelling-place. It is not to be found in the old creation, but is in itself a part of that new creation where no sin is found, and consequently no sorrow can enter. Practically, then, beloved, may we not learn that we are *intended to praise*? It should be the one thing that marks out all who are living stones in the Temple which He inhabits who inhabits

the praises of His people. "In every thing give thanks." It is suited to our God, it is His rest. But how can we in our trials, perplexities, difficulties, sorrows,—nay, failings and shortcomings, not to say *sins*,—how can we live in this atmosphere of *praise*? Surely only by recognizing, enjoying, being occupied with, that new-creation scene of which our blessed Lord is the Head, on whose perfect work it rests secure, who is Himself its one Exponent. Ah, keep the eye on Him, and the heart in the atmosphere of His love, and stripes, and stocks, and foulest dungeon, and darkest midnight, can hinder the springing up of that fountain of praise, not at all. So look forward a little to the coming Sabbath that remains for the people of God, when God's tender hand has touched every weeping eye, and the touch has dried every tear,—not merely, as here, in a few, and in them in part of their being only, but in all; and there shall be no more death, nor grief, nor cry, nor distress shall exist more. Then, and only then, shall it be said, "The tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall *dwell with them*." Blessed be God forever!

F. C. J.

JOHN XX. 10-18.

"TO whom shall we go?" Not "where." The world had become to them an empty void. In the fourteenth chapter, the Lord is about to leave them, and there is really no one else for them to turn to; their hearts are attached to Him. Their hearts tremble in anticipation of His departure, and the Lord ministers to them. He seeks to take their affection away from this world altogether, by showing them their prospect in the Father's house, where He is going. They are looking for a place on earth: the Lord transfers their affections to heaven. He seems to take their attention right away

from this scene, and leave them as strangers and pilgrims, but not as orphans. I need not say that it is only those who are out of this world in heart and affection who are fit to go through it according to what is of God.

These remarks remind us of one of the apostle's straits in the epistle to the Philippians. It was when he could say, "I have a desire to depart and be with Christ," that God could say, You are just the man I can leave down there. What for? For the "furtherance and joy of faith" of God's people. Nevertheless, though the hearts of the Lord's people were thus attached to Christ, we find here that even they go to their place of rest; but there is one here who seems for the moment to be in just the place Christ occupied in this world—no place to lay her head,—no place for her in this scene where her Lord was not. She is there at the sepulchre a mourner.

There are different degrees of affection; this none of us doubt. Sometimes Jonathan's affection to David is pointed to as a specimen of Christian devotedness. I would not in the slightest degree despise Jonathan's love; indeed, I think we may often take it as a reproach to ourselves, and ask ourselves if our love and devotedness to the Lord comes up to it; nevertheless, we have a standard, and we shall find, according to it, Christian love is higher than Jonathan's to David. Jonathan stripped himself of all that he possessed; he loved David as his own soul, and yet he returned to the palace. Even his love could have gone a step further, and therefore cannot be love of the highest degree, for he might have followed David into the cave. Love of the highest degree cannot, will not, rest short of the presence of its object. Orpah loved her mother-in-law, but went to her own country, which was something like the affection of Jonathan to David; but Ruth wept, and kissed her mother-in-law, and clave to her, saying, "Whither thou goest, I will go; and

whither thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Nothing but the presence and enjoyment of the company of its object could satisfy such love as this, and that is what we have here in Mary. Her affection for Christ makes her a mourner here in this world where He is rejected.

As she is there at the sepulchre, mourning the absence of her Lord, the angel asks the question, "Why weepest thou?" She gives the reason: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." The absence of Christ was the cause of her mourning. Do we know, beloved brethren, what it is to mourn the absence of Christ in this world? Every thing tells of His absence. We have experienced, like Mary Magdalene, a great deliverance at His hands. Has He not won our hearts? Can we get along through such a world without Jesus? Are we mourners because of His absence?

Now the Lord appears. He appears to Mary, and repeats the angel's question, but asks another, which comes much nearer her heart: He says, "Why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?" This seems to take Mary Magdalene right beyond herself, and she says, "Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." Occupied as she is with her Lord, she concludes that he will know whom she means. It was the one who knew what it was to mourn the absence of her Lord who got the revelation of His presence. The more we mourn the absence of the Lord in this world, the more, I am sure, he will reveal Himself to our hearts; but if we think we can get along in this world without Him, He will leave us to ourselves until we turn to Him in contrition of heart.

Christ desires the company of His people. He has redeemed us, and He loves us; and love, with Him, will be satisfied with nothing less than the presence of its object.

“That where I am, there ye may be also.” He desires us to be with Him forever. He desires that we may enjoy Him here, and that He may enjoy our company as we journey along through this world; but if we are to company with Him, we must be suited to Himself. He will not suit Himself to our company, but we must be suited to His company.

Here we have a beautiful picture of the way the Lord fits us for His company. He has made provision for the removal of every thing that would hinder the enjoyment of His company, or that would make us unsuited to Himself. He desires our company, desires to dwell in our hearts,—not to come and visit now and then, but to *dwell* there. “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.”

The Word says, and it is blessed, that God has two homes,—one in the highest heaven and the other in the lowest hearts. Listen to that beautiful verse in the fifty-seventh of Isaiah,—“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is ‘Holy,’ ‘I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a humble and contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.’” The One whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain dwells in the lowest hearts. What for? “To revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” He desires our hearts. Some give their fortune, but withhold their hearts; their talents, but withhold their hearts; their time, but withhold their hearts: all these are nothing without the heart. He wants our hearts. If He has them, He has all,—all is held by Himself; but, how marvelous! if we will not give Him His place there, He stands outside and knocks, saying, “Open unto Me, and I will come in, and sup with you and you with Me.” I know it is wonderful, but there it is set forth as clearly as possible in the Revelation of God’s Word. There is

nothing more wonderful in Christianity, I am sure, than the thought that the Lord Jesus Christ desires the company of His people,—yea, that the affection of the Father requires the gratification of the Father's desire—our presence in the house above.

It is more real heart-work that is wanted amongst us, I am sure; I feel it for myself. "The trees of the Lord are full of sap:" all that He hath not planted will be plucked out. It is more real, genuine freshness and power that is needed in our hearts,—in our condition amongst ourselves: it is more real sap of the freshness and power of the truth of God. "The trees of the Lord are full of sap," and I believe the secret of it is, to have the companionship of Christ; and if we know what it is in any measure to mourn His absence in this world, He will reveal Himself to us,—I am sure He will.

Here we find that Christ must have the first place, as we find it all the way through the New Testament; and you never yet enjoyed the presence of Christ without getting something from Him. Did you ever enjoy the presence of Christ, sitting at His feet, without getting a communication or communications from Him? So here, after He has revealed Himself to Mary, and satisfied her heart by such a revelation, she gets a communication from Himself. "Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God." What a revelation! In the previous chapter, He was under the same condemnation; here, He takes them into the same relationship in which He stands. "My Father and your Father, My God and your God."

Now follows something else. Getting a communication from Himself, she becomes His messenger. "Go to My brethren." She becomes a witness of what she has learned from Himself. These three things you find all the way through the New Testament: Christ must be first; then,

communication from Himself; and, third, witness for Himself in this scene.

In the twenty-fourth of Luke, we get it. Christ appears in the midst of His disciples. The first thing is, the revelation of Himself, which dispels their fear: their terror gives way to joy and wonder; and now, having Himself before them, the Lord recounts the things concerning Himself; He opens their understanding, that they may understand the things concerning Himself. Third, He says, "Ye are witnesses of these things." There is a fourth thing there too; it is the power in which the witness is. They had to wait for the power. Though we have not to wait for it, we should wait upon it.

There is another instance where we get this same order. When Ananias went to Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, . . . the Lord hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of His mouth. For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard." (Acts xxii. 12-15.) First, "that thou shouldest see the Just One;" second, "that thou shouldest hear the voice of His mouth;" third, that thou shouldest be His witness among all nations." This is the order; and so we find the very first utterance of Mary, when she got to His disciples, was, "I have seen the Lord." If we can say this first, when we go forth to be a witness, or to comfort the downcast saint, we shall be able to say what He has said to us. No doubt it was her proclamation of the risen Lord that brought them together, for in the next verse they are together.

There are three places where He is in the midst. In the nineteenth chapter, "in the midst" of two thieves. "On either side one, and Jesus in the midst." In the twentieth chapter, ver. 19, "in the midst" of His gathered people; in the fifth chapter of the Revelation, we find Him "in the midst" again—"a Lamb as it had been

slain,"—and, I say, what is a gathering of saints if the Lord is not in the midst? Nay, more, what is heaven if Christ is not there? For a moment, Christ is hidden from the view of heaven, and a question is raised that cannot be settled: who can settle the question apart from Christ? The question is, "Who is worthy?" For a moment, Christ is hidden from view, and John begins to weep. Though in heaven there, yet he begins to weep because no one is found worthy to open the book, neither to look thereon. One of the elders says, "Weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." In a moment, his tears are dried up.

What are we without Christ?

"The person of the Christ,
 Enfolding ev'ry grace;
 Once dead, but now alive again,
 In heaven demands our praise."

Plainfield, July, 1892.

J. H. B.

"THE COMING OF THE LORD DRAWETH NIGH."

LORD, we would be growing stronger,
 Would be pond'ring, ling'ring, longer
 O'er the precious things we know.
 As the day approaches nearer,
 We would have our vision clearer,
 And Thyself more precious grow.

Few the hours (and oh, how fleeting!)
 Ere the promised, longed-for greeting
 Calls us to the home above.

We would, till that blest reunion,
 Spend the hours in sweet communion,
 Learning all Thy heart of love.

Shall we spend these last few ling'ring
 Moments o'er our troubles, hind'ring
 Love, joy, peace,—the Spirit's fruit?

O'er some brother's failings brooding,
 Harb'ring unkind thoughts, intruding—
 Nourishing some bitter root?

No; we would be girded, waiting
 Ev'ry hour that blest translating,
 Longing, Lord, Thy face to see.
 Watching for the glorious dawning
 Of that one triumphant morning,
 Jesus, occupied with Thee.

Plainfield.

H. McD.

THE life of Jesus was the bright shining of a candle. It was such a lamp in the house of God as needed no golden tongs or snuff-dishes. It was ordered before the Lord continually, burning as from pure beaten oil. It was making manifest all that was around, exposing and re-proving; but it ever held its own place uncondemned.

Whether challenged by disciples or adversaries, as the Lord was again and again, there is never an excusing of Himself. On one occasion, disciples complain, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" But He does not think of vindicating the sleep out of which this challenge awakes Him. On another occasion, they object to Him, "The multitude throng Thee, and sayest Thou, 'Who touched Me?'" But He does not need this inquiry, but acts upon the satisfaction of it. At another time, Martha says to Him, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." But He does not excuse His not having been there, nor His delaying for two days in the place where He was, but instructs Martha in the *wondrous character which His delay had given to that hour.*

All this tells us of the way of the perfect Master. Appearances might have been against Him at times. Why did He sleep in the boat when the winds and waves were raging? Why did He loiter on the road when Jairus's daughter was dying? or why did He tarry where He was when His friend Lazarus was sick in the distant village of Bethany? But all this is but *appearance*, and that for a

moment. We have heard of these ways of Jesus,—this sleep, this loitering, and this tarrying, but we also see the end of Jesus, that all is perfect. Appearances were against the God of Job in patriarchal days. Messenger after messenger seemed too much, unrelenting, and inexorable; but the God of Job had not to excuse Himself, nor has the Jesus of the evangelists.

Therefore, when we look at the Lord Jesus as the lamp of the sanctuary—the light in the house of God, we find at once that the tongs and snuff-dishes cannot be used. They are discovered to have no counterpart in Him. Consequently, they who undertook to challenge or rebuke Him when He was here had to go back rebuked and put to shame themselves. They were using the tongs and snuffers with a lamp which did not need them, and they only betrayed their folly; and the light of this lamp shone the brighter, not because the tongs had been used, but because it was able to give forth some fresh witness (which it did on every occasion) that it did not need them.

I may further observe, that as He did not excuse Himself to the judgment of man in the course of His ministry, as we have now seen, so in the hour of His weakness, when the powers of darkness were all against Him, He did not cast Himself on the pity of man. When He became the prisoner of the Jews and of the Gentiles, He did not entreat them or sue to them. No appeal to compassion, no pleading for life is heard. He had prayed to the Father in Gethsemane, but there is no seeking to move the Jewish high-priest or the Roman governor.

I have heard of one who, observing His bright and blessed ways in the four gospels, was filled with tears and affections, and was heard to cry out, "Oh that I were with Him!"

If one may speak for others, beloved, it is this we *want*, and it is this we *covet*. We know our need, but we can say, the Lord knows our desire.—(*From "Meditations on the Moral Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ."*)

INITIATION.

“In every thing and in all things I am initiated both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer privation.” (Phil. iv. 2.—J. N. D.’s Version.)

SECRECY always has a charm for the natural man. It is this which in greatest measure attracts to the many orders and societies which profess to have knowledge of something hid from others. In religions also the same craving for secrets has been freely made use of by the priests of these false systems. Mysteries, strange and secret rites have been the attractions by which the unlearned have been allured,—mysteries which in many cases were but the “hidden things of darkness,” revolting and degrading ceremonies which revealed only the utter corruption of the heart of man, and drew him on into still greater depths of evil. It was charged by the enemies of Christianity that, while its outward teachings were moral, its secret and hidden practices, known only to the initiated, were dark and terrible orgies, revolting even to the heathen mind. In reply, it could be truthfully said, of course, that this was utterly false,—that Christianity had no secrets, nothing for the initiated beyond the simple and clear and holy teachings of God’s blessed Word. It is true indeed that “we speak wisdom among them that are perfect,” but this is only the unfolding of that which every babe in Christ knows in an elementary way.

But there *are*, in one sense, secrets in Christianity known only to the initiated,—secrets, not of the intellect, but of the heart, learned, not by study, but through experience. In blessed contrast to the empty husk that man has to offer as his secret, Christianity offers a solid reality. But one must be initiated to learn what these secrets are. They are not hidden from view, we can read in a few

words what they are, and yet there must be initiation to properly appreciate them. There must be the learning by experience, by denying self, either as to worthiness or power, which answers to initiation.

What, then, was the secret the apostle had learned by initiation? It was simply this: a satisfaction of soul under all circumstances, a quietness of heart no matter what need oppressed,—a quietness which, as it could not be disturbed by trial, could not either by prosperity. It does not seem to be a great secret at first sight, but the longer we dwell upon it, the more will we see how deep and far-reaching it is. With many, how easily does trial oppress! They forget the admonition which speaketh to us as sons—"My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor *faint* when thou art rebuked of Him." Trial comes, and it overwhelms them. It may be loss of property, and they mourn as though they had forgotten that "better and more enduring substance" "reserved in heaven." Repining, they lose the opportunity of knowing the fellowship of Him who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor. They are not initiated. Or health fails, giving a good opportunity to show the precious truth that "though the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day." But instead of bowing to a Father's loving dealings, the person grows morbid, selfish, becomes nervously sensitive, and exhibits not the power of grace, but of selfishness. Why this failure? The person has not been initiated, has not learned the secret how to suffer need. And so, without multiplying illustrations, whatever the circumstances of trial may be, if possessed of this happy secret, all is for our profit. Or, on the other hand, are our circumstances prosperous? unless possessed of this secret, we will not "know how to abound." Many a Christian who has walked humbly and closely with God in sorrow, poverty, obloquy, has grown

cold and careless when earthly joy and wealth were given. Nor is this because there is inherent evil in wealth or prosperity; surely our God does not delight in making our circumstances uncomfortable. The trouble is with our corrupt hearts (Sodom's plains have allured many a poor Lot on to shipwreck),—hearts which cannot be trusted. What is the remedy? Not the hair-cloth garment, or the vow of poverty, but the initiation into this secret.

But looking deeper, we find in this epistle to the Philippians the very root of the secret. It is the person of our blessed Lord as the object before the apostle's heart—he knew Him, longed to know Him more—that kept him above all circumstances whether of joy or sorrow. This epistle is precious to us all; it seems to carry us along with it, and yet it speaks of an experience which is that of but few. Take the second chapter, as giving the habit of mind in the believer, how little we know of it! or the third, where we see him pressing on with ever-increasing speed toward a prize, which is a precious, glorified Christ; and we do not wonder that the man whose whole heart is after that Object should know how to be abased or to abound. He was indeed initiated,—he had a secret which would take him through all circumstances, and show him how to distill sweetness and blessing from every bitter and baneful happening. The "fathers" in 1 Jno. ii. were initiated—they knew Him that is from the beginning. They need no warning so long as that One is before them.

But there is a counterfeit to all this. We have been speaking of that rest of soul with Christ for its object which is the secret to be learned by the believer, and which lifts him above circumstances. There is an indifference to circumstances which is nothing but selfish sloth. The truly initiated one is not unmoved by circum-

stances,—he weeps at sorrow and rejoices in blessing, but these things do not hold his heart captive. Let us beware of mere indifference; it is most benumbing and dangerous.

When a neophyte sought initiation into the mysteries of a heathen religion, he had to give himself up to his guide. He knew not what was before him; but at all cost, he was determined to learn. So if we are to learn—really learn the “secret of the Lord,” there must be the abandonment of self, that Christ may be *all*.

Even here we can know something of the joy of having a secret with the Lord,—of getting a glimpse of that “white stone” which is given to those who in days of looseness hold fast to Him.

“AND NOW ABIDETH

Faith, Hope, Love,

THESE THREE

BUT THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE.”

FAITH—blest answer to each yearning,
 Hope—bright lamp so ceaseless burning,
 Needed now our hearts to prove.
 But beyond life's storms and tossings,
 Earth's enticements and engrossings,
 Stretches forth an endless Love.

Faith will cease when sight is given :
 Hope is needed not in heaven,
 But its atmosphere is Love.
 Faith to keep our souls from drifting,
 Hope our vain affections sifting,
 But our *rest* is in His *Love*.

Higher than the heavens around us
 Is the love that sought and found us,—
 Free, unfathomable love.
 Deeper than the depths of ocean,
 Swifter than the lightning's motion :
 Vain attempt its worth to prove.

He who doth so deeply love us,
 And in faithfulness doth prove us,
 Measures not His wealth of love.
 Still for us too deep its meaning,
 Till this moment's intervening
 Fades, and we're caught up above.

Hope shall reap her full fruition
 When each blood-bought son's petition
 Comes in answer from above,
 When the Lord, with shout descending,
 Speaks the rapture now impending,—
 “Rise, and come away, My love.”

Faith and Hope forever ceasing,
 Love eternally increasing.
 Oh, the depth of Jesus' love!
 We shall be forever learning,
 Ever needing, ever yearning
 For that priceless, precious love.

Plainfield.

H. McD.

“THINGS THAT SHALL BE:”

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART VII. (Chap. xix. 5—xxii.)

THE CONSUMMATION.

The Restraint upon Satan. (Chap. xx. 1—3.)

THE judgment upon living men is followed by that upon Satan their prince, though not yet is it final judgment. This partial dealing with the great deceiver means that the end of man's trial is not even yet reached. He is shut up in the abyss, or bottomless pit, of which we have read before, but not in hell (the lake of fire). As restraint, it is complete; and with the devil, the host of fallen angels following him share his sentence. This is not merely an inference, however legitimate.

Isaiah has long before anticipated what is here (chap. xxiv. 21-23): "And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days they shall be visited. Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed; for the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously."

Here the contemporaneous judgment of men and angels at the beginning of the millennium is clearly revealed, and just as clearly, that it is not yet final. The vision in Revelation is also clear. The descent of the angel with the key and chain certainly need not obscure the meaning. Nor could the shutting up of Satan mean any thing less than the stoppage of all temptation for the time indicated. The "dragon," too, is the symbol for the explanation of which we are (as in the twelfth chapter,) referred to Eden, "the ancient serpent," and then are told plainly, "who is the devil and Satan." It is simply inexcusable to make the interpretation of the symbol still symbolic, and to make the greater stand for the less—Satan the symbol of an earthly empire or any thing of the sort. What plainer words could be used? which Isaiah's witness also abundantly confirms. God has been pleased to remove all vail from His words here, and it does look as if only willful perversity could misunderstand His speech.

That after all this he is to be let out to deceive the nations is no doubt at first sight hard to understand. It is all right to inquire reverently why it should be; and Scripture, if we have learnt Peter's way of putting it together,—no prophecy to be interpreted as apart from the general body of prophecy,—will give us satisfactory, if

solemn, answer. The fact is revealed, if we could give no reason for it. Who are we to judge God's ways? and and with which of us must He take counsel? It should be plain that for a thousand years Satan's temptations cease upon the earth; and then they are renewed and successful, the nations are once more deceived.

What makes it so difficult to understand is that many have a false idea of the millennial age, as if it were "righteousness *dwelling*" on the earth instead of "righteousness *reigning*" over it. It is said indeed of Israel, after they are brought to God nationally, "My people shall be *all* righteous" (Is. lx. 21); but that is not the general condition. The eighteenth psalm, speaking prophetically of that time, declares, "The strangers shall submit themselves unto Me," which in the margin is given as "lie," or "yield feigned obedience." They submit to superior power, not in heart; and so it is added, "The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their close places." (Comp. lxvi. 3; lxxxii. 15.) And Isaiah, speaking of the long length of years, says, "The child shall die a hundred years old," but adds, "and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed." (lxv. 20.) So Zechariah pronounces the punishment of those who do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the glorious King (xiv. 17).

The millennium is not eternal blessedness; it is not the Sabbath, to which so many would compare it. It answers rather to the sixth day than the seventh,—to the day when the man and woman (types of Christ and the Church) are set over the other creatures. The seventh is the type of the rest of God, which is the only true rest of the people of God (Heb. iv. 9). The millennium is the last period of man's trial, and that is not rest: trial in circumstances the best that could be imagined, righteousness reigning, the course of the world changed, heaven open

overhead, the earth filled with the knowledge of the glory of God, the history of past judgment to admonish for the future; the question will then be fully answered, whether sin is the mere fruit of ignorance, bad government, or any of the accidents of life to which it is so constantly imputed. Alas! the issue, after a thousand years of blessing, when Satan is loosed out of his prison, will make all plain; the last lesson as to man will only then be fully learned.

The Resurrection and Reign of the Saints. (xx. 4-6.)

AND now we have what requires more knowledge of the Word to understand it rightly; and here, more distinctly than before, there are vision and the interpretation of the vision, so that we will be inexcusable if we confound them. The vision is of thrones, and people sitting on them, judgment (that is, rule) being put into their hands. "The souls of those beheaded for the witness of Jesus and the word of God" are another company separate from these, but now associated with them; and "those who have not worshiped the beast" seem to be still another. All these live and reign with Christ a thousand years, and the rest of the dead do not live till the thousand years are ended.

That is the vision. The interpretation follows: "This," we are told, "is the first resurrection;" and that "blessed and holy is he who hath part in the first resurrection: upon these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

We must look carefully at all this, and in its order. First, the thrones, and those sitting on them: there should be no difficulty as to who these are, for we have already seen the elders crowned and seated in heaven, and before that have heard the Lord promise the overcomer in Laodicea that he should sit with Him upon His throne. That

being now set up upon the earth, we find the saints throned with Him. In the interpretation, it is said they reign with Him a thousand years. The vision is thus far very simple.

Daniel has already spoken of these thrones: "I beheld," he says, "till the thrones were placed," (as the Revised Version rightly corrects the common one,) "and the Ancient of days did sit." (Chap. vii. 9.) But there was then no word as to the occupants of the thrones. It is the part of Revelation to fill in the picture on its heavenly side, and to show us who these are. They are not angels, who, though there may be "principalities" among them, are never said to reign with Christ. They are redeemed men,—the saints caught up at the descent of the Lord into the air (1 Thess. iv.), and who as the armies that were in heaven we have seen coming with the white-horsed King to the judgment of the earth.

This being so, it is evident that the "souls" next spoken of are a separate company from these, though joined to them as co-heirs of the kingdom. The folly that has been taught that they are "souls" simply, so that here we have a resurrection of souls, and not of bodies,—together with that which insists that it is a resurrection of truths or principles, or of a martyr-"spirit"—bursts like a bubble when we take into account the first company of living and throned saints. In the sense intended, Scripture never speaks of a resurrection of *souls*. "Soul" is here used for "person," as we use it still, and as Scripture often uses it; and the word "resurrection" is found, not in the vision, where its signification might be doubtful, but in the explanation, where we have no right to take it as other than literal. What is the use of explanation, except to *explain*?

The recognition of the first company here also removes another difficulty, which troubled those with whom the "blessed hope" revived at the end of the last century,

that the first resurrection consisted wholly of *martyrs*. The *second* company does indeed consist of these, and for an evident reason. They are those who, converted after the Church is removed to heaven, would have their place naturally in earthly blessing with Israel and the saved nations. Slain for the Lord's sake, during the tribulation following, they necessarily are deprived of this: only to find themselves in the mercy of God made to fill a higher place, and to be added, by divine power raising them from the dead, to the *heavenly* saints. How sweet and comforting this assurance as to the sufferers in a time of unequalled sorrow!

When we look further at this last company, we find, as already intimated, that it also consists of two parts: first, of those martyred in the time of the seals, and spoken of under the fifth seal; and secondly, the objects of the beast's wrath, as in chap. xiii. 7, 15. This particularization is a perfect proof of who are embraced in this vision, and that we must look to those first seen as sitting on the thrones for the whole multitude of the saints of the present and the past. To all of which it is added that "the rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished," when we find in fact the resurrection of judgment taking place (*vv.* 11-15). All ought to be simple, then. The "first resurrection" is a literal resurrection of all the dead in Christ from the foundation of the world, a certain group which might seem not to belong to it being specialized, as alone needing this. The first resurrection is "first" simply in contrast with that of the wicked, having different stages indeed, but only one character: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection! upon such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

To suppose that this passage stands alone and un-
 sup-

ported in the New Testament is to be ignorant of much that is written. "Resurrection *from* the dead," as distinct from the general truth of "resurrection *of* the dead," is special New-Testament truth. The Pharisees knew that there should be "a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." (Acts xxiv. 15.) But when the Lord spake of the Son of Man rising from the dead, the disciples question among themselves what the rising from the dead could mean (Mark ix. 9, 10.) Christ's own resurrection is the pattern of the believer's. The "order" of the resurrection is distinctly given us: "Christ the first-fruits; afterward, *they that are Christ's* at His coming" (1 Cor. xv. 23): not a general, but a selective resurrection. Such was what the apostle would by any means gain: not, as in the common version, "the resurrection *of*," but "the resurrection *from* the dead." (Phil. iii. 11.)

In his epistle to the Thessalonians, the same apostle instructs us more distinctly as to it, speaking in the way of special revelation, by "the word of the Lord:" "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent"—or, as the Revised Version, "precede"—"them that are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. iv. 15-17.) Thus before He appears shall His saints be with Him; and, of course, long before the resurrection of the lost.

But the Lord Himself has given us, in His answer to the Sadducees, what most clearly unites with this vision in Revelation (Luke xx. 34-36). They had asked Him of one who had married seven brethren: "Whose wife

shall she be in the resurrection?" meaning, of course, to discredit it by the suggestion. "And Jesus said unto them, 'The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection *from* the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.'"

Clearly this asserts the fact and gives the character of the special resurrection which the vision here describes. It is one which we must be "accounted worthy" to obtain, not one which nobody can miss: it is grace that acts in giving any one his place in it. Those who have part in it are by that fact proclaimed to be the "children of God," thus again showing that it cannot be a general one. They die no more: that is, (as here) they are not hurt of the second death. They are equal to the angels: above the fleshly conditions of this present life. Finally, it is the resurrection *from* the dead, not *of* the dead merely. All this is so plain that there should be no possibility of mistaking it, one would say; and yet it is no plainer than this scene in Revelation.

How dangerous must be the spell of a false system, which can so blind the eyes of multitudes of truly godly and otherwise intelligent persons to the plain meaning of such scriptures as these! And how careful should we be to test every thing we receive by the Word, which alone is truth! Even the "wise" virgins slumbered with the rest. Which shows us also, however, that error is connected with a spiritual condition, even in saints themselves. May we be kept from all that would thus cloud our perception of what, as truth, alone has power to bless and sanctify the soul!

F. W. G.

(To be continued.)

THE OLIVE-TREE, FIG-TREE, AND THE VINE.

THERE are three fruit-bearing trees, much esteemed and cultivated by the inhabitants of Palestine, which are fruitful in instructing us who possess and peruse the New Testament. They are the OLIVE-TREE, the FIG-TREE, and the VINE. It was these of which Jothan made mention in his parable to the men of Shechem, which furnish parabolic teaching about Gentiles, Israel, and Christians. *Privilege, profession, fruitfulness*, such are the topics in illustration of which these trees are severally introduced.

1. The OLIVE-TREE furnishes special instruction for Gentiles, as such, in the way of dispensational teaching. We meet with it once in this manner in Rom. xi., where a word of warning is given to those who are not of the race of Israel. Promises belonged to Israel as the children of Abraham. (Rom. ix. 4.) To the covenants of promise Gentiles were strangers. (Eph. ii. 12.) Promises there were, as has been remarked, *about* Gentiles, but not *to* them. To Abraham they were made and to his seed. (Gal. iii. 16.) Israel, on the ground of their lineage "after the flesh," looked for the fulfillment and enjoyment of them. John the Baptist had warned them how mistaken they would find themselves, if they trusted in this matter to natural birth without being born of God. God could of the stones around them raise up children to Abraham. The warning was in vain, as far as the nation was concerned. For they rejected the One to whom the promises made to Abraham were confirmed—that One was Christ, the patriarch's seed. God, therefore, has cast them off, nationally, for a time, and is now dealing with Gentiles. It is of this dispensational change that Paul writes in Rom. xi., and, to illustrate it in a manner within the comprehension of his readers, he

makes use of the simile of *an olive-tree*, with which those in Italy would be familiar. From this tree, a good olive-tree, some of the branches have been broken off, that is all the nation of Israel, except the remnant according to the election of grace, who remain branches in the olive-tree, where they had always been.

Into this same tree other branches have been grafted, taken from a wild olive-tree, one which had never been brought under culture. Now these are the Gentiles, with whom God is at present dealing in sovereign goodness, brought thus outwardly into connection with Abraham, the root of promise—the root, to carry out the figure, of the olive-tree. Before the cross God was dealing with Israel as the elect nation, but not directly with the Gentiles. Privileges belonged to the former, in which the latter had no part. The Syrophœnician woman had to acknowledge that. She felt it, and she owned it. After the cross a new feature in God's dealings with man was displayed. The privileges which had marked Israel as God's special people on earth they enjoyed no longer, for they continued in unbelief. The aged Simeon had declared that the child he held in his arms would be "a light for revelation of the Gentiles," to bring them out of the obscurity in which they had hitherto been dispensationally, as those with whom God could prominently deal in goodness; and Paul teaches us this took place when Israel for a time, as a nation, was cast off.

Advantages, then, Gentiles now possess such as they never had before the cross. The root of promise has not changed. The olive-tree has not been cut down, but some branches have been broken off, and branches from a wild olive-tree have been grafted in on the principle of faith. As grafted in they partake of the "root and fatness of the olive tree." Privileges are theirs, as brought into direct association with the root of promise, Abraham,

the father of the faithful. What flows from the root, therefore, they share in ; “of the root and fatness of the olive-tree” they partake, being, as Gentiles, grafted in by faith into the line of promise on earth.

Now this is not salvation, for they might be “cut off.” It is not church position, for church position is new both to Jews as well as to Gentiles who enjoy it. But here it is, Gentiles coming in to share the privileges on earth as those who, as faithful among the Jews, had never lost them. We say *on earth*, for the simile of the tree teaches us, that the position thus illustrated is one enjoyed on earth.

Would, then, the Gentiles continue in this privileged place? That depended upon them. “If thou continue in goodness.” Have they? One must surely admit they have not. Excision, therefore, must take place. And, if the natural branches abide not in unbelief, they shall be grafted into their own olive-tree. The good olive-tree is Israel, the root is Abraham; and the advantages Gentiles as such possess they can lose by unfaithfulness, for they stand in that place only by faith. God is now visiting the Gentiles (Acts xv. 14), and the outward result of this is what we term Christendom. Privileges those possess who are part of Christendom, but these privileges entail responsibility. Could the Gentile glory, then, over the branches broken off? He could not. To the Jew his natural place was in the olive-tree, it was only through his sin of unbelief that he was broken off. To the Gentile it was of divine goodness that he was there at all, grafted in on the principle of faith, to be continued there only if he abode in God’s goodness. All those, then, who are really saved are in the olive-tree, but far more than they are numbered amongst its branches. It takes in the faithful remnant of Israel. It includes all Christendom. The Gentiles, if once cut off, will never be restored. The

Jews may be, and will, if they abide not in unbelief. How truly will that be felt and confessed by and by, when that which Zech. viii. 13 says, shall receive its accomplishment!

2. The FIG-TREE suggests teaching of a different order, and was used as an illustration to a different audience. The Lord made use of it when warning Israel, and instructing His disciples. (Luke xiii. 6-9; Matt. xxi. 19-21; Mark xi. 12-14, 20-23.) Its *fruit* makes it of such value. If the tree is fruitless, why let it occupy the ground? Now there is one feature in the fig-tree which made it so suited to depict the state of Israel. Its flowers are formed before the bursting out of its leaves. Hence the presence of leaves suggests the promise and appearance of fruit. One sees at once, then, how fit an emblem such a tree would be of Israel, who by profession were God's people, but who, nevertheless, when the Lord came, proved by rejecting Him their unfruitfulness for God. The olive-tree, as an evergreen, fitly represents the continuance of the line of promise on earth, which would never end, even in appearance, during all the ages that should precede the establishment of the kingdom of God in power upon earth. As the olive-tree from its character suggests the thought of continuance, the fig-tree from its habit is well adapted to illustrate profession, which should be accompanied by the proofs of fruitfulness. And if it lacks such proofs, cutting down surely the tree richly deserves. God's forbearance, then, with the nation of Israel till the cross, the parable of the fig-tree in Luke xiii. sets forth. The sentence on the barren but leaf-clothed tree on Olivet was the indication of the carrying out of the judgment against Israel, of which the Lord had previously warned the people. A tree cut down ceases to be seen by men. Israel, as an ordered nation, would cease to exist. Profession without fruitfulness will never do for God.

3. Turning to the VINE, we get instruction of a different character. It speaks of, and to, Christians in truth.

God had a vine, which He had brought out of Egypt: that vine was Israel. (Ps. lxxx. 8-11.) A vine which is unfruitful is useless, as Ezekiel (xv. 2-4) reminded his countrymen. The Lord then, in Jno. xv., teaches His disciples that He is the *true* vine: hence, fruitfulness in them could only be produced as they abode in Him. For those who were of the Jewish race this teaching was important: national position, a lineage after the flesh, such would not avail. They must abide in Christ to bear fruit for God:—teaching, too, this for us, useful, needful at all times. “I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is My Father glorified that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples.” (Jno. xv. 1-8.)

When we come to the Lord's teaching about the vine, we leave dispensational truth about Gentiles and Jews, and come to that which is vitally important. But, to understand it aright we must ever remember, that the simile of a tree suggests something which is upon earth, not something about heaven. Keeping this in mind, we

shall understand the bearing of what He says. He speaks of that which is seen upon earth: a branch, therefore, might be in the vine and yet be unfruitful. But no one could be in Christ before God without being really a child of God. If we bring in standing before God when we read of the vine, we shall get all wrong. If we remember that a tree is a simile of something existing upon earth, we shall be kept right. A branch, therefore, in the vine is a professing Christian. There might be that without the person being a true believer. At the moment the Lord was speaking there was a marked illustration of it in Judas Iscariot. He was one of the twelve, appeared to be a believer, was a branch in the vine; but his occupation at that very moment indicated that he had not abode in Christ. Mere profession, then, would not do. He is not merely impressing on them that there must be reality and life to be fruitful; He is telling them how, and how only, they can be fruitful, viz., by abiding in Him. The curse on the fig-tree showed that God would not be satisfied without fruit. The Lord's teaching about the vine makes plain how fruitfulness can be insured. Professors there might be, there have been, there are still. Of such, if that is all they are upon earth, the Lord speaks in ver. 6, but let the reader remark He does it in language which, while pointedly showing the dreadful future of such, carefully guards against the idea of any real Christian perishing. Speaking to those who were true, He says, "*Ye.*" Describing the barren professor, He says, "*If a man,*" etc. There is no discouragement to the weakest believer. There is the most solemn warning for the mere professor.—*Bible Witness and Review.*

"THE DEW BRINGS THEM OUT."

DRIVING along the road with a companion the writer remarked the great number of spider's webs on the grass along the road-side. His companion replied, "Yes, the dew brings them out," which was in fact

the case: they were made visible by the dew which lay upon them. How simple yet true a picture of our way in this world! Our path is beset with snares, on the right and the left. Satan spreads his nets at every step to catch the unwary. But the dew brings them out.

Israel had to gather the manna when the dew was yet upon the ground. The reviving, refreshing influences of the Holy Spirit are thus typified. It is in communion with God, enjoying the guidance and comfort of the Holy Spirit, in the Word of God, that we are enabled to detect the snares of Satan, and so to avoid them. How often do young Christians ask the question, "Is there any harm in this or that habit, or association?" How often, alas! do they step into what is nothing but a snare of Satan! How can they avoid these snares? Simply by letting the dew bring them out—abiding in communion with God, the Holy Spirit ministering the Word to them and the snares are detected. Many apparently harmless things will then be seen to be snares.

May we thus let the Holy Spirit be our detective, and as we press on our way see the traps of the enemy and say, "we are not ignorant of his devices."

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

THERE are no two people alike" is an expression we often hear; which in one sense is quite true.

In another sense we are all alike, for "as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." (Prov. xxvii. 19.) Our hearts are all alike. We naturally love self amazingly. We may put it down emphatically, "*The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth enviously.*" (Jas. iv. 5.) "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth *no good thing.*" (Rom. vii. 18.)

If we could only keep in memory the truth as to what

“the flesh” in us is, *Christian* fellowship might be maintained where it otherwise is so often marred; for we would, as a matter of course, turn from it completely to Christ Jesus, in whose face we would thankfully behold every believer! But, alas! we too often “look one another in the face” (2 Kings xiv. 8), and as a consequence, become occupied with the blemishes there.

If we would but remember when we do so, that we are but receiving the answer to our own face, “as in water,” would we not be ashamed? Paul says, “I knew a man *in Christ*. . . . Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.” (2 Cor. xii. 2, 5.) As a “man in Christ,” the thought would ever be present, “by the *grace* of God I am what I am.” (1 Cor. xv. 10.) Consequently, “by the *grace* of God” we each are what we are; though as “in Christ” there is absolute perfection, yet in ourselves there are “infirmities.” In other words, there is that in each one of us which ought to cause shame and self-abhorrence rather than self-satisfaction or self-righteousness. Can we look at *our past*, and say, “I am pleased with it”? Would we dare to look at *our present*, and say, “I am satisfied”? And yet do we not forget this when we mark the “infirmities” of others? Of course, this is short of “wickedness.” I am but speaking now of that in our nature which makes the diversity between us, and calls for forbearance. We hear Christians talking of the bad traits of character in others, and then closing with the remark, “*I* could not do such a thing;” or, “I cannot see how such an one can do so-and-so; now *I* do so-and-so.” Is not this the unwise thing of which the apostle speaks? “For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.” (2 Cor. x: 12.)

Can there be real *Christian* fellowship where such thoughts and words are indulged?

But, beloved, the "virtues" of Christ are to be seen in *all* who are His, and "by the *grace* of God" they are what they are. Then let us cease this busied effort of digging up evil, as it is the work of the "ungodly." (Prov. xvi. 27.) It is an unholy practice, which we can easily fall into if not "sanctified by the truth"—preserved. (Jno. xvii. 17-19.)

We are to recognize the fact that there are human weaknesses in all, and ought we not rather to pray for the needed grace to overcome these infirmities, and so "provoke unto love and to good works"?

It is a painful fact that Christians often cannot live together? Why is this? Is it not because they are not grounded and established in the truth we are considering? I am sure it is. Is it not frequently also a painful fact that Christians are not in fellowship together very long before these "little foxes which spoil the vines" appear and endanger the "little flock"?

And is there no remedy? Yes, the remedy is twofold. I believe, before any real abiding soul-progress can be made, true "repentance toward God" as to our natural condition is absolutely essential. In other words, to abhor self as Job did (Job xlii. 5, 6). This can only be by getting a good view of ourselves as in God's holy presence,—by believing the truth as to our condition already referred to. Second, faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ sufficient to draw upon the *grace* needful for daily piety.

Our infirmities remind us of our natural condition, and consequently humble us, and thus serve the purpose of exalting Christ in us, as we *must* lean on Him or fail miserably.

Let us, beloved, turn away from occupation with the

blemishes in *others*; and when tempted to be so engaged, let the remembrance of our own nature bring the blush of shame to our face, and the grace of Christ prostrate us before Him—the absolutely spotless One, in whom alone we “stand” or can alone hope to be “holden up.”

“Let brotherly love continue.” (Heb. xiii. 1.)

S. A. W.

[NOTE.—It is to be remembered that the writer is referring, not to the *wickedness* of the flesh in the believer, but its weakness. All true fellowship is based upon righteousness—“in the light”—and righteousness cannot turn away from sin in a brother. The sin must be dealt with, in all gentleness and love, and wisdom, but it cannot be ignored.

What is most to be deplored is the lack of *power* to deal with evil. It is perhaps easy to speak of this, easier than to manifest that power. Where one is walking with God, he can and will rebuke sin and in so doing not offend, save the incorrigible, but commend himself to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. It should be owned with sorrow that fellowship is a thing easily marred, and the writer notes the spirit of criticism as the cause. But we must remember too that *neglect* of evil only allows it to increase, and meddling with evil without power also spreads it. The only remedy is to be cast upon God, to be much alone with Him and thus have His mind. We shall then be able to act in faithfulness and to verify that sure word which says, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend.” Let it be seen that there is no selfishness, no party spirit, at the bottom of the rebuke or the discipline, but a true desire for God’s honor, and His blessing will go with us. How many have had occasion to bless God for the faithful dealing of a fellow-Christian, or even of a whole assembly. But let us remember, we are to walk with God if we are to act for Him.—ED.]

REASON AND FAITH.

WHILE *Reason* like a Levite waits
Where priest and people meet,
Faith by a new and living way
Hath reached the Mercy-Seat.

While *Reason* hath but barely said
 That earth can not give rest,
Faith, like a weary dove, hath fled
 Unto the Saviour's breast.

TWO KINDS OF ANSWER TO PRAYER.

"And He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul." (Ps. cvi. 15.)

"Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." (Ps. xxxvii. 4.)

PRAY without ceasing," says the apostle; "Ask, and it shall be given unto you," says our Lord; and the impulse of the new-born soul is to pray. One of the tests of a new life is, "Behold he prayeth." Our God delights to hear prayer and to answer it. Surely in His heart there is no thought but for our blessing; but for that very reason His dealings with us vary according to the state of soul, and our real necessities. He certainly would not give us any thing to harm us; and when we ask for what would injure us, He knows how to refuse. But there may be a condition of soul where refusal does not touch the conscience; where the will, instead of being subdued, is only made the more stubborn by refusal. Then it is that divine wisdom may grant the request, in order that the one who will not learn to trust God in His way, may find the folly of his own. It was thus with Israel in the case alluded to in the passage before us. God has undertaken to deliver them, and to bring them into the "good land and large." He had provided suited food for them in their journey, in the manna, which, as it lay all about the camp each morning, silently bore witness to the love and care of One who never slumbered nor slept. But they never realized the

privilege of being so cared for, and so take their case in their own hand. They ask for quails and quails they must have. Their longings for the food which perishes was so great that it eclipsed every thing else. Such a people could not be benefited by a refusal. They would not learn except by tasting the bitter fruit of their own lusts.

At first, they might have been tempted to boast in the answer to prayer. Is not answered prayer always a proof of divine favor and special good-will? But there was no gratitude, no sense of humility, no asking, "Who am I?" They had carried their point, and now proceeded to gratify to the full the desires which had demanded this gratification. They became the more alienated from God by His very mercies. This was the leanness which came into their souls—the natural result of self-will uncontrolled. It never checks itself, never is satisfied with any possession of good, but craves and craves, and the granting of each new craving but results in still further alienation and leanness; unless, indeed, through mercy, the eyes are opened to see where we are. So Kibroth-hattaavas speaks to us most seriously, warning *us* against "asking amiss," lest that leanness come on us, which, unless delivered from, is but the precursor of dealings in severity.

Lot looked over to Sodom's plains with the same longings that Israel had for the quails, and the mountain cave where his light went out in obscure darkness, is *his* grave of lust. He wished for himself and got what he wanted, but the leanness in his soul resulting from gaining his point, stands out to-day in all its clearness for our warning. And how many Lots since that day can bear witness to this truth, "He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul"! Could Lot have dreamed as he looked with such longing over these pleasant plains

that they lead directly to that lonely mountain cave, we can well believe he would have drawn back in horror. And yet they were but the way and the end of a self-will which craves indulgence and will take no refusal. Beloved, is the personal application difficult? Let us beware of this subtle working in our hearts, lest blight and sorrow come upon us to teach us.

But let us hasten from these sad things to look a little at the sweet assurance of the other verse: "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He will give thee the desires of thine heart." At a glance we see the difference. In the former case self was the centre and all revolved about it, everything must contribute to self-gratification, and, as we said, when one is bound to have his own way, God allows it. Here, how different! we are in another atmosphere. God is the centre, about whom all revolves. His interests are the important ones, His good pleasure, His glory. Self is subordinated and out of sight—God fills the horizon.

But there is more. "*Delight* thyself in the Lord. He rejoices over us, wonderful that it can be, and wishes us not merely to be absorbed, occupied with Him, but to delight in Him. He wishes no compulsory attachment—He draws free hearts, and attaches them to Himself by the sweet constraint of love. It is the glory of redemption that it does this, wins the heart, as well as enlightens and arouses the conscience. Mere sense of duty will sooner or later say, "Thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends." The elder brother admits, with all his correctness in service, there was no joy in it, and he seems to fail to see how there can be joy in the father's house. How different the language of One who always delighted in His Father. "In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore,"—language to be taken up and repeated

by lips of faith in all places and at all times. "God my exceeding joy," says David; "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ," says Paul. When joy goes declension soon follows. But what an object for our delight! Well may we ask,—

"Where shall our wondering souls begin?"

We need never be at a loss for fresh delights. His Person, His works, His attributes, counsels, His Son, and the vast plan of redemption, the depths of His love—surely here we have themes to charm and delight the soul.

Delighting in Him, our desires are secondary and ever subject to His will. But if we almost forget them, He does not. "He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." No fear that riches or prosperity will lead astray. Abraham places God first, delights in Him, only to prove that the blessing of the Lord was his—"He maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it."

Even as to spiritual blessings, this truth applies. If we are asking for gifts, or even for holiness for *ourselves*, we will find that whatever apparent attainments we make, instead of ripening and mellowing us, do the reverse. The holiness is in name only, contributing to self-complacency, not God-likeness. On the other hand, let God be delighted in and the desire of the heart to be like Him is granted; we grow like Him, by being occupied with Him, and holiness results.

Dear brethren, have we desires? longings it may be for temporal things, or for blessings on others; for greater power in the assemblies of His people; for simpler and clearer testimony before the world? Let us learn to delight in Him more, for His own sake, and He will give us the desires of our heart.

BAFFLED.

I SAID, "I will be a reaper, and toil with all my might,
 For the laborers are few, though the harvest is so white."
 So I took my sharpened sickle and sought the ripened grain;
 I took in my hand my sickle--God took it out again.

I saw that in fields beyond me the corn was in the blade,
 But the weeds were thickly choking. I took my hoe and spade,
 And said, "I'll dig for the Master, and how the corn will
 grow!"

But the Master came behind me and quickly answered, "No!"

I said, "I will be a sower, and scatter tiny seed:
 Sowing is as sweet as reaping, and quite as much a need."
 So I took the yellow kernels to drop as I should go—
 The Master gathered them again as fast as I could sow.

Then I said, "I know, dear Master, how little is my skill;
 It is wise I should not garner and well I should not till;
 I will walk behind another, and hold the homely plow."
 "I have those to tread the furrow," He answered, "Go not thou."

So I took my burnished sickle and hung it again to rust,
 And my hoe and spade and basket, to gather mold and dust;
 I left the earthly furrow for another's feet to tread,
 And said, "To the hungry reapers I'll carry drink and bread;

For surely no sweeter service I need to ask or seek
 That to strengthen with refreshment the weary and the weak."
 I filled my cup at the fountain, I cut my loaf in twain,
 Looked in the face of the Master and knew it was in vain.

"Oh, Master!" I murmured, weeping, "I may not work for
 Thee!

Thou desirest not my service!" He whispered, "Thou shalt
 see."

Then my arms He gently folded, my feet securely bound,
 And laid me down all helpless upon the parched ground.

Then my eyes I closed in silence and hushed my eager breath,
 For I thought He had brought me into the dust of death;
 But, as I lay in the darkness, anew to me He spoke,
 And out of a fevered slumber I dreamily awoke.

And awoke to find beside me a reaper wounded sore,
 With never a hand to soothe him or stay the flowing gore;
 I drew from my cup of water and laved his burning brow,
 I staunched the tide of crimson and smiled for service now.

“Child,” said the loving Master, “sigh not for the open field,
 For here in the lonely shadows rich service can’st thou yield.”
 And all day long till the evening work unto me He brought,
 Looked tenderly on my fetters and blessed me as I wrought.

I whispered the word of courage, I sang of hope and cheer,
 I told of the Lord’s forgiveness, I dried the contrite tear,
 And many a heavy burden I might not even share
 I lifted unto the Master on outstretched arms of prayer.

And I think when night has fallen and the harvest all is stored,
 There’ll be little sheaves in garner, known only to the Lord,
 Of the gleanings that He gathered unto a captive’s feet;
 I think the captive’s harvest-joy may be of all most sweet.

(Selected.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Q. 14.—“Please explain Matt. v. 8. Are there any ‘pure in heart.’”

Ans.—Yes. That is the character of those who will see God. “Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.” The verse is true in the same way as 1 Jno. iii. 9—“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.” As born of God, he does not; bring into view the flesh, and he does when he fulfills its lusts. So with purity of heart; it is the broad line which separates God’s children from the men of the world. But the flesh is there too, and to be watched—fleshly lusts to be abstained from. Coming down to individual cases, surely the most spiritual will not claim for himself heart-purity in the sense generally understood—complete holiness. Above all, there is no such thing as a change of the natural heart. “A new heart will I give unto you.” The old remains there, a witness of what we were, and ever ready to assert itself in power again.

"REDEEMING THE TIME."

MORE literally, the expression might be rendered, "Buying up the opportunity;" as the merchant, looking out for bargains, buys up every thing that promises profit. In the ordinary sense of the words, we can never redeem the time. Time once passed is gone forever, only to meet us with its record at the judgment-seat of Christ. We can never make it up if it has been misspent or wasted. Each hour carries its own responsibilities, and can never be made to atone for former wasted ones. Lost opportunities! — what a solemn theme! Wasted time! Well may we pause at the close of another year, and think on the swift-flowing stream which has swept past us never to return, and ask ourselves how we have spent it. Humbling, no doubt, will it be to many of us to dwell on the past, but wholesome too if we take to heart the lessons it teaches, and learn from past follies to buy up present opportunities.

Opportunities are manifold, and each moment carries with it an opportunity. In general, they may be divided into two classes, given to us respectively in the two passages where the same expression is used. "See, then, that ye walk circumspectly; not as fools, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil." (Eph. v. 15, 16.) "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." (Col. iv. 5, 6.) The first of these passages gives us more particularly the opportunities which relate to ourselves—personal; the second, those which link us with others—relative.

We live in evil times. The whole tendency is away from God, and it is only too easy for us, if unwary, to be carried along with the stream. Hence the exhortation

"See that ye walk circumspectly," or carefully. We absorb easily the flavor of our surroundings; let us, then, be careful. The days are evil: God is not known, loved, or honored. But though the days are evil, they are none the less crowded with opportunities. There is the open page of God's precious Word ever ready to reward the diligent seeker; the throne of grace invites to believing prayer; while there is not a circumstance or event of our lives but affords golden opportunities to learn, to do, or to bear. And how fleeting these opportunities are! The quiet time for reading and prayer, if not availed of, gives place to the turmoil of every-day life. The solicitation of temptation, to evil thought or word or deed, soon passes into actual sin, or gives place to something else,—in either case, leaving a scar upon the soul, unless the opportunity is availed of to resist it in the energy of faith. The merchant eagerly seizes upon every bargain which will profit him; let us too learn to make use of the opportunities which crowd upon us. Naturally, we look for the great events of our lives, and usually wait in vain. Our lives are made up of little things, and unless we make use of these, we will have nothing.

In Colossians, it is our relation to our neighbor which is contemplated, particularly "those who are without." Man is a social being, made for intercourse with his fellows. Conversion does not alter our natural constitution and tendencies, nor is this to be desired. Separation from the world is in spirit, not in contact. "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil." We are thrown with men of the world on every hand; in business and travel, intentionally and accidentally; we are visited by strangers, are accosted on the street, asked the way or the time. Do we realize that we in this way have thousands of opportunities for speaking to men of Christ? and are

we buying up these opportunities, making use of them? Many of these opportunities come but once; we cross a man's path, and may never see him again. We are not saying that every one we meet can be spoken to, or that a tract should be thrust upon persons, without seeking guidance. There may be very much legality in such work, bringing one into bondage instead of ministering joy. But the fact remains that we are brought into contact with persons daily, and have many opportunities for influencing them. "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without." Alas! how often does folly rather than wisdom characterize Christians in their intercourse with those that are without! The unprofitable conversation,—frivolous remarks, levity, worldliness,—too often is heard rather than speech with grace, seasoned with the salt of truth, pungent and painful though it may be. Do we realize the lost condition of those that are without? Did we but think that we would never in this life see again such, would our last words be of this world, or would we not seek for an opening to speak for God and their immortal souls—at least, would we not be praying for them? Surely we have a responsibility in all this which we cannot shun,—nay, if the love of Christ constrains us, we will not desire to shun it.

Nor need we confine this responsibility in speech to our intercourse with the unsaved. There are countless opportunities of helping one another by a word of advice, or the mutual edification which comes from talking over the things in God's Word. But if we follow the usual course, and allow the things of sense to absorb our talk,—or worse, if criticism, backbiting, and railing are indulged in, we lose an opportunity never to be recovered.

All this is plain enough, and familiar to us all; we all assent to it, but a little reminder may not be out of place. If there is aroused a spirit of self-examination, of prayer-

ful desire to avail ourselves of the opportunities afforded us, the admonition of these verses will not be in vain.

But how, in brief, can we be ready to buy up the opportunity? By being right in *heart*. If the heart is in communion with Christ,—if His Word fills and occupies our minds, we will almost involuntarily avail ourselves of openings. It is easy to tell sinners of a precious Saviour if our own hearts are overflowing with His love; easy to have a suited word for all—sinners or saints,—a word in grace seasoned with salt, if we imitate Him whose ear was ever open to learn from God, and who therefore knew “how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.”

FOLLOWING CHRIST.

IT is instructive to notice, in the case of Elisha and Elijah, and the case of Ruth and Naomi, as well as that of Abraham and Isaac, a phrase used by the Holy Spirit. “And they two went on,” or “both together,” in the case of Abraham and Isaac. It pictures to us the devoted disciple and his Leader. No others are before us. These are the actors—others are but onlookers, or (as Orpahs) left behind. It presents to us, beautifully and affectingly, the path of the true disciple, alone with Christ. The disciple himself thinks only of his Master. The onlooker beholds, as it were, just the two—the disciple and the other—Christ, of whom the disciple bears witness. Others may remain at the foot of the hill, like Abraham’s young men, or, like the fifty sons of the prophets, may stand to view “afar off,” but “the two” went on.

Notice that the words “they two” are first used in the case of Elijah and Elisha when their faces are turned toward the Jordan (in 2 Kings ii. 6). Elisha had followed his leader from Gilgal to Bethel, and from Bethel to Jeri-

cho, and had left the sons of the prophets behind; and now only the Jordan of death was before them, and immediately and for the first time the words are used "and they two went on." The difference is at once manifest between religious routine and real power. It was the same with Abraham and Isaac, and also with Ruth in following Naomi. Death was faced, and there was the leaving behind all that would naturally be clung to, through confidence in the one that was obeyed or followed.

"And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood to view afar off; *and they two stood by Jordan.* Here is a test and a witness for God. There is neither halting nor haste. They face the difficulty before all. It was the same with Israel centuries before. "And Joshua rose early in the morning, and they removed from Shittim (no doubt significant) and came to Jordan—he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over. That was the other side of Jordan, just opposite where the prophets stood. The prophets were going by the way of death—the death of the cross in figure, outside the land, "without the camp." And here, the others (the fifty) stopped short. They cluster together. We like company and numbers and popularity, without giving up religion. "*They two*" looked lonely. The others were looking at them. They were "a spectacle to angels and to men,"—the two, the leader and the follower. It was at such a pass that Peter shrank: "Far be it from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee." Peter was still among the fifty. He savored, not the things that were of God, but those that were of men. "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it."

Elijah and the Lord went outside the land for the same reason, because the nation was not in it according to God. The Lord went outside it and all its religion by the cross,

and we are to go forth to Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. Then only can we return to our old circumstances as Elisha came back through the Jordan to his—in the power of God, we as risen with Christ.

Let us abhor that that would make us compromise. It will be an infinite loss.

“And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that *they two* went over on dry ground.”

The follower was as safe as his leader. The channel was made bare. They passed by where the twelve stones had been placed five hundred years before by Joshua, when the ark was borne by the priests who “stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan.” But these two are now going in the opposite direction; and only two! No army—not a nation, with an array of priests and warriors and the ark as of old. That was a type of how God’s people are brought into their inheritance, and how we are dead and risen with Christ; but in this case (that of Elisha and Elijah) we have a different lesson, namely, the confession that God’s people have failed in their witness, and the one who would be faithful to Christ must act now for himself, not waiting for his dearest friends or religious companions; he must give up seeking the approval of the religious world, with its routine to promote self-complacency and hinder self-judgment; he must cross the Jordan,—he must put the cross between himself and all that is merely religious without Christ. What a test is here! who is sufficient to bear it? How troublesome to have to test by the Word all we are attached to!—so troublesome that the common thing with Christians is to refuse to be troubled about it. The reproach is too much, or the world has so blinded them that they have little or no exercise about bearing their cross and following Christ.

And now they have crossed the Jordan, and “they still

went on and talked.” It was solemn and joyous converse. The cross has been taken up, and the bliss of communion is being enjoyed—the reward of victory. We know well what they talked about—“the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” (1 Pet. i. 11.) They were beyond Jordan now, as the Lord was in Luke xxiv., with His two companions when He talked with them and said, “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?” It was the same on the mount of transfiguration—they spoke of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem, that event of all events when the passing the Jordan would be forever fulfilled. There Elijah is again before us, and the cross is the shame.

Brethren, may we follow the Lord for ourselves. It is a matter between one’s own soul and Him. Alone with Christ is the Christian’s pathway; the only way of true fellowship if with others. *E. S. L.*

“I GO TO PREPARE A PLACE FOR YOU.”

SURELY no part of God’s most precious Word is more so to the believer than the record of those last scenes of our Lord’s life, and especially of those last words, saturated, so to speak, with the tenderest affection, the most considerate thoughtfulness, and sweetest communications;—and of these, no portion has given, through the long centuries that have wearily revolved since He left, more comfort to the mourning, more confidence to the feeble, more cheer to those who were departing this life, than those words found in the fourteenth chapter of John’s gospel. They appear to be the full, sweet, musical voice itself that spoke once long before, through the prophet of old: “‘Comfort ye, comfort ye My people,’ saith your God.”

Let us, then, dear fellow-pilgrim, ponder a single clause of them together: "I go to prepare a place for you."

Have we not often asked in what possible way did any place in that glory called His "Father's house" need preparing for such poor things as we? Could there be any thing there that lacked "preparation" for a poor redeemed sinner? No doubt, the Lord's people have ever fed upon the precious comfort of the words, and many a tempest-tossed spirit has been stilled, like unconscious Genesareth of old, by the infinitely tender considerate love that recognized something lacking even in His Father's house ere it could be said to be prepared for the reception of His redeemed, even though it might not grasp the full bearing of the words;—nay, I feel sure that to many who read this it will be no new thought; but such will not refuse to enjoy it with me again, whilst to some it may bring, in God's mercy, a little light on these few words that shall make Him who spoke them the dearer. So may it be!

Then let us look at it:—let our eyes follow Him into His Father's house, and view the scene there. We find the vail withdrawn in the epistle to the Hebrews—the heavens are opened, and we may make count of their glories: Angels and thrones and principalities and powers: all the beauty and wealth patterned by the tabernacle of old here seen in living reality: all, too, of one heart and mind, without discordant note, all filled with joy and praise. For so it has been ever. Praise has never lacked there. Every movement of God only gave fresh cause of joyful praise, as we see when the foundations of our earth were laid, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Ah, who can tell the glories of that scene? But is that what our hearts crave for to give them rest? No, surely. Glories in themselves may be the opposite of restful. To

illustrate: you are introduced into a palace on earth; every thing about you there is rich with the glories of earth; gold glitters on every hand, and each apartment, from floor to ceiling, is filled with its evidences of the wealth and refinement of the owner. Would all that make you feel the more at home? No, surely. Sad and lonely would your heart be amidst all that grandeur. It has been made with another capacity, and if that be lost sight of, every thing is gone. *It must find LOVE.* It insists on that. But introduce the same one into the lowliest cottage, and there let him pillow his head on a breast he *knows*, of whose love and sympathy he is well assured, and this, he says, is my *home*, this is my rest. Now that is just the need that our blessed Saviour recognized in His grace; and He says, as it were, "I will go, so that when you reach My Father's house, you may find there what will make you feel at home—make it "*home*" for you.

Let us now throw the light of that beautiful scripture we were considering in the October number of *HELP AND FOOD* (p. 270). It was of very similar bearing. God Himself there was seeking a rest, and Solomon was "preparing a place" for *Him*. Nor did, in that case, "glories" satisfy God's heart any more than they would ours in this. Not till He heard the sound of joyful praise, which spoke of overflowed hearts that *knew Him*, did He fill it with His presence. Exactly the same here: our blessed Lord is fully acquainted with man's need, and meets it as perfectly as (speaking reverently) the trumpet-sound of praise met God's requirements in the case of His earthly house. Let me hear there the sound of a divine yet human voice; let that voice be of One who, whilst God Himself, has yet tasted every sorrow of a walk as a poor man through this world;—let me find One there on whose human sympathy none ever called in vain,—whose eyes have shed human tears (just like ours) in the presence of human sorrow

and death that we know so well;—nay, more, One who, in His divine love for us, has washed us in His own blood from every thing that would make us unfitted for that place. Ah, my reader, can we not feel “at home” there, even in *those* courts? Is not *that* the place in all the universe in which we should feel at home? Does not that meet the need of our hearts? Is not the “*place prepared*” now by His being in it?

But what spot in heaven is thus made “homelike” for a poor redeemed sinner? Just inside its gates? as some dear souls, with low thoughts of His love, speak. No; we should not feel at rest there. Amongst the angel-ranks, or in the courts of the principalities and powers of those bright scenes? No, not there has He chosen for us. But see where He is!—sitting at the right hand of God in the place of nearness and power. There is He, and there, after He has fulfilled His word, and come again and received His own to Himself, we see, in Rev. iv., the crowned throned elders nearest the throne of God—nearest the centre of all glories, and yet perfectly at rest, perfectly at peace, perfectly at home,—they prepared perfectly for the place, and the place prepared as perfectly for them.

F. C. J.

ISAAC'S WELLS.

WELLS, in the east particularly, have a special importance and prominence. In the desert they form the oases, spots of life amid surrounding death, and even in fertile places water is so precious that the well is never ignored. It is the nucleus, the rallying-point, about which the people gather, and by which they are held together.

But wells are more than fountains, the latter springing up spontaneously, and offering their refreshing draughts

to every passer by, beautiful type of that "fountain of the water of life," which flows freely for all that are athirst. Wells, on the other hand, have to be *dug*, calling for labor, and each draught of water has to be brought up from its depths. Water is life, both literally and typically, and is constantly used thus in Scripture: "born of water," "a well of water in him," "rivers of water flowing from him," show us the Holy Spirit imparting, maintaining, and manifesting divine life. The well is particularly a type for the believer, yielding its waters to the digger, and and rewarding with its never-failing refreshment him who will draw it up.

These wells which Isaac opened, had previously been dug by his father Abraham, and then choked by the Philistines, dwellers in the land, but without right there—types of professors laying claim to heavenly things, but without title to them. As has been noticed, these dwelt in the lowlands of Canaan, near neighbors to Egypt, a fact of significance in our present subject, as we shall soon see. These men choke the wells dug by Abraham. The precious truths, brought to light by godly servants of the Lord, in the energy and illumination of the Holy Spirit, are deprived of their life-giving force by those who are merely traders in the Word. The letter they may retain, as even Rome has in considerable measure the form of correct doctrine, but there is no power in connection with it. She has choked the wells, and while many correct statements of truth may be found in her writings, all is emasculated by the spirit of the world that pervades the mass and rules throughout. Nor is Protestantism without its Philistines: Reformation doctrines without Reformation piety and power are but choked wells. Such are creeds, in which much precious truth is contained, the expression, it may be at first, of what was a divine reality, but long since made by profession into a dry and empty

thing—tombs of the prophets, memorials of what no longer exists for the ecclesiastical bodies holding them.

But do we individually know something of these closed wells? The joy of the Lord which once filled the heart and overflowed into the life has ebbed, it may be, until scarce manifest now. Love, zeal, power, progress, have all gone. The water, thank God, has not gone; but the well has been choked—filled with things of earth. Too easily has the charge been made that the Holy Spirit leaves the unfaithful believer. Such, we know, is never the case; but how often is He grieved and quenched! how often are His manifestations so checked that God and faith alone know He still remains! A choked well! how useless! Dear brother, what are you and I? Have we allowed our hearts to become filled with earth till the Holy Spirit no longer manifests His fruits? This is the work of the Philistines—both without and within. For it is not only true that there are people who answer to them, but there are in our hearts principles, habits of thought, and desires which also correspond to them. Outwardly, they are, as we have seen, those having the form of godliness, but denying its power. Inwardly, they are those habits of soul which do the same,—which would not have us give up our profession, our religious duties—prayers, Bible-reading, and such-like, but which deprive these things of their spiritual freshness, turning them into mere forms, food only for self-complacency, and leave our hearts the while empty and chill. Resting on past experience is a Philistine, choking up the well of present communion. Allowing sin to pass unjudged is another, quickly quenching the Holy Spirit—“hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” It is not necessary to approve sin; if it is neglected—allowed to pass the conscience unchallenged and unjudged, it soon hardens, the well is choked. We must live day by day in all reality, or we

will soon find that the Philistines have been at work, the flow of service, love, and joy is checked.

It was in Gerar that Isaac met with the Philistines. The famine in the land tempted him to follow the steps of his father Abraham, who, under similar stress, went down into Egypt. But Gerar was on the border-land. It was the next thing to Egypt, though in the land of Canaan. To dwell there was taking low ground as compared with Hebron. So we see a corresponding moral state. Isaac had not courage to confess his wife (the sin of Abraham in Egypt), and though the Lord protected and blessed him, he does not seem the ideal pilgrim and stranger. His valley may be *called* "Gerar," "a place of sojourn," "a tarrying-place;" but, like every thing under the power of the Philistines, it did not answer to its name. Most naturally, therefore, do we find the wells choked—the water stopped. The Holy Spirit cannot give joy and blessing where our ways so plainly contradict our knowledge. The Philistines, however, see beneath the unfaithfulness of the man a reality, and would have him leave them. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and these are contrary the one to the other."

If the choked wells bear witness to his condition, his effort to open them shows a desire not to continue in that condition. Very simple would seem to be the lesson for us in this. Has the well become choked in us? dig out that which has choked it,—remove the things of earth from their place of power in the heart, and the sweet refreshing of the Spirit will be quickly felt.

But it costs something to regain that which has been lost. The enemy will not quietly resign the place he has occupied, and will dispute our right to recovered joys. This we see in the four wells of Isaac, at once the evidence of the hostility of the Philistines and a test of his purpose of heart to recover what had been lost.

First, we have Esek, "strife," the name given to the first well, because they strove for it. How strange it seems that they should want a well which they themselves had choked. How like those who contend and fight over doctrines until they lose all sweetness to the soul, and become distasteful even to the child of God. Many a truth has been thus snatched out of their hands, and come to be the symbol, not of food for the soul, but the battle-cry of contending factions, until for very weariness the soul says, "Enough! let us speak no more of this matter." So what should have refreshed becomes repulsive. Is not this true of the divine side of truth—election, final perseverance, and the like? Strife, discord, war of words, perverse disputings, have so choked the wells of divine truth that men have been ready to take one another by the throat in the maintenance of what they may hold. Within too, in the history of the soul, do we not see the same strife? The self-righteous spirit resisting, opposing that which is according to godliness, and such conflict waged about the very truth which would help?

The effect of this conflict can be one of two. Either wearied with struggle, the baffled one may yield in despair, and no more seek for recovery of lost blessings; or, as in Isaac's case, he may turn his back upon Esek and dig again, well knowing that the water can surely be found. It is a good thing to know how to yield without giving up. Let men turn our wells, which we have dug at great cost, and from which we have drawn refreshing streams,—let them turn them into scenes of strife: our love is for the water, not the well, and we can dig elsewhere. The time comes when the child of God must in faithfulness turn from what was once a well of springing water to him, and seek to find elsewhere the refreshment his soul craves. Inwardly, we are to abstain, withdraw, from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.

Next comes Sitnah. The water comes afresh, only to be the occasion of renewed conflict. "Sitnah" does not mean "hatred," as in the margin of our common version; but "accusation." It is from the same root as "Satan," "the accuser of the brethren;" and if strife characterized the first well, more bitter and active enmity is shown here. Luther was accused of all sorts of blasphemies when he dug afresh the wells of truth at the Reformation. Accusations are a common weapon of attack by the enemy, and they are satanic weapons. Let them accuse; if still associated with them, we can withdraw, and leave to them what was a well of refreshing, only now designated by this name. Alas! how many wells have become Sitnahs—whispered accusations, backbitings, railings, turning the outflow of refreshing into waters of bitterness and sorrow!

But faith and a steadfast purpose knows how to turn from such scenes with the renewed determination to find what it longs for—unlimited fellowship with God. And surely every one with such a purpose will sooner or later come to Rehoboth, "room," rather "streets," an enlarged place, a broad highway, and the plural indicating abundance of enlargement. Ah! here no enemy contends or accuses. We can look around and realize that at last we are away from the Philistines. Freedom to enjoy God is now ours. How significantly Rehoboth is the *third* well! resurrection-power and ground cannot be reached by outsiders. There is this place of enlargement. Have we reached it? where we can call our wells no longer by names which remind us of strife and accusation, but of the liberty in which we now stand.

Beer-sheba completes the list, giving us the positive side. The well of the oath, while referring to the oath between Isaac and the Philistines, which ends their strife, also reminds us of that sure word of Him who cannot lie, and who will confirm all that He has spoken, making

good to us the precious things which grace has given us.

Here let us dwell, drinking daily more deeply of the pure waters of eternal love, growing more and more into the image of Him who loves us, as we drink. The Lord give us purpose of heart to reopen these wells with the determination to persevere until we reach Rehoboth and Beer-sheba.

"THINGS THAT SHALL BE:"

AN EXPOSITION OF REVELATION IV.—XXII.

PART VII. (Chap. xix. 5—xxii.)

THE CONSUMMATION.

The Little Season. (vv. 7—10.)

OF the millennial earth, not even the slightest sketch is given us here. The book of Revelation is the closing book of prophecy, with the rest of which we are supposed to be familiar; and it is the *Christian* book, which supplements it with the addition of what is heavenly. Thus the reign of the heavenly saints has just been shown us: for details as to the earth, we must go to the Old Testament.

In the millennium, the heavenly is displayed in connection with the earthly. The glory of God is manifested so that the earth is filled with the knowledge of it as the waters cover the sea. Righteousness rules, and evil is afraid to lift its head. The curse is taken from the ground, which responds with wondrous fruitfulness. Amid all this, the spiritual condition is by no means in correspondence with the outward blessing. Even the manifest connection of righteousness and prosperity cannot avail to make men love righteousness, nor the goodness of God, though evidenced on every side, to bring

men to repentance. At the "four corners of the earth," retreating as far as possible from the central glory, there are still those who represent Israel's old antagonists, and thus are called by their names—"Gog and Magog." Nor are they remnants, but masses of population, brought together by sympathetic hatred of God and His people,—crowding alike out of light into the darkness: a last and terrible answer to the question, "Lord, what is man?"

The Gog, of the land of Magog, whose invasion of Israel is prophetically described in the book of Ezekiel (xxxviii., xxxix.), is the prototype of these last invaders. There need be no confusion, however, between them; for the invasion in Ezekiel is premillennial, not postmillennial, as that in Revelation is. It is then that Israel are just back in their land (xxxviii. 14), and from that time God's name is known in Israel, and they pollute His holy name no more (xxxix. 7). The nations too learn to know Him (xxxviii. 16, 23). There needs, therefore, no further inquiry to be sure that this is not after a thousand years of such knowledge.

But the Gog and Magog here follow in the track of men who have long before made God known in the judgment He executed,—follow them in awful, reckless disregard of the end before them. This is clearly due to the loosing once more of Satan. While he was restrained, the evil was there, but cowed and hidden. He gives it energy and daring. They go up now on the breadth of the earth—from which for the moment the divine shield seems to be removed, and compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city. The last is of course the earthly Jerusalem. The "camp of the saints" seems to be that of the heavenly saints, who are the Lord's host around it. The city is of course impregnable: the rebels are taken in the plain fact of hostility to God and His people; and judgment is swift and complete: "fire came

down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." The wicked are extinct out of the earth.

The arch-rebel now receives final judgment. "And the devil, that deceived them, was cast into a lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are; and they shall be tormented day and night for the ages of ages."

These words deserve most solemn consideration. They are plain enough indeed; but what is there from which man will not seek to escape, when his will is adverse? The deniers of eternal punishment, both on the side of restitution and that of annihilation, are here confronted with a plain example of it. Two human beings, cast in alive into the lake of fire a thousand years before, are found there at the close of this long period still in existence! How evident that this fire is not, therefore, like material fire, but something widely different! All the arguments as to the action of fire in consuming what is exposed to it are here at once shown to be vain. That which can remain a thousand years in the lake of fire unconsumed may remain, so far as one can see, forever; and it is forever that they here are plainly said to be tormented.

But it is objected that there is, in fact, no verb here: the sentence reads simply, "where the beast and the false prophet," and that to fill up the gap properly we must put "*were cast*," which would say nothing about continuance. But what, then, about the concluding statement, "and *they*"—for it is a plural,—"and *they* shall be tormented day and night for the ages of ages"?

Finding this argument vain, or from the opposite interest of restitution, it is urged that "day and night" do not exist in eternity. But we are certainly brought here to eternity, and "for the ages of ages" means nothing else. It is the measure of the life of God Himself (iv. 10). No

passage that occurs, even to the smoke of Babylon ascending up, can be shown to have a less significance.

Growing desperate, some have ventured to say that we should translate "*till* the ages of ages." But the other passages stand against this with an iron front, and forbid it. We are, in this little season, right on the verge of eternity itself. The same expression is used as to the judgment of the great white throne itself, which is *in* eternity. It will not do to say of God that He lives *to* the ages of ages, and not *through* them. The truth is very plain, then, that the punishment here decreed to three transgressors is, in the strictest sense, eternal.

Whether the same thing is true of all the wicked dead, we now go on to see.

The Judgment of the Dead.

THE millennium is over: "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hades delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every one according to their works. And death and hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

This is the judgment of the dead alone, and must be kept perfectly distinct in our minds from the long previous judgment of the *living*. The judgment in Matt. xxv., for example, where the "sheep" are separated from the "goats," is a judgment of the living,—of the nations upon

earth when the Lord comes. It is not, indeed, the warrior-judgment of those taken with arms in their hands, in open rebellion, which we have beheld in the premillennial vision. The nations are gathered before the Son of Man, who has just come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him; and that coming, as when elsewhere spoken of throughout the prophecy, is unquestionably premillennial. As mankind are divided into the three classes, "the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God," so the prophecy in relation to the Jew is to be found in chap. xxiv. 1-42; that in relation to the professing Church, to the thirtieth verse of the next chapter; and the rest of it gives us the sessional judgment of the Gentiles, so far as they have been reached by the everlasting gospel. The judgment is not of all the deeds done in the body: it is as to how they have treated the brethren of the Lord (*v.* 40) who have been among them, evidently as travelers, in rejection and peril. The Jewish point of view of the prophecy as a whole clearly points to Jewish messengers, who as such represent Israel's King (*comp.* Matt. x. 40). There is not a word about resurrection of the dead, which the time of this judgment excludes the possibility of as to the wicked. It is one partial as to its range, limited as to that of which it takes account, and in every way distinct from such a *general* judgment as the large part of Christendom even yet looks for.

Here in the vision before us there is simply the judgment of the dead; and although the word is not used, the account speaks plainly of resurrection. The sea gives up the dead which are in it, as well as by implication also, the dry land. Death, as well as hades, deliver up what they respectively hold; and as hades is unequivocally the receptacle of the soul (Acts ii. 27), so must "death," on the other hand, which the soul survives (Matt. x. 28), stand here in connection with that over which it has supreme control—the body.

The dead, then, here rise; and we have that from which

the "blessed and holy" of the first resurrection are delivered—the "resurrection of judgment." (Jno. v. 29, *R. V.*) From *personal* judgment the Lord expressly assures us that the believer is exempt (*v.* 24, *R. V.*) Here, not only are the *works* judged, which will be true of the believer also, and for lasting blessing to him, but *men* are judged *according to* their works—a very different thing. Such a judgment would allow of no hope for the most upright and godly among mere men.

And this would seem to show that though a millennium has passed since the first resurrection, yet no *righteous* dead can stand among this throng. The suggestion of the "book of life" has seemed to many to imply that there are such; but it is not said that there are, and the words, "whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire," may be simply a solemn declaration (now affirmed by the result) that grace is man's only possible escape from the judgment. May it not even be intended to apply more widely than to the dead here, and take in the *living* saints of the millennium negatively, as showing how in fact they are not found before this judgment-seat?

At any rate, the principle of judgment—"according to their works"—seems to exclude absolutely any of those saved by grace. And there are intimations also, in the Old-Testament prophecies, as to the extension of life in the millennium, which seem well to consist with the complete arrest of death for the righteous during the whole period. If "as the days of a tree shall be the days of" God's "people" (Is. lxxv. 22), and he who dies at a hundred years dies as a child yet, and for wickedness: because there shall be no more any one (apart from this) that shall not fill his days (*v.* 20), it would almost seem to follow that there is no death. And to this the announcement as to the "sheep" in the judgment-scene in Matthew—that "the righteous shall go away into life eternal," strikingly corresponds. For to go into life eternal is not

to possess life in the way that at present we may; in fact, *as* "righteous," they already did this: it means apparently nothing less than the complete canceling of the claim of death in their case.

And now death and hades are cast into the lake of fire,—that is, those who dwelt in them are cast there. These exist as it were but in those who fill them; and thus we learn that there is no exemption or escape from the last final doom for any who come into this judgment. The lake of fire is the *second* death. The first terminated in judgment man's career on earth; the second closes the intermediate state in adjudged alienation from the Source of life. The first is but the type of the second. As we have seen, it is not extinction at all; and indeed a resurrection merely for the sake of suffering before another extinction would seem self-contradictory. In fact, death—what we ordinarily call that—is now destroyed. "It is appointed unto man *once* to die, but after this the judgment," which is thenceforth, therefore, undying (Heb. ix. 27).

With the great white throne set up, the earth and the heavens pass away, and there come into being a "new heaven and a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness." (2 Pet. iii. 13.)

F. W. G.

(*To be continued.*)

FRAGMENT.

WE often hear the expression "heavenly." Well, no person can be "heavenly" unless he lives in heaven. The fact is, we all of us have too much the tendency to put off heaven until we die. We think of it as the place where God is, and where Christ is, and it is the resource for us when we leave this world, when we leave our bodies behind us. When we cannot live any longer here, we go to heaven. Or, it may be, if you advance a little upon that, when a person has every thing

blighted and ruined down here, and there is not a single thing left, then he turns to heaven. It is like a person taking refuge from the storm, and when the storm is over, coming out again to enjoy the things around. Is that the case with you and me, beloved friends? That is the natural tendency of our hearts. We have very poorly, if at all in our souls, the thought of continuously *abiding* in that wonderful place where God is free to express Himself in all the infinite fullness of His love to us. He does not express Himself to us *here*. He gives us His care, His sympathy, His help, His cheer, His solace; He takes us by the hand, and leads us along the way, every step of the journey: but He does not *express* Himself to us here. He does *there*—that is the difference. That is what I feel, beloved friends, that we want, every one of us, in these days,—a more habitual dwelling in the house of the Lord. You may depend upon it, we should be a different kind of people altogether if we *dwelt* there. It is not *visiting* there, it is not running there for shelter out of the storm; but I will tell you what it is,—it is knowing it as *home*, with all the joys of home. Do you know what they are? Home! It is not being driven there through sheer necessity, but it is the attractiveness of it that draws us there. What do you know of the attractions of that blessed One who is up there? You see, it is not a doctrine, nor a theory; but it is a divine, living, adorable, blessed, transcendent *Person* for our affections. It is a Person who has an attractiveness peculiar to Himself, and one who throws this attractiveness, and blessedness, and beauty connected with Himself, around the affections of my heart. It is not, as I said, that I am driven by mere necessity from all the things that are round about me here, but I am *attracted* by the beauties and blessedness and glories of that scene where Christ is every thing *to God*, and where God delights to express Himself in all His fullness.

There is the spot I long more to dwell in, to live in, to abide in; that is the place I desire to know as my *home*, and that is the one thing the Psalmist speaks of here. To me, it is a beautiful instance of the expression of this divine life in a person, the life of God—"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may *dwell* in the house of the Lord all the days of my life."

Now I see all this in its perfection in Christ as a man. We get it in that beautiful passage, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, the Son of Man"—who *was* in heaven. Is that it? No. "Who is in heaven." Take Him as a man (He was the mighty God, the Creator and Preserver of all things, as well)—as the perfect man, He who walked that magnificent, blessed, shining pathway, that we have traced out for us in the gospels, and which, by the Holy Ghost, we can read and think over and delight in. Was it not this continuous, blessed, wonderful communion, intercourse with all that belonged to that blessed place from whence He came, that so marked His way? As He said, "I know whence I came, and whither I go." There was all that blessed distinctiveness and separateness about His walk here. Is there, in our measure, that about *us*? Are *we* like people who know whither we go? Is that the thing which day by day is telling itself out in your business, in your home, in your intercourse one with another, in your families? What I am speaking of is a *practical* thing. It goes down into the most minute circumstances of our daily life. There is to be this blessed testimony stamped upon it, that "I dwell in the house of the Lord." What sort of people should we be if there were that distinctiveness about us, and divine satisfaction and rest!

W. T. T.