

# HELP AND FOOD

FOR THE

Household of Faith.

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Vol. XIV.

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## THE REDEMPTION FROM "VANITY."

THE great wheel of the world goes round,  
 And nothing is at a stay;  
 The generations come and pass,  
 As shadows move upon the grass,  
 More permanent than they.

A transient ill, a fleeting good,  
 A hope that is attained, and gone:—  
 On all, the penalty alike,  
 Of passing with the hours that strike,  
 As the great world moveth on.

And the flowers that cluster over it  
 Are crushed and buried beneath;  
 For life sports with its strength above,  
 And we dare to smile, and we dare to love,  
 But ever below is death.

And we cry, O God, but our joys are sweet:  
 And why doth the wheel go round?  
 And why must that which is high be low?  
 And how canst Thou have ordained it so?  
 And where—this throbbing movement thro',—  
 Oh, where can rest be found?

But yet, though the wheel be high, look up:  
 For a Form, and a Human Form  
 Sitteth in peace above it still,  
 And guideth it with a perfect will,  
 Through brightness and through storm.

A Form, and a Human Form is there,  
 Whom the wheel, with spirit instinct, obeys,—  
 The chariot-wheel of destiny,—  
 For a purpose fixed and firm has He,  
 And the end shall be only praise.

For it bringeth low all human pride,  
 And humbleth into dust the Dust,

And thou seest not the other side,  
 —For there we see not, but we trust,—  
 Where the wheel revolveth into day,  
 And the cycle of life comes to its stay.

The Dead and Risen, He knoweth it all,  
 And therefore His face is bright and still  
 With the joy to which He alone can guide  
 The souls for whom He has stooped and died  
 In the might of His perfect will.

And the wheel of the world is His chariot-wheel:  
 For His triumph it moveth on;  
 And we catch from His glorious face to-day  
 The peace of its promise all the way,  
 Till the goal of His rest be won.

F. W. G.

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## THE PILGRIM CHARACTER.

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(Heb. xi. 8-16.)

**A** BRAHAM was the ideal pilgrim. His whole earthly life was, humanly speaking, a disappointment. Called from native country and family, to go to a country he knew nothing of; on reaching the land, finding that he had no possession in it—that he was still as much a pilgrim as ever; no seed, only the promise of innumerable descendants; and when the son of promise came, called to sacrifice him (received back, as it were, from the dead);—all these teach us practically, as his simple tent does figuratively, that Abraham was a pilgrim. Beautifully does the passage we have referred to place the tent of this lonely man of faith alongside of the assured hope before him—"for he looked for the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (verses 9, 10).

We say Abraham was the ideal pilgrim—nothing *now*, everything hereafter; nothing *here*, everything there. Even his failure in going down to Egypt, and the failure of the man who followed him so far, but emphasize this pilgrim character. Going to Egypt, he gains wealth, but loses both altar and wife. There could be no worship without the tent, as there could be no recognition of the heavenly ties (as of Christ and the Church, the man and his wife) where unholy ties with the world were found. How much more strongly poor Lot emphasizes the same, we need hardly say. He loses *all*—all that a child of God can lose—of communion, power, and testimony. A homeless, wifeless, terror-stricken old man, even in his hour of distress the tool of the abominations amidst which he had been living—God save us all from such shipwreck! Were it possible, even heaven itself would not check the bitter thoughts of such a failure.

But we repeat, the pilgrim character, the pilgrim walk, is marked by having *nothing* here. It is ever looking *forward*, not to something here. True, there will be sustenance by the way, needed grace and needed supplies, but no portion here. Pharaoh's contention was to get Israel to leave some interests behind in Egypt—wives and little ones, or property. Well did he know that interests behind would draw them back; and as a matter of fact, when their thoughts turned back to what seemed interests—fish and flesh-pots—their hearts followed their thoughts.

If nothing was left behind, neither was there anything for them in the wilderness. Manna fell from heaven, water by divine power flowed from the smitten rock (“and that rock was Christ”). Grapes and

fruits of Eshcol did but remind them by contrast of the waste in which they were and lure them—had they hearts for it—to the land that flowed with milk and honey. As we look back to our bondage, does anything beckon us back—any interest that God would have us tied to? As we look about us in this wilderness, is there anything to hold us? Verily no. May our hearts truly give the answer.

What then have we here? The same that Abraham had, that Israel had—the word of God, sustaining us and feeding our hopes; the presence of God, our shield, guide, and the object of our worship, with whom we can have sweet communion, and for whom we can work. We have all this, not darkly as Abraham and Israel, but in the full unveiled glory of the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. Here we have food for the soul, to sustain and cheer—richest foretastes of joys to come, knowledge of the Person of our Lord and His work; but the effect of it all is to show the barrenness of our surroundings and spur us on.

But the pilgrim is no vagrant. Any disappointed misanthrope might be detached from his surroundings and wander aimlessly about. The pilgrim, however, is more characterized by his object than by anything else. He has something definite before him that makes him quicken his steps as he thinks of it. It is *home*, where he is well known, and where dwell those he knows and loves. The pilgrim may be lonely here—he often is; but he looks for the *city*, a place of happiest intercourse, where the social instincts will be fully gratified. It is the city that has foundations, and so will not pass. Not like Cain's, nor Babylon, nor Sodom—its builder and maker is God. And does He not wish our hearts to

grow familiar with thoughts suggested by it! Did he say *city*, and not mean city?

If a world where sin has had sway for six thousand years can be as fair as this; if the paradise of man was indeed a garden of delights—what shall we say of the paradise of *God*? We have peopled it with angels, and made it the abode of spiritual joys; have we not, perhaps, forgotten that heaven is a *place*—a city with attractions and beauties suited to bodies, glorified to be sure, but still bodies? If the outlying courts of God's universe are beautiful, how much more will His house excel in beauty! Its river of the water of life, its tree with its leaves and fruit, its glory of street and wall and gate—these are lovely symbols of spiritual truths, and of Christ and the Father,—are they not hints too of the character of the place where these blest persons—pilgrims no longer—shall be forever at home?

God never calls us to give up anything but He will eventually give us a better. If Abraham gave up one country, he had “a better country, that is, a heavenly.” If he turned his gaze from Sodom and its plains,—like the garden of the Lord,—he could look up steadfastly to the city of habitation, prepared by the God who was not ashamed to be called His God. And if we look with amazement on the progress, the inventions of man, on the great cities full of splendor and magnificence,—full, too, of sin and death,—and are tempted to sigh as we think we have no portion here, let us remember that we have what is fairer far, and far more real.

But the gem in this glorious setting is the Lamb, the Light thereof. The very glories of heaven would but enhance its loneliness and deepen its misery,

were it possible that He could be absent. His presence makes it *home*; and all that is there will but be the suited display of that which is His by right. The glory and the honor are for Him. We know Him now, as Saviour and Lord: we know something of His blessed Person, divine and human—of His finished work. We know something of His character, inexpressibly holy, gentle, lovely—of His love that passeth knowledge. But ah! what will it be to see Him! to hear His voice calling us by name! to bow before Him—to sinlessly worship Him forever! Beloved fellow-pilgrim, this is what awaits us.

How natural and proper, then, is the hope of the Church as laid down in Scripture! she is waiting for the coming of the Lord. Nothing can transpire that has the interest for her of this one all-absorbing expectation. What to her is the progress of the world, the spread of civilization, the conflict of political and commercial life? Her Lord, her bridegroom, is not here, and she must press on to meet Him. Like Rebekah, she has heard of Isaac, and the love kindling in her heart makes her forsake all that would detain her, to go to meet Him.

Nor let it be supposed that this pilgrim character is inconsistent with a most practical style of life—it makes it such. Enoch walked with God, and begat sons and daughters. In the epistle of Peter, the exhortation to “strangers and pilgrims” introduces all manner of practical exhortations—obedience to rulers, duties of servants, wives, husbands (1 Pet. ii. and iii.). The pilgrim character will make the careful, honest, industrious man. Anything else is a mere sham—rebuked as in the epistle to the Thessalonians—“If any man will not work, neither let him eat.”

It will give him power. Abraham the pilgrim has power to rescue Lot when taken captive. It was the mass of stragglers at the rear of Israel's army that was attacked by Amalek. The soldier must be lightly equipped. "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life." He is not hampered by the world and the flesh, and therefore has play for the new man, the man of power.

Lastly, the pilgrim life is a life of joy. "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage." The pilgrim has a light heart, nothing holds him back, all allures him forward. He has been set free from law, and now God's commands are turned to songs of praise as he journeys on.

Beloved brethren—as we enter upon a new year, and look out into the unknown future, let us gird our loins afresh. Let us remember we are pilgrims, that we do not belong here, and that our hearts crave nothing here. Is that true? Are our hearts really severed from things here? Is our one thought to please our Lord, our one hope soon to hear His call into the air? Ah, if we had hearts and minds engaged with what was there, where Christ is, how small, how weak and contemptible would appear the great mountain-loads we now carry. Shall it not be our prayer, our resolve by God's grace, to be more pilgrims than ever before? The Lord grant it!

“For thee, O dear, dear country,  
Mine eyes their vigil keep;  
For very love, beholding  
Thy happy name, they weep;  
The mention of thy glory  
Is unction to the breast,  
And medicine in sickness,  
And love and life and rest.

“O one, O only mansion!  
 O paradise of joy!  
 Where tears are ever banished,  
 And smiles have no alloy.  
 The Lamb is all thy splendor,  
 The Crucified thy praise;  
 His laud and benediction  
 Thy ransomed people raise.

“O sweet and blessed country,  
 The home of God's elect!  
 O sweet and blessed city,  
 That eager hearts expect!  
 E'en now by faith I see thee,  
 E'en here thy walls discern;  
 To thee my thoughts are kindled,  
 And strive and pant and yearn.”

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A DIVINE MOVEMENT,  
 AND OUR PATH WITH GOD TO-DAY.

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*(Continued from page 339, Vol. XIII.)*

8. CLERISY AND ECCLESIASTICISM.

THERE is no position that we can take, however right it may be, that will free us from dangers that, in a world which is Satan's world, yawn for us on every side. We have no sooner escaped them in one direction than we are made to realize that we have only thereby drawn nearer to them in another. The church is truly militant. To have learned our place in the ranks is a very different thing from being withdrawn from the battle. Nay, it is those who are with God who will be most of all the object of the enemy's attack; and God permits us to learn war, that thereby every spiritual sense may be compelled into activity, that we may “by



reason of use have our senses exercised to discern both good and evil," and to make us learn thereby the value of what is our own, as men realize the value of what they have been in peril of losing.

In Israel's wilderness journey, all the people were in camp. The dangers by which they were surrounded were dangers for all alike. And in Christianity, in proportion as the warfare is more purely spiritual, so does it come nearer to us all. There is no non-combatant class. There are none by sea or in any other way exempted from the drill and discipline and actual encounter. Just as every Christian is a priest, and every Christian is a minister of Christ, so every Christian is a soldier of Christ, and must have the knowledge of his weapons, and the nerve and dexterity only to be acquired by practice, and must understand the tactics of the foe he faces.

There are leaders, of course. In Israel every one was ranged under his standard and his captain. But it is important that we should realize in this the great difference between the fleshly and the spiritual warfare. In the former, the responsibility assumed by the leader is correspondingly the acquittal from responsibility of those that follow him. In this case you have nothing but admiration for the unhesitating devotion of those that go forward, even to destruction, at the will of another; knowing full well, perhaps, that

"Some one has blundered."

In the spiritual warfare one can have pity for such, but *no* admiration. The responsibility of the leader takes not one atom of responsibility from the follower. And if he is misled he is guilty for being misled. He has not only compromised himself, but

the whole cause with which he is identified; and he is guilty: just because there is really One only and infallible Leader for His people, whose voice is to be heard every where amid all the din of the battle-field; and every lesser leader has only to make men listen to that Voice;—every one of these has to say, “Follow me, *even as I also follow Christ.*”

If we value the welfare of God’s people, we must press responsibility upon them to the full; and that none can save them from it, in any part of Christian practice. And yet this is what the great mass of even Christian men and women seek, in some way or other, escape from. They believe largely in the practicability of *substitution* in almost every line of Christian activity; and in all that concerns the assembly especially, this principle avails to blind the eyes and lead astray the steps of God’s people to an extent that calls for the most energetic and decisive repudiation of it on the part of every one whom the Lord has given any ability to influence the minds of his fellows. What does it proceed from but that state of spiritual sluggishness and torpor to which we may apply the words of the wise man, twice uttered in the book of Proverbs (vi. 10, xxiv. 33): “a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep; so shall thy poverty come as one that traveleth, and thy want as an armed man.”

Christian, whoever it may be that reads this, suffer none to stand between your soul and Christ. He alone is your Master; to Him alone you must give account. The vigor, the brightness, the faithfulness, of your life depend upon how you abide in the place of dependence on Him alone. Not, of course, that you are to refuse the help that He would give you

through another: that would be mere pride and self-sufficiency of heart. God has given us each to the other for all the help that we can give each other. Let not that thought be weakened in the least. But oh, let us remember that we fall into one of the most subtle and successful snares of the enemy when we allow the esteem we have for another, the rightful confidence in his genuineness, wisdom, piety, or aught else, to make *him* the director of our consciences in the things of God. It is Romanism in principle: for Romanism, all through, is nothing less than giving Christ a human "vicar," a substitute to whom, as if He were far off from us, we give His place.

We must seek no substitute for ourselves, we must have no substitute for Christ. We must not falsify the blest relationship into which we have been brought with Him. We must be for Him wholly. We must be with Him wholly. We must have nothing secular in our lives. Least of all must we consecrate another to fill the offices that we have vacated.

But this is what clerisy means,—the official taking up by a class among Christians of what the rest, and these the mass, have given up to them. It means the unspiritualizing of the mass—the "laity"—who resign the duties for which they are unfitted into hands more capable:—give up, that is, so much of their relationship to Christ, to be correspondingly freer for the world,—for its demands upon them! Not, of course, that people think it out in this way; the mass of us have grown up in such an atmosphere, and we are apt to know little of how it cleaves to us. Nay, if we have measurably escaped from it, let but our spiritual warmth be chilled

a little, and almost insensibly, and perhaps quite informally, we drop into it again.

To take up one point,—in which, if anywhere, also it may seem to have some shadow of Scripture for it, but only that,—does not *sex* seem to have something to do with conscience among us still? is this not really considered more a masculine characteristic than a feminine? With regard, for instance, to the discipline carried out in an assembly, is it always a matter of course that the women are as much exercised about it as the men? Nay, are they always admitted, even, to have as much title to be exercised?

Yet they are responsible for every such act, and if they take part in it with a bad conscience, must feel the effect of this in their whole spiritual life; nay, if unexercised, they are making it a small matter whether that which they do is according to God or not, and must have a *dull* conscience, if not a *bad* one. Of those cases in which they have been taught that matters of this nature are outside their province, because of the apostle's word that they were not to speak in public assembly, I scarcely need to speak. It is as much as to say that they are either not part of the assembly, or that they are not moral beings.

But is it not true that women do very much incline to take the place that is here assigned to them; and whatever the motives, is it not a grave mistake? does it not induce a habit which is sure to cleave to them with regard to other things, and from them spread among the men also, until a large part of the assembly even merely confirm the judgment of their leaders, and the reign of clerisy is in this respect practically established? If questions graver than ordinary come now before them, their incapacity will

only become the more apparent. The conscience habitually unexercised will not be found to possess the ability for judgment which can only come through exercise. The mere human motives which have always swayed them, will, for the most part, sway them still. They will be carried by arguments which derive their force mainly from the people that use them. Or they will drift, and perhaps break up, under the influence of family and social ties. *Drifting is always favorable in the end to stranding and breaking up*, simply because there is no intelligent guidance of the vessel. And this is only truer in spiritual than in natural things, because divine wisdom does not govern, is only, at the most, formally sought after all. In the divisions which have been among us, this has every where intensified the evil, as it was certain to do. Christian men and women, exercised before God, will necessarily walk together, act together; but the unintelligent followers of other leaders, when God permits the inevitable collision to test their state, fall asunder with these, if they do not break up into much smaller fragments. A spiritual state of the mass would, to a large extent, hold fast the leaders; who, just as that, naturally lead the divisions; who, sensibly or insensibly, have in fact formed them. The mass are responsible, just for that helpless leaning on them, which has helped their fall, just because they have lost the One Voice, which never can divide—never can be in contradiction to itself—amid the many voices so apt to be discordant. And this is clerisy,—a state of spiritual declension, first of all, from Christ,—and which can never be remedied, therefore, by any external application, but only by the return of souls to their

allegiance. He must be Master and Lord of every one of His own, in every detail of individual and collective life, and we must allow no substitute,—no “vicar.”

We must look beyond the actors in these divisions, then. There was a state of things which favored, yea, necessitated them. Wherever you find a state of things in which there is an unspiritual, unexercised mass, who can be wheeled into line at the bidding of some trusted man, or men, with at best slight knowledge of the facts, perhaps also with knowledge as slight, of the principles which are concerned with them,—there is the state of things which is at the bottom of the trouble. There is clerisy, and there is ecclesiasticism: these two things are but the complements of one another; and they exist all around us among those who have a horror of them in their developments elsewhere, while they know not that they are cherishing the very thing which has produced them.

This is no imagination of my own: it is the saddest reality. You will hear intelligent Christians say something like this with regard to things in which they have taken definite sides with their party—and I let the word stand, offensive as it rightly is, because for those who can say so, it is but as with a party they have acted: “Well, we did not ourselves know much about these things: Mr.— looked into them, and we all had confidence in Mr.—,” and so on. Sometimes—and not unfrequently indeed—and where widespread division has taken place, you may find that numbers of people have never known at all, even by the representation of another, what was in question, and every thing that would have

enlightened them has been kept from getting into their hands! How can the commendation apply to such: "Thou hast kept My word," when they neither know, nor cared to know, to what, or in what way, His word applied.

Of course there are many decisions of an assembly, —nay, the mass of them—which, as with regard to local matters, must be reached there upon the spot, and ought never to be carried round. Of such things I do not speak. But these are not the matters that ordinarily cause any wide or lasting division. What does so is usually some question of truth or principle, as to which it seems not even yet to be understood by many, that the local assembly has no binding authority at all for others. Of course, if an errorist be in their midst, and they are satisfied that he subverts the foundations, their duty is simple: they must clear themselves. But appeal may be taken from their decision to the word of God; and the consciences of Christians every where are bound to consider the appeal. The judgment of an assembly in this case has no force whatever, except as they can produce the evidence of the evil which has necessitated their action. And with the doctrine before one clearly, such a decision has no binding power at all. The word of God is the charter under which the assembly acts, and is above all its actions. The Church does not teach, or define doctrine: that is, again, the heresy of Rome. And the very semblance of power in its hands to set forth what is to be received among Christians is to be refused by every one who would be loyal to Christ Himself. Here individual exercise is therefore necessitated and imperative. We cannot hide from it behind one another.

“Thou hast kept My word—“My word”—rings in our ears.

The truth committed to Christians is the most important trust that they can have. If of Israel it could be said, “What advantage has the Jew? . . . *chiefly*, that unto them were committed the oracles of God,”—what then, must be the value of such an inheritance as is ours in this respect? And, if God has suffered a few to return to something like the simplicity that obtained at the beginning, to recognize the common relationship of Christians to one another; if He has freed us in measure from the traditions of men, and from human inventions in the things of God, it is to enjoy and profit by the unadulterated word of Christ. It is all we have for blessing. The Spirit of God, whose presence with us and authority in the assembly it has taught us to realize, is characterized for us by the Lord Himself as the “Spirit of truth.” His great work on earth is to take of the things of Christ, and show them unto us. If He be also the “*Holy Spirit*”—holiness is the “holiness of truth;” sanctification is by the truth. If we are taught of God to love one another, this Philadelphian spirit is shown us by the very apostle of love to be “love in the truth” and “for the truth’s sake.”

Men are learning to talk of the “unity of Christendom,” and they are proving by many experiments, the practicability of bringing masses of Christians together, associate and unite together for many good ends. But who can expect anything else than that by all this the truth as a whole must be set aside to maintain good fellowship? Differences must be avoided, even gross error condoned, and if “evil communications corrupt good manners” still, as they



did of old, what must be the end of such association without even the guard imposed by the discipline—if there be yet a discipline—maintained in the churches?

On the other hand, if the Church is to maintain the truth, this can only be done by allowing full liberty for the truth to *maintain itself*, without sectarian restriction of any kind. Where the “doctrine of Christ” is held, and thus the gathering to His name is guarded, Scripture warrants no further restriction on the part of the assembly. It may, of course, always refuse for itself to listen to what is merely unprofitable and vain; but the truth only gains by being trusted as having full power to speak with its own authority to the heart and conscience of the saint. “Let the prophets speak, and let the rest judge,” says the apostle: “prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” The exercise of conscience thus is for blessing to all. Those who can go to sleep under the not to be disputed creed, are waked up by the discussion. The relations and consequences of truths are searched out and manifested. Have we not been too much afraid of that which, while it is reverent and brotherly in its character, tends ever to make the truth a present and living issue, and therefore to give it power? If God had seen the creed to be the better way of maintaining this, would He not have given it?

(*To be continued.*)

F. W. G.

POPISH unity attaches Christ to unity, and hence may and does legalize with His name every corruption and evil; Christian unity attaches unity to Christ, and therefore gives it all the character of grace and truth that is in Him—gives it all His excellence.

J. N. D.

## “HE KNOWETH.”

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JUST two words from His treasury,  
 Their worth is more to me  
 Than all the world could offer;  
     Its wealth were poverty,  
 When placed beside the joyful tide  
     Which floweth  
 From words so blest, so full of rest—  
     “ He knoweth.”

How oft, when sorrow held me,  
     And thinking no one cared,  
 How sweetly all my spirit  
     These little words have cheered.  
 All gone my fears, while through my tears  
     There gloweth  
 A heav'n-sent light, dispelling night—  
     “ He knoweth.”

And if temptation find me  
     Well nigh about to yield,  
 Then comes the timely whisper,  
     My faltering soul to shield;  
 Like distant strain of sweet refrain,  
     It floweth,  
 Until at length it bringeth strength—  
     “ He knoweth.”

“ He knoweth ” what awaits me,  
     The heights my soul may climb;  
 He knoweth faith, and victory,  
     Belong to earth, and time.  
 I cannot know what sting, or blow,  
     He spareth;  
 Though He deny, in love, my cry,  
     He careth.

When hedged is all my pathway  
     By most disheartening things,  
 And all my soul most longs for

Meets only hinderings,  
Then comes again that touching strain—  
    "He knoweth."  
No sympathy like that which He  
    Bestoweth.

If in my friends I find not  
    The fellowship I crave,  
He draws me all the closer,  
    And tells me of His love.  
Ah, then, regret can never fret,  
    But groweth  
The less a sting the while I sing,  
    "He knoweth."

Or if suspicion's shadow  
    Hangs darkly o'er my name,  
My brethren turn accusers,  
    And all unjustly blame,—  
How tenderly His heart to me  
    He showeth!  
For this distress, and bitterness,  
    "He knoweth."

If weary, heartsick waiting  
    My spirit sorely tries,  
And hopes I once had cherished  
    But fade before mine eyes,  
The soul that knows life's deepest woes  
    But groweth,  
And all its pain will be but gain,  
    "He knoweth."

Yea, Lord, though sure the treasure,  
    I know the vessel's frail;  
Which vessel *must* be broken—  
    Thy purpose cannot fail.  
Then 'neath Thy will I would be still,  
    And broken;  
And yet, to me, "He knoweth," be  
    Love's token.

"He knoweth"—who can fathom  
 The depths of this sweet spring?  
 Which e'en in sorrow's midnight  
 Can make the spirit sing,  
 Whate'er His love (my heart to prove)  
 Bestoweth,  
 This heav'n-sent note o'er *all* shall float,  
 "He knoweth."

H. Mc D.

—\* CURRENT EVENTS. \*



TURKISH OUTRAGES IN ARMENIA.—  
 THE EASTERN QUESTION.

THOUGH not of the world, but citizens of heaven, it is right that Christians should take knowledge of events. We have our Lord's example as to this, who, besides giving the prophetic outline of future events, could draw lessons from a special act of cruelty by Pilate, or the fall of a tower. Particularly should Christians take knowledge of those events which are closely related to the subjects of prophecy, and which have a most important significance at the present time.

The Turkish Empire, as is well known, displaced the so-called Christian one which had had Constantinople as its capital for centuries. For centuries too had the Mohammedan power been rising and spreading. It was, and is, a distinctively antichristian power. Little apology can be offered for the wretched semblance of Christianity in the East at the time of Mohammed; ignorance, superstition, idolatry held

sway, and doubtless paved the way for the denial of Christ in somewhat the same way that the corruptions of the Church of Rome prepared the way for the atheism of the Reign of Terror in France. But Mohammedanism, appropriately enough, is a religion of the sword of blood. It offers its enemies one of three things—the Koran, tribute, or the sword—usually but two, the first and the last.

Trace it to its genesis, the Turkish power is still what it ever was—a bloodthirsty persecutor of all who profess the name of Christ. Within its dominion are several Christian nations—Armenians, Bulgarians, etc. The original fanatical hatred of these is just as strong to-day as ever. The events of late and still happening are witness of this.

The most shocking and appalling reports come from Armenia—tens of thousands, including babes, children and women, have been killed; multitudes have been driven from their homes which have been despoiled and demolished. Whole villages and towns, nay entire districts, have been ravaged. The work of destruction is still going on, and each day adds to the awful record of murder and rapine. It is also said that, through the surveillance of the Turkish authorities, only a part of the truth has reached our ears. To add to the horror of all this, winter is upon the poor Armenians, and already the number of victims to starvation, privation, and cold is great. What will it be by the end of winter! It is matter for thankfulness that noble men and women of the Red Cross League have offered to carry relief to the sufferers, and ere long this work of succor will begin. But Armenia is wrecked.

Nothing like this has been known for centuries.

The massacres by the Indians in this country furnish some counterpart; but those were by savages, these by a regular government, scarce seeking to disguise its acts. To find parallels we must turn to the persecutions of Christians by the empire under Pagan Rome, or of the Albigenses by the French under Papal Rome.

The so-called Christian nations of Europe have not been, as a rule, slow to take the sword. Many a time has Europe been wet with the blood of contending armies fighting for territory, for power, for *religion*, for anything. But now the strange spectacle is afforded of these nations looking on and scarce raising the hand while the work of murder goes on. They have no conscience about war, they believe in the arbitrament of the sword, but thousands of Christians are being murdered and they still look on. True, diplomacy has been tried, and steps have been taken to protect their ambassadors at Constantinople. The powers have also induced the Sultan to promise certain reforms in his government of Armenia. In fact, the first outbreak of murder and pillage was apparently occasioned by these "reforms." Still Europe does nothing. Can there be any reason for this?

Turkey has been in a state of decrepitude for years. Politically, financially—we need hardly add, morally—she has been ready to fall to pieces. Moslem fanaticism might bind the various parts into some sort of religious confederacy, but by far the strongest bond of union has been the protection and support of European powers; and among those who have afforded "aid and comfort," England stands out in unenviable prominence. The reason for this is

not far to seek. Russia is the great Eastern-European and Asiatic power—she is England's greatest and most dangerous rival. Her vast territories on the north are perilously near those of England, which run parallel to them as far as India. Russia has her eyes upon Constantinople, as she has no seaport in the cold north open more than half the year, and none in the south. England is determined that Russia shall not have Constantinople, and in this the other European powers are in the main agreed, with the exception, for the present, of fickle France.

It is the policy of these powers, therefore, to keep Turkey in existence, in order to prevent Russia from acquiring more territory. She is therefore held together by this pressure on either side—any change would doubtless precipitate a general European war—a war, it is needless to say, which would infinitely exceed in horror all the sufferings of poor Armenia. We hardly think such a war imminent, but it is inevitable—to every thoughtful mind—and it is deferred, humanly speaking, only by the presence of Turkey.

We have said that every thoughtful person is apprehensive of a general European war. There seems no escape from it; and a glance at the page of prophecy turns this probability into a certainty. It is our purpose in subsequent papers to take up this question in relation to the Jews and to the Gentiles, but our first question must be, what is the bearing of all this upon us as Christians, as members of the body of Christ?

The first thought that comes to our minds is, How different is this awful state of affairs from the reign of Him who shall be as “showers upon the mown grass,” and at the same time One who shall gird His

sword upon His thigh and His right hand shall teach Him terrible things (Ps. lxxii. and xlv.). We have now the government in man's hands and it is more and more of a satanic character—fully that in the last days. The rod of government has been cast upon the ground, has turned into a serpent: but One can grasp it again and turn it back into a rod of blessing—a rod too of deliverance for His oppressed people and of judgment on His enemies.

We next think of the emptiness of all man's plans of betterment, and of all hopes for the gradual improvement of the world. The golden dream of the poet, when

“The war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle-flag was furled,”

is too vain to lull thoughtful men to slumber. They see *war* not peace before the world. We need hardly say how fully Scripture bears this out, but this is a subject belonging to a subsequent paper. How sorrowful it is to think that all the inventions, the education, the wealth of man have not changed him and cannot. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. The world is no better to-day than when the Lord Christ was crucified.

Then the effort of the christian is not to seek to better that which is hopelessly bad, but to seek to rescue those who are *of* the world as well as in it,—to preach the gospel of the grace of God and to seek to turn men “to God from idols, to serve the living and true God and to wait for His Son from Heaven” (1 Thess. i. 9, 10). For the coming of our Lord and not death, nor the gradual spread of the gospel, is the true and proper hope of the Christian. The passage just quoted proves this, and the testimony of all



Scripture on the subject is the same (Jno. xiv. 1-3; Acts i. 9-11; 1 Cor. i. 7; 1 Thess. iv. 13-18; Titus ii. 11-14, etc.).

Lastly these awful events point to the *nearness* of the Lord's coming for His Church. There never has been any earthly event between the believer and the hope of the Lord's coming. Paul was waiting for Him, as all the early Christians were taught to do (Phil. iii. 20, 21). No world-history must necessarily transpire before the coming of our Saviour. God is simply waiting in patience while the gospel of His grace is sounded forth and lost sinners are gathered in. We know not when the day of grace will close, but Scripture tells us clearly we are in the last days,—even in John's time that was true; how much more now.

But we shall see as we look into Scripture and compare present events with its teachings, that all is heading up for the last great closing act of the world's history. We shall see the Jews returning, in unbelief, to their own land; we shall see the confederacy of the European nations in process of formation; we shall see the bitter foe of the Jews, the Assyrian of scripture—the Russian—ready to blot out their name from the earth; we shall see that apostasy already begun, but hindered by the One who lets (2 Thess. ii. 7), which will culminate in the development of the man of sin, in Jerusalem, the Antichrist; and that Laodicean state which shall terminate not only in the professing Church being spued out of the Lord's mouth but rejected by the Nations (Rev. iii. 16; xvii. 16).

Meanwhile, how cheering is the prospect, as the Christian looks *up*. Before the hour of trial comes,

before the earth shakes with the awful tribulation, the Church of Christ will be "caught up" to meet the Lord in the air; away, forever away, from the sorrows and woes of earth. Oh may this "blessed hope" nerve us to faithful service, to patience. May it be a living reality in the hearts of the Lord's people, detaching them from earth and making them practically, as they are really, a heavenly people. Before this year runs to its close, we may hear that glad shout and change our vile bodies and our sad circumstances for the presence of the Lord. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

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## SIGNS AND WONDERS.

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NEWSPAPER reports speak of a great prophet which has risen up in Denver, Colo.; they say crowds are after him; that he heals their sick, showing mighty signs of supernatural power.

Supposing all this to be true, and no delusion or deception in it, let the christian ever remember the warning that God has given us in His word: "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, *and the sign or the wonder come to pass*, whereof He spake unto thee saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: *for the Lord your God proveth you*, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul."

It is plain from this passage that mere supernatural power is not enough to prove that a man's mission is of God. It may indeed be allowed of God to test

the people who profess to be His, whether or no they will be loyal enough to Him to enquire into the *doctrine* of the wonder worker. What place had Jehovah in this man's doctrine? and now we ask, what place has *Christ*? Let none be surprised if workers of real signs and wonders arise here and there. The devil has much more power than men; his object is nothing less than to supplant Christ, and as the end draws near he cannot fail to put forth all his energies to reach his object; he will *almost* succeed; his supreme effort will produce "Antichrist" (1 Jno. ii. 18) who "doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by those miracles which he had power to do" (Rev. xiii. 13, 14).

"*What think ye of Christ*"? must therefore be the final, crucial test if we seek and desire to know the mind of God as to anything that rises up—that which alone can carry us safely through the "perilous times" of the end. And this is the more needful as many affect a growing disregard for *doctrine*. Little matter what doctrine a man holds, they say, as long as he does good among his fellows. But the chief mark of the power of the Spirit in a man is when he lives of "*every* word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

P. J. L.

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## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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QUES. 1.—Please explain 1 Cor. xiv. 14, 15: "My spirit prayeth"; "I will pray with the spirit." Do these expressions correspond with Rom. viii. 16—"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit"?

ANS.—The word "spirit" is in evident contrast with "under-

standing." If one prayed in an unknown tongue, his *spirit* prayed, but his understanding was unfruitful; that is, there was the divine impulse (not the Holy Spirit, but the impulse to use a gift) which lifted the heart in prayer, without the person knowing what he was praying for. So the apostle says the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets—they were to discern by their spiritual understanding whether they should yield to the impulse which they felt.

In Rom. viii. the Spirit is the Holy Spirit, who witnesses with our spirit—our spiritual nature—as in 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12: "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him?" "We have received the Spirit, which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God."

QUES. 2.—Please explain Matt. xxii. 10-14. How came that one in, not having the wedding garment?

ANS.—The whole parable gives the explanation. The marriage of the king's son was for Israel primarily; the invitation was given, but refused and despised by them. It is then given to the Gentiles. The truths of the kingdom are preached to all, and all invited to enter. Among those who professedly avail themselves of the invitation is one who has no appreciation of what is due to the king, and who appears without a wedding garment—type of Christ our righteousness, the free gift of God. He is cast out. He is not in heaven, but in the kingdom out of which "all that offend and them that do iniquity" will be cast (Matt. xiii. 40-43).

QUES. 3.—What is taught in John xx. 6, 7—the linen clothes lying, and the napkin not lying with them, but by itself?

ANS.—When our Lord arose there was a great earthquake, and the keepers of the tomb shook and became as dead men, afterwards going into the city to tell of it—all was confusion (Matt. xxviii. 2, etc.). Within the tomb all was quiet and orderly; there was no appearance of a struggle, even of a victorious one. Our blessed Lord had left His grave-clothes just as they rested upon him. He had simply risen out of them by His divine power. The clothes marked His resting-place somewhat as one would leave the impress of his form upon the bed on which he had been lying,—body, arms, head,—so that the angel could say, "Come, see the place where the Lord lay." The mighty victor had risen from the sleep of death.

DEAR BROTHER:—I send you a line to say that our dear sister Mrs. Mohr was taken home Saturday evening. She took inflammation of the lungs, the fever rapidly increasing. She was very happy in the prospect of being with Christ. "It is a great joy," she said. We will miss her much. The holy influence of such a life lost to us, seems a serious thing; but the memory of it will long remain green, and we hope yield its happy and peaceable fruits among us.

Lachute, 9th Dec. 1895.

W. B.

A LETTER from Robert T. Grant to his brother F. W. G. mentions our young brother E. N. Groh, who is now with him at Los Angeles, as hard at work at the Spanish language, and mingling with Mexicans to help him learn it faster. His thought is to go into Mexico in due time.

As the mind dwells upon those vast spanish fields "wholly given to idolatry," the heart follows these beloved brethren who are making an entrance into them. May every need be graciously bestowed upon them, and suited fellow-laborers be led of the Lord to join them in the work.

IN A LETTER of Dec. 7th, from Palisade, Neb., our brother A Broadfoot speaks in loving and encouraging terms of the young assembly there. His labors at that place two years ago, were blessed in the conversion and gathering to the Lord of quite a little company, and now, after two years, he finds them going on in love and unity, and growing in the Lord. Truth, love, unity! how blessed a sight when combining in a company of men in a scene like this; there is Christ truly glorified, and they whose labors are to such ends need seek nothing greater. Brother Broadfoot is also finding an open door there for the gospel and hopes to see fresh fruit in it.

OUR BROTHER A. E. Booth writes from Minnesota as one full of cheer. He had spent about three weeks at Lowry, ending his labors there with a whole day's meeting on "Thanksgiving day." Among other blessings, one old lady, for "forty years in the house of bondage," as she expressed it herself, was set free and gathered with the company already there. The assembly at Lowry is comparatively young, the clear Gospel of the grace of

God having come among them only a very few years ago; but it came with power to a goodly number, and their testimony has been blessed to the people round about them. Our laboring brother J. W. Allen resides there, and keeps a little depot of publications for the use of the Lord's people in those parts. A young brother, W. J. Hume, from among themselves, is addicting himself to the ministry of the saints and doing the work of an evangelist in the country around.

From Lowry brother Booth went to Alexandria, from which he writes. The assembly there had been allured into principles of independency which of late have agitated some, and which are alluring because of the liberal *face* which they present; but now they were undeceived; they saw those principles were in reality a denial of the responsibilities which flow out of our being all baptized by *One Spirit* into *One Body*; also a denial of the Lordship of Christ whose holy government in any one of *His* assemblies must be recognized and submitted to in all.

Deliverance out of a snare is ever a joy among God's people, and so our brethren at Alexandria have all rejoiced together. Our laboring brother W. H. Scott resides there. His health has not been good of late. We trust prayer will go up to God for him from such as have at heart the interests of our Lord Jesus Christ, that any hindrance to our brother's ministry in the Word may be removed. Indeed, "tidings of the Lord's work" will be but a mere satisfaction of curiosity unless they lead us all to find in them occasion for prayer and mutual sympathy and affection.

A LONG and interesting letter from our beloved brother E. S. Lyman, dated Harbor Grace, Newfoundland, Dec. 15th, is a manifest proof that heathen lands are not the only ones which need missionaries. The Bible may be everywhere, but men know not or believe not what is in it. Pharisaism and clerisy abound, but how few they seem who honestly cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" Our dear brother J. B. Jackson, after a protracted season of labor, having returned to Boston, we are sure our brother, toiling now alone in Newfoundland, will have the prayers of many who know him, that the Lord may strengthen his hands and encourage his heart by showing him fruit from their labor.

## “WHICH HOPE WE HAVE

AS AN ANCHOR OF THE SOUL, BOTH SURE AND STEADFAST.”  
 “BEHOLD, I COME QUICKLY.”

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**I**F we could for a moment to ourselves portray  
 All hope removed—hope which pertains to God—  
 How black and awful would the picture be!  
 How blank the future! yea, how aimless life!  
 What turning of the tide of better thoughts!  
 What chaos! ruin! what despair! But oh,  
 The God of mercy hath not left us thus!  
 For is not Christ our hope? yea, more,  
 The precious pledge of all we hope to have?

Earth's hopes are fleeting, and the fondest dreamed  
 Could never satisfy the longing soul.  
 How many a soul, all tempest-tossed, and cast  
 Upon the shoals of disappointed hope,  
 Turns, in the bitter loss of earthly prize,  
 To Christ, and sure and everlasting gain!

Life, at least, looks bright and hopeful  
 To the young and strong.  
 Forgetting all things bear the stamp of death,  
 That this is not our home,  
 And God must needs make new this blighted earth,  
 The treacherous heart lusts here and there,  
 And grasps with eager hold some object coveted.  
 And so, like children who must needs be checked  
 In wants most hurtful, and undue desires,  
 Our Father oft breaks up our much-loved plan,  
 Or lays our idol in the dust:  
 And then, if not submissive, comes the storm.  
 He must accomplish what He will  
 In His unwilling child.

What folly now it seems, as we look back,  
 And see how once we dared to fight  
 Against the Lord!—the worm to quarrel  
 With the One who made the universe!

Yet so it was ; so foolish are our thoughts ;  
 And all because we could not have our way.  
 No man e'er wrestled with the mighty God,  
 And came off conqueror : He must the battle win !  
 And when the storm is passed,  
 And we have learned to trust His love  
 As much as we had feared His power,  
 We'll thank Him that He took such pains,  
 Through discipline and patient care,  
 To teach us that His love was on our side.

For though to break our wills must often break our  
 hearts,

'Tis well ; for then we fly to Him ;—  
 And who can bind the broken heart but Christ ?  
 Then, in the quiet of a heart at peace with God,  
 We rest, and, like a weaned child,  
 Accept the firm restraint, nor doubt the love  
 That ministers the pain.  
 Then we can seek His way with singleness of heart,  
 And, waiting, work His will.

Experience works by patience in the soul,  
 And sorrowful indeed it oft must be  
 To work in us the fruit the Master craves.  
 But then, the heart that's weaned from earth looks up,  
 And hope displaces all solicitude, and we are free  
 To wait the changing tide of this life's troubled sea,  
 Now tossed no longer by its turbid waves ;  
 But patient wait upon the rugged shore,  
 And, though it cover all the heart held dear,  
 We gladly count our loss our gain,  
 Because we have a better hope beyond.

The furnace we so dread but burns the bands,  
 Which hold us down to earth and dim our faith.  
 Then let us walk with Him ; if on the troubled sea  
 Or through affliction's fire, yet still with Him ;  
 And while we give Him thanks for mercies by the  
 way,  
 For sweet companionships and tender ties,



To soothe our pains and make the way less drear,  
We'd hold these gifts as though they were not ours,  
But His, and weep as though we wept not  
For joy of that bright hope  
Which lifts the heart above this blighted scene,  
Where sorrow's school and disappointment's blast  
Have weaned us, once for all, to wait for Him  
In whom is all our hope.

Fulfill to us, O Lord, ere long,  
That soul-entrancing word,  
Which thrills our hearts with joyful song,—  
“Forever with the Lord!”

H. Mc D.

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NO SHORT CUT IN THIS WAY WITH GOD.—Had God left Israel to choose their path from Egypt to Canaan, they would, we may rest assured, never have chosen the way He led them. But it was His way, the right way, the *only* right way—a slow, tedious journey of forty years, suited to the slow, fleshly hearts of a people who required all this time, with its numerous lessons, to learn how evil they were, and how good, and patient, and holy, was their God. And all this is a life-picture of what the history of every child of God is : a lovely beginning, full of new affections and joys ; a song of praises, as the Red Sea of judgment delivers us forever from the bondage of Egypt ; a delightful sense of His tabernacling Presence ; and then weary marches, long and trying stops, where progress seems at an end ; and even backward journeys, as if to make their hearts hopeless. All this to learn self, and grow sick enough of it to find that “Christ is all.” What an important *end* this must have, to call out such dealings of our God and Father with us ! May we be in communion with Him, and thus learn our lesson in such a way as to reap at the end all He would have us reap !

P. J. L.

## A DIVINE MOVEMENT, AND OUR PATH WITH GOD TO-DAY.

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(Continued from page 17.)

### 9. HERESY.

**B**UT thus we have reached this formidable word "heresy," and must examine what Scripture says about it. Not that there is much difficulty in what Scripture says: the difficulty is in what has been attached to it from elsewhere.

The word for "heresy" is, as frequently as not, rendered "sect" in our common version. The "sect" of the Pharisees, the "sect" of the Sadducees, (Acts v. 17; xv. 5,) show us the general thought. These were not divisions in the sense of separation *from* Judaism, but doctrinal parties *in* it. When Paul speaks of having "after the straitest *sect* of our religion, lived a Pharisee," he acknowledges other sects of our religion, and certainly could not have meant to use the word in any offensive manner. The impossibility of using the word "heresy" in these cases shows how little our modern idea of it can be taken as that of the New Testament. Christianity was looked at in its beginning as but a similar "sect"—the "sect of the Nazarenes" (Acts xxiv. 5); and it is to be remembered that Christians were not yet separated from the Jewish worship.

When the apostle therefore before Felix confesses that "after the way which they call 'heresy,' so worship I the God of my fathers" (Acts xxiv. 14), we must not import these newer ideas into it. They would have used the same word of "parties" to which they themselves belonged; and that was the

force of the word,—literally, a “choice,” an “adherence.” Those who used it did not mean to decide by it as to right or wrong, but simply to classify as different the schools of thought or doctrine which they saw existing. The apostle might well refuse for the Christianity which he professed, that it should be so classified. The term was offensive to him as ignoring the divine revelation which had been given in it, and characterizing it as a mere human choice—an opinion.

On the other hand, it is plain that he could not have resented the imputation of its being a doctrine or system of doctrines which was in fact, *and in design*, claiming men's adherence and gathering disciples. This it certainly was doing in the most distinct and positive way. And the apostle asserted this claim (which is the claim of truth everywhere, and at all times) in the very presence of those who called him before their tribunals for it. He could seek to “proselytize” the king Agrippa before their eyes.

Yet he refused the denomination of Christianity as a “sect,” and for that very reason. God had spoken in it: all men were to hear. It was no opinion, but revealed truth; and this is the key to the condemnation of “heresy” in the apostolic writings. There is to be no opinion, no mere human “choice,” among Christians. The one truth claims the allegiance of all. The word of God has been given to us; and the one Spirit to bring us all to one mind about it. All departure from this is to be condemned utterly.

There are but three passages in the Epistles in which “heresies” are spoken of. In the second epistle of Peter, the “damnable heresies” of our English version has doubtless tended to some obscu-

ration of thought. The phrase is literally "heresies of destruction,"—that is, heresies that destroy men. They are brought in by false teachers, and are doctrinal clearly—doctrines in which they even deny the Lord that bought them. Thus fundamental error is, of course, intended; but this does not show that *all* "heresy" is fundamental error. The term is a much wider one than this.

Notice, that they bring in these "privily":—not necessarily whispering them about merely; for the word means strictly "by the side": thus, perhaps, in an indirect way, not straightforwardly. Satan, in attacking the Lord among Christians, would naturally take his own subtle, sinuous way. To expect straightforwardness in such a case is not to know the foe with whom you have to do.

In view of the "divisions" of which he had heard in Corinth, the apostle adds, "And I partly believe it: for there must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" (1 Cor. xi. 18, 19). Here the differences among them were openly showing themselves when they came together at the Lord's Table. These differences came from following different and discordant teachers (chap. i. 10-13); and therefore he puts them down as the fruit of "heresies." These, too, he speaks of to the Galatians as "works of the flesh" (v. 20). This is all that we have in Scripture as to heresies themselves.

But there is still one mention of a heretic: "A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition, reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself" (Titus iii. 10, 11).

For "reject," the Revised Version has "refuse," or, in the margin, "avoid"; Alford and Ellicott, "shun"; J. N. Darby, "have done with." Literally, it is "ask off," or, in familiar parlance, "ask him to excuse you"; so that "have done with" seems to be the best rendering among these. It certainly is not the discipline of the assembly which is implied, and the assembly is not in question. In dealing with a man bent upon having his own opinion and maintaining it, after this is clear, leave him to himself.

The reason given is: "for he that is such is subverted"—rather, "turned aside," is gone out of the way, and cannot be helped: "he sinneth, being self-condemned." The truth bears its own testimony to the conscience; but he hardens himself against it: there is therefore no use in going on with him.

As for assembly-discipline in such cases, we must find the principles which regulate it elsewhere, and not here. Manifestly, the whole question is, whether that which is fundamental is at stake or no. Here every Christian has the means of judgment and the responsibility of it. As to what is not so, one could not expect all to have the same competency. The party-making, if there be such, is to be treated as the apostle treats it, by appeal to the conscience and the heart. The assembly has the right also to refuse what is unedifying. For the rest, God must be trusted, and we must learn patience with each other. The truth can be trusted to make its way with the true-hearted; and authority—short, that is, of the divine—can never help it. All manner of creeds and subscriptions have failed, in all countries and in all ages, to maintain the truth; and an unwritten creed will be worse in this respect instead of better:

more uncertain and capricious, as subject to the will of the few, and varying with their character and temperaments, their learning or their ignorance, and with the many influences that may work upon them.

*Nothing must stand between the word of God and the soul of the saint; and the Spirit of God must be the only authoritative Teacher.* "Ye need not that any man teach you," should be graven upon our memories and hearts (1 John ii. 27). Only where the Spirit of God is honored and relied on,—only where the word of God is received, not as the word of man, but as it is indeed, the word of God,—can there be the least security for anything. If this be doubtful, where shall we find anything that is less so?

Nothing, again, must stand between the conscience of the teacher and his Lord as to what he teaches. "He that hath My word," says the Lord to Jeremiah, "let him speak My word faithfully" (xxii. 27). Who shall venture to dictate to him what the word is that he is to say, or to refrain from saying? who is to dictate as to what the Lord's people shall receive—some would say, even listen to—or not receive? who is able to take the place of vicar of the Spirit of God among His people, and to do for them what He Himself does not do,—nay, what He Himself expressly refuses to do,—keep them from all need of "proving all things," by keeping from them what shall need the proving, and giving them only what has been before decided to be good and wholesome food?

Could it be done, (as has often been said, but can hardly be too often repeated,) it would not be well done. It would be just to keep the children of

God babes, unexercised, unaccustomed to decide for themselves between truth and error. Were their teachers, possibly, not so competent as they believed themselves to be—possibly in error even, in some things—it would ensure that those accustomed to receive without exercise what came to them from certain quarters, should receive the error now with no more question than the truth. Such principles received and acted on would introduce more than all the evils of an ordained clergy; they would introduce a practical Romanism, which would prepare the way for a large departure from the truth of God.

Such infantile Christianity, as the right condition for the saint, is advocated now in many ways, and in unexpected quarters. I have before me some correspondence of two brethren with a third person; and one of these refers to a book of essays written by rationalistic high-church Episcopalians, "*Lux Mundi.*" The other retorts with a remark as to "his allusion to an infidel book (*which he should know nothing about*).*"* There is no qualification as to this whatever. He knows nothing of the motives which might have led the brother in question to read such a book. He is not suggesting caution in such matters. His words are equivalent to a statement that *no* motives could justify a Christian in acquainting himself with a book of the kind.

This is not as far as others go. They will refuse even to read the defence of those whom they know to be Christian men, and whom they themselves have charged with heresy! One gave as his reason for not reading a reply to his own pamphlet, that "those who read it fall under the power of it"!

Such Christianity is hardly suited for the days on

which it has fallen,—hardly suited for anything but some paradise (if it could be found) with evil carefully fenced out from all intrusion. Such ideas would condemn every book written in defence of Christianity itself, if this suppose a knowledge of what is said against it. But they are as well suited for an entrenchment to keep in error as to keep in truth,—to keep out truth as to keep out error. For such persons the apostle's "prove all things" must be too lax, too dangerous; or it must be intended for some special safe class who are to be the custodians of others, but who unfortunately are not indicated. *Their* rules would evidently, with slight alteration, suit every kind of heresy under the sun, while Christianity under them would become a mere hot-house plant, to which a breath of cold outside air were almost fatal.

God forbid that I should say a word to induce any to be really careless as to how they expose themselves to what are the attacks of Satan; but *carelessness is the very thing induced* by such contrivances for shutting him out: in proportion as we can suppose we have done this, we shall naturally—necessarily—be less upon our guard. *Where* does the soldier stand at ease most? In the battle-field? And shall we prosper by being ignorant—or being "*not* ignorant of his devices"?

Light, loose, careless dealing with Scripture is the trouble everywhere. Scripture is the pilgrim's guide-book, the soldier's manual, the furnishing of the man of God to every good work. But we must be pilgrims, soldiers, *men of God*. There is no help, no hope, but in this. And then Scripture, as interpreted by the Spirit to the honest heart, is amply



sufficient for all possible demands upon it. Let us trust it, not be afraid for it.

The unreasoning cry of "heresy" has for years been used to terrorize the souls of those who, if any, should have been God's freemen. They have been made afraid to look at the word of God for themselves, apart from the guidance of some recognized interpreter; and *there* there must be no question. People have been cut off as heretics for putting forth that which in a "believer knowing no more" would not have excluded him from fellowship; and again, because they have put upon paper what they might have held privately, or talked about here and there to others, without such action following! To *publish* what they held was to form a party by it, it was said, and a man became a heretic by this.

We have seen already all that Scripture has to say of heresy, and any one that will can judge. What I urge now is how, of necessity, this view and treatment of it must act to hinder and limit the Spirit of God, and therefore to stop all progress in the knowledge of divine truth. The only safe thing becomes to reiterate the old truths in the old formula; or if there is to be development, this must be justified, if possible, as a development of human standards, not fresh truth from the divine. The Christian gathering *becomes* thus a sect, or (according to the Scripture use of the word) really a heresy—a school of doctrine. The spring of living water is exchanged for the cistern or the pool: it will be well if it do not become, in the end, a marsh.

Again, the Lord's commendation of Philadelphia must be heard here. "Thou hast kept My word" implies, for all who are to receive it, that they allow

none to rob them of their right, which is their responsibility, of knowing for themselves what Christ's word is. The apostle's "prove all things" applies to us all individually, and we cannot commit this proving to the hands of others. No assembly of men, whatever its Christian character, can be permitted to decide for us between heresy and Christian truth. "My sheep hear My voice" is too precious a privilege, too absolute a characteristic of the people of Christ, to permit it to be taken from us under any plea or pretext whatever.

Have I any truth that I believe in my heart to be such,—the people of Christ have a right to claim it from me. If I have any, I have it in trust to communicate to others. That done, it is for them to say whether they can receive it as such: and here comes in the opportunity for all that help which we can give each other by brotherly conference and free discussion, which these ready charges of heresy tend to make impracticable. If there be nothing that subverts fundamental truth, there is nothing to hinder the freest and widest circulation of all that can be said about it; and the more fully this is done, the sooner will that which is of God be sifted from error, and the honest-hearted find what He has for them in it. Exercise as to the Word will accomplish for us the more intelligent possession of what we had before, even if no fresh truth result from the sifting.

F. W. G.

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A MAN may say, What harm is there in the well-watered plains of Jordan? are they not the gift of Providence? I answer, the devil has planted Sodom in the midst of them.

J. N. D.

## “THE LORD’S SUPPER.”

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**I**F we were to admit that any passage found in the New Testament could be inapplicable to the condition of things now ruling, we should at first sight say that this 1 Cor. xi. 18-22, was such an one.

In Corinth license apparently ran riot. All soberness; all sense of what was becoming or proper seems to have been lost. The Lord’s Supper had degenerated into a common meal, or rather each one took by himself his own supper with his own little company. It is true they had not yet separated from one another. They still came “together into one place,” but being in that one place, the internal discord that was amongst them found expression, apparently, in little knots or cliques, partaking of their own supper together; and some were filled to repletion, whilst others were hungry. This was *not* to eat the Lord’s Supper at all. They must have lost all sense of what that most blessed feast really was, and needed indeed to be fed with “milk,” and not with “meat,” for still were they unable to bear it.

But how different it is with us. Where will you find one “drunken” at the Lord’s table? Where will you find any who go there with the direct object of satisfying physical hunger? Surely, most surely, such things do not exist at all. What can exceed the decency and order with which we partake of that Supper? Admirably suited to the Corinthians,—with their so recent deliverance from the disorders of heathendom, which still, however, clung to them, it can surely have no bearing on ourselves, with our

centuries of christian training. Hence, have we not here one scripture which cannot directly apply to days so different?

Emphatically no. Of no single word of God can this be spoken. The "man of God" in every age needs every letter; and were but one jot or tittle lacking, he would be so distinctly the loser that he would fail of being perfect to just that extent (2 Tim. iii). Nay further, as one ponders this most precious portion, one comes to believe, far from not applying, that it is peculiarly applicable to the day in which our lot is cast. - That we peculiarly need its "doctrine, its reproof, its correction, its instruction in righteousness."

For what was the root that produced this evil fruit of practical profanity? This shocking lack of reverence at that holy Supper? This selfish indifference to one another? These cliques and parties? *Carnality*. The Corinthians "walked as men." They looked at everything from a fleshly, carnal standpoint. Thus the supper had lost its character and confusion followed.

Now, is this root absolutely non-existent to-day? Is there no carnality in the Church of God? Have Christians ceased to walk as men? Are there no evidences of it in parties, cliques, sects, divisions everywhere? Or is it indeed a day of superabounding carnality and worldliness, with all their attendant train of consequent evils. To ask such questions is to answer them, and at once then this blessed scripture is found instinct with divine life in its appropriateness and its applicability to the present time. Our very "order," of which we boast, may be the cover for the disorder spoken of—our very "de-

“decency” a cloak for the selfish, cold indifference here rebuked.

Is it not true? Can not Christians gather together even “in one place,” with no real sense of the sweet story the bread and the wine tell? Deaf to the divine music of the words “for you?” Untouched by the infinite depth of affection that is brought so tenderly before the heart and mind in broken bread and poured-out wine? Oh, the miserable “decency” with which the bread is broken, without a tear or sigh;—the wretched “order” with which the cup is drunk, with no responsive burst of genuine affection, that finds its necessary vent in melody of praise! Yes, order has itself indeed become disorder with us, if the whole being be not moved, the affections be not all awake, the emotions of the soul be not all astir. We have lapsed into Corinthian carnality, indifference, apathy, and need exactly the remedy they needed. Beloved, if we can sit here unmoved, we are as they, even though none are “hungry,” none “drunken.”

The remedy that the apostle applies is a very simple, but a very sweet one. A repetition of the primal institution of that blessed Supper, every detail of which is here given in direct view of the disease it is intended to heal.

So, as we full deeply need the healing, let us meditate on these details in dependence upon Him who alone can make such meditation effective—Him who is still Jehovah Ropheka, the Lord who healeth thee.

“For I have received of the Lord Jesus that which also I delivered unto you.” A preface of immense importance for us. Direct from the eternal Fountain of love and light comes this sweet and refreshing rill

of living water, uncontaminated and undiluted by the human channel through which it comes. Nothing has been added to it; no single syllable is the result of those human traditions which were then fast clustering round and obscuring the truth of the Gospel. Too reverend, too heartily under the clean and holy fear of the Lord is the apostle to attempt to embellish or improve upon the words He gives. That which he has received, and only that which he has received, does he deliver to us. Every syllable of it is absolutely divine. It is the voice—they are practically the words of "the Lord Jesus."

Nor, on the other hand, has aught been diminished from it. Nothing has been held back. *All* that he has received has he delivered unto us. He, dear needy saint as he was, doubtless partook of the comfort of the words he gave. Drank deeply in his own spirit of the spring he passed on to others, but without diminishing from it at all. As with the widow's cruse of oil no such drawing from it could lessen it one drop. Forth it flows to us with all the volume and strength of the true Source whence it comes. That which he delivers to us, is exactly that, and all that which he has received.

"That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread and when He had given thanks, He break it and said, take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of me." *The Lord Jesus*—mark well the dignity of that holy Person who is the one actor in this touching scene. It is the Lord who of old was known as Jehovah, but now, as very near to us, a man with the human name "Jesus." Precious combination; the Lord Jesus—Jehovah the Saviour. So was He

divinely named at His birth, “for He shall save His people from their sins.” \*

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\* But yet no prophecy had marked Him out by this name “Jesus.” Quite the contrary, another name altogether had been provided for Him by the spirit of prophecy. Had it not been written, “Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call His name *Emanuel*,” that is, “God with us,” and yet when He comes He is not called Emanuel at all. Is it not strange that the historian should direct our attention to this very prophecy, in the same breath that he apparently nullifies that prophecy? A fine opportunity this for logical infidelity. The Virgin’s Son was to be called Emanuel. Here is one not called Emanuel, but Jesus,—therefore He, at least, cannot be the Virgin’s Son! But blessed be God, we have learned somewhat of the pitiful shallowness of infidelity, and to hail with delight the “inconsistencies” she points out to us in our treasure of God’s word, knowing full well that they cover holy beauties, hidden only to her own blindness.

Four thousand long weary years had passed since that promise of, and to, the woman’s Seed among the scenes of ruin and sorrow in Eden. Generation had followed generation, but no “Saviour” had appeared. Not one son had been born but soon gave sorrowful proof of his *needing*, rather than *being* a Saviour. That first disappointment of Eve in *her* first-born had been repeated a myriad times; until “How can he be clean that is born of woman?” was a question to which there was no answer. A Saviour there was *none*. Now then, if a babe can be truly divinely called “Saviour,” is it not evident that he must differ as light from darkness, from all others of all ages? Yea, whilst “with us” indeed, must He not be more and far other, than any of us—in a word—*God*? Most surely. Hence He that is, in very truth called Jesus, *must be* “God with us” or Emanuel! That is, in thus calling Him Jesus, the prophecy was most beautifully perfectly fulfilled in the truest, deepest way. “With us,” born of a woman, but not of us, is Jesus. “Unclean! Unclean!” had been the cry for four thousand years over everything of woman born, but now the “due time” has come and here is one “a holy thing.” A unique word applied to a unique object. For not merely innocent, mark, is that tender babe. Adam was

Such being the glorious Person, the time, the occasion is next brought before us. "The same night on which he was betrayed." It was night,—

"When all around Him joined  
To cast their darkest shadows  
Across His holy mind;"—

that in Eden. He knew no evil there nor was there that, on the other hand, in him which rejected evil; thus he was not holy, but innocent. But here was Something to be born of woman, who by the intrinsic essence of His own spotless character, should reject and repel every touch of defilement in her of whom He should be born, hence rightly called "That holy thing." Emmanuel! God with us! Jesus! Saviour!

And how perfect a proof, how satisfactory an assurance to simple human *reason*—ordinary common sense as men speak—have we here to the divinity of the whole Gospel. The birth of Jesus was either natural or supernatural. If the former, then must there have been an awful conspiracy of lying and fraud, to make His birth fit in with the prophecy of old. The narrator, here in Matthew would give, in this case, full expression to that diabolical, vile conspiracy, in calling our attention to the prophecy, the fulfillment of which the conspirators purpose to claim; and yet again, mark it well, the simplest most direct part of that prophecy—that which would have caused no strain on the credulity of the world, the name of the child, *is not even pretended to be fulfilled at all!* Would not "fraud" have hastened to secure this easy proof at least, and calling him Emanuel, removed a stumbling block in the way of the acceptance of the story? Would "fraud" thus have given another name altogether? To believe this,—to believe that conspiracy would naturally, carefully, intelligently call our attention to its own inconsistency, to a discrepancy on the very surface, is beyond the power of human reason to accept! It would be a miracle in itself. Hence only the other alternative remains. The birth of Jesus must be supernatural; and His name, the very human name of Jesus, carries with it the perfect proof of His divinity, as does every breath, every thought, every act of this blessed Man. Faith thus ever puts her foot on the solid rock of reasonable truth, and leaves to the folly of unbelief and infidelity, the muddy quicksands of irrational and childish credulity.



the very night in which—not His enemies only vented all their bitterness upon Him, but he who had “eaten bread” with Him, now “lifted up his heel against” Him. It was *then*, when His heart was suffering most acutely from the treason of a disciple, that he gave the most pathetic, tender evidence of His unquenchable love, in seeking to keep the memory of Himself before disciples. He cares for our thoughts; and in that hour, when every evil was abroad in the darkness, when every form of awful suffering was gathering as clouds from every quarter, to break in concentrated tempests upon Him, not for Himself was His care, but (let each saint confess) for my thoughts, my memory, my heart! It was then He placed, in this Supper, that monument of His love that has remained ever since.

Of another night, long centuries before, it had been said, “It is a night much to be remembered.” Then again the “east wind” was about to blow; a lamb was dying; judgment was abroad in the darkness, and soon a great and bitter cry, that spoke of the stricken first-born in every Egyptian house, was to ring through that darkness. Now, on this later night, no guilty child of man is stricken, but *His* solemn cry alone was soon to be heard, and to express the agony of a holy One enduring judgment infinite in fearful loneliness. This “night in which He was betrayed” precedes and ushers in that awful judgment scene; and *then*, with all the mighty strength of such tender associations, before is heard the roar of the fast-coming storm that shall break upon Him,—in the one moment of peace ere the betrayer’s work comes to issue,—*then* He says, “Oh, my beloved, remember Me!” It is a night much to be remembered. Get these memories in the heart, and let carnality and all its attendant train of evils stand, if it can.

F. C. J.

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**CURRENT EVENTS.**  
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## TURKISH OUTRAGES IN ARMENIA—THE EASTERN QUESTION.

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**I**N our previous paper we spoke of the threatening condition of affairs in the East, and how, even from a human point of view, war seems inevitable. Since then nothing has transpired to relieve the strain—quite the reverse; so that the new year has opened with war possibilities in almost every quarter of the globe: the misunderstandings of England and the United States; England and Germany, with France and Russia as possible allies; Cuba's continued fight for separation from Spain; the perpetual unrest in the South American republics:—all these show how vain is the thought of universal peace, as man now is.

Even if the threatenings of war do not materialize; even if much has been exaggerated by the papers,—ever ready for sensation,—does it not all show the *desire*, the expectation of the world for war? We know, for Scripture tells us, what the heart of the natural man is; and “who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?” Man's heart is full of murder and hatred; it is selfish and violent; and until born again we can expect nothing but evil from it.

The world-wide disturbance has drawn the attention somewhat from the East; but further news confirms all that had been previously said of the havoc wrought in Armenia. We pass, however, from the page of present history, as it is being written, in

darker and darker lines, to that of prophecy in the inspired word of God. which foretold all this, and much more; and which, beyond the dark, shows the light of a "morning without clouds" soon to dawn upon this world. Surely every godly, thoughtful mind will turn from the dark and unsettled present to the bright future that lies beyond. How and when is the era of peace to begin?

Our first answer has already been given: *not* by the gradual spread of the gospel, and the corresponding uplifting of the nations of the world. We might as well expect to see the sinner gradually improve until his nature is changed, as to expect the same in the world. It is strange that those who are clear enough as to immediate conversion, the necessity for regeneration, etc., should be believers in an opposite doctrine when conversion on a larger scale is the subject. No, the coming of the Lord is the proper and only hope of the Church—to take His beloved people out of the world, to be forever with Himself.

When the Church is thus taken up, there will be left behind a vast mass of profession which will soon cast off even the name of Christian. "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. ii. 10). Evidently from this mass there is no hope for the regeneration of the world, only the proof that it is ripe for judgment—a judgment which takes place "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. i. 7, 8).

What we are to expect, then, after the taking up of the Church, is a period of confusion, apostasy, and

violence, closed only by the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ in judgment, who will then set up His kingdom in power, and all the blessed fruits of the millennial reign will be manifest. "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. . . . For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor ever shall be. . . . Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened. . . . And *then* shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. xxiv. 7, 8, 21, 29, 30). "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him; and all the kindreds of the earth (tribes of the land, *Gk.*) shall wail because of Him" (Rev. i. 7).

Thus will the events of the last days be introduced. It is a scene of awful judgment inflicted upon enemies by the Lord in person. (See, also, Rev. xix. 11-21.) "Clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne. A fire goeth before Him, and burneth up His enemies round about" (Ps. xcvii. 2, 3). "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies. . . . Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Ps. xlv. 3-6).

As to the results of these judgments and the glories of the Lord's kingdom, Scripture is beautifully explicit. "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In His days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth" (Ps. lxxii. 6, 7). "With righteousness shall He judge the poor, . . . and He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked. . . . The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid. . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. xi. 4, 6, 9). "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. . . . The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God" (Isa. xxxv. 1, 2).

But we must turn from the fascination of quoting these precious scriptures to fill in a few details, for which we trust the reader is now prepared, and which, drawn from the same inspired source, give us a complete view of what shall take place on the earth in the last days.

The first important point of detail is that this kingdom of Christ on earth will be at Jerusalem, with Israel as His chosen people. "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion" (Ps. ii. 6). "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, . . . the city of the great King" (Ps. xlviii. 2). "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and

the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isa. ii. 3). This will take place after Israel has been scattered as a nation, and then recovered. "In that day, saith the Lord, I will assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; and I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation; and the Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever" (Mic. iv. 6, 7). See, also, Isa. xi. 10-16; Ezek. xxxvi. 24, etc.

But we find from the prophecies as to the last days, that only a remnant will be faithful, while the mass of the nation, even after the restoration to the land, will abide in unbelief, even while they have the temple and their religious worship. It is this apostasy of the mass of the nation which opens the way for their reception of the antichrist—the man of sin, the false prophet, who comes in his own name (2 Thess. ii. 3-10; Rev. xiii. 11-18; John v. 43.) It is the persecution of the antichrist and his followers that calls forth the prayers and causes the exercises of the remnant who do turn to God, so frequently before us in the book of Psalms (Ps. x., xi., xii., etc.), and which is terminated by the bright appearing of the Lord to judge for the meek, and to deliver them from the oppressor, as we have already seen.

This, in briefest outline, is what the prophetic word puts before us. The reader is earnestly requested to examine the subject at length,\* and to

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\* Elementary instruction on the subject will be found in "Papers on the Lord's Coming," and other excellent tracts; while more extended discussion will be found in "Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects," to be had of the publishers of this magazine.

prove the truth of what we have said. It is a matter of deepest interest to us that the beginnings of this are already taking place. The Jews are returning in great numbers, and, alas! in dark unbelief, to their land. The hatred of them in Russia and Germany is too well known to need more than a passing allusion; while the possibility of their national rehabilitation is being discussed by men who know little of and care less for prophecy. We need hardly say that the longing for their "pleasant land" is deep in the hearts of multitudes, and their faces are "toward Jerusalem." Even the wealthy,—and the wealth of the world is largely in Hebrew hands,—if not personally desirous of going there, have a national pride, and would liberally aid the returning multitudes; while the nations of Europe, in hatred or love, would hasten their departure from their midst as in Egypt's day of old. (Isaiah, eighteenth and sixtieth chapters.)

Meanwhile Turkey's hold is fast relaxing; and in the speedy dismemberment of that empire, what is more likely, even to the man of the world, than that the Jews should come into their own again? All seems to hang upon a thread which, when it snaps, is well-nigh sure to bring about what we have been considering. And when we turn to the sure word of prophecy, we see, not speculation, but divine certainty, as to the facts of the future. As to the *manner* of their introduction, we cannot dogmatize; as to the facts, they are in the eternal word of God.

But, beloved fellow-Christian, where shall we be when these events take place?—toiling, suffering on the earth? Nay, but in that glory *with* our blessed Lord, for whom we wait (1 Thess. i. 9, 10). Before He lets loose His judgments, and resumes definite

dealings with His earthly people the Jews (enemies for our sakes—Rom. xi. 28), the Church will have been caught away, forever with and like the Lord. How bright the prospect! and as we look forward to it, and think, too, of a groaning earth, may not each heart cry, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus”?

It remains for us to see the place the nations occupy in the page of prophecy, and to gather from that inspired source, light to examine the events now happening. We offer no apology for treating in an elementary way these most important themes. They are discussed primarily for the sake of those unacquainted with prophetic truth, while the most deeply-taught ever delight to have their minds turned afresh to God’s precious truth.

(To be continued.)

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## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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**QUES. 4.**—Reading Question No. 19 and Answer, in Vol. XIII., No. 11, **HELP AND FOOD**, as remarked, one of the swords was used by Peter to cut off the *ear* of Malchus, *a servant of the high-priest*. May this not speak of the judgment which strikes nationally at Israel’s hearing, while the other sword might speak of the sword of the Spirit? To be sure, the Lord in mercy heals immediately, and thereby rebukes man’s proneness to take vengeance; but may not this healing be prophetic of Israel’s restoration? The sword of vengeance was to be put up because “vengeance is mine, saith the Lord.” It is to be used, though, by the Lord in due time, while meantime we fight the good fight of faith with the sword of the Spirit; “it is enough.” Our dear Lord’s reply would not seem to conflict with this thought.

**ANS.**—While the sword does speak of vengeance and self-protection, we do not see how the other sword could speak of the Spirit, for our Lord’s words as to *both* were, “They that take the sword shall perish with the sword,” which certainly could not refer to what is the weapon of the people of God. We



think that a careful examination of the context will confirm the meaning given in a former answer. Another brother asks if there "may not be reference to a future dispensation, when the sword shall be unsheathed?" Notice, however, it is the present dispensation when our Lord is absent, not a future when *He* will whet His sword.

QUES. 5.—Ought not *supreme* worship to be offered to God the Father by the Holy Spirit in the name of Jesus Christ the Son? Need this interfere with our worship of Christ as our Lord and Head? Some maintain that *all* worship should be to our Lord; but if we stand in Him—He being our great High-Priest—and are brought into the holiest through Him, should not our supreme worship be to Him into whose presence we are thus brought?

ANS.—"That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him" (John v. 23). "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father; but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (1 John ii. 23). "And hath given Him a name that is above every name; that at the name of *Jesus* every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the *glory of God the Father*" (Phil. ii. 9, 10). "And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as one dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last" (Rev. i. 17). "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, *and unto the Lamb* for ever and ever (Rev. v. 13).

We confess, the precious Scriptures on this theme are so attractive, that we are tempted to go on quoting them in answer to the above question; and surely they are an all-sufficient answer. We merely point out a few of the salient features of these Scriptures. Coördination of the Son with the Father is most prominent; so much so, that we are told one cannot have the Father who denies the Son. But lest it should be said this is only the Son as divine, we have in Philippians the human, humiliation-name of the blessed Lord as that at which every knee shall bow. And this is what gives highest glory to God the Father. Do we want to honor the Father? It is only to be done by giving equal honor to the Son.

So, in the scene in glory, when the "Lamb as it had been slain" is presented, all heaven—yea, all creation—unites in ascribing the identical honor and glory to Him as to the Father. And so will it be throughout eternity.

The grave error underlying the question (and such we do not hesitate to declare it to be) springs from unscriptural speculations as to the person of our adorable Lord. That He has two *natures* is plain from very many scriptures. "The Word was God; the Word was made flesh" (John i. 1, 14). But that there is but *one Person* is equally clear; and that Person is God. That He is man too, in infinite grace, we know. But let us never allow in our thoughts the slightest cloud upon His Divine Glory. Mysteries there are here, but holy mysteries, before which we bow in the most absolute worship. We have no hesitation in saying that a prying into things which, from their very nature, are beyond our finite comprehension, is a sure way to open the door to blasphemous denial of Christ. We speak strongly, for the subject demands it. We note with sorrow the question, and trust that the writer will be delivered from the snare into which, from the tone of his question, we fear he has fallen.

See what it does. We have no Christ as the object of worship. The Romanist may speak of different grades of worship for angels, Mary, God—in ascending grades;—but if such unholy reasoning is to be applied to Christ, we simply say we have no Christ to worship. He is not God—only an exalted man.

Giving Christ the place which Scripture gives Him, so far from derogating from the Father's glory, and lessening our worship of Him, does but set us at liberty in the Father's presence.

Nor do thoughts like these interfere in the least with the clearest apprehension of the work, offices, and character of our blessed Lord. Beloved, can we contemplate Him in *any way*—the lowly man of sorrows, walking meekly the path of obedience; the forsaken one, made sin for us on the cross; the High-Priest, who has opened the way for us into the Holiest;—can we see Him in any of these characters without falling at His feet, and, with Thomas, saying, "My Lord and my God?"

We would most earnestly press upon beloved brethren the immense importance of this subject. We are custodians, down here, of our Lord's honor. We are bearing the ark through the wilderness. Let us remember, it was *all gold* outside, and had a covering all of blue upon it.

## A DIVINE MOVEMENT, AND OUR PATH WITH GOD TO-DAY.

(Continued from page 40.)

### 10. THE ASSEMBLY, IN ITS PRACTICAL WORKING.

WE come now to consider the assembly itself in its living operation,—as filling (in the power of the Spirit, as alone it can) the place for which God designed it. This place it must, of course, fill, in order to satisfy and to be practically owned of Him; and the ruin of the Church, which all that have the mind of God must acknowledge, has not lowered His standard for it, nor set aside one word that has gone out of His lips. Gracious too, He is, and will be, or who could stand before Him? but this does not imply the toleration of even the least departure from His word, which would mean the giving up of His holiness and truth, and of His love itself.

That the Church has failed, miserably failed, is a solemn truth indeed; and this failure has altered largely the circumstances in which we are placed to-day, and encompassed our path with difficulties, while it has deprived us largely of the help that we should have gained from one another. But it compels no one of us to disobedience to the least word that God has spoken, nor deprives us of either the wisdom or power necessary to “stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.” Difficulties are only means for us of realizing the more what He is for us: as the spies said of the gigantic enemies that Israel would be called to encounter in taking possession of the land that had been promised them, “they shall be bread to us”: for faith is strengthened by

those demands upon it which only expose the weakness and bankruptcy of unbelief.

We are to look at the assembly, then, according to the character which the word of God has given it, quite unhindered by any reasonings derived from changed conditions of the time in which we live. And the assembly of which we are now to speak is not the Church of God at large, but the local assembly: which in God's thought, however, is that which represents it in the locality, being those who alone can actually *assemble*, the practical gathering together of the members of Christ as such.

These members, were they gathered all together, would show us the whole assembly as the body of Christ, and thus each assembly is the body of Christ in the place in which it is: a divinely-constructed organization, that is:—the only organization God ever owns as of Him, and all-sufficient to give us as Christians all that can be rightly expected or desired in organization.

Of this, more presently: the first thing we have to notice now is the individual members, who are spoken of individually in such terms as the whole body is. That is to say, as the whole body is joined together and united to the Head by the one Spirit which pervades it all, and brings every member into living and practical relation with every other and with Christ,—so each individual also is in his own person a picture of the whole. Indwelt of the Holy Ghost, “he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit,” with this effect, that “*your bodies* are the members of Christ” (1 Cor. vi. 15, 17): each and the whole of every individual belongs to Christ, and there is no one, and no part of any one, permitted to be secular or self-controlled.

Thus not only is the white garment of practical righteousness to cover us completely, but the "ribband of blue," the heavenly color, is to be seen upon the borders of it, *just where it comes in contact with the earth* (Num. xv. 38).

If we are not thus, in the sincere intent and purpose of our hearts, recognizing our whole lives as to be lived for Him,—our every faculty of mind and body to be His,—ourselves taken out of the world by sanctification to Himself, to be sent into it again as His representatives (John xvii. 16-18),—then the moral basis of all right fellowship is lacking with us,—of fellowship with Himself, and necessarily with one another. In this case we do not and cannot fill our places in the assembly, however much we take part with the rest in the meetings of His people: for the place is essentially a spiritual one, and can only be spiritually filled.

Let us remind ourselves that there is nothing that is merely negative in our lives and ways, but that our Lord's words are true in particular as in general, that "he that is not with Me is against Me." If in any one habit or practice of our lives we are not with Him, we are in that respect against Him. We are in the miserable condition thus of being divided against ourselves, and as a consequence shall find a loss of vigor and competency, a lack of ability to make progress in the things of God, and even to stand in the presence of the enemy. It is as to things that (abstractly considered) were lawful enough, that the apostle marks off things that were "not expedient"; and immediately he adds, as applying to these: "all things are lawful for me; *but I will not be brought under the power of any*" (1 Cor. vi. 12). *Lawful things*

might thus develop a power to which even such an one as he might have cause to fear becoming captive.

Now *here* begins the question of fellowship with one another. Are we in true and whole-hearted fellowship with Christ ourselves? Have we no fence fencing Him off from certain portions of our lives? Has obedience with us no secret limitations? Have we no division between mine and Thine with Him, but do we know the blessedness of realizing that to have all ours His, is the only way ourselves to enjoy it and find satisfying sweetness in it?

Thus indeed will our bodies be the members of Christ. Our hands will be for His work, our feet for His errands, our lips for His communications and His praise. Our entire lives will be the expression of communion.

Now, whatever shortcoming we may have to confess in actual attainment, this, and nothing less than this, must be our honest desire and aim, or how can there be a walk with God? for how can He consent to other terms than these? would it be for His glory or our good, that He should do so?

Think, then, of what is implied in the "body of Christ," where the Spirit of Christ links all together in harmonious subjection to the will of the Head, and so in a living unity of the members with one another. And this is plainly the practical "unity of the Spirit" which the apostle bids us to "endeavor to keep." It is certainly not the unity of the body simply that he means; but it is assuredly the unity of that which *makes* it in any proper sense the body—the body fitted to Christ the Head. And this is what is to be seen in the assembly of God, if this is to fulfill its proper character,—a living, speaking,

working unity of obedience, inspired by devoted love. What a testimony to Him of "two or three" gathered together in this spirit! and it was thus at the beginning, when it could be said that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that *ought of the things that he possessed was his own*": the true spirit at all times, whatever may be the difference as to the manner of its expression.

Where something like this is not, already men have "their own things" to seek, and "not the things of Jesus Christ"; the various interests lead in various ways, the wisdom of the world comes in to secure them, and the door is opened for every kind of departure. It is only the sense of what is ours in Christ, where all have all in common, and the joy is but increased by sharing it with others,—ours, where all abides and no room is left for the cares which make man a weary worker for himself, the hardest of masters: it is only here that the heart is fenced from the close-surrounding evil, and fenced in for flower and fruit for Him who looks to find in us "the travail of His soul." Thus we may again see why Philadelphians are emphasized as those that keep Christ's word. Communion can only exist where the heart is held by the revelations of God's grace; and the soul that is *kept* in communion is that which is sustained by the fresh manna, gathered every day.

The *reading-meetings* are thus a great test of the state of an assembly; for it is there, if things be right, that the knowledge gathered in whatever way is tested and made sure by that personal conference and comparison which help so largely in making it the

realized possession of the soul. Here we may learn, too, if there be the freedom and candor of brotherly love, the needs to which the truth ministers, and the ability to use it for real edification. It is of immense value to test in this way how far we have got the truth, while by this means what has been learned by each is thrown into the common fund, to enrich the whole. Those who know least would be surprised to realize how much the questions suggested by their own need may help in various ways the very people who answer them. And this is only one of the many modes in which the waterer is watered—the minister is ministered to.

The reading-meeting is never, therefore, made needless or of little value by whatever multiplicity there may be of more detailed and connected teaching. Nay, all this creates a special need for the reading-meeting, in order that the food laid before the whole may be individually digested and assimilated. Here, however, any lack of nearness to and confidence in one another will be surely felt as a hindrance, and need of another sort manifested to those who have eyes to see.

“The children of this world are” indeed “wiser in their generation than the children of light.” Persons brought into the inheritance together of large worldly possessions would soon realize the necessity of becoming acquainted with what they had so much personal interest in. How few are there who, in the case of spiritual wealth which God has made their own, have boldness and earnestness to lay hold of what is theirs by any means available to them! When, over sixty years ago, the Spirit of God began to move freshly in the hearts of His people to recover



them to one another and revive the almost lost idea of the assembly of God, the reading-meetings were a marked and prominent sign of the awakened interest in His word, and that the people of God as such were awaking to claim for themselves their portion in it. No class of men could be allowed, however gifted, however educated and sanctioned by the mass, to stand between their souls and the possession of what was needed alike by all and designed of God for all. Now, alas, the decay of the reading-meeting means nothing else but the subsiding of that eager enthusiasm for the truth that then was, the lessened consciousness of the Spirit of God, in each and all His own, to give each for himself the power to acquire possession. The flood-tide is gone, and the diminished stream begins to confine itself to the old channels.

We need to proclaim again that God never designed "theology" to be for a class of theologians, but all the treasures of His word to be for all His people,—not a thing in it to be hidden, save from the eyes of the careless and indifferent, those who are willing to exchange their heavenly birthright for a mess of the world's pottage. We need once more to assert that teachers are only a pledge, on God's part, of His eagerness to have *all to know*,—*not* that He has restricted to these the possession of any kind of spiritual knowledge. Teachers are only to show that there, in the living fount from which they drew, is the living water for all, as free for others as for themselves. They are only the truth of God's word made to stand out in blazon before the eyes of those who have not yet found it there where He has put it for them, and with this for a motto of encouragement to

those who have faith in a God that cannot lie :—  
“*Every one* that seeketh, findeth.”

The success of teachers is shown by their ability to make others independent of them; when men say to them as the Samaritans to the woman of Sychar, “Now we believe, *not* because of thy saying”; and in proportion as the Church of God by their means is made to realize its ability for self-edification. As the apostle says that Christ has given gifts unto men,—“some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints *unto* the work of ministry, *unto* the edification of the body of Christ, until we all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. iv. 11-13). That is, the “work of ministry”—and this is left open to the largest construction—is what the saints as a whole are to be perfected unto. Every saint is free to “covet earnestly the best gifts” (1 Cor. xii. 31), and responsible to use all the ability that he has, of whatever kind, to enrich others with it. “The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to *profit withal*” (verse 7); and if there are special evangelists, all are free and called upon, each in his measure, to evangelize; if there are special teachers, all are free and responsible to communicate to others what God has given them of His truth. Love to each other, love to souls, is to have liberty and be encouraged everywhere.

How blessed would be an assembly of saints in this condition! every one realizing that the fullness of all spiritual knowledge was open to him to enjoy,—the best gifts were his to covet,—that he was, by

the simple wondrous fact of his endowment with the Spirit, the ordained minister of Christ to the world, the ordained servant and helper of his brethren ! How intolerable is the thought of class restrictions to limit and hinder the grace of God in His people ! yet, alas, into which, sensibly or insensibly, they so readily sink down ! The development of all gift is necessarily hindered by it ; and this is largely the reason why so few among us are going forth to labor in the ample fields on every side, and why the gatherings develop so little strength and stability. We need not *talk* about a "laity," to *have* one. Let God's people sink down into indolent acquiescence in their inability for their spiritual privileges, and little gift of any kind is likely to develop among them. Those that can be fed only with the spoon are infants or invalids.

On the other hand, where spiritual life is strongest we shall be most fully conscious of our need of one another. For spiritual feebleness means always a strong world-element, and occupations, aims, pleasures, in which as children of God, we can have no fellowship—can be no help to one another. Our spiritual links become proportionately theoretical, formal, sentimental. But where life is practical and earnest, its needs will be felt and the grace realized which has united us together. Life is, wherever we find it in nature, in conflict with death ; and organization, which is its constant accompaniment, is the embattlement of its forces against this. Nor is organization a sacrifice of individuality : every part of the body is distinct from the rest, has its own work and responsibility ; and only by maintaining this individuality can the welfare of the whole be maintained. Every one

has a place to fill that no other *can* fill: every one is necessary. Good it is to remember this, as to ourselves and as to every other. If we forget it, we cannot by this escape from the consequences.

F. W. G.

(*To be continued.*)

"LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS."

**T**HOUGH from its long-accustomed place  
We miss a dear, beloved face,  
That seemed replete with every grace,  
*Lord Jesus, Thou remainest.*

Though oft we dry the falling tears,  
Our hearts oft sick with anxious fears,  
Yet this sweet fact our spirit cheers,  
*Lord Jesus, Thou remainest.*

Should life look dark, drear *seem* our way,  
Hope o'er our future shed no ray,  
Yet *this* can turn e'en *night* to-day—  
*Lord Jesus, Thou remainest.*

When all seems changed and changing here,  
We turn to Thee without one fear,  
Thou Life and Rock—strong, steadfast, near;  
Yes, *Thou*, our life, *remainest.*

Remainest, Lord, our long-tried Friend,—  
Patient, unchanging, to the end.  
Father, our praises would ascend  
*To thee, for Thou remainest.*

Bravely we'll tread e'en lonesome ways;—  
Yes! and we'll sing glad songs of praise  
Though *all* else goes! The Best Friend stays  
*Whilst Thou, "The Truth," remainest.*

P. W.

## THE LORD'S SUPPER.

## THE BREAD.

**T**HUS being seated in spirit around our Lord Jesus in the light of the upper room, whilst outside in the congenial "night" the devil is leading his wretched tool Judas to betray Him, and all the powers of darkness are confederate with ungodly men against Him, we will feast.

And truly our board bears "royal dainties," if there be but a healthy appetite, and the hand be free to take what our divine Host shall give.

For now He takes bread, and let us hearken whilst He speaks: "This is my Body which is for you : this do in remembrance of Me."

With perfect divine wisdom is the emblem here chosen. We may feed upon it in our souls with ever-increasing delight and strengthening. 'Tis His holy Body that was, in the divine counsels of eternity, prepared for Him. In that sublime passage in Heb. x. we look upon a scene in which the Eternal Persons of the Trinity are the alone Actors. The altar of the tabernacle is smoking with victims ; and as each yields its life, the blessed Son looks, as it were, to see if any can give rest and satisfaction to the heart of His God. There is not one. Bullock, or goat, or lamb, give up their lives ; their blood is presented ; but God cannot *rest* in them. There is nothing in them to really satisfy His holiness. His heart is still barred from expressing the fullness of His love ; the veil is unrent ; the impassable barriers of His own holiness remain ; and in their utter inadequacy to admit His heart's desire in coming forth in the

fullness of His grace to a sinful world, God turns from them *unsatisfied*.

The holy One of God marks that inadequacy, and consequent dissatisfaction, and utters His thought thereupon: "Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not." What, then, can take their place? One and only One—Himself! As He, in that holy splendor of the glory of God, discerns the story that each ineffectual offering tells—that Himself, the only One, must take such form as shall admit of His suffering unto death; yea, a body must be prepared\* for Him;—and as He recognizes the awful sublime truth, He speaks: hark, my soul! not to poor angelic songs now, but to divine notes, that an opened ear may hear,—“Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God.” He shrinks not back from the infinite sacrifice, with all its sufferings. He presents Himself willingly, yea, with “*delight*,” to do His will; and to the altar goes the holy Victim. Love leads Him there—love, the cord that binds Him to its horns; and at last God's will *is* done. As the billows of His judgments roll over that holy Victim, all His holiness is satisfied, and Love may now have its way with sinners, unchal-

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\* The word “*prepared*” is not without its interest in this connection. We have already referred to the unique character of that holy Body—unlike, *in its absolute holiness*, any other; the same truth may now be inferred from the use of the word “*prepared*.” It seems ever to indicate a special purpose in view for which the object is exactly fitted. Thus, in the book of Jonah, great fish, gourd, worm, and east wind, are all “prepared” for specific purposes, and for nothing else. Thus too, in the New Testament, we have “Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, *prepared* for the devil and his angels”—for no other purpose, for no other race.”

lenged. Now must veil rend, and let God *out* to the world He loves—rend, and let repentant, blood-washed sinners in to the tender love of a God and Father. God rests at last. His will is done. The rent veil shows it. It is His *flesh*, the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Yea, hearken to its speech, ye who eat of this Bread! Not of love does it primarily speak, but of righteousness. It is the crushed and bruised grain that has passed under the weight of the mill-stones. "This is My body," He said, "which is for you." Our version inserts "broken," but not justifiably, I think; rather would "bruised" be the more scriptural word to apply, for "it pleased the Lord to bruise Him," whilst a bone was not to be broken. That is, evidently no human hand was to have any real part in taking away His life. He maintains the divine dignity of His person even in death; and in the sense of that dignity He Himself dismisses His spirit, as Matt. xxvii. 50 properly and literally reads. None did, or could, take it from Him. He laid down His life Himself. Capable of dying, that holy One was absolutely free from the claim of death—was not subject to death; for death is only consequent on sin; it is sin's wages, and came by it; hence man's rude hand must not break a bone, lest that death be attributed to that blow. Nay, our Bread is God-bruised only. O wondrous word! "*it pleased the LORD to BRUISE Him!*" Think of it as ye eat.

But once more, as we are feeding on the bread, let us "consider Him" of Whom it speaks. For the first time He is now alone, forsaken. All through His life, the beams of God's delight have rested on Him; even when "all forsook Him and fled," still

He was "not alone"; but now His God has forsaken Him, and for the only moment in the universe of time *He is alone*. Now we know that God is Light and God is Love; hence, if forsaken of God, He is of light bereft. Then is He, during those three hours on the cross (between the sixth and ninth hours), in awful darkness—darkness truly that "might be felt"; and who can tell how keenly felt, by that holy One, *alone* there! It is like the brass in the temple: none can measure its weight. Love too gone, wrath only remains, and those awful fires of God consume Him who is now in the place of sin, who is bearing sins. He *must* be now absolutely alone—where no mere creature ever did or could stand without falling.

It seems to be the one common characteristic of all creation that it can only be maintained by the constant upholding care of the Creator. *It cannot* be independent of Him for one instant, or there is some awful fall. In physical things this is true; by constant dependence is every living thing maintained. "He openeth His hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing." By no primeval law is the Sun upheld in his course, kept in his orbit, and daily set on his mission of benevolence. The Hand that made him alone keeps, moment by moment, or confusion and chaos would result instantly. For whilst we know but little of what preceded the creation of our own race, of the first beginning of evil, yet we do learn that grace, and grace alone, upheld even the angels in their places—those so upheld are the *elect* angels. Not an *angel* could stand alone. As to man, that truth has been too clearly shown; fall after fall has told it from Eden onwards, throughout the ages of time. Thus it is evident that no moral creature



with a will and intelligence ever maintains perfect integrity of character if left alone. He loses his place as quickly and naturally as a stone dropped from the hand falls to the earth. But here is One thus forsaken—heavy judgments bruising Him—thick darkness about Him—fires consuming Him—absolutely alone; but still, with infinite sublimity and perfection of holy character, He *stands*—maintains His absolute perfection as a man even there, and gives expression to those perfections in His justification of God: “Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.” Can judgment be eternal upon such an One? The fire has done its perfect work; sins, our sins, were upon Him, and those fires have consumed them; and lo, nothing but perfection is found! He has been looked upon as sin; and all God’s judgments passing, the Holy One in perfect beauty is seen, and He is “heard from the horns of the unicorns,” “heard for His piety.” Righteousness, even righteousness, now demands that the holy One be raised by Him Who was thus able to save Him out of death. (Heb. v.)

Yet once more, then, let us enjoy the Divine wisdom in the Lord’s taking the bread *first*. Is there any meaning, any beauty, in this order? Was it a matter of indifference whether wine preceded bread, or bread wine? An acquaintance, though it be indeed but superficial, with the glorious and perfect ways of that Divine One may still lead us to expect a meaning in everything He said or did—in the *place* He chose to say it, and in the *order*. Nothing is without its significance to an open ear. Not always may we be able to discern it. Dull and heavy are we still in these heavenly exercises; but it is in medi-

tation on such themes that the holy and gracious Spirit, the Comforter, leads us "into all truth." Under His guidance we walk in pleasant pastures, and our eyes open to ever-unfolding beauties, to which we had hitherto been blind. Thus, let us feel well assured that there is a depth of holy meaning and purpose in the order chosen by the Lord Jesus. *First*, the bread. What, then, is always first in the ways of God with man? *Righteousness*, and afterwards peace. As surely as, and for the same reason as, the Holy Spirit speaks of the name of the royal priest Melchizedek as being "first by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace," so must that which so clearly speaks of all the demands of righteousness fulfilled, come first. *First*, a solid foundation must be laid, in order that, in unshaken security, the edifice may rest upon it. *First*, everything must be *right*, in such sort as is fully consistent with the *Light* of God, in order that the *Love* of God may freely act. *First*, the Throne of God must be guarded, that it may not "shake" in showing mercy to the guilty. It is the mark of the "wisdom that is from above," that it is *first* pure; then peace happily follows. *First*, sins must have their just due; then may God press to Himself the penitent sinner with a holy kiss.

Thus shall we, if we listen intently, find this "bread" to be in sweet, if solemn, harmony with all this accord in the ways of God. It is His Body, bruised for us. Oh, how well and admirably chosen is the symbol! "Bread corn is bruised," says the prophet (Isa. xxviii. 28). Indeed it is; and until it *is* bruised, as we may say in a sense, "it abideth alone"; none may feed upon it. We may admire its

beauty as it waves like billows of gold in the autumn sunlight; but no food, no strengthening, do we get from it. Crush it between the millstones, grind it, bruise it, and so we shall eat of it; yes, and so shall it tell us of His body which is for us. Then, as we eat *first* the bread, are we called to remember the holy One of God bruised under the stroke of judgment; with reverend awe, and affections all astir, may we watch Him once more as He enters all alone into that cloud where no man could be. No Moses and Elias with Him now. It is still God's "beloved Son"; and indeed, *indeed* we "*hear Him*," as He cries, "Eli, Eli, lama Sabachthani." We feed;—this is indeed the staff of our life—this the power of God in the Gospel, the joyful boast of the apostle, and, in measure, of all saints; for "herein is the righteousness of God revealed;" and in the solemn silence of the Holiest of all, we eat the bread in remembrance of Him in perfect peace.

Let us further note, before closing our meditation on the bread, that it represents specifically His holy body which was bruised—not, therefore, the Church, which is also in another sense His body, but never bruised. The loaf upon our table is to bring to our minds His *human body*; and yet the oneness of all believers is evidenced by their partaking of the one loaf, as chap. x. 16 distinctly teaches: "For we being many, are one loaf, one body; *for we are all partakers of that one loaf.*" It is therefore distinctly the divinely-given privilege of every member of that mystic body, whether a babe, young man, or father,—irrespective of intelligence or attainment,—to partake of that "one loaf;" and, thus partaking, to show the oneness of all believers, who are as closely

united by the indwelling Spirit as are the members of the natural body. Thus the guests at this holy supper are divinely marked out.

F. C. J.

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### FRAGMENTS.

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“THE fear of reverence and of awe is pleasing to God. It is a tender fear; and the more we have of it, the less is it fear, because of the sweetness of the love that causes it. This fear and love are brothers. And therefore sure am I that he who loves fears, yet is not afraid. All other fear, though it may wear the garment of holiness, is a dangerous fear. Thus may we discern the good fear and the evil fear. The good fear makes us fly from all that is evil in the eyes of God, to cast ourselves into His arms, as a child will fly to his mother. With all our soul and all our desire shall we fly to Him, knowing our weakness and our great need, and knowing also His eternal tenderness and His blessed love, in Him alone seeking deliverance, cleaving to Him alone.”—*From the MS. of a Christian before the Reformation.*

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“AND the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man, and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian”—“But the Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison” (Gen. xxxix. 2, 21). What a contrast do these two verses present in the circumstances of Joseph! In the one, he is the head of the house of Potiphar—everything is intrusted to him; in the other, he is cast into prison under a false accusation, bitterly hated, and in danger of losing his

life. Yet all is well with him. Circumstances have changed, but the Lord has not changed; "the Lord was with Joseph"—in palace or prison, it matters little, since this was the case. And so, with us, our circumstances do not make so much difference after all. We can say, or rather remember, the words of Him who said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Sicknes or health, riches or poverty, joy or sorrow—they can only work for our good, if we are exercised aright by them. Let us learn the happy secret of which Paul was the possessor—"I have *learned*, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. . . . I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. iv. 11-13).

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THE patriarch was not drunk at the beginning, but he became a husbandman, planted a vineyard, and then drank of the wine. "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" the soul may indignantly reply!—but if the *hidden tempers* of the dog be allowed, his *active fury* will break out in time. "Walk in the Spirit,"—that is the divine security,— "and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." The holy, watchful habit of denying the flesh, its tempers and its lusts, will keep the appetite fresh and ready for the new and better wine; and into all this may the gentle and strong hand of the Spirit lead our souls daily!

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WHERE there is not the faith that keeps the soul on the 'promises, there is not the faith to keep it out of sin.

J. N. D.

## \* CURRENT EVENTS. \*

### TURKISH OUTRAGES IN ARMENIA—THE EASTERN QUESTION.

*(Continued from page 54.)*

WE conclude this series of brief papers on the Eastern Question by an inquiry into the position of the Gentile nations with reference to the great events which Scripture predicts. We may be sure that the occurrences which have of late transpired in the East should awaken interest in the teaching of Scripture on prophetic truth. We repeat that we have not the slightest power, nor the desire, to declare the time when all will take place. We are persuaded that this cannot be done.

Though by no means settled, the tendency seems to be toward an uneasy and temporary peace, with Russia occupying and controlling Armenia, and thus having still greater influence in Turkish affairs; while England, having publicly, through her government, confessed her impotency to rescue Armenia, is correspondingly weakened. This move, should it prove that the report is accurate, is very significant, when we remember the parties concerned. Its primary effect will be doubtless the maintenance of the status of affairs, but it increases the power and prestige of Russia, brings her a step nearer the object of her desire,—Constantinople,—and nearer, also, to the inevitable conflict with England and the other powers, should she lay her hand upon it. Thank God, we as Christians have no part in all the turmoil, save to walk quietly and firmly in the midst of it all, waiting for God's Son from heaven, meanwhile guided by the word of God as to our path, and as to the destiny of things around us.

To that word we now turn, to see the end as to the nations involved in the Eastern Question.

“When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel” (Deut. xxxii. 8). This passage shows the preëminence of Israel in the counsels of God from the beginning, as the centre, the head, of the nations. We see her as a nation delivered from the power of Egypt—the great world-power at that time; we see the nations of Canaan thrust out (for their sins) before them, that they might inherit the land; we see them protected from foreign incursion or delivered from the grasp of those who had taken them captive when they had departed from the Lord; we see them finally brought, under the warlike reign of David and the peaceable reign of Solomon, to a visible and glorious headship over the nations—a figure, and only that, of the glorious realities when the true King—David and Solomon—shall make the name of Israel synonymous with all that is righteous and blessed and glorious—preëminent among the nations.

The glory under Solomon was short-lived. A divided kingdom, idolatrous kings, an unrighteous nation—the people soon were ripe for judgment and rejection. The ten tribes were carried away by the Assyrians (2 Kings xvii. 6). The kingdom of Judah lingered a hundred and more years longer, to fall before the king of Babylon, who captured Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, and carried away king and people into captivity to Babylon (2 Kings xxv. 1–17). This closes Israel’s history as a *nation*, and marks the beginning of the “times of the Gentiles.”

When a remnant under Ezra and Nehemiah were restored to Jerusalem, it was under the protection of

Cyrus, king of Persia; and never since then has there been an independent Jewish nation. The temple was built, but there was no glory in it, and the presence of the Jews at Jerusalem was simply by permission of a Gentile power. Still unrepentant at heart, the guilty people reached the climax in the rejection of Christ; and soon after, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, and the rejection of the nation was more than ever manifested. Since that time, they have been "fugitives and vagabonds upon the earth," yet with life and identity spared, till that time when, brought to repentance and purged in the times of the great tribulation, the remnant will be restored and become a nation, the centre again of blessing for the nations during the millennium. This will mark the close of the "times of the Gentiles" (Luke xxi. 24).

The times of the Gentiles, then, is a distinct period, beginning with the rejection of the Jewish nation, and ending with their restoration, at the beginning of the millennium. We are living in that period. It may be roughly divided into three portions; first, from the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar to the destruction of that city by the Romans after the crucifixion of Christ; second, the period since then until the resumption of God's dealings with the Jews as a nation in the last days; third, the brief period of the last week of Daniel ix. 27,—the time of the revival of the Gentile power under the beast of Rev. xiii. These divisions are indicated in the 70 weeks of Daniel, beginning there, however, with the edict of Cyrus to rebuild Jerusalem (Dan. ix. 24-27). The cutting off of Messiah closed the sixty-ninth week; and the setting up of the abomination of desolation, with the attending tribulation, occurs during the last or seventieth week. Therefore, between the sixty-ninth and



seventieth weeks there is an interval, or break—the period of grace in which we live.

The first part of the times of the Gentiles was characterized by some reference to the Jewish nation—patient and forbearing mercy: the last part is brief, “for a short work will the Lord make upon the earth” (Rom. ix. 25), characterized by a resumption of dealing with the Jews and the satanic energy of the revived imperial power, coupled with the schemes of a Jewish antichrist at Jerusalem; the present portion is marked by the hindrance of lawlessness, ready to be developed as soon as the “Spirit and the bride” are removed (2 Thess. ii. 7, 8). It is a time of what is called progress, increase of knowledge, national individuality, coupled with a leading on to democratic imperialism, league of nations, etc.

Let us now turn to Scripture, and see what the course of the times of the Gentiles will be. Dan. ii. 31–45, Dan. vii., Rev. xiii., Rev. xvii., furnish us with material as to the general history of these times. All students of Scripture are agreed as to the first part of Daniel’s two visions of the image and of the beasts. [It is significant that the Gentile king should see the image of a man; the prophet of God, beasts of prey.] Briefly, the head of gold and the beast like a lion represent Gentile rule under Babylon and her king Nebuchadnezzar. “Thou art this head of gold”; the breast and arms of silver and the second beast like a bear show the Medo-Persian empire which succeeded to that of Babylon; the belly and thighs of brass and the third beast like a leopard, having four heads, give us the Greek empire under Alexander the Great, and the four kingdoms into which it was parted at his death; while in the legs and feet of iron and the fourth beast, diverse from all the rest, we have the Roman empire, and something more.

The feet and toes of the image are part of iron and part of miry clay—partly strong and partly brittle. The ten toes and the ten horns (Dan. vii. 24) are evidently identical in meaning, and carry us on to Rev. xvii., where we have again ten horns, meaning ten kings, who unite to give (in the last days) their power and strength to the beast. This beast, we see in Rev. xiii. 1-10, has the features of all four of the beasts in Daniel (Rev. xiii. 2). Combining Rev. xiii. 1-3 with Rev. xvii. 8-11, we have a form of Imperial authority which once existed, has ceased, and will yet revive again under satanic form, which will be intrusted with all the power of the confederated kings.\*

If now the fourth beast of Dan. vii. is the Roman empire, then the beast of Rev. xiii. is also the Roman empire, but the empire under an imperial head, that has marked, and satanic, characteristics. If it be objected that the Roman empire has passed away, let it be noted that the beast had received a deadly wound; that it *was*, is not, and shall be. These expressions show a cessation, and then a revival, of empire, under satanic influence, which causes universal amazement and commands well-nigh universal worship.

Let it also be noted that in both Dan. ii. and iii. the end of the world-powers comes in judgment and the establishment in power of Christ's kingdom. That this has not yet taken place is evident. All these prophecies, then, bring us down to the close of the times of the Gentiles, and give us the features of the last days. These features are, first, imperial power, combined with democracy; the ten toes are of iron and clay mingled; the ten kings agree to give

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\* We pass over the great harlot in Rev. xvii. as not being directly connected with our subject. It is not very difficult to detect in her the false Church of Rome, who has committed fornication with the kings of the earth, but who will eventually be rejected by them and judged by God.

their power to the beast. We have thus an imperial league of the kingdoms forming the Roman empire, in Western Europe. The second feature of this empire is satanic blasphemy, with hatred and persecution of the saints of God (the godly Jewish Remnant). Lastly, this imperial head will be in league with the Antichrist, or false Messiah, accepted by the bulk of the Jews.

Such being the features of the revived empire of Rome, it is hardly necessary to say these conditions do not yet exist. The Roman empire is not: though the nations of Western Europe, like the rest of the world, lie in the wicked one, there has not been the development of the blasphemy and persecution that will mark the beast: the Jews are not in any real way installed in Palestine: the Antichrist has not yet appeared. But let no one say "peace and safety." "The mystery of lawlessness doth already work." When He that hindereth is removed, it will reach its full development. The coming of the Lord for His Church will let loose the powers of evil on the earth—Satan being cast out of heaven (Rev. xii. 9–12). So soon as the gracious workings of the Spirit of God cease; so soon as the true Church, with its godly example and restraining moral influence, is removed,—evil will be unhindered, and all things will hasten toward the end.

Even now, we can see things getting ready for this. We have the alliance of three kingdoms, why not of ten? We have all Europe in a state of unrest, why not secure ease from that by delivering over to one strong hand the reins of power? We see infidelity on the increase; 'twill soon lead to apostasy. So, then, we may indeed say, we know "what withholdeth" (Thess. ii. 6). The Lord's coming may take place at any moment. We look for no signs, we wait

simply for Him who said, "Behold, I come quickly."

It now remains to see what place Russia occupies in the coming scenes. In the last days the mass of the Jewish nation is apostate, and, under the lead of the Antichrist, is in league with the beast who wears out the saints (the godly remnant). But there is another bitter enemy of the Jews distinct from the beast, who are spoken of in the prophets as the Assyrian (Mic. v. 5) Gog, the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal (Ezekiel, 38th, 39th chaps.). Here we have mentioned by name the land of Rosh, or Russia, with its chief cities in Europe and Asia. We know the hatred of Russia against the Jews. It cannot endure to see their prosperity, when, restored to the land, they will for a brief period enjoy peace (before the "middle of the week" Dan. ix. 27). Hatred too, of the Western powers will lead her, as even now, to encroach on what is under their protection; hence the invasion by Russia and her dependencies into Palestine—an invasion which, at the moment of success (Zech. xiv. 1-7), shall be cut short by the appearing of the Son of Man.

We have thus, briefly and imperfectly traced the future of the Gentiles up to the coming of the Lord. He will "break in pieces the oppressor;" the beast and the false prophet will be taken and cast into the lake of fire (Rev. xix. 11-21): He will cause wars to cease, and introduce at last a reign of peace for all the earth.

**"He'll bid the whole creation smile  
And hush its groan."**

Beloved brethren, we wait in weakness for that day. Nay, we wait for the Morning Star, that rises before day. May we hear the voice of the Lord saying, "Surely I come quickly;" and may our hearts reply, "Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus."

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 6.—In 2 Cor. v. 3, is “naked” the same as “unclothed,” verse 4 ?

ANS.—The subject in this part of the epistle is the glory—the final glory—that awaits the people of God. There is not the dwelling upon the intermediate condition at length, save to speak of the blessedness of being “absent from the body and present with the Lord.” In verse 1, the apostle says that even in view of the dissolution of the body, we have the eternal heavenly abode—the resurrection body; that our desire is to be freed from this body in which we groan, and to be clothed upon with our heavenly house—our glorified body. He is careful to say that our *desire* is not death, to be unclothed,—though *willing* even for that, verse 8,—but the resurrection body. Then he shows, by way of parenthesis, it would seem, that such a resurrection body clothing us is absolutely inconsistent with the thought of being “naked,” *i. e.*, in our sins before God. For when raised, it will be apart from sin forever. This seems to be the force of “naked,” not synonymous with “unclothed,” (the state of the soul of the believer between death and resurrection,) but being without a covering before God. This seems to fit in with the line of thought, where it would be natural to show that the “house from heaven” was forever freed from the possibility of the presence of sin. The use, too, of the word in several passages would bear this out (Rev. iii. 17, 18; xv. 16). A prominent thought seems to be that of the shame of such a condition, connecting it with our first parents. We can hardly think of one clothed with the “Best Robe” being “naked,” though he might—as to his earthly body—be unclothed.

QUES. 7.—Is the manifestation at the judgment-seat of Christ, 2 Cor. v. 10, to include *all* our sins before and after we were saved, or is it the work of believers from the cross until we are caught up to meet the Lord? And what does “whether good or bad” mean?

ANS.—There can be little question that the manifestation includes the *whole* life of the believer. The very thought of “manifestation” would suggest that. When we remember that the glory of God’s grace will thus be exhibited, we can easily understand why the whole record should come out. It is never the habit of Scripture to *hide* sins, though God blessedly “cov-

ers" them. We know the life of Paul, for instance, before conversion, and of Matthew. The sins of Abraham, Lot, David, and Peter, after conversion, have been manifested in the word of God. We may be sure that what is brought out at the judgment-seat of Christ will only manifest in perfection the wonder of redeeming love.

"Whether good or bad" shows that not merely the failures, but the faithfulness, will be brought out; "and then shall every man have *praise* of God."

No doubt, too, the moral character of all judgment is alluded to, showing its absolute impartiality, which, while it decides the loss or the reward of the believer for his *works*, shows the fearful doom awaiting the unsaved. The apostle adds, therefore, "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

QUES. 8.—Please distinguish between "the man of sin," the Antichrist, and "the false prophet."

ANS.—Some have thought the "man of sin" to be (2 Thess. ii. 3, 8, 9, 10) identical with the first beast of Rev. xiii. (1-10). Notice, however, that the development of the man of sin is in connection with a religious apostasy already working in a mystery; that this man of sin is a false teacher, and works lying wonders, and claims a divine place in the temple. All this would identify him with the *second* beast (Rev. xiii. 11-end), called the false prophet (Rev. xix.). None question who this second beast is. He is the religious ally of the imperial rule resuscitated by satanic power, and by signs and lying wonders would deceive, if it were possible, even the elect. Lastly, the man of sin and the false prophet are identical with the Antichrist, who denies the Father and the Son (1 John ii. 18, 22)—a Jew, who, in the last days, when apostasy shall have ripened, will usurp the worship of Jehovah, and claim that he is the true Christ, and divine. That he is intimately associated with the civil power, the first beast, and sets up *his* image in the temple—the abomination of desolation—has probably been the ground upon which some have thought the first beast and the man of sin were identical. There is no contradiction, however, in his setting up an image for worship, and claiming worship for himself also.

QUES. 9.—As to the eternal city, is not the tabernacle in the wilderness, with the camp surrounding it, a type of it?

ANS.—Yes; save that it is important to guard against the thought that the heavenly city is *upon* earth. That, it never is, but always "eternal in the heavens," like the glorified bodies of those who will inhabit it.

[Other answers deferred.]

## A DIVINE MOVEMENT, AND OUR PATH WITH GOD TO-DAY.

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(Continued from page 66.)

### 10. THE ASSEMBLY, IN ITS PRACTICAL WORKING.

THE Church of God is therefore an organization, the body of Christ,—the body on earth of an unseen Head in heaven. The body is always looked at as upon earth, just as the Head is in heaven; and thus, as governed by that Head, one with Him as joined by the uniting Spirit, it is His representative in the world, to be the expression of His mind, His will, His nature. This every individual is, of course; but that is not enough: it has pleased Him to link these individuals together: and thus even individual duty is not performed, if one's place is not filled in the body, of which we are part. There is to be an "epistle of Christ," (not "epistles," as it is practically often, sometimes actually, read) which, the apostle says to the Corinthians, "*ye are.*" (2 Cor. iii. 3.)

If then we are livingly linked together in such a manner, and for such a purpose, how necessary it must be that, as gathered together, we should habitually seek His mind, learn what He would have us do as yoke-fellows together, how we are to sustain and supplement each other in His service. The value of *organization* in this way seems, strangely enough perhaps, least appreciated by those who should know it best—by those who have had recovered to them by the grace of God the knowledge of His own perfect organization for such work as His, which demands the very utmost of our united energies!

“Organization” is every where appreciated among Christian workers in the various bodies of Christendom to-day: nothing can be done without organization. So abundant is the manufacture of them now, that they are in danger of becoming parasitical growths upon the bodies themselves from which they sprang, and of over-burdening at last what they were designed to buttress and support. There are in fact some very serious reasons for the distrust we have (some of us) learned to entertain of them. They are too loose and large in some ways—undisciplined and destroyers of discipline: all distinctive faith is in danger of being swamped, by many of them, through their loose association of the most contradictory elements,—converted and unconverted, Christians with the deniers of Christ, in an “unequal yoke” forbidden by God Himself under the severest penalties. (2 Cor. vi. 14–18.)

And then on the other hand, by their mere human artificial rules, they oppress the conscience almost equally, and substitute the will of the majority, or officialism, for the guidance of the Spirit of God. With all this we have learned so to link the very thought of organization, as to look upon every suggestion of it with more than suspicion as necessarily unspiritual and evil,—at least, outside of and so against Scripture.

But what then shall we do with the thought of the “body of Christ,” which is most surely that of an organization, as it is also scriptural and divine? That common relationship which we have to one another binds us to “consider one another to provoke to love and to good works” (Heb. x. 24); with which the apostle conjoins the “not forsaking the assem-



bling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another." Do not such words imply the opportunity given for more "consideration" of individual needs, and more occupation with the Lord's work among us, and that in our "assembling together," than is almost any where found among us? more than "open meetings" or reading meetings or prayer-meetings, as these exist among us, can unitedly supply?

Must not fellowship with one another be sadly limited in its range, if there is not fellowship in the Lord's work among us and around us? if there be no gatherings to consider this? and such not exceptional, casual, something supererogatory, as it were, but earnestly and heartily entered into as essential to our corporate duties, and thus to our right spiritual health itself?

Right and left of us, in all the denominations round, Christians come together to consider the Lord's work, and express their interest in and identify themselves with it. Is it a necessity laid upon us any where as two or three gathered to the Lord's name, that we should be cut off so largely as we are from all gathering together for such purposes? I cannot but believe that wherever such lack exists, it is a most serious one. It tends to make our interest in one another partial and exceptional; to deprive us of much of the good that should come of the differences that are among us which make mutual help so necessary, and in its ministry so serviceable in binding us together; it tends to make our Christian activities more desultory and feebler; to deprive us of many doors that would be found open to us; and

to expose us to the reproach of being (as a whole) out of the way of usefulness.

Why is it that those who have the gospel, it must be allowed, in a simplicity at least as great as anywhere, should be even capable of being assailed with just such reproaches? Why, in fact, have we been left so much behind in the evangelization of the world by others with much less light, but zealous in their coöperation with one another for such a purpose? Have we been too heavily freighted by the truth we carried? If it were *dead* truth, probably; but not if it were living. Truth, that is known in the power of it, is "such a weight as wings are to a bird;" and had we gone in the same zeal after the same class that these have sought, no ecclesiastical prejudice could have robbed us of the blessing. The hindrance, of whatever nature, has been something else than this.

But again, has there not developed among us a dangerous tendency, on slight occasion, to break up? Is it out of place to remind ourselves, that Philadelphia must *be* that—a "brotherhood"? Have we not failed in cultivating that spirit of brotherly fellowship of which the hand to hand occupation in the Lord's work is certainly a very important part? We have, no doubt, left room for the development of gift, and been unfeignedly thankful to see evangelists, teachers, and others raised up among us; but have we not lacked in seeking, in the way stated, to make the work of the Lord a matter of common responsibility and widest fellowship?

"Business meetings," even "brothers' meetings," will not fill this gap. We need something wide enough to take in all the Lord's interests on earth,

free enough to give every one place in it, practical enough to concern itself mainly with home duties and responsibilities that lie upon us in connection with the places in which we live and the spheres in which we move day by day. We want something which will bring us continually into remembrance of our individual duties as the Lord's workers, be suggestive, encouraging, and helpful as to our fulfillment of them, fit us more together as really co-members of the body of Christ, make us realize His mind for us as a whole, and form it in us, give us practical wisdom for the days in which we live, that we may be like the men of Issachar who came to Hebron, to make David king, "who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chron. xii. 32),—something that may develop all the truth we have into practical expression.

I am persuaded that if the Church of God be, as it plainly is, an organization, we have yet to use it for all the purposes of an organization, and that charged with the responsibility of representing Christ, and being the practical expression of His mind on earth. And if we be but "two or three" in each place, instead of thousands, while acknowledging sadly, as we must, the broken condition of things, we are just as much responsible to show forth in our measure what the Church of God should be:—a living, united, working, coöperating membership; a body, moving in unison with the mind of the unseen Head, in the energy of the Spirit, which has formed and which inspires it.

No one suggests that we can all read our Bibles at home, and that there is no need of our coming together for this purpose. Nor that we can pray in

our houses and our families and have no need of prayer-meetings in the assembly. Why should the *work-meeting*, the means of communion in *practice*, be the only thing thought unnecessary?

Yet for lack of this, the prayer-meetings become vague, general, with little definite application to needs that are not known, and to service which is merely personal, private, or shared by few, with which communion is not sought, and little possible. Our reading meetings lack similarly the point of personal application, the freshness of interest which is supplied by the incidents of service unknown save to individuals. We are in fact, largely, individuals, touching each other at a few points, hidden from each other in most; save as personal friendships join us here and there, and which, without the larger interests to steady them, tend to form us into parties, and in times of pressure break us up into them.

How little do we "*consider* one another, to provoke unto love and to good works"! how pointless, from lack of knowledge, do exhortations of this kind fall! How little in general are we near enough to each in our inner lives to encourage or give opportunity to make them! Yet as children of God and members of Christ, we are in a relationship to one another nearer and more abiding than any other can be!

We need to draw nearer together as Christians practically, not merely theoretically. In the stress of the world upon us we need to take each other by the hand, and strengthen each other's hands in God. In the presence of evil we need to show, not a broken, but an embattled front. In a world away from God but over which His mercies linger, we need a more

practical fellowship with the gospel, and encouragement to every one to take earnest part in ministering it. In all that concerns the Church of God we must have that which will give us better opportunity to know that we are "members one of another." And we need, as partakers of the mind of Christ, to give this more united practical expression.

Membership in the body of Christ means service: every part of a "body" is in necessary relationship with the whole, and there is no independency anywhere; each needs and serves and is served by the whole. God has acted upon this principle throughout nature; and nowhere more fully than among men. If "it is not good that man should be alone," God makes for him as a helper, not the repetition, but the complement of himself. He unites the weaker to the stronger, that even by this weakness his strength may be better served. She is given him to be ministered to, that by this she may minister to him also, drawing him out of himself, developing his heart,—a blessing which all he gives cannot repay. The needs and inequalities of men similarly have built up society by division of labor; and even the regions of the earth are thus helpful by the difference of their productions in binding together the nations of the earth. The city is the highest development of this principle; and if man departed from God built the first, yet God has prepared for His people the final one: a "city which hath foundations," and will abide.

Thus ministry is God's law of nature, as it is the expression of the nature of God Himself, which is love. "Love seeketh not her own;" "by love" we "serve one another." Love is freedom, happiness, the oppo-

site of all legality, the spirit of heaven, conferring and reflecting blessing. And that fullest description of love which we find in Corinthians is enshrined in that of the "body of Christ" as its proper home and the means of its expression. Here the necessity of all parts to one another is just what provides for and makes necessary the constant out-going of love to one another. There are some small animal half-organisms that grow by division; but the higher the organism the more its unity is enforced by the abhorrence of this. A part lost is not supplied again: the creature is maimed, and goes mourning for its loss, refusing substitution.

Such is the body of Christ then—the highest pattern of such fitting together that can be: and if but two or three can practically be together, this does not free them from the obligation to all the members. Love would abhor the thought of this as freedom, and it is only at peril to ourselves that we can act upon it. Love would indeed hold fast therefore the local expression of the greater thing, not set it aside for the unpractical and impossible; yet would it see that this did not in fact degenerate into merely partial, and thus sectarian, display. It would still look out and beyond, as partaking of the divine love towards all, and unforgetfulness of the tie existing. It would look out over the whole field of Christ's interests and identify itself in heart with all; seeking ever to widen the outlook and extend the sphere of practical sympathy. Prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, would become ever with it more definite, while yet larger in scope, and more according to the apostolic, sadly forgotten rule, "for *all* men."

But more: did such a spirit animate us, we should

come to see, perhaps, that there were other "divine movements" among Christians elsewhere; not less to be recognized as such because, mixed up with what was of the Spirit of God, there were elements too purely human, and that the enemy was striving to adulterate them with various evil. We should learn too that God had lessons for us, most practical and profitable, from all around, if we were only humble enough to learn from all sorts of teachers, and wise enough to be able to "take forth the precious from the vile," the imperative condition for our being "as God's mouth" (Jer. xv. 19). Doubtless we should find very frequently our own rebuke in it, and this would test us much: it would show whether we *desired* to believe that all wisdom was with us, and outside was only darkness; whether, like Gideon's fleece, the dew of the Spirit was with us wholly, and all the ground around were dry.

Not that it is meant by this to encourage a tendency to run hither and thither, which is in general but the expression of restlessness and want of proper occupation with our own things. Our feet are to be kept in a known path, and not allowed in doubtful ones. It is the *heart* that is to be enlarged, and not the path, which must ever be a narrow one. The spirit of the wanderer is one too little heedful of the way with God to be able to guide another into it. "Let him that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity" is a word which, followed in the spirit of it, will keep one from every doubtful thing (which *may*, therefore, be evil) as well as from what is known as such; and from that also in which I may see the working of the Spirit of God, so long as it is yet mixed with that which I have to judge as contrary to His mind.

I would press upon my own soul what I press upon others, speaking from convictions which have been now a good while with me, and only increase with the lapse of time, that while we rightly gather together as worshipers, and hearers of God's word, we have nowhere perhaps, except fitfully and exceptionally, gatherings of the whole as *workers* under the Lord our Head, and to possess ourselves as such of His mind, wherever, however expressed, in all the largeness which we must recognize His mind to have. I believe such meetings to be necessary for the maintenance of true Christian fellowship in its full reality, with each other and the Lord alike; and to help to make the assemblies a living, intelligent representation, however feeble, of the "body of Christ."

I had purposed saying more, but have perhaps reached the limit of what the Lord would have at this time. Merely fragmentary and suggestive, these papers must not be supposed to ignore what else in the address to Philadelphia has been unnoticed. If He should be pleased to use them to bring the consciences of His people more into exercise as to what is surely a special word from Himself for the present day, the object will be attained.

F. W. G.

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WE can all say "Whom have I in heaven but Thee," knowing well that the Lamb is the light, glory, and joy of that place; but can we add, "and there is none *upon earth* that I desire besides Thee"? How constantly do the things of earth assail our hearts and claim a place there—at first only a little place, at last, however, absorbing the whole, and depriving us of our blessed Lord as the portion of our hearts.



## THE LORDS' SUPPER.

## "THE CUP."

"AFTER *the same manner* also the cup when He had supped." That is, I suppose, in the same way as He had taken the bread: with the same expression of *thanks* to God. And here again what a lovely scene of beauty these words would spread out before us if we had but hearts in some measure awake to such scenes,—quick to catch, and rejoice in such beauties. He—Jesus—who tells us that the bread is to remind us of His own sufferings under bruising—that the cup is to bring before the eyes of our hearts, His own life poured out in blood—He, as He takes these very emblems, *gives thanks*. Is it not passing wonderful, that, so to speak, the very victim should join in the praise that ascends at the altar where it suffers and is slain? Meet and right it is, surely, that guilty rebels who see here another suffering in their stead—hear the bruising blows as they descend on His body, interposed to shield them—see the resulting life-blood forth flowing—meet and right it is that *they* should be thankful for the love for them that spared not even so infinitely precious a treasure—for the love that was in Him stronger than death, which many waters could not quench. But that He, already entering into the dark shadow of that scene that was to press the exceeding bitter cry from His lips—that *He* should "give thanks"! Wondrous thought, ponder it, O my soul, first for thyself! Jesus was *thankful* that He was going to suffer for thee! Yes, now I remember too, He hastened as one bound for the joys of love and home, to that bitter cross. Back to the memory come those words

spoken long ages before "I *delight* to do Thy will, O, my God!" And these again are caught up and echoed by a more recent utterance of the same beloved Person, after the same sort, "I have a baptism to be baptized with and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." *Now* this baptism is in full view. The betrayer has gone forth on that errand which is the beginning of the end of these things—yea, in figure it is passed, the body is bruised in the bread, the blood is already poured forth in the cup, and His tender gracious heart rejoices at the fact and He gives thanks! Listen, my soul; Oh, listen, my beloved brethren, to these words of joyful praise from His lips. There was "a joy set before Him" through all these sufferings, and He takes you and me into company with His heart in that joy. A sevenfold joy, surely, if we, again I say, had eyes to see, hearts to apprehend it.

First, God in a very solemn, official way, is glorified because His *throne* is now so firmly established, that whereas its foundations would have trembled at the slightest mercy shown to guilt, the whole moral universe would have been thrown into irredeemable chaos if He had forgiven a sinner, now such sinner may be embraced and kissed without a tremor anywhere. The "posts of the door" of God's house may rock at His awful presence *before*, but not *after*, the "live coal" has uttered its voice, done its work. Jesus for this gives thanks.

Second, God's own character is glorified; His justice satisfied; His holy nature rests; He is propitiated, and our Lord gives thanks.

Third, God His Father is in a more personal way honored; yea, more than He was dishonored by all

the overwhelming guilt of all of Adam's seed. Jesus hath added the "fifth part" to the trespass-offering. (Lev. v. 16.) God is richer, as we may speak, than before the first man robbed Him of His honor. Jesus the Second Man joys as He knows this, and gives thanks for bread and wine.

Fourth, God is thus fully displayed to a created universe in His unapproachable wisdom in thus making "righteousness and peace to kiss each other, mercy and truth" to embrace. "Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" Surely it is in itself a "Light that no man can approach unto." But it is a source of joy to Him who has made it manifest.

Fifth, our Lord Himself shall not now "abide alone." Precious corn of wheat as He is, dying,—fruitful shall He be, and shall have His place from henceforth "in the midst" of His brethren; a place He dearly loves, and this forms a large part of His joy.

Sixth, Love now may have its own way unchallenged. Straited and shut up, poor Love has been behind the barriers of righteousness. Those barriers are down, the veil is rent, and Love escapes, not only to welcome, but to "*seek* the lost" no longer straitened. It is the joy of the Lord Jesus.

Seventh, *eternity* is secure. Songs of spontaneous fresh delight shall resound through the lengthened arches of that dwelling that God shall make with men, in which He may enjoy that most congenial work of Divine Love, of wiping away the tears from the eyes still brimming with earth's sorrows, and listening to the music of overfilled hearts *forever*.

Sevenfold joy this, shining with rainbow beauties

in the very storm cloud of the scene here shown forth.

“After He had supped.” Words introduced here doubtless to show in a picture that the Passover had now come to an end. The cup of the Lord's supper was no part of the paschal supper. This was over before the cup was taken. The Passover that He had so earnestly desired to eat with His own, before He suffered, was finished. It closed the long series of Passovers that began on that memorable night in Egypt. Much needed had that Passover been to keep His people in memory of an earthly deliverance, and to figure to spiritual intelligence the true Lamb of God, who should be “the propitiation for the sins of the world.” For many centuries it had served, thus awakening, year by year, dormant memories, and kindling faith. No limit had been given to it at its inception: no “till He come” had indicated its cessation, but now it ceases, and a cup expressive of joy, that the Passover knew not, in a sense, takes its place.

For now we have a double thought in this cup that we drink. If “bread is to strengthen man's heart,” the wine is to “make glad” that same heart (Ps. civ.), and well adapted indeed shall we find this cup if we truly drink it in the appropriation of faith. For mark, first the correspondence and yet difference between “the bread” and “the wine:” bruising is connected with each, both grain and grape are crushed, but in the former, we have actually the *thing bruised*. We eat what the millstone has crushed for us. In the latter we drink that which is the *result* of the bruising; and not without its beauties and significance is this. The former as we have seen, speaks

of judgment being borne. The latter, then, tells us of judgment passed, and death accomplished. These two things complete man's appointment as a sinner; "it is appointed unto man once to die and after this the judgment." Now

"As we behold the wondrous cross,  
On which the Lord of glory died,"

it is as solemn as it is precious to see these two awful appointments fully borne; but, as the order of the bread and wine shows us, in the reverse order. First judgment and after this death. The blood flows forth with its clear and touching evidence of every thing finished, and we take the cup and find that *that* blood is figured by "wine that maketh glad the heart of man" indeed. Beautifully adapted is wine to symbolize that death that told out all the measure of His love. *Blood* it speaks of, but blood as the token and measure of a love that could not stop till its object of saving was attained, and many waters could not quench, and which alone could make glad man's heart. For it is divine love for which the human heart (indeed, but too often unconsciously) thirsts. From God our spirits come, nor can they rest satisfied till they again reach that source—God. All the world is quite insufficient to fill the thirst of one human heart, as the experiences of "the King," pathetically told out in the book of Ecclesiastes, evidence.

This cup, then, is the love of God, witnessed by the life of His chief Treasure given up for us. Oh, let us drink! let us take it in! Hear Him, the divine Host at our supper, speak: "Drink, O friends, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved!" We shall not exhaust the fountain by all our thirsty drafts upon it; *our* cup always and ever "runneth over." Here,

then, we see the beauty of the wine being our symbol. It is an evidence of the bruising in judgment, sin, having been fully looked upon, and righteously dealt with, love may flow forth in all its breadth and length and depth and height, unchallenged and unhindered. Never would it do for the cup to precede the bread, it *must* follow it.

“This do in remembrance of Me.” Mark the touching simplicity and condescending grace of these words. It is a command, but such a command as incarnate love alone could give. Not “This do, and live for Me;” not “This do and devote thy all to My service;” not “This do and,” even, “give thanks;” nothing that could, by any possibility, occupy us with ourselves, and make us distressed and sorry at our inability to come up to what He desires. Nothing but “remember.” “In remembrance of Me.” Affecting in its simplicity! Oh, that rough human hands had ever been kept from it, and His people had been allowed to enjoy their feast as He desires, simply leaving memory free; as when we go sometimes to a drawer and take therefrom some simple object connected with one dearly loved in days gone by

“With easy force it opens all the cells where memory slept.”

Memory alone does all the work needed. A worthless object in itself it may be; an old garment or what-not, but it brings back to the heart the *person*, and it does its work. Thus He puts into our hands “bread and wine,” His body thus in death for us, and if the memory alone be free all shall be well. Tender thoughts, joy, and praise shall all follow in due course.

F. C. J.

(*To be continued.*)

NOW  
THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY,  
THEN  
FACE TO FACE.

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AT evening as the twilight gathered in,  
And stopped my needle going to and fro,  
I lost myself, in thinking of my Lord:—  
Oh! blessed losing, would 'twere always so.  
And as I gazed by faith into His face  
With confidence I sought not to explain,  
The things of earth were for a time forgot,  
With all their joys and sorrows, all their pain.

Earth's daylight is but evening at the best;  
Faith pierces through the gloaming, to discern  
The length and breadth, the height and depth of love,  
Whose fullness with Himself alone I'll learn.  
Oft times 'tis night, some times I say 'tis day,  
But ere my little round of labor's done,  
I cry, "alas! the day is all too short,"  
While, with regret, I watch the sinking sun.

Thus, here, 'twill ever be, this changeful scene,  
Of life's experience but the picture true.  
The heart must know the pain, and bliss, of these—  
Storm, sunshine, drought, and the refreshing dew,  
While waiting for the harbinger of day,  
For then I know my feet shall no more roam,  
Where light and shadow, storm and calm succeed,  
But rest with Him, who soon shall call me home.

How sweet to seek the shelter of His wing,  
In secret hidden from the world's rude gaze;  
My fortress strong, where I may e'er retreat,  
My refuge in life's stormy, cloudy days.  
If I had only come to Him before,  
I had not missed such blessing all those years,  
But, seeking rest in restless hearts like mine,  
I lost the goal I sought, and gained but tears.

But when I think of all the pains He took  
To lead me to this blessed resting place,  
I'd turn me and retrace the dreary path,  
For one look of His gentle, gracious face,  
In which I read the depth of God's great love  
To me, whose hunger He alone could know,  
His love alone could meet, and satisfy,  
And give the peace I craved, and heal my woe.

I had not known Him intimately long,  
Yet did not fear that He would turn away,  
And leave me desolate again, and lone.  
I knew He would abide with me alway.  
He'd watched me, all the weary winding way,  
Until, despairing, to His feet I'd come,  
With what I could not speak to other ears;  
Ah! then, I felt my heart had found its home.

My Saviour, not thyself alone Thou'st given,  
But all things good; whilst in Thy loneliness,  
Thou hadst not e'en a place to lay Thy head,  
Yet, me, with untold mercies Thou dost bless,  
Thy heart alone could be my resting place.  
Earth's passing joys will soon give place to bliss;  
Eye hath not seen, nor ear hath ever heard,  
Nor even heart conceived, save only this,

That Thou hast told the secret of Thy heart,  
To those who know Thy love. And though the night  
Be dark, 'twill soon give place to endless day,  
When thou shalt be the everlasting light.  
No fitful twilight musings then, my soul,  
But, at loves fountain-head, my heart shall slake  
Its thirst, with everlasting love. And 'tween  
His heart and mine, communion know no break.

H. McD.

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## SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE.

No. 3.

WE were speaking, in our last paper, on worship. And this, beloved reader, is most important. To be a worshiper of the true and living God is the grandest thing possible for any created intelligence, since this will be the chiefest occupation of the redeemed to all eternity. Think, one moment, of this : to all eternity a worshiper ! Never wearying, and never monotonous ; always fresh. He who knows what worship is, (for it is a purely spiritual exercise,) will witness to this as a divine reality. He never wearies of it. And he who doubts, or questions, this statement, may be sure that he has never known true worship, "in spirit and in truth." There are many nowadays who can say with the woman of Samaria, "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, but ye say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship"; and to such the Saviour's answer would equally well apply, "Ye worship ye know not what." To enjoy a meeting is not necessarily worship ; and yet there is abundant joy in worship. One may be very happy in preaching the gospel, as in listening to the preaching of the gospel, and yet not worship at all ; for the gospel is God's message sent down to men, while worship is a sweet savor of Christ handed up to God. The gospel is manward : worship is Godward. The gospel is to, and for, the unsaved, that they may become worshipers—that they may be saved, and then answer back to God, in the power of the Holy Ghost, with a song and a heart-throb which present Christ as our meat-offering (Lev. ii. 1-11). But notice especially

the eleventh verse. "No leaven," and "no honey," allowed here—nothing of man, nothing of ourselves. The honey and the leaven represent the good and the bad in man; there is the good side, and there is the bad side. But the good side has no more a place before God than the bad; and for this reason: it would displace Christ! And if you displace Him,—the Holy and the True, the Father's delight, God's Beloved,—you might as well do it with bad self as with good self. And yet much that is called worship in these days is but the honey and leaven of human wisdom and fleshly contrivance, which of course yields its proportion of joy and satisfaction, according to the measure of devotedness with which it is taken up. Beloved reader, am I speaking rashly, when I say that Christ must be the measure of all that you can present to God as worship? And this is made plain in Phil. iii. 3: "For we are the circumcision (God's true Israel) which worship God in the spirit, and *rejoice in Christ Jesus*, (not in ourselves,) and have no confidence in the flesh." The word translated flesh here is the same as in chap. i. 22, 24, and also in the fourth verse of the same chapter, and is intended to designate the whole man, the good as well as the bad of a Christian, a child of God; and this all the more intensifies the thought expressed in the leaven and the honey, which shows clearly that there is nothing of ourselves, in good feelings, nor in good doings, that we can bring to God as worshipers: absolutely nothing can God accept but that which is a sweet savor of His blessed Son. Hence, "to worship God in the spirit" is to "rejoice in Christ Jesus;" it is to find your whole soul's delight in Him who is God's delight. Oh, if I could impress this upon your

heart!—the importance of finding your delight in God's delight. "TO BEHOLD THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD." Is this a reality to my reader? or is it barbarian—something which you do not understand? Be assured of this: worship does not consist in good thoughts, nor good feelings, nor in good meetings. It does consist in presenting to God, most holy, that which delights His heart. And where do you find it? IN CHRIST.

Turn, if you please, to the seventeenth chapter of Matthew, and mark one thing which we get there. While on the mount of transfiguration, when Jesus had put on the glory of the coming kingdom, and Moses and Elias were seen by Peter, James, and John, as talking with Jesus, Peter would give Moses and Elias a tabernacle as well as Himself. What did God think of it? "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid." What does this mean? Well, beloved reader, to me it means this first of all: that God has spoken to us by His Son (Heb. i. 1-3); and, secondly, that now there is absolutely no access to God but in and through Him; and it is a saved soul—one consciously saved—who can be, and is, a worshiper "in spirit and in truth."

Beloved reader! what did Jesus say to the woman of Samaria? (John iv. 22.) "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to

worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." "IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH"—by the Holy Ghost led, and according to the truth. And again I ask, Do you know what this is? Do you know that the Holy Spirit dwells in you? and that it is the Spirit abiding in you, and ungrieved, who must lead and guide in everything which we say and do, else it cannot be acceptable to God, it cannot be "worship in spirit and in truth," since there can be no sweet savor of Christ in it?

Oh, how many thousands of people there are who are no better off than the woman of Samaria!—they worship *they know not what*—the religion of their fathers, their church, their minister, their good feelings, their happy experiences. And what is this but idolatry? And yet they are sincere and conscientious. Their religious teachers have never given them anything better, simply because they had it not to give. The one-man ministry is all right for the gospel, but all wrong for worship. The evangelist is necessarily alone in speaking for God to men; but in worship, each individual saint is responsible to offer to God a sweet savor of Christ. And how can he do this? Only as led by the Holy Spirit—not by proxy. Under the ritual of the law, it was by proxy. The high-priest went into the presence of God *for the people*: but under the law, it was man in the flesh worshiping; hence timbrels and harps, trumpets, pipes, and organs—musical instruments of all kinds; because there is nothing like music to stir up the natural emotions; and how oft these emotional feelings, stirred up by fine music and good singing, are supposed to be worship, while the heart is just sim-

ply occupied with the music, and the fleshly delight which it gives, and not with Christ at all!

My reader! how is it with yourself? Have you ever tasted the divine joy of offering to God a sweet savor of His beloved Son?

“O Lord, we know it matters not  
How sweet the song may be;  
No heart but by the Spirit taught  
Makes melody to Thee.”

C. E. H.

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How touching it is to read “the Lord’s portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance.” (Deut. xxxii. 9.) He who possesses heaven and earth, as Creator and upholder being Lord of all, in telling us what *His* portion is, passes by angels and all else, to say it is His people. A people, too, whom He calls *Jacob*, a name significant of all that Jacob was, cunning, planning, weak; but significant, too, of the grace that met him as he was, and chose him for God’s peculiar treasure. “Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name [Jacob]; thou art Mine.” (Isa. xliii. 1) Christ gave Himself for us that He might sanctify unto Himself a peculiar people, (a people for His own possession, *R. V.*) (Titus ii. 14.) Even the inheritance in heaven, when it is spoken of as God’s, is to be enjoyed *in* the saints (Eph. i. 18). Just as He inherited Canaan *in* His earthly people, so will He inherit the glories of heaven in us. He has, as it were, no pleasure in it, save as a possession for us. What grace all this speaks of—election, redemption, glory—all show that we are God’s portion! We can say, “I am my Beloved’s.”

## ROMANISM, ITS INFIDEL NATURE.

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**R**OMANISM does not deny facts, but their availableness to my peace; it does not deny the expiation for sin made at the Cross, it does not deny the Trinity, it does not deny the Incarnation, nor the Divinity of Christ; these truths it holds, so that it would not be suspected, at first sight, of Infidelity. It is in the actual value and application of them to the sinner that it has destroyed the truth, and taken away the way of peace to the soul thereby.

God says, that by the one offering Christ has perfected forever those that are sanctified. (Heb. x. 14.)

Romanism says, He is to be offered often, and that the believer is *not* perfected by that one offering of Christ on the cross. It denies, not the offering, but the value and sufficiency for the believer's peace.

God says, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin; that He has by Himself purged our sins. (1 John i. 7; Heb. i. 3.)

Romanism says He has *not*, that people have to be purified in purgatory.

God says, that Christ is a merciful High-Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. (Heb. iv. 15.)

Romanism says, that we shall find more suitable persons to go to, more accessible, more tender-hearted, in the Saints and the Virgin Mary.

It denies not the fact of Christ's Priesthood, but its real value for me. In vain then it is orthodox as to the facts of Christianity. It makes them useless to the soul, and substitutes others in their place, for a supposed greater advantage.

These are examples of the real infidelity of Romanism as to those truths of the Gospel which are most precious for the peace of the soul.—*Selected.*

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QES. 10.—Please give the thought in Mark xiv. 51, 52.

ANS.—the literal meaning is evident. “They all forsook Him and fled.” Even those who were bold enough to follow a little, had not the courage to stand out boldly, but fled at the first approach of personal danger. We see that the timidity which follows Christ in its own strength will leave its covering, to its own shame, when trial comes. Peter lost his linen sheet (practical righteousness?) at the fire in the high-priest’s palace.

QES. 11.—Matt. v. 42 with Luke vi. 30-35. In what sense are these scriptures suited to the Christian of today In what sense could we do this; how far could we go; is it lack of faith?

ANS.—The passages are in beautiful harmony with their connection, as of course is ever the case in the perfect Word of God. The purpose of the sermon on the mount is to enunciate the principles of the kingdom, to show they are at once a fulfilment of the spirit of the law and an advance upon some of its commands which had been lowered to the people’s condition, “for the hardness of their hearts.” The immediate connection in Matthew shows that instead of retaliation and self-assertion there was to be grace and yieldingness. That the verse in question is not to be taken with absolute literalness hardly needs saying. It is the *spirit* of the Word we are to keep,—not merely the letter. For instance if a person asked for that which we knew he would misuse; if it encourage him in beggary and idleness, we would be bound to refuse. On the other hand, he who knows God as his Father can well afford to give, where there is need, of that which is only entrusted to him by his Father. No rule is laid down, simply a principle is stated—a principle, we need hardly say, which requires faith and discernment to apply. The passage in Luke is of similar import.

QES. 12.—In 1 Cor. v. 5. Has the assembly power or authority now to deliver a wicked person to Satan, or was that only the prerogative of an apostle?

ANS.—The assembly was simply to purge itself—to put away the wicked person from among themselves. Only an apostle could deliver to Satan. As a matter of fact the person put out

from the company of God's people is in the world where Satan's power is, but this is simply the result of his exclusion and not a direct delivering over. An assembly is not a court of justice, where criminals are tried and sentenced, but a company of believers who, in obedience to the Lord, are seeking to keep clear of evil.

QUES. 13.—Please explain Isa. lxxv. 19-22. "The days of a tree" are often looked at as a thousand years. Will all that go into the millennium live through that time, both in Israel and among the Gentiles, except those cut off in judgment? In John v. 29 the resurrection of life and of judgment is spoken of—the latter looking on to the great white throne. One author, on Revelation, seems to think that believers might die during the millennium, and if so that they would be raised up in the last resurrection. But how can that be? Will there be any saved in the second resurrection?

ANS.—The passage referred to in Isaiah is a beautiful description of the blessing in and from Jerusalem during the millennium. "The days of a tree" would, as the next clause shows, indicate the wondrous longevity of that time: "Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." This period is one of universal blessing and peace; but Scripture guards us from thinking that evil has ceased. In the very passage before us we see judgment visited upon the open sinner, who shall be cut off in childhood, for a hundred years will be but youth in that day. This passage shows on the one hand that longevity will be enjoyed even by the unregenerate, if they submit to Christ's rule, and on the other, that they will be cut off if sinning. As to the resurrection, it is correctly stated in the question. The second resurrection is that of judgment, for the wicked alone, at the great white throne. There is no mention in Scripture, so far as we know, of the Lord's people dying during the millennium, though possibly some passages in the Psalms might be construed that way. If there be such, of course they will be raised—not, however, along with the wicked but distinct from them, just as the martyred remnant during the great tribulation have a part in the first resurrection, though all the "dead in Christ" had been raised before, at the Lord's coming. But, we repeat, we do not know of a scripture that teaches the death of any but the wicked during the millennium. Scripture is also silent as to the passing of the righteous from the millennium into the eternal state—the new



earth. Doubtless there will be a similar change as in the case of the "living" at the Lord's coming.

**QUES. 14.**—Will the wicked who come into the judgment of the living nations (Matt. xxv. 31-46), be again brought up at the great white throne (Rev. xx. 11-15)? How do we understand Luke xvi. 23-35, seeing that hell (hades) is the present and not the future abode of the lost?

**ANS.**—As to the first part of the question, the judgment of the wicked among the nations is immediate and final, verses 41, 46, though it takes place a thousand years before that of the great white throne. The beast and the false prophet meet their doom about the same time (Rev. xix. 20).

The state of the man in Luke xvi. is also final, as we see the great gulf is fixed. The passage teaches that just as the children of God who die pass into conscious blessedness, so the ungodly pass into conscious misery. We know that hades gives up the dead which are in it, to be cast into the lake of fire. It seems that in the passage considered, we have the thought of hades succeeded by the lake of fire—the punishment final and continuous. Hades, in Scripture, seems to indicate a state rather than a place; or rather, the unseen world, in contrast with this one. The general meaning of the passage is clear enough.

**QUES. 15.**—Please explain Ecclesiastes vii. 16, 17.

**ANS.**—The fifteenth verse seems to be a part of the paragraph which goes on into verse 18 also. Bearing in mind the general thought of the book—the utter impossibility of finding good or God by human means, and the vain efforts to do so—the passage before us seems to be one of these wise sayings which reach no higher than earth. He has seen a just man perish in his righteousness, and a wicked man live on in his wickedness. Therefore it would seem to be the part of wisdom, not to go to extremes either in righteousness or sin. As a matter of fact every one has his faults—"there is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good, and sinneth not." Therefore, says this wise man of earth, don't kill yourself with efforts after a righteousness which has never been attained by any, nor, on the other hand, go to extremes of wickedness. And this is the best that the world's wisdom has to give us! How refreshing to turn to the precious

truth of God's grace and revelation, and see there how His righteousness has been perfectly manifested in our redemption through the blood of Christ; and now, being set free from sin, we have our fruit unto holiness; that the measure of this holiness is Christ Himself. We should walk as He walked; and *that* we can never say we have attained or are already perfect (Phil. iii. 12). To the objections of the earth's wise man that all this is death to us, we thankfully reply, It is indeed. "Our old man is crucified with Him . . . that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Rom. vi. 6). That this holiness may be a practical thing, we are to bear about the dying of the Lord Jesus (2 Cor. iv. 7-10).

QUES. 16.—In "Answers to Correspondents" in February number of *Help and Food*, question no. 6, would not "naked" refer rather to the absence of fine linen (Rev. xix. 7, 8)—the works of the believer—for which God so jealously cares and faithfully warns, lest, while saved, any of His people be "saved as by fire"? That any one will be *absolutely* without reward, absolutely fruitless, I do not think we can suppose, with such scriptures before us as speak of the grace and power of God to keep His saints, and to make the fruits of holiness abound in them.

ANS.—We merely give the thought of the letter, condensing for the sake of space the question of our brother. As to the subject of rewards we feel it to be one of immense importance, and agree fully with all he has said on the subject. We still feel, however, that this is not the subject in 2 Cor. v. 3, and would again refer to the explanation given in the answer to question 6. "Naked" is a strong word and seems to have a well defined moral meaning in Scripture—the sinner uncovered before God, as Adam was. Also the position of the verse indicates its meaning—a parenthesis, explaining that the apostle refers to real Christians not mere professors—they are not naked, because they are clothed with a glorified body, which presupposes that they have been justified; for "Whom He justified them He also glorified." We think a careful examination of the context will convince our readers of the correctness of this view of the passage.

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## “UNITE MY HEART.”

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NOW we have the path itself with its trials and experiences, in which these principles are practically realized. First of all, the sufficiency for it, which is in God alone: this is but the application of what has been already said; but it is the necessary foundation on which alone a life with God can be based. And our utter dependence upon Him is expressed in the next verse, in which with the full purpose of heart to walk in His truth the psalmist confesses his need, not only of instruction as to the way, the one way which is Jehovah's, but also of his own deliverance from the infirmity which nevertheless yields so to distraction: “*unite* my heart,” he says, “to fear thy Name.” This is indeed what is everywhere the great lack among the people of God. How much of our lives is, not spent in positive evil, but frittered away and lost in countless petty diversions which spoil effectually the positiveness of their testimony for God! How few can say with the apostle, “This *one* thing I do!” We are on the road—at least, not intentionally off it—but we stop to chase butterflies among the flowers, and make no serious progress. How Satan must wonder when he sees us turn away from the “kingdoms of the world and the glory of them” when realized as his temptation, and yet yield ourselves with scarce a thought to endless trifles, lighter than the thistle-down which the child spends all his strength for, and we laugh at him. Would we examine our lives carefully in such an interest as this, how should we realize the multitude of needless anxieties, of self-imagined duties, of permitted relaxations, of “innocent” trifles, which in-

cessantly divert us from that in which alone there is profit! How few, perhaps, would care to face such an examination of the day by day unwritten history of their lives!

"We must not be legal": with such an excuse, how we pass over the "little things" which come in everywhere unchallenged by reason of their littleness. "We must not make religion too severe": and so we take off our armor on the battle-field. "We must not have a morbid conscience": and so we forget to *exercise* ourselves, that we may have one void of offence toward God and man. Concentration of purpose is what most of all the devil dreads for us as Christians, and the air is full of whispered plausibilities and lullabies to deprive us of this. Thus Christ Himself as "all" for us is looked at as somewhat not to be too seriously taken; the glorious sunshine is to be helped to be brighter by men's taper-lights; or carefully shaded from eyes too infirm to enjoy it in its brightness or too continuously.

How perfect a lesson there is for us here in the Lord's words as to the vine-branch and abiding in Him (Jno. xv.)! The branch abides in the vine without intermission: a moment's intermission would be fatal to it. And "as the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine, no more can ye," says He, "except ye abide in Me."

But then for *what* are we to abide in Him? The whole purpose of the vine is *fruit*; and this is what rules in the ways of the husbandman with it. He prunes unsparingly, that he may have fruit: one might think, to look at him, that he was making but a wreck of the whole plant. What harm is there in all this wood and leaf that he is paring away? In itself none;

and yet in relation to its fruit-bearing, very much. The parasites that destroy it from without cannot do it much more harm than just these fruitless stems and this exuberant foliage. The precious sap is drawn off by them by which the fruit is to be filled out and perfected; and, if they are spared, not simply will there be less fruit, but (worse than all) *the whole character of that which is produced is deteriorated*. And so with the toleration of much that is merely evil in its power to draw off and scatter the energies which should be yielding fruit for Him and are not. It is the "one thing I do" that as a principle characterizes the whole man, and marks him out as Christ's, glorifies Christ in him. It means seriously "Christ is all." It proclaims Him the sunshine of life, not shadow; and sunshine is what the fruit needs. It says that for progress every moment of life is valuable, saves the life from dilettanteism and superficiality, makes Christ Lord, not casual adviser: no wonder that in the servant's psalm we should find, as nowhere else in them, this prayer, "Unite my heart to fear Thy Name."—(*From Numerical Bible, Psalm lxxxvi.*)

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"OUR giving up the world, and the world giving us up, are two very different things. It is the latter tries all the elements of self-importance, which lie much deeper rooted than we are aware. There may be some little sacrifice in giving it up, but we have a sufficient motive, but what motive for being despised? it is really our glory, for Christ was, but then He must be all, and that is saying a good deal."

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"WE should like to go always with a full, favorable wind, but this does not make a good sailor."

“HE THAT HATH AN EAR LET HIM HEAR.”

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BELoved BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN CHRIST,—The day of the apostasy is hastening on with rapid strides, and also the day in which the Lord shall come to snatch His own away. The present moment is of so solemn a character, that I feel constrained to address you the word of exhortation. Godly men, everywhere, who watch the signs of the times, see the moment approaching, which shall terminate the present actings of grace. The time has evidently arrived when one must speak plainly and decisively, and ask you, where you are, and what you are about. You have, by grace—which has shone brighter and brighter as it has approached its termination—been gathered out of the seething mass of idolatry and wickedness which now threatens Christendom and the world with an overthrow, more awful than that of Sodom and Gomorrah of old; and the question is whether you are adequately impressed with the responsibility, as well as the blessedness, of the ground you are on, and walking like men and women whose eyes have been opened. Believe me, there has never been in the world's history such a time as the present, and Satan is occupied with none as he is with you, and his occupation with you is the more to be feared, because of the subtlety of his operations. His object is to withdraw your attention from Christ, while you suppose you are on safe ground and have nothing to fear. He would destroy you with the very truth itself. For, mark the subtlety: you *are* on safe ground, but *only* while Christ is your all in all. Here is where he is drawing some away. Interpose anything between your soul and Christ, and your Philadelphia

becomes Laodicea, your safe ground is as unsafe as the rest of Christendom, your strength is gone from you, and you are become weak, like any ordinary mortal. Some of you are young, recently converted, or brought to the right ways of the Lord, and you do not know the depths of Satan. But you are hereby solemnly warned of your peril, and if mischief overtake you, you cannot plead ignorance. Again, I say, Satan has his eye specially upon you, for the purpose of interposing the world, in some form, between your soul and Christ. He cares how little, or in what form. If you knew how little will answer his purpose, you would be alarmed. It is not by that which is gross or shameful; such is the *development*, not the *beginning* of evil. It is not by anything glaring that he seeks to ruin you, but in small and seemingly harmless things—things that would not shock or offend any one as things go, and yet these constitute the deadly and insidious poison, destined to ruin your testimony, and withdraw you from Christ. Do you ask what are these alarming symptoms, and where are they seen? The question does but show what is the character of the opiate at work. Brethren and sisters, you are being infected with the spirit of the world. Your dress, your manner, your talk, your lack of spirituality, betrays it in every gathering. There is a dead weight, a restraint, a want of power, that reveals itself in the meetings, as plainly as if your heart were visibly displayed and its thoughts publicly read. A form of godliness, without power, is beginning to be seen among *you*, as plainly as in Christendom generally. As surely as you tamper with the world, so surely will you drift away to its level. This is in the nature of things. It must be

so. If you tamper with the world, the privileged place you occupy, instead of shielding you, will only expose you to greater condemnation. It must be Christ *or* the world. It cannot be—ought not to be—Christ *and* the world. God's grace in drawing you out of the world in your *ignorance* is one thing, but God will never permit you to prostitute His grace, and play fast and loose, when you have been separated from the world. Remember you take the place, and claim the privilege, of one whose eyes have been opened, and if on the one hand this is unspeakably blessed (and it is), on the other hand, it is the most dreadful position in which a human being can be found. It is to be at the wedding feast without the wedding garment. It is to say, Lord, Lord, while you do not the things that He bids. It is to say, I go, sir, as he said who went not.

Beloved, I am persuaded better things of you, though I thus speak, and I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will bless Him for these few faithful words. Nothing can be more glorious than the position you are called to occupy, in these closing days. Saints have stood in the breach, have watched through weary days and nights these eighteen hundred years, and you only wait for the trumpet of victory, to go in, and take possession of the glorious inheritance. Other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors, and yet, forsooth, you are lowering your dignity to the level of the poor potsherds of the earth, who only wait for the rod of the Victor, (and yours too) to be dashed into pieces. Oh, awake then from your lethargy; slumber no longer—put away your idols and false gods, wash your garments, and get you to Bethel, where you will find God to be



better than ever you knew Him, even in your best days. Lay aside your last bit of worldly dress; guard your speech, that it be of Christ and His affairs, and not, as you know it now often is, of anything but Him. Let your prayers mingle with those of other saints at the prayer-meetings—they never were more needed. Neglect no opportunity of gathering up instruction from that Word which alone can keep you from the paths of the destroyer, and let your life be the evidence of the treasures you gather up at the lecture or the reading-meeting. If you want occupation, with a glorious reward from a beloved Master, ask that Master to set you to work for Him; you will never regret it, either in this world or in that which is to come.

Beloved, you belong to Christ and Christ to you. Break not this holy union. Let not the betrothed one be unfaithful to her Bridegroom! Why should you be robbed and spoiled? And for what? Empty husks and bitter fruits, while you waste this little span of blessing! All the distinctions acquired here in the energy of the Spirit, will but serve to enhance your beauty, and render you more lovely in the eyes of Him who has espoused you to Himself. Can you refuse Him His delights in you? Can you refuse Him the fruit of the travail of His soul, who once hung, a dying man, between two thieves on Calvary, a spectacle to men and angels, and for *you*; you who have *forgotten* (for you cannot have *despised*) this devotedness for you. He could have taken the world without the cross, and left you out, but He would not; and now, will you, having been enriched by those agonies and that blood, take the world into your tolerance and leave Him out? Impossible!

Your pure mind but needs to be stirred up by way of remembrance.

Let us therefore take courage from this very moment. We have lately been offering up prayers, confessing the lack of piety and devotedness. May we not take this word as the answer of our ever-gracious, faithful Lord, to arouse us—to reawaken our drooping energies? And then the more quickly He comes the better. We shall not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

LONDON, May, 1869.

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## PASTORAL CARE.

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WHEN Paul had planted the gospel in a country, he did not abandon the converts, but returns with affectionate solicitude, instructs, exhorts, edifies, and watches over the seed planted by his instrumentality, in order that it may be preserved, and grow in the knowledge of Christ. He does not neglect the Lord's garden, well knowing that tares may spring up where the good seed grows, and that the enemy can spoil the harvest, if it is not well guarded. It is more needful now than ever to do this, for we are in the perilous times of the last days. Though the enemy can never pluck the sheep out of the Good Shepherd's hand, yet he may disperse them; they may be subjected to the effect of every kind of evil doctrine, by which their growth is hindered, the Lord's glory trampled upon, testimony to Him destroyed, and the candlestick taken away. Let the Lord's servants take warning!

J. N. D.

## MODERN EDUCATION AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

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THIS subject is by no means one of theoretical interest merely; nor does it concern us simply as showing the general tendency of the world about us. It is a matter in which every child of God has a direct interest, while it presses particularly upon those Christian households where there are young to be educated. Too long have Christians held their peace, and allowed their children to be taught whatever seemed proper to those in authority, with the inevitable results. Just as in Pharaoh's day, Satan would keep our children back in the world and worldly systems. Let us awake to the dangers of this.

Of the immense importance of education we need hardly speak. It is provided for in the Word of God. Children were to be taught the works and the ways of God. The Word of God itself is a summary of knowledge of various kinds—history, the works of nature, law, ethnology,—but all linked with that which makes true knowledge, with God Himself. This is the proper effect of all true knowledge, to put us into communion with Himself. Thus are the faculties brightened, the mind elevated, and the man occupied with that which lifts him above the level of the brute. Scripture encourages the pursuit of knowledge, particularly that of nature. “The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.”

The Christian Church has been the conservator of education even during the darkest periods of its history. For centuries all of learning was confined to

monasteries, where the Word of God was carefully copied and at least partially studied. Outside all was gross darkness and dense ignorance. The great universities of continental Europe and England owe their origin to the Christian Church—even if degraded by superstition and ignorance.

Nor is this merely true of mediæval times and Roman Catholic countries. Most of the great literary institutions of this country were at the beginning formed by godly men, that their sons might be taught of God and His works. Many were established that young men might get that education which would the better qualify them as preachers of the gospel; and however unduly the thought of human fitness may have predominated, we must thankfully confess that these institutions were founded by men of prayer and faith, and for the glory of God and the blessing of His people.

Very simple were those early institutions. Money was not then so plentiful and there was no show. A simple "Log College" might be the only shelter for a few godly young men with one or two devoted teachers. The whole atmosphere was one of sobriety and much prayer marked the work.

How often have these simple schools and colleges been the scene of wondrous awakenings, where scores of young men were brought to Christ and devoted themselves to His service. How were these institutions centres from which light radiated far into the surrounding darkness.

Let us look at it now. Knowledge surely has increased wondrously. Institutions of elementary and higher education have multiplied until the land is filled with them. Discoveries in the realm of nature

have opened up almost a new world. Appliances of the most ingenious kind have made investigation amazingly accurate and profound. Where tens enjoyed the advantages of a so-called liberal education in the last century, thousands now are obtaining what is tenfold wider and more profound. All this is, at the first glance, very encouraging. But let us look a little deeper. Money is plentiful, and is poured out by millions where it used to be given by hundreds. Are those millions the result of heart dedication to Christ? Are prayers as constant and as earnest? Are colleges training schools for piety and scenes of wondrous revivals?

Look too at the teachers. Formerly they were, as a rule, devoted servants of Christ; now, would not many of the professors claim for themselves the privilege of being "advanced," "liberals," "agnostics"? Is it unkind to say, judging by the character of the teaching, that the mass of college professors are unconverted men? God forbid that we should judge harshly, and He alone knows the hearts of men, but while morality, uprightness, and professional zeal characterize this class, God seems to be unknown and unloved.

And this is, in a word, the character of modern teaching: God is put far off—out of His world. Development has taken His place. Instead of the providence of God we have the philosophy of history—the development of nations: creation has been displaced by the theory of evolution of man from the lower creatures. The same atheistic theory has been applied to well nigh every branch of science, until it has laid its unholy hands upon the Word of God, and under the plea of "Higher Criticism," has rent

it apart into unrecognizable fragments, and left us, if we are to believe these teachers (which, thank God, we are not) a mass of inaccuracy, fraud and superstition, without a divine mind, a living Spirit. These teachers of evolution would thus have us believe that the precious Word of God, instead of having been given by inspiration of God, has developed in connection with the national development of the Israelitish nation. They would leave us nothing supernatural. As we said, God is left out.

Reason is exalted, deified. The mind of man is the final court before which every thing must be summoned and be examined. God Himself and His Word are thus judged. It is the old lie of Satan, "Ye shall be as gods," as attractive now as ever to the natural mind.

It need hardly be said that this system has no place for such unwelcome truths as the lost and guilty condition of all men, the eternal doom awaiting the impenitent, the person and work of our blessed Lord. All these are but phases in the gradual development and progress of the human race, to be left behind as the emancipated soul builds for itself "more stately mansions." How different it was in the development of the Apostle? He too left what was behind, for it was linked with self, but what did he have before him as the goal, the end of all? Christ only.

There is scarcely a branch of human knowledge into which this atheistic spirit has not penetrated. Particularly is this the case in the physical sciences, and the criticism of Scripture. Colleges become thus veritable hot-beds of infidelity, fountains from whence issue streams which poison the masses. Alas, that we should have to say it! many of the theological

schools, where the ministers of the gospel are educated, are thus defiled. What can we expect when the teachers of Christianity are really infidel at heart?

A sad feature is that colleges for the education of women are not exempt. An infidel *man* is sad enough; but we have become painfully accustomed to that. Are we now to have infidel women? Is their higher education, which should be a blessing, to be turned into a curse? Think of the mothers of the future, instead of teaching the little ones of the blessed Lord Jesus, being themselves really unbelievers; a cold intellectual atheism taking the place of the precious atmosphere of the grace of the fear of God. For the mother makes the home, and where she is ignorant of Christ and God, what will be the character of that home?

We must expect, alas! that those who are going on in the course of this world will be such. But these institutions of learning are the places where the sons and daughters of *Christian* parents receive their training. Some of these institutions are directly under the supervision of the leading evangelical denominations and are responsible to them. Why are not the teachers called to account? Has the spirit of loyalty to Christ departed? Oh, for the spirit of Phinehas, of unsparing faithfulness to God.

Many Christian parents send their sons and daughters to these places under the impression that all is well. Does not the Church endorse the college? Is not its president a clergyman? Imagine the feelings of parents who by self-denial have sent their son to college, to see him return an unbeliever—despising the precious Word of God, and an enemy to the gospel. Would it not be better to see him a drunkard?

for that sin is in the body, but infidelity fastens its fangs upon the heart and feeds upon the vitals of the man's soul.

Does all this sound extreme? We are persuaded that it is not. Who of us has not heard of these saddest cases? And who can tell of the innumerable number whose shipwreck of faith will not be known until "the day shall declare it"? So long as the Lord's people are indifferent to the reality of the danger, so long are they exposed to it. An infatuation seems to have taken possession of the professing Church, and they are ready to barter the Word of God, the truths of the incarnation, atonement, the person of Christ, the presence of the Holy Ghost,—everything that makes up our Christian heritage—for a mess of German pottage. For Germany seems to be one of the most fruitful sources of all this infidelity. The natural industry of that people, coupled with their speculative tendencies, and divorced from the fear of God and subjection to His Word, has produced an immense mass of theories, philosophic and scientific, alike perhaps in nothing save their unlikeness to God's truth, and their fascination for minds not subject to that truth.

There seems to have been in these theories a revival of the old deism of the eighteenth century, which did not trouble itself so much to deny the existence of God, as to put Him out of His own creation. The educated world is fast becoming agnostic. And this is the tendency in institutions of teaching to-day.

The question then will be asked, Does the enjoyment of a liberal education necessarily mean the destruction of faith? Most unhesitatingly we answer, No. All true knowledge but enlarges the field



of human intelligence, and strengthens the faculties of man. It puts us nearer to Him who knoweth all things. But all true knowledge must recognize Him as He has revealed Himself in Christ our Lord. We need fear no knowledge of nature or of man. We will find God in all His works. We will find Him even above the chaos of humanity, in the history of the world. All speaks of Him, and when the ear has been once opened to hear the voice of the Son of God, we can see and hear God every where. We can say with the poet,—

“Let knowledge grow from more to more,  
But more of *reverence* in us dwell.”

Ah! that is it. All true knowledge humbles man and exalts God. We cannot have too much of that. Satan, on the contrary, would give knowledge apart from God, and this we repeat is the growing tendency in the vast majority of the educational institutions of to-day.

But we are asked, What is the remedy? In one sense there is no remedy. We cannot improve the world, and these things are mainly in and of the world. True, if Christians were awake to their responsibilities they might check the growth of infidelity in those schools over which they have control; or failing in this, they might establish others on Christian principles. In the main, however, we are confronted with the sad fact that education is in the hands of the world.

Shall we then let our children grow up in ignorance? Better that than have them infidels. But neither is necessary. Our children are in the world, they must overcome it as their parents, it is to be hoped, do. It is well however for the parents to

realize that it *is* the world into which their children go when they begin school. A sense of the danger will put them on their guard.

A happy, holy Christian home is the great safeguard against all kinds of worldliness, whether intellectual or moral. Let there be prayer and faith from the earliest childhood; godly example, tenderness, and withal a firm hand of parental love. In other words, let the children be surrounded at home by an atmosphere of Christianity, let them be taught of Christ and early brought to the gracious Saviour. In all probability their conversion will take place early in life.

Nor let the parental care cease with the conversion of the child—it should have then a second beginning. Let the children be sympathized with; their interests, and their lessons talked over, so that they feel happy in the joy and fellowship of home. The multiplication of schools has made it unnecessary, save in rare instances, for the child to leave home until the time comes for college, and even then it is by no means always necessary.

This is the golden time for seed-sowing and faithful care. By the time he is ready for college, the youth's character should be established and be so confirmed in the faith and knowledge of the Word of God, that the most brilliant theories would seem to him as old wives' fables compared with the precious verities upon which he has grown strong; every suggestion of doubt would be an insult to the blessed Lord, whom he has long known and loved. If the young man is weak and unstable and unsaved, it may be gravely questioned whether he should be sent into the perils of a college life. In fact, unless

one show a real aptitude for learning and some soberness of mind, it might be far better to have him enter upon some other walk of life. We only suggest this for prayerful consideration.

Another most important matter and one which should arouse Christian parents to a sense of responsibility is this, should not Christians take a deeper interest in the works of God and in all true knowledge? If themselves more familiar with the facts of science, could they not more easily check the crudities gathered in the mind of youth? We do not mean that parents should become students again, but that by reading they should be more or less familiar with the great truths of the world. There are works which can supply most delightful and valuable instruction in these lines.

Above all, let there be a fresh turning to the Word of God. As in Israel's day, whenever they ceased from the occupation of their heritage, the enemy came in and dispossessed them, so it is now. If we were ever gaining in heart knowledge of the perfections of the Word of God, higher criticism would have no dangers for us, nor for the young, growing up to understand the depths of beauty and wisdom in the Scriptures.

Is it not too often the case that Christian parents cease to grow in the knowledge of God's word? But little that unfolds its wondrous depths is read; in fact, is not their reading confined largely to simple gospel tales or the merest elements of divine truth? Let there be an acknowledgment of failure, a hearty turning to God with an awakened interest in divine things, and we are persuaded that not all the power of Satan intrenched in all the universities of the

world will be able to dislodge one of the least of these little ones from the impregnable position—founded upon the Rock.

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## "ALL THE DAYS OF JOSHUA."

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"And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that He had done for Israel." (Joshua xxiv. 31.)

SO long as the people had a leader whom God had raised up, who passed through the trials and experienced the joys of a journey from Egypt to Canaan in dependence upon the living God, so long did they abide faithful, outwardly at least, to the Lord. When, however, the old generation had passed away, and when those were placed in responsibility to whom all the past had been simply a history and not an experience, they showed how much they were influenced by man, and how little by divine power.

In our day, too, there is the same danger. Truths for which the men of God went to the stake in years gone by, are now taken upon the lips with little thought as to their preciousness or their gravity. Truths which were learned through prayers and tears, earnest crying to God through sleepless nights and anxious days, can now be mastered by a little attentive reading of the proper books. Need we be surprised, then, if these truths which took those who had found them, out of the world, made them in reality pilgrims, should now be pronounced "trippingly on the tongue" by those who have known but little of the exercise in acquiring and correspondingly little of the transforming power of the truths?

God forbid that we should say there are none now who know the power of divine truth; we speak of tendencies just as dangerous to-day as in the days of Israel. Is it not the Laodicean state, complacent possession of that which begets pride, rather than obedient cleaving to Christ.

Even where there is real love to Christ, is there not the danger of not realizing the priceless value of truths and testimony gained in the past? The conflicts are over, and we have been enjoying the benefits of the victory; now comes the danger of despising that conflict and its results. Let us remember that the faith which was once delivered to the saints has to be always earnestly contended for; that in things spiritual as in temporal "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

It may be said, Is this the necessary and inevitable tendency of the second generation, and is there no remedy? We believe the tendency is real, and, thank God, the remedy is real. It is when traditionalism comes in, and the past seems but a story, when the heart has not passed through deep exercise, that the danger is great. O brethren, if the truths for which our elders suffered, wept, and prayed to *gain*, are as real to us, we too will be ready to suffer, weep, and pray to *keep* them, and we will keep them. Let us remember that we are living in restless times, when almost everything seems to be going to pieces. Let us therefore not be drawn aside, but hold all the more closely what is against the democracy of the day—the truth of God. Largeness of heart ever flows from communion with God, but we will not be unmindful of his works in the past, nor will we be ashamed to own the grace of God in those who stood for Him when it *cost* to be faithful.

## THE TESTIMONY OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES.

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“**I**N the mouth of two or three witness shall every word be established,” says the apostle. (2 Cor. xiii. 1.) This is in accord with the injunction of our blessed Lord, when He said, “But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.” (Matt. xviii 16.) This is the well-known rule of the law also: “One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth; at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.” (Deut. xix. 15.) In this connection see also Num. xxxv. 30; Deut. xvii. 6; John viii. 17; 1 Tim. v. 19; and Heb. x. 28. The reason for this wise provision is manifest, guarding, as it does, not only against false witness, but also against the *mistakes* of those who do not intentionally testify contrary to truth. To some degree, and in some cases, the rule is found in modern jurisprudence; but, the legal systems of men not being framed on a spiritual basis, nor intended to be administered in accordance with the scriptural exhortations to charity (1 Pet. iv. 8; 1 Cor. xvi. 14), the testimony of two witnesses is not, as a general thing, required. If, however, we see that the practical effect of insisting that *every word* shall be established “in the mouth of two or three witnesses,” in our intercourse with our brethren, will be to promote the proper exercise of charity (Prov. x. 12), we will not be averse to the undoubted scriptural rule being enforced in our consciences with all its strictness. The

observance of this rule will tend to make us far less ready to believe the latest breath of gossip, and certainly very unwilling to pass along an unsubstantiated report.

But one exception to the teaching of Scripture, as above stated, has ever been urged, the alleged exception being based on 1 Cor. v. 1. "It is *reported commonly* that there is fornication among you." It is thought by some that the apostle Paul accepted the "common report," referred to in the passage just quoted, as the basis of the judgment expressed by him in verse three, where he says, "For I, verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed." In other words, in their view, Paul accepted "common report" in lieu of the testimony of two or three witnesses, as required by the law, the Lord, and the apostle himself in his second epistle to this same church. They overlook the fact that such a view imports a contradiction into Scripture, when, as we know, "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace." (1 Cor. xiv. 33.) This view makes 1 Cor. v. 1, bear too heavy a burden; it is thereby made to mean too much.

In the first place, the Revised Version so changes the translation of 1 Cor. v. 1, as to divest it of even any apparent sanction of this unscriptural view. The rendering of the R. V. is, "It is *actually* reported," etc.

In the second place, it is preposterous to suppose that this same apostle would write to this same church (2 Cor. xiii. 1), saying, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established," if he himself had not had, in conformity with the law,

(which he knew) and the words of Christ, the testimony of two or three witnesses prior to forming his personal judgment "concerning him that hath so done this deed." (1 Cor. v. 3.) Paul was at Ephesus when he wrote this epistle (1 Cor. xvi. 8, 9,) and Ephesus was not so far from Corinth that it is unlikely Paul personally had the testimony of, at least, two witnesses; in fact, it is in every way highly probable that he did have that testimony, especially in view of 2 Cor. xiii. 1.

In the third place, to make "common report" a test of truth, a ground of belief, as is done by the adherents of the view under consideration, in the place of the "two or three witnesses" in whose mouth "every word shall be established," proves entirely too much for their purpose. It would equally prove that our blessed Lord's disciples "came by night and stole Him away while" the guard "slept" (Matt. xxviii. 13 and 15.) This is important. The "evil report" against Paul (2 Cor. vi. 8) was undoubtedly false, and we know that the "slandorous report" (Rom. iii. 8) was undeniably so.

In the fourth place, to make assurance doubly sure, the word of God even gives the names of the witnesses whose testimony Paul had, besides mentioning a "letter" which the church at Corinth wrote to Paul, which undoubtedly, afforded him written evidence of the fact. Paul had labored in Corinth for "a good while" over "a year and six months" (Acts xviii. 11, 18), that church being the fruit of his labors. After his departure for Ephesus (vers. 18, 19), the church had fallen into a very low spiritual condition; they became "carnal," says the apostle. (1 Cor. iii. 1.) They greatly needed the instruction of the



apostle in regard to a variety of matters; and, therefore, they wrote unto him. (1 Cor. vii. 1.) As we see from the seventh chapter, this letter referred to a matter akin to that treated of in chapter five of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians; in fact, it must have referred to the very fact itself of sin in their midst, thus giving the distinct and definite testimony of the church in regard to the reality of the fact. This letter was conveyed to Paul, at Ephesus (Acts xix. 1; 1 Cor. xvi. 8, 19), by three of the brethren from Corinth, whose names were Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (1 Cor. xvi. 17, and *cf.* 1 Cor. i. 11, and chap. xi. 18. In 1 Cor. xvi. 17, Paul says, "I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied." That this means that Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus came to Paul from Corinth, there can be no doubt; otherwise, there would have been no occasion for mentioning their coming. This view is, however, verified beyond cavil by 1 Cor. i. 16, which refers to Stephanas by name as one of the Corinthian saints, whose household Paul had baptised, and 1 Cor. xvi. 15, which tells us that the house of Stephanas was "the first-fruits of Achaia" (the Roman proconsular province where Corinth was situated. Moreover, the name of one of the brethren named with Stephanas is Achaicus, which name means "an Achaian"—*i.e.*, a native of Achaia (Greece). Thus Paul undeniably had the testimony of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, and also a *letter* from the church of Corinth on the subject, regarding which he expresses His judgment in 1 Cor. v. 3.

In addition to this testimony which Paul undenia-

bly had, it is highly probable that he had also the testimony of Apollos. An examination of Acts xviii. 24, 27; xix. 1, and 1 Cor. iii. 6, will show that Apollos succeeded Paul in ministering in the Word at Corinth. "I have planted, Apollos watered," is very plain on this point. In 1 Cor. xvi. 12, at the time Paul was writing to the Corinthians, we find Apollos with Paul at Ephesus. Apollos was, undoubtedly, able to confirm the testimony of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, and the letter from the church at Corinth. So, it seems to be established, in an irrefragable manner, that, so far from receiving "common report" in lieu of the testimony of "two or three witnesses," Paul unquestionably had more than the required proof,—*viz.*, *certainly* the testimony of three witnesses and a written statement, and *probably* the testimony of a fourth witness, besides.\*

Daily experience confirms to us the truth of Cicero's remark, that "there is nothing which wings its flight so swiftly as calumny, nothing which is uttered with more ease; nothing is listened to with more readiness, nothing dispersed more widely." But is it conduct "as becometh saints" to indulge in this, the world's favorite pastime? Or is it not rather the case that the mere requirement that *every word* shall be established "in the mouth of two or three witnesses" will, if acted out, effectually prevent the repetition of many choice morsels of gossip!

Let us weigh well, and endeavor to practice, this apostolic injunction, "In the mouth of two or three

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\* In addition to what has been said, the shameless publicity of the whole matter made it universally known. It was trifled with apparently by the entire assembly. At least, there was no brokenness and humiliation.—[ED.]

witnesses shall every word be established." Let us "speak the *truth in love*" (Eph. iv. 15), avoiding "backbitings" and "whisperings," which render saints not such as an apostle would desire. (2 Cor. xii. 20.)

H. K. W.

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## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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**QUES. 17.**—Does Scripture teach that regeneration can take place in infancy? Would John Baptist's case "filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb" be an illustration of this, and if so would it be exceptional?

**Ans.**—It would seem that the prediction as to John the Baptist in Luke i. 13–17, does not raise the question of New Birth, but refers to his fitness for service as a prophet—the forerunner of Christ. He was to be a Nazarite and filled with the Holy Ghost from infancy. This expression is used in connection with prophetic gift twice again in this chapter, vers. 41, 67; of the disciples at and after Pentecost (Acts ii. 4; vii. 55; ix. 17; xiii. 9). The general meaning seems clearly to be that the person thus "filled" was entirely under the guidance and control of the Holy Spirit. We think that even in Acts ii. 4, the *filling* with the Spirit is in connection with the speaking with tongues and prophesying, though of course the baptism by the Spirit took place at the same time. John Baptist was a chosen vessel of the Spirit from infancy specially raised up for that purpose. That he was also a regenerate person we do not question, but Scripture does not say when and how.

However, of one thing we may be certain; Scripture always links New Birth with the Word of God (John iii. 5; 1 Pet. i. 23; James i. 18). It would be dangerous, therefore, to separate them, and particularly so to teach that infants are sometimes regenerate from birth. Very early, thank God, He can speak to the child and faith should expect it. The question of the salvation and consequent regeneration of those who die in infancy is not one which touches man's responsibility, and therefore is not enlarged upon in Scripture. Of course such are saved.

**QUES. 18.**—Please explain 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19. In what manner were the spirits in prison preached to? Did Christ preach to

them Himself? If so when? What is the prison spoken of? Also in ver. 21 please explain how baptism saves.

ANS.—The spirits are *now* in prison (the place of confinement of the lost). When they were men upon the earth, in the days of Noah, Christ preached to them by the Spirit ("My Spirit shall not always strive with man") through Noah. We have a similar expression in 1 Pet. i. 11, "the Spirit of Christ which was in them." The connection shows that we are to expect suffering during the absence of Christ, personally, from earth, that He suffered even to death, as to His flesh, but He has been raised up and now by His Spirit in us sustains us just as He did Noah in his lonely testimony before the flood—times similar to the present in many ways. As Noah was saved through the water—reached safety on the other side of the flood in the ark—so baptism, figure of death, is likewise a *figure* of salvation through the death of Christ, who is now risen and glorified, and thus in *reality*, not in figure, gives us a good conscience. We know we are saved because Christ is risen.

QUES. 19.—In 1 Tim. v. 9, "Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man etc.," does the term "into the number" convey the thought that she was not to be taken upon the list of widows to be cared for by the Church unless she answered to the above qualifications, as well as being without relatives responsible as well as able to maintain her (vers. 4, 16), or was there some other number referred to? Has Acts vi. 1-6 any reference to it? And would it preclude the thought of caring for widows anywhere *under* the age of threescore?

ANS.—"As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the *household of faith*" (Gal. vi. 10). This would include widows of any age who were in need—such as we have in Acts vi. On the other hand it was apparently customary in Judaism for the younger widows to return to their father's house (Gen. xxxviii. 11; Lev. xxii. 13; Ruth i. 11-13). This seems to be the ground of the apostle's caution to distinguish cases, and to let none be 'a burden to the assembly, who could be provided for by their families. The limitation of age seems to be connected with the formal *enrolment* of aged persons, who were not merely beneficiaries, but formally recognized as ensamples to the younger women, who by their godly walk and judicious oversight would be of special

help (Titus ii. 3-6). Such persons should be of mature years, with the experience which a faithful performance of a mother's duties, and of Christian hospitality would have given. Younger widows were unfitted for such work, not merely because of their forsaking it and thus giving occasion for reproach, but because of the temptation, to which they would be more particularly exposed, of mere gossip and visiting without conscience. While not exactly of an official character, these elder widows were formally recognized. We might add of what immense value are such women in the Church to-day. We have no formal enrolment and do not need it (we have no Timothys to enroll them). "Mothers in Israel," visiting the sick comforting the sorrowing, counseling the younger women—how beautiful is such a service, even when it flows from a lonely heart and a dependent position. May God awaken the elder sisters to this lovely and needful work.

QUES. 20.—Were the "garments of glory and beauty" worn by Aaron his ordinary dress? Lev. xvi. shows clearly that he never entered the holiest in them, but as the white linen garments were to be worn on that occasion, and then to be laid aside, vers. 21-23, what other garments had he to put on? Ex. xxviii. 30 seems to teach that he must have worn them continually. What garments are referred to in Numb. xx. 28? The white linen garments seem to have been worn only upon the day of atonement.

ANS.—We agree with our correspondent, that the garments of glory and beauty were the ordinary dress of the High-Priest, most certainly whenever he was engaged in priestly service—save for special reasons on the day of atonement. The beautiful typical teaching of these garments would bear this out. For atonement absolute spotless sinlessness was the great essential, hence the white linen: in priestly service our great High-Priest wears the varied characters shown in the garments of glory and beauty. The garments referred to in Numb. xx. 28 were evidently the holy garments of glory and beauty. See Ex. xxix. 29.

QUES. 21.—Is it scriptural to say that Christ's *Spirit* went to the Father, His *soul* to Hades, a different place (called by some the bowels of the earth)?

ANS.—"To-day shalt thou be with *Me* in Paradise." "Father into Thy hands I commend My spirit." Christ was with the Father in heaven: His *body* in the grave.

QUES. 22.—Can we separate soul and spirit after death?

ANS.—We can doubtless *distinguish*, but never separate soul and spirit.

QUES. 23.—What is Hades? the bowels of the earth? or the *whole* unseen world as contrasted with that in which we live?

ANS.—Unquestionably it is the whole unseen world, including both saved and lost. See Luke xvi. 23; Rev. xx. 13, 14 for the lost. Acts ii. 27, 31 for our blessed Lord. It answers to Sheol of the Old Testament.

QUES. 24.—What does “the lower parts of the earth” refer to? Eph. iv. 9.

ANS.—To the grave. He first died before He ascended—that He might be our Head in redemption.

QUES. 25.—What does Eph. iv. 8, “He led captivity captive” refer to—the overcoming Satan and the principalities and powers with him, as in Col. ii. 15; or was it as some teach “Christ going down to Sheol or Hades and bringing up Old Testament saints with him and leading them up to Paradise?”

ANS.—Most unquestionably the former. He led *captive*, captivity. There is the thought of conquest, victory over a foe. Satan seemed to triumph—“the power of darkness” to prevail, but at the moment of apparent victory—nay by the cross itself Christ triumphed over Satan’s hosts—He bound the strong man.

The views as to Hades opposed in the above questions are, we are persuaded, most unhealthy and unscriptural. What shall we say of a doctrine that would sunder our Lord’s person and put His Spirit in heaven with the Father and His soul—the desires and affections—in Hades? or of the Old Testament saints having been shut up in the bowels of the earth till liberated by our Lord’s going down and leading them out? Such views are not merely unscriptural, but devoid of sobriety—well nigh grotesque. They may serve to pander to a morbid curiosity, but they misrepresent the grace and power and goodness of God. We trust beloved brethren will be kept in all simplicity, not occupied with that which cannot be to edification, and which distorts the precious truth of God. We are therefore grateful to our brother for calling attention to these “unlearned questions” that all may be warned against them.

# “YE HAVE COMPASSED THIS MOUNTAIN LONG ENOUGH.”

(Deut. ii. 3.)

**T**WICE in the first two chapters of Deuteronomy do we have similar expressions, moving the people to go forward; when they dwelt at Horeb and here again, when they had “compassed Mount Seir many days.” At Horeb they had received the law (Sinai being a part of the great mountain) and had been instructed in the elements which were to characterize them as a nation. They were to leave the place of mere instruction and to go on to actual attainment. But eleven days journey lay between Horeb and the land, which they could not enter on the basis of Horeb and its law. Unbelief and presumption with all the apostasy and murmuring that darken the pages of the book of Numbers show how they failed to answer to the mercy and goodness of God. “They could not enter in because of unbelief.”

They are put under the chastening hand of God and for the remainder of the forty years they wander in a desert land. “The rebellious dwell in dry land.” But now again they hear the words of a faithful God, who, whatever their departure, would not forsake His beloved people. Again they are called to take a fresh step—one of progress, and not simply to walk in the paths which had not led them one step in advance. How cheering it must have been to those who while plodding on had grown weary and heart-sick for something better than the desert rocks and sands, with nothing to make them think of what was beyond.

Now there is a new word, a new departure; how it must have thrilled their hearts and made dull eyes brighten with hope and brought fresh joy into faces out of which the light had faded. "Turn you northward!" Have done with Mount Seir, which hitherto had but acted as an impassable barrier; "forgetting the things that are behind and reaching forth unto those which are before," press on now toward the goal.

And yet the forty years wanderings were needed to show them both the unbelief of their own hearts and the goodness of God. He had humbled them, had suffered them to hunger, had made them learn to depend upon Himself. The lesson had been taught, and now they must enter upon a fresh stage of their journey.

Are there not also points when the people of God pass into a new stage of their wilderness experience, both individually and collectively? Here is one who, perhaps, has been plodding on with heart under the power of Horeb—faith glimmers, hope and fear alternate; assurance, full peace, an ever springing well of joy—he has heard of these, has caught glimpses of them, but through faulty teaching and self-occupation, he has not grasped them as his own. But he hears the commanding word of truth—the glad news of a full, eternal redemption—and what had been vague and powerless shines forth bright and clear. He has compassed the mountain of unbelief and doubt long enough, and he turns his back upon it. Oh! beloved do we not well remember the joy of that time? A new departure for the soul, we left the dark sad past and turned our steps toward the clearer day.



Here again is one who, while his faith is clear as to his acceptance, is still struggling with sin in his flesh. He has been compassing that mount—a combination, we might say, of Seir and Horeb, of the flesh and the law which, while it forbids sin, gives no power against it—is but the strength of sin. He has grown weary with the struggle; he can but moan out his longings after God's will along with his confessions of inability to do that will; until in a burst almost of despair he cries out, "Oh! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" Can we forget the bondage of that time? But now, clear and sweet comes again a commanding word of truth—"Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under law, but under grace." "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." We hear that word and pass out from the shadow of "this mountain" into the light of a fresh power and an upward path.

Let it not be thought that the long wanderings of unbelief and fruitless struggle against sin are the proper path for God's people. They are not, save as our unwillingness to learn in any other way, makes it necessary for God to teach us in this way. If we will not go the appointed way in eleven days, we must learn in the forty years of wanderings.

Now these epochs in the Christian life—what makes the change? Has divine truth changed? Ah no! That is "forever settled in heaven." It always was and always will be true. We have simply learned that truth; it has come to heart and conscience in divine power and changed *us*. In one sense the Red Sea and the Jordan set before us the same truth—

the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Red Sea shows us the deliverance *from* sin by that death, while Jordan in the same way shows us the entrance into the inheritance. The truth is unchanged—its application to the need of the people, and their apprehension of it by faith, make the only difference.

As is the case with the individual believer, so also is it with them corporately. God has led His saints, as they would suffer themselves to be led, into paths of testimony for Himself. Necessarily the calls into these paths have been for "him that hath an ear." Of the exercises, the struggles, the sundering of ties strong and tender, that accompany the hearing of the call to "turn northward," we would not think or speak lightly. True hearts feel keenly, but true hearts prefer Christ and His truth to all else. His voice and His call is heard, to enter a path which however narrow it may be is ever characterized by one feature—it is a path *with Him*. What can compensate for the loss of that? What blessing unspeakable is it to have Himself with us in a path of testimony for Him! Blessed Saviour, what honor dost thou put upon Thine unworthy people, to entrust them with such treasures! How have they answered thy confidence?

Nor can we say that all at one bound God's people leap into the fullest light as to what this path means. Many failures will mark the stages of their journey. They will find they have swerved from the path, and be recalled to it at the cost of suffering—often of loss of the companionship of those dear. Still always one feature will mark their progress. They will ever approach nearer to divine truth, divine principles as

revealed in the Word of God. Any true fresh departure will be marked by that, by increased light, never by less. Lessons of the past will ever remain, and not need to be set aside only to be learned afresh, by painful experience. Progress will ever be into the light. That increased love, tenderness, forbearance, will mark those who walk with God will ever be true, but *never* will true advance be marked by the sacrifice of truth. “Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them” (2 Tim. iii. 14).

But in the path of truth, not only should we be learning more of its fulness, but we should be putting into fresh practice the truths we have learned. This is a matter of immense importance. A principle held as a doctrine and not acted upon, becomes a menace to that which, if obeyed, it would secure. Theory as such is not found in the Word of God. *That* is living and operative. And when we fail to carry out the truths we have learned, and hold them merely as so much theological belief, they become useless or, what is worse, positively hurtful by deadening the moral sense. A deadened conscience cannot be in the presence of God, hence lack of communion, of joy and power and the lapse into those things we had once forsaken.

Let us then take the precious truths which we have been taught at great cost, and seek to put them into practice as never before. Let debate and strife be exchanged for devoted and diligent obedience to the truth, and we will find most ample space for every activity, and a path, too, in which we can walk with all who by divine grace will accept the same truth.

Beloved brethren, is not God calling us to “turn

northward"? Not to forsake His truths, but to put them unto fresh *practice*. Here will be relief at once from restlessness of spirit which seeks for change for change's sake, and from the temptation of the enemy to give up that which we have learned. May our God awaken us to our responsibilities, that in the power of His grace we may take a fresh start in His paths.

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GODLY ORDER;  
OR, "THINGS THAT ARE WANTING"

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(Titus i. 5.)

THE writer takes up his pen to give a few lines on what he considers *godly order* among the people of God, who are professedly gathered to the Name to the Lord Jesus, which we verily believe are at this time "the things that are wanting." Who can fail to see the evil tendency to looseness and lawlessness of a grave character almost everywhere? In political circles it is felt keenly, "who despise *government*," (the outbreak of man's will against authority and government as ordained of God). The cry of democracy (man's rule) is to be heard everywhere. Almost all nations under heaven are battling with this state of things, from favored England on to heathen China and the tyrant Turk; and the same spirit of democracy has entered church circles also. Whether it may be in the most popular denominations of Christendom down to the comparatively little flock of God's people professedly gathered to the Lord Jesus, and in professed subjection to the word of God. To these last we pen our lines, for with doctrines such as *Higher Criticism* and other

evils which sap the foundation of our most holy faith, we have nothing whatever to do, save to testify against and seek in love to get earnest and honest hearts delivered from such. Our path is truly *in separation from* all such persons, and systems, and gathered out to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in true hearty subjection to the word of God. This *we* accept without a reserve, as a lamp to our feet and a light unto our path. This is our profession, as it was also that of the early Christians in the apostle's day ; yet he left a Titus at Crete to set in order things that were wanting. The word of God alone can meet this need, and establish *one or more* in the matter of godly order.

We verily believe the great lack among many at this present time is not rightly distinguishing between *privilege* and *responsibility*, and the difference is immense and important, and the calm, sober, and godly heart will always seek to give each its due proportion. Yet we plainly see the tendency with many, and the snare into which some have fallen, is accepting all the gracious *privileges* of Christianity, and at the same time shirking the many *responsibilities*. These we insist never can be divorced without great loss to those who do so, and great dishonor to the Lord. Yea, more, each one of us can but own how that the tendency of his own heart, considering the character of the times, is to fall into line with such, and the path for nature will appear easier. But then what are the holy claims of our Lord Jesus upon us ? and what is the very word of God left us for ? Surely to guide us in these as every other form of our path in this world ; and true subjection to God, and the word of His grace, alone will preserve us from such

disaster. Men to-day want broader principles, they tell us, more liberal thought, broader lines to work upon, and hence by some we learn of a "larger Christ," and a "larger hope," etc., etc.; and in a day like this, when everything almost everywhere is enlarging its stakes, and in the world we get among professing Christians a much larger scope than the word of God will permit, then I put it to the reader, Is our remedy to change our position, our principles, to suit the breadth of man's thought to-day? Surely, surely not, will, we are sure, be the answer of every upright mind and loyal heart taught of God. To do so would be to drop into the down grade movement and surrender part of that most holy faith delivered to the saints. We believe from the very depths of our heart we need nothing more than the word of God, and the same breadth of principles there taught by the great Head of the Church, and left to guide us in an evil day, amid all the dangers of a hostile world, and an adversary such as the devil, ever on the watch to destroy any testimony on earth for God and His beloved Son. Let us now look for a brief space at some of the privileges and responsibilities in connection with the Church of God.

To those for whom I write the broad truth as to the Church will be clear. Yet its divine unity needs again and again to be emphasized. If we look at the Church as *a pearl*, to adorn the person of the Lord Jesus forever and ever, yet it is *but one pearl*; if as *a flock*, with its many sheep and lambs for His care, the good Shepherd, yet it is *but one flock*; if as *an epistle*, with its many pages, yet it is *but one epistle*; if as *a body*, and there are various members, yet *but one body*; if as a bride, yet *but one bride*, a chaste

virgin; and if as *a house*, for God Himself to dwell in, yet *one house*. These are a few of the blessings and privileges of the large wealthy place into which we the people of God are brought, in this highly favored dispensation. Great is the grace that has enriched us, and great the riches we have been enriched with, yet in receiving those blessings and riches from His hand, still marked with all the solemn memories of the cross, we need to ponder well, what *claims* has our ever blessed Lord upon us? what are our *responsibilities*? Some of them it will be our task to point out to the reader.

The Church *is one*, as we have before said, and comprises all God's people through the wide world (Matt. xvi.; 1 Cor. xii), and although (as in the apostle's day) many local representations of that Church were to be found in various places here and there, yet all were subject to *one Head*, taught by *one Spirit* and guided by *the same Word*. This, to commence with, will be an immense help if rightly understood. To that Church left here to represent the Head while He personally is in the glory, a close tie existed, her relationship very near; yet while all this was true, grave and solemn responsibilities remained with her, and only as she rightly fulfilled *these*, would she be preserved as a vessel from *wreck* and *disaster*. Did that Church, so fair and beautiful as she was, and careful in practice, fulfil her responsibilities and keep her first estate, is a question which scarce needs an answer. Failure is stamped on everything left to man to fulfil. While she walked in a path of separation, a path of holiness, a path of faith, watchful and careful, all went well; when, instead of keeping true to her post, as a faithful watchman, as the

night grew on, she grew careless about the interests of Him to whom she owed her all. Soon, like Sampson, she fell asleep in the arms of this evil world. Need we wonder if her strength is shorn as his? and to find even now her very enemies using her to furnish them sport and entertainment, as did Sampson? Very humiliating are these lessons for us, and we need to lay them more to heart.

Now we will commence at the *door*, for here we believe responsibility commences, and this in connection with *whom she receives among her number*.

RECEPTION. The Lord Himself, ere He left, gave part of the instructions to guide her, and those instructions are completed in the Acts and Epistles. May we glean in this field what God has for us in this respect. If the reader carefully reads Matt. xviii. 18; John xx. 23, "Whatsoever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven;" and again, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained,"—in this we get some of the responsibilities resting upon the Church of God as the House of God; for in a house we expect to find *rule, order, good government*. This has been sadly overlooked by some, and hence confusion has been the result. Some that we have met of late boldly affirm we have no responsibility here at all, but it remains solely with the one who comes, and we are simply to trust the Lord. But Scripture teaches far differently, and we purpose to abide by Scripture precept and example. "Whosoever sins *ye* remit," and "whatsoever *ye* shall loose" we verily believe furnish us with instruction in the reception of individuals into the fellowship which be-



longs to such a place as Christians occupy according to the Word. The Church as a whole, we grant, has failed; but has God's word failed? Is not God's order ever the same? and does not the foundation of God stand sure? Surely, surely it does! If the persons coming are received, all that might have been against them in their past life, be it a Paul a persecutor, yet they are forgiven, between men and men; all that was righteously against them is now no more so. We believe God has forgiven them, and hence all being now right with the Lord, *we* forgive (upon the same principle as 2 Cor. ii. 7 and Eph. iv. 32). This applies to one upon his first reception, or after, if ever excommunicated, as 2 Cor. ii. applies. How wise our God is, thus ever providing for His poor weak people in an evil day!

Now as we enter the doors of the house of God upon earth (for such is every rightly gathered company of saints), we ought to have the humility to inquire diligently from the word of God, what is the order and government of such a holy place, for “Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord, forever.” (Ps. xciii. 5.) And “God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him.” (Ps. lxxxix. 7.) And again, to a Timothy, “That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” (1 Tim. iii. 15; Ps. cxxxi.) All these passages herein quoted have by many of us not been seriously thought of. We know there have been other extremes, rigid rules have been by some laid down, and wherever this is true, such a fellowship would be legal and sectarian *bondage*; and we are

aware of late years Matt. xviii. 18 has been abused, used even to sanction subjection to unholy and unrighteous acts, and yet bound in heaven; and the righteous Lord, who loveth righteousness, is made to sanction unrighteous actions. Far be the thought. This we believe worse than Rome. She says her actions are infallible, and must be submitted to. The others say, they may fail and be wrong, yet all must submit. We are indeed thankful to be outside of both systems, Rome and the other, although we feel deeply sorry for God's dear people in either. But because this extreme is taken by some, are we to allow the pendulum to swing and carry us to the opposite? Surely, surely not! See the care exercised in the apostle's case (Acts ix. 26, 28). They knew what his past life had been. Now he professed conversion. But more than *profession* was required, and so Barnabas came forward, and declared not only the truth of Paul's conversion, but also gave them *positive* marks which verified the truth, "how he preached boldly," etc, and hence to their satisfaction, he was received. They did not fold their arms and say, This is his responsibility, and we will just trust the Lord, as to whether it is right or wrong; and so, in such a free and easy way, permit him to come among them, and partake of that sacred institution given by the Lord Himself. (Luke xxii.) Surely, Abraham's care in watching the sacrifices of old would have put them to shame. The Church as yet had not got so far down the stream of time as Matt. xiii. 25, Rev. ii. 13; but understood too well the need, as the Levites, who as porters guarded the doors and gates of the Lord's house of old. (1 Chron. xxvi. and Ps. lxxxiv.) The holiness of God's house they under-

stood too well and holy government of such a place to be guilty of such grave neglect.

The things we believe essential to all coming, are,  
1st. That they are *known* to be believers.

2nd. That they are *known* to be sound in Christian doctrine, and *godly in life*.

3rd. That they are *known* to be free from evil associations, which would defile a gathering.

The importance of this we believe we cannot too earnestly press, and this responsibility rests not upon one or two merely, but we believe with *the whole gathering as such*, every one ought to be exercised about a question which concerns the glory of the Lord Jesus. Matt. xviii and Jno. xx. were given to all, not one or two leaders to legislate for all. We are quite aware some have the place of *rule* or *government*, and “the elders which *rule* well are counted worthy of double honor,” and “he that *ruleth*, with diligence,” is enjoined, Rom. xii. 8; 1 Cor. xii. 28; 1 Tim. v. 17. God forbid we should pen one word to weaken the force of such passages, and God be praised in an unruly age as this is, to find faithful men who have this place and amid the many difficulties, “rule with diligence,” “rule well.” They will meet the Lord’s approval in that day we are sure, if not always from their brethren now. Yet their place and importance need a word. Amid difficult times such men understand the Word, and point out to the gathering what is proper and in accord with the holiness and government of God’s House, from the Word, and when this is done, the rest ought to thank God for such; and if it is otherwise, we may rest assured self-will is at work, and 1 Thess. v. 14 may be a word at such a time, “warn the *unruly*.”

But when godly order is thus made known, and the holiness of such a place pointed out, every conscience ought to be in exercise, and not one godly exercised conscience overlooked. We believe in this as all else it should be true, "He that believeth shall not make haste," ought to characterize one taking such a step, and as to the gathering itself in receiving, the principle also true "lay hands suddenly upon no man." This we believe is of paramount importance, if we are to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" as we are enjoined in Eph. iv. If even one sister has a serious doubt in her mind as to the one coming, and the person coming would press his reception, his spirit would be far from what the Scriptures enjoins, and if the gathering would receive among them people to the disregard of any exercised one among them, they override the conscience, and commit we believe a grave sin. What fellowship in the Spirit could such an one coming, or such a gathering receiving, enjoy at such a time when they knew they had by *such an act* already crushed and wounded some hearts, and broken the unity of the Spirit of Eph. iv.? Would such be in accord with ver. 2, "with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love?"

A. E. B.

(To be continued.)

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Our needs and our helplessness compel us to have to do with God. When we know not which way to turn, when all human help is vain, then, if not before, we must turn to Him. Blessed is the exercise that thus compels us to take refuge in His arms. But how much more blessed would it be, not to be driven by circumstances to Him, but ever to abide in His presence.

## THE LORD'S SUPPER.

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(Continued from page 100.)

“FOR as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death till He come.”

This sentence frees the ordinance from all formalism of every kind, whether of time, manner, or place. Its purpose is evidently in harmony with the whole institution, and takes this holy supper from the circle of formality to that of the affections. Wherever the affections of the renewed heart move two or three saints thus to remember their Lord, there ever is the same result, the same spectators, the same holy, never-wearied interest elevating it far above all earth. Well adapted certainly it is to the associations of the first day of the week, with its memories of victory in resurrection, yet by no means necessarily confined to that day. Spontaneity must govern it, with only the divinely given guards, reverential decency and order to save it from profane misuse.

“Ye do show forth,” etc. Is there intended in this supper a testimony to the world? Is it before the eye of the unbelieving world that we, in this appropriation by faith of His body and His blood, show forth His death? Verily, no. This holy feast is no *public* display to the curious eye of unbelief. It is with closed doors that we eat it—not from fear, as in the days long past; our Lord Jesus had again and again to free the showing forth of His goodness and love from the presence of those who “laughed Him to scorn.” Babylon shall not look upon these treasures of ours that she can as little appreciate, as the swine can the pearls. Once cruel unbelief saw Him

“stricken, smitten and afflicted,” nevermore shall it so see Him. When next every eye shall see Him, it shall be as clad in different sort than in the evidences of human hate and scorn; in body ploughed with human scourge, or in features “marred more than any man’s.” In holy splendor, in burning majesty, in clouds of great glory, accompanied by the hosts that wait but upon His eye in the watchfulness of love, shall He next be seen.

Who, then, does look upon this showing forth of that death? He to whom it is infinitely precious. Is it not written “precious *in the sight of the Lord* is the death of His saints?” Then think of it, my soul, and estimate, if thou canst, how “precious in the sight of the Lord” must be the death of His own beloved Son! For where is it that we eat? to what place have we boldness to enter through the blood of Jesus? The camp? Nay. The outer court? Nay. The holy place? Nay. But the very holiest of all. And what is the company that we find in the holiest? There God our Father dwells; there too the Lamb. O ye who take the bread as a mere religious form, know that God’s eye looks with infinite interest on what you do, and woe indeed to him who treats with formal indifference, that in which the interest, the attention, the heart of Infinity is concentrated. Woe indeed to him who eats thus unworthily. But of this the apostle speaks a little later.

Nor are, we may well believe, the ranks and orders of heaven excluded from this happy scene. Is not this plainly indicated in that everything should be strictly according to God’s order in the assembly, even if of but two or three, “because of the angels?” (1 Cor xi.) Those principalities and powers of the

heavenlies are certainly no uninterested spectators of the marvelous scene, where the redeemed of Adam's race evidence their participation in the death of Him whom those angels have hymned with their songs of joy from the beginning. Oh, let us be watchful, lest thoughts wander and affections are astray in such a scene and with such company ! \*

"Till He come." There is an end of this supper. We shall sit at a table spread "in the presence of our enemies" for the last time. Then what need will there be of emblems more ? What need of *bread* when our eyes shall behold the King in His beauty Himself ? What need of *bread* when we shall look into that face once so marred, now radiant with divine glory ; that Body now glorified, yet bearing, at least to the open eye of kindred love, those marks of infinite affection that shall awaken an unending song of joy ? What need of *bread* when surely He, who said on earth, "Handle Me and see," will not forbid the perfect reverence of His redeemed from once more handling with our hands the Word of Life ? What need of *wine* then to awaken memories of the love that is ever there—a fountain springing up in eternal refreshment for us, whose tents are forever pitched beside its flowings ? Thankful may we be

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\* [While we do not question the truth of what is said in the above paragraphs, we hesitate to apply the word "show" in the way it has been by the author. The emphasis is on the Lord's death, not on the persons to whom the death is shown. In fact no one is mentioned. The Lord's death is announced or shown, in the breaking of bread. To whom ? No one is mentioned because, as has been said, the emphasis is upon *what* is shown. If there is thought of persons, would it not be rather to those gathered at the table ? "Do this in remembrance (to call to mind) of me." It would seem that this is the thought in the word "show."—ED.]

for bread and wine now. More thankful still may we be that the moment hastens when we shall not need them more. There are no sweeter words in the whole joyful feast than that we keep it only "till He come."

"Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." Now, after all this perfect grace, we have a little seasoning, a little salt of powerful savor. We are apt to desire to stop our reading when we come to this verse. It seems out of harmony with the character of the scene ; but "salt is good," and we shall find it so here, although it be a solemn word indeed. For if all who partake declare the Lord's death, he who shows forth this death in a spirit of indifference or hard heartedness, as not being himself the object of the love there shown forth, puts himself as it were on the other side of the line, and becomes guilty of it. He has ranged himself in spirit on the side of those who "discerned not the Lord's body," as we may speak, in another day, and so, because they knew Him not, they crucified the Lord of glory. (1 Cor. ii. 8.) Not exactly willful, intelligent hatred to the Lord is needed for this, but rather lack of exercise, and a consequent failure to enter into the true meaning of the scene. As it is a matter of grave importance, let us endeavor by the help of Him who is our Comforter, to throw a powerful sidelight from Old Testament history, upon the scene. Let us read together 1 Chron. xi. 15 to 19.—

David, God's anointed is in the cave of Adullam ; the enemy, the Philistines, are in the Valley of Rephaim, which means, "the terrible ones." David thirsts, and, apparently unconsciously, utters the longing of his heart as he remembers the cool waters



that quenched his thirst in the days of childhood. "Oh! that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem that is at the gate." There are those there who hang upon his lips, who watch every look, who strain ear to catch every breath; and at once they are off into the Valley of Terror, which has now no terror for them. These were the very ones, who were only the other day "in distress," "in debt," "in bitterness of soul;" a poor worthless crowd; but the touch of David's love has already made them "mighty men of valor." They break through the hosts of the Philistines and bring the water back to their king. Now look at him. "Consider him" most carefully as he takes it in his hand. What does he "discern" that cup to contain? Water? No indeed. It is the blood of these men. Shall I drink, he says, the blood of these men, "for with their lives they brought it." David's eyes are not dull, David's heart is not heavy. The quickness of his affections makes him keen of sight and he discerns the rich and precious value of the simple cup of cold water, and pours it out to Jehovah as all too priceless for anyone less than Jehovah to enjoy. Worthily was it done; most worthily. Nor does it need carefulness in applying. Is it *bread* we take, is it *wine*? Then may we indifferently and coldly eat and drink. But if it be in very deed the Lord's Body that faith "discerns" here, then surely *something* must be poured out to the Lord. Need we ask what? Perhaps it may be but very little, still there must be *something*. Perhaps only such word as I "thank Thee Lord Jesus." Perhaps not even that, but only one upward heart-carrying glance of gratitude, but *something* must be poured out as a result of discern-

ing the Lord's Body, or surely, most surely, we partake unworthily; indeed we do. Oh! for that tender sensitiveness that when it takes the bread and wine, thus discerns the Lord's Body, and feeding on it, pours out the full heart in praise before the Lord.

But it becomes us most carefully to ask as to this partaking unworthily and to accept no mere human interpretation of so solemn a subject. If the danger is pointed for a warning, the antidote to the danger is like the sin offering in Cain's day graciously "crouching at the door."

"So let him eat." There is distinctly the salvation from partaking unworthily. Then let us see to what this "so" refers. "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat." Here then is the antidote to partaking unworthily. Here the eye-salve, as we may say, that shall serve to open our eyes to "discern the Lord's Body." May we not then boldly say that he who thus examines himself will never "eat unworthily," never "be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord" Jesus? Let us ask, dear reader, have we not missed something here? Has not the blessed assurance of being free from the law led us to look down upon all self examination of whatever character, as being legal and far beneath our attainments? Let thy heart answer, my reader, dost thou habitually partake of the Lord's Supper in the spirit of one who examines himself, or has this been habitually overlooked, omitted, forgotten? I would affectionately press this upon my brethren, perhaps the more because one feels one's own deep need of the Spirit's exhortation.

But may we now look a little closer at the word and ask, What is to be the object of our self-examin-

ation? Is it to raise any doubt as to our own acceptance with God? Far be it. I look *up* to see the grounds for that, and not *within*. Jesus, at God's right hand, measures that acceptance, and to find that measure out I must examine *Him*, and not myself. Mark it well, dear Faint-heart, or brother Little-faith, or sister Despondency, and be careful that you never examine *yourself* to see if you are accepted of God, but the Lord Jesus Himself. Man's pride, hidden indeed under a thin veil of a false humility, would tell you to do just this, but not one syllable of God's word. Such examination would most surely either keep you away altogether in despair, or send you to His table, a proud self-satisfied guest, to eat judgment to yourself as partaking unworthily.

But, says one, is it not written, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith"? (2 Cor. xiii. 5.) Yes indeed, and it is also written, "Touch not, taste not, handle not," and both Scriptures are ever taken out of their context and quoted in diametrically the opposite sense to that which was unmistakably the writer's intention. Why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances (such as) touch not, taste not, handle not, having to do with that which perishes in the using, and is of this passing world, while ye are dead to all such with Christ? So the apostle writes to the Colossians; and so the same apostle writes to the Corinthians a second time; and taking into full recognition their confidence in their own Christianity, uses an argument to establish his apostolic authority over them, the force of which they cannot question. He says, "Since ye seek proof of Christ speaking in me, *examine yourselves whether*

*ye be in the faith.* If ye are in the faith, then Christ speaks in me;—if Christ speaks not in me, ye are not in the faith. Both propositions are assumed as incontrovertible, while the clause taken from its context is made to mean exactly the opposite of the truth. But if this, “Let a man examine himself” does not mean to see if he be in the faith—if he be a Christian at all—what does it mean? Does it mean let a man examine his conduct, his walk, and see if it be in conformity with that which he is going to show forth in the Lord's supper? Surely, it must at least *include* this. But I am inclined to think that it is somewhat wider than that. If this were the case, would it not have been equally easy for the apostle to have written, Let a man examine *his ways*. But it is *himself*. “Prove” himself, as it is more literally—find out the touching tender relation that he *himself* bears to that rich feast of which he is about to partake. Let him see how he is indeed the object of the love there shown forth and (judging indeed his ways in view of that love) “so let him eat.”

Perhaps an illustration from the Old Testament may again help. Look at that man who stands with bowed head “in the place that the Lord his God has chosen,” with well-filled basket of the first-fruits of his inheritance on the ground before him, and listen carefully as he speaks. Presently it shall be said of him, He *worships*, but before that he will “examine himself” in our hearing. “A Syrian ready to perish, was my father.” A wholesome consideration wherewith to begin. He discerns in his examination, the very root whence he came—a humbling truth, but since it is the first step on a path that leads him to worship, shall we not stand at his side and begin that

path and walk it with him. Discern my soul, whence *thou* didst spring. Who was thy father? In the deepest, truest sense that first man was a Syrian, one whose proper dwelling-place was upon the heights (which is the meaning of the word Aramean or Syrian) but a lost man—one wandering about as lost.\*

Second: "And he went down into Egypt and sojourned there with a few, and became a nation, great, mighty, and populous." Indeed he went *down*. He stepped from the heights or rather fell therefrom, to Egypt, the land that speaks of God unknown and unrecognized, with only blessings received as the ox receives its grass, with no knowledge of the giver. A fall indeed.

Third: "The Egyptians evilly treated us and afflicted us and laid upon us hard bondage." Here let memory do its work. Examine thyself. Does it not tell out *thy* history. Need we multiply words here?

Fourth: "And when we cried unto the Lord God of our fathers, the Lord heard our voice?" Whence too was our relief? Helpless as poor Peter as the waves began to shut out the light from his eyes: weary with a fruitless striving we too cried unto the Lord, and then—

Fifth: Remember, oh, remember the "mighty hand," the "outstretched arm" that lifted us up. Remember the "great terribleness," "the signs, the wonders;" remember "the dark night," "the judgment abroad," "the dying Lamb." Remember the storm that broke full on Him alone, and then remember the dark sea of Egypt. Remember all, and now—

Sixth: What was the end, the contrast to all this?

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\* The same word here translated "ready-to-perish," is "lost" in Psalm cxix. 176.

“This place,” a land that floweth with milk and honey. That is for us, the heavenly places where we are blessed with spiritual fountains that abound for us in Christ, and—

Seventh: That basket with its first fruits tells it all, and so *our* basket of faith that takes in our first-fruits, tells out our blessings, and he and we may bow our head together and worship.

F. C. J.

THE FOOL ANSWERED ACCORDING TO HIS FOLLY.

AS an illustration of the folly of the results of the so-called “Higher Criticism” as applied to the writings of Moses, we insert the following from “The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch,” a sober and sound work upon the subject, by Dr. Greene of Princeton Theological Seminary. It shows that the same methods of criticism by which it is sought to prove that the books of Moses are composed of two or more contradictory accounts, blended together by a redactor, can with equal ease and apparent truth be applied to documents of whose unity there is not the slightest question, with like results.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN. (Luke x. 29-37.)

A.

B.

29 But he (the lawyer, ver. 25.) desiring to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?  
30 Jesus made answer and said, A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; . . . . and they

30 b. And (a certain man)\* fell among robbers, which both stripped him . . . and departed . . .

\*Omitted by R ( )

A.

B.

beat him, . . . leaving him half dead.

31 And by chance a certain priest was going down that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. . . .

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; . . . .

34 And came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, . . . and took care of him.

36 Which of these [three]\* thinkest thou, proved neighbor unto him? . . . And he said, He that showed mercy on him.

32 And [in like manner]\* a Levite, [also]\* when he came to the place, [and saw him, passed by on the other side].\*

33 b. And when he saw him, was moved with compassion. . . .

34 b. And he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn . . .

35 And on the morrow he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said, 'Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, I, when I come back again, will repay thee.

37 b. And Jesus said unto him, . . . that fell among the robbers, . . . Go, and do thou likewise.

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\* Inserted by R [    ]

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\* Inserted by R [    ]

“Both these narratives are complete; only a subject in B. (ver. 30 b.) the omission of which was rendered necessary by its being combined with A. ‘Three’ is substituted for ‘two’ in A. ver. 36, for a like reason. R has tampered with the text and materially altered the sense in ver. 32, from his desire to put the Levite on the same plane with the priest in ver. 31, the language of which he has borrowed; the gen-

vine text of B. will be restored by omitting the insertions by R, which are included in brackets. He has likewise transposed a brief clause of B, in ver. 37 b, and added it at the end of ver. 36. These changes naturally resulted from his making A. the basis, and modifying what he has inserted in B into accordance with it. Hence the necessity of making it appear that it was not the Levite, but the Samaritan, who befriended the injured traveler, and that Jesus spoke not to the traveler, but to the lawyer. In all other respects the original texts of the two narratives remain unaltered.

Both narratives agree that a man grievously abused by certain parties was treated with generous kindness by a stranger; and that Jesus deduced a practical lesson from it. But they differ materially in details.

A. relates his story as a parable of Jesus in answer to a lawyer's question. B. makes no mention of the lawyer or his question, but seems to be relating a real occurrence.

The spirit of the two is quite different. A. is anti-Jewish, B. pro-Jewish. In A. the aggressors are Jews, people of Jerusalem or Jericho, or both, and a priest pitilessly leaves the sufferer to his fate; while it is a Samaritan, with whom the Jews were in perpetual feud, who takes pity on him. In B. the aggressors are robbers, outlaws, whose nationality is not defined, and it is a Levite who shows mercy.

Both the maltreatment and the act of generosity are different. In A. the sufferer is beaten and half killed, and needs to have his wounds bound up and liniments applied, which is done by his benefactor on the spot. In B. he was stripped of all he had, and left destitute, but no personal injury was inflicted;



accordingly he was taken to an inn, and his wants there provided for at the expense of the Levite who befriended him.

The lesson inculcated is different. In A. it is that the duty of loving one's neighbor is not limited to those of the same nation, nor annulled by national antipathies. In B. it is that he who has been befriended himself should befriend others.

It is not worth while to multiply illustrations. Those now adduced are sufficient to give an idea of the method by which the critics undertake to effect the partition of the Pentateuch; and to show how they succeed in creating discrepancies and contradictions, where none really exist, by simply sundering what properly belongs together. The ease with which these results can be accomplished, where obviously they have no possible significance, shows how fallacious and inconclusive this style of argument is. No dependence can be placed upon a process that leads to palpably erroneous conclusions in other cases. An argument that will prove everything proves nothing. And a style of critical analysis which can be made to prove everything composite, is not to be trusted.

The readiness with which a brief, simple narrative yields to critical methods has been sufficiently shown above. That extended didactic composition is not proof against it is shown in 'Romans Dissected.' The result of this ingenious and scholarly discussion is to demonstrate that as plausible an argument can be made from diction, style, and doctrinal contents for the fourfold division of the epistle to the Romans as for the composite character of the Pentateuch."

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## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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**QUES. 26.**—"How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (1 Cor. xv. 12). See 2 Tim. ii. 18. "Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already etc." Can you explain the different way of acting on the part of the apostle? In the epistle to the Corinthians he does not command such to be put away from among themselves, while he commands Timothy to purge himself from such.

**ANS.**—In 1 Corinthians, it was a matter upon which they needed instruction, as not yet fully established in all truth, or, from their carnal state, not fully weighing the consequences of such a doctrine. In Timothy, it was systematized error of a deadly character, which was eating as a canker. Had they at Corinth persisted in their course, the only resource for the faithful would have been to act as in 2 Tim. It may be noted that again in our day is this doctrine coming to the surface—the denial of the resurrection. Errors of ignorance and apostasy are very different. Truth once held departed from—this marks the days in which we live.

**QUES. 27.**—1 Corinthian v. Does not the leaven to be purged therein mentioned refer to moral evil? Does the same principle apply also to doctrinal evil? What difference is there in quotation of the words, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" in this chapter and in Galatians v. 9? Is there not a difference because of what follows in the one case and in the other? In Corinthians it is "Purge out therefore the old leaven etc" while in Galatians it is "I have confidence in you through the Lord that ye will be none otherwise minded."

**ANS.**—The leaven in 1 Cor. v. is moral evil; that in Galatians v. is doctrinal—Judaism and legality. In 1 Cor. it was distinctly manifest and localized, so that nothing remained but to put away the wicked person. In Galatians the conflict was still going on of truth against error. The apostle had confidence in them through the Lord that they would clear themselves of the error and to this end instructs them. He wishes too that the troublers would "cut themselves off" (*Gk.*). Should the doctrinal error be deliberately accepted by an individual, it would not be the time for instruction but for discipline—after due and proper patience. We would again note the difference between ignorance and apostasy.

## THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST.

(Heb. vii. 24, 25.)

SWEET to trace His toiling footsteps  
 Here amidst the desert sands;  
 Bear in memory all His sorrow,  
 Thorn-clad head and pierced hands!  
 Learn His love beside the manger,  
 Learn it on the stormy wave,  
 By the well, and in the garden—  
 Learn it by the Cross and grave.

Yet not only in remembrance  
 Do we watch that stream of love—  
 Still a mighty torrent flowing  
 From the throne of God above.  
 Still a treasure all uncounted—  
 Still a story half untold—  
 Unexhausted and unfathomed,  
 Fresh as in the days of old.

Christ at God's right hand unwearied  
 By our tale of shame and sin,  
 Day by day, and hour by hour,  
 Welcoming each wanderer in;  
 On His heart amidst the glory,  
 Bearing all our grief and care.  
 Every burden, ere we feel it,  
 Weighed and measured in His prayer.

Fragrant thus with priestly incense,  
 Each distress, each sorrow tells  
 Thoughts that fill the heart of Jesus  
 In the glory where He dwells.  
 All His love, His joy, His glory,  
 By His Spirit here made known,  
 Whilst that Spirit speaks the sorrows  
 Of His saints before the throne.

He, of old the Man of Sorrows,  
Pleads before the Father's face,  
Knowing all the needed solace,  
Claiming all the needed grace.  
We, so faithless and so weary,  
Serving with impatient will—  
He unwearied in our service,  
Gladly ministering still.

Girded with the golden girdle,  
Shining as the mighty sun,  
Still His piercèd hands will finish  
· All His work of love begun.  
On the night of His betrayal,  
In the glory of the throne,  
Still with faithful patience washing  
All defilement from His own.

When the Father's house resoundeth  
With the music and the song;  
When the bride in glorious raiment  
Sees the One who loved so long;  
Then for new and blessed service  
Girt afresh will He appear,  
Stand and serve before His angels  
Those who waited for Him here.

He who led them through the desert,  
Watched and guided day by day,  
Turned the flinty rocks to water,  
Made them brooks beside the way—  
He will bring them where the fountains  
Fresh and full spring forth above,  
Still throughout the endless ages  
Serving in the joy of love.

T. P.\*

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\* From "Hymns of Ter Steegen, Suso and others," being the poems reprinted from "Three Friends of God," "The Quiet in the Land," and "The Service of Song," (which last is out of print.) By Mrs. Frances Bevan. To be had of the publishers.

## LESSONS IN VICTORY AND DEFEAT.

(Joshua vi.-viii.)

TO sight nothing was more unlikely than the victories of the children of Israel over the Canaanites, and their possession of the land. When they, in the unbelief which is so natural to the people of God, asked that spies might be sent from Kadesh to search out the land, they began the warfare by sight rather than in the simple confidence in the goodness and power of God which alone could do all for them. The result was to be expected. The spies return from their search, laden with the fruit of the land, but with the most disheartening report of the number and power of the enemies. "The people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there . . . and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight" (Num. xiii. 28, 33).

In all this, nature, which judges by sight, speaks its fears. How different is the thought of faith which looks first at God and then at the difficulties. "Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." "If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it us" (Num. xiii. 30; xiv. 8). If they would not go into the land with God, they could not enter at all. The forty years wanderings witness to this. Faith, which has no confidence in self, which has therefore all confidence in God, is the only power by which they could, or we, enter upon the conflict which was to put them in possession of the good land and fair which had been given to them.

Coming to Jericho—at the close of those years of wandering—we see most beautifully illustrated the power of that faith which counts upon the living God. Here was a city filled with the very foes which had before smitten them with terror; with walls exceeding high, utterly mocking all assaults—and yet they march around those walls in simple confidence in God until He, by His power, gives them the victory. “By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days” (Heb. xi. 30). Here all was of God, the victory therefore was decisive and complete. “They got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favor unto them” (Ps. xliv. 3). God stamps this victory with the witness of their own helplessness and of His power.

Alas for man! alas for ourselves! We cannot be trusted with much success. The spies sent to Ai report it a mean, contemptible place, that does not warrant the entire army laboring there. They seem to have forgotten their own helplessness and the strength of the enemy. A few thousand could do all that was needed at Ai. This might seem like faith; for had they not been promised “one of you shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight”? But they were looking not at the power of God; they were thinking merely of the weakness of the enemy. Flushed with victory, they forget Him who alone had wrought for them.

The sin of Achan was but the reflection of the state of all. Had there been the brokenness, the self-distrust which became them, defeat would not

have been necessary to remind them of their proper attitude. "And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you" (1 Cor. v. 2). Israel had sinned indeed, in having amongst them the sinner, for a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump; but Israel's state was shown as much in their complacency as in the more glaring act of an individual.

Must we not remember this lesson from the victory at Jericho and the defeat at Ai? Apply it to individual experience. We have passed through deep exercise and searchings of heart, until we have been brought to a true sense of our own nothingness. Our dependence has been upon God alone. He has therefore given us victory—has dislodged our foes from their strongholds, and turned the very place of the enemy's power into a place of spiritual enjoyment. How many such experiences have the people of God had! for He, blessed be His Name, never disappoints a feebleness that cleaves to Him alone. But now, the victory has been won, the conflict is over. What is the most natural thing for us? *self-complacency*. The very display of God's power, seems too often to be but the occasion of forgetfulness of our need of that power. We get our eye on success, and in some way, God is eclipsed by the very blessing He has bestowed.

We need hardly say where the fault lies. Our wretched hearts ever ready to boast, to make us lie at ease—these are the Achans who turn our very blessings into curses. Self must be judged, must be *kept* under judgment. Not only were Israel circumcised at Gilgal, but their camp was there. It

was their proper place of abode during their conflicts. Not only did the apostle learn in the bitterness of a single experience that in him dwelt no good thing (Rom. 7), but this knowledge marked his whole Christian life; "we rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh." His very joy in the Lord was linked, necessarily linked, with self-judgment. Let us ever remember this. Oh when will we learn to have this abiding sense of what we are by nature! When we do, Ai will not be needed to remind us.

Equally is this lesson needed in the life of God's people collectively. Israel, as we have seen, illustrates it here, and in the subsequent partial occupation of the land. A lodgment seemed to satisfy them, with the enemy shut up in fastnesses or put under tribute, *not* extirpated as God had commanded. Again and again in the history of the kings—David, Solomon and others—did ease and self-complacence follow blessing. The remnant that returned from Babylon found the same experience; the very ones who then in faithfulness separated from evil, were succeeded by the Pharisees who boasted in their name and their merely outward separation from evil. We see the same in the history of the Church. If an Ananias met swift judgment for covetousness and lying, how soon did murmuring arise, as the number of the disciples were multiplied; how soon did the legalist gain power, and Judaism mix itself with the new thing God had set up on the earth. Almost immediately after apostolic days—shall we not say even before they had passed?—the Church lapsed into error.

Trace every divine work among the people of God, and defeat follows victory with sad and painful regu-



larity. The Reformation was succeeded by the rationalism and deadness of the next period. The revival of godliness under faithful witnesses, has been succeeded by great systems which largely shut God out. The wonderful spread of evangelical truth in these days is being accompanied and succeeded by a Laodicean self-complacency which is appalling.

Does all this sound trite? Is it said it is old and well known? Ah! our very familiarity may make us indifferent to the solemnity of it. How humbling it is that defeat should succeed victory. Let us take the lesson to heart. Let us not merely accept as a theory, but act upon it as a fact, that lowliness, brokenness, self-distrust are what become us, at all times. It is not a sign of spirituality, quite the reverse, to despise our foes. Is Satan weak? Are the hosts of wickedness to be made light of? is the flesh a trifle? This means defeat; this means the humiliation and bitter shame of fleeing before our enemies. May the Lord teach us His lesson as to all these things.

But we can bless Him that He brings blessing even out of our failure. How, in the final overthrow of Ai, was the lesson of dependence upon God alone emphasized! All Israel was to go up to the battle; and they were not to meet the foe now openly and vanquish him; they had to learn in painstaking care that their own pride had weakened them. There has to be night work, an ambush set, the main army to retreat in order that the pursuers may be drawn away from their city;—then, and not till then, can they turn upon them and conquer. Are there not in our day lessons to be learned from all this humbling care and pains? Are we not to remember that

all boasting, all acting with a high hand is not only most unseemly but most dangerous for those who have "fled before the men of Ai"? Truth must not be surrendered; there must be firmness in the maintenance of all that is of God. But with this there will be the acknowledgment of past mistakes, the lowliness of mind as we remember our weaknesses and our pride: there will be increased carefulness, and much, very much prayerfulness.

Humbling these lessons are, but how blessed it is to learn them. Is it not true that we cannot have to do with our God, even in chastening, without the richest blessing? His very chastenings are "for our profit that we might be partakers of His holiness." Under no circumstances of sorrow, weakness and failure,—or of joy and victory can we fail to get blessing if we go into His presence. May He keep us there, and our pathway shall be a march of triumph, when the Victor is the Lord, and we, who enjoy His victory, "have no confidence in the flesh."

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## THE TWOFOLD CHARACTER OF THE DOG.

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THE dog and wolf are of the same family, and both are the sheep's enemy; but through love for his master the dog is interested in the flock and guards the sheep from the wolf and other dogs.

So too is it true of us, Gentile "dogs," until, grace coming in, we who were enemies to God and His people, turn in love to the flock of Christ, in harmony with love to our Master. His interests become ours, and in proportion as our faithfulness to our Master continues do we continue the guardians of the flock; and as our faithfulness diminishes, in proportion do we lapse again into the old unregenerate dog nature, rending the flock of God, or the sheep are left to perish of neglect.

M. H.

## GODLY ORDER; OR, "THINGS THAT ARE WANTING."

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(Continued from page 154.)

THE TIME AND PLACE FOR SUCH QUESTIONS, we believe *is not* when the Lord's people are gathered around the table to remember Him in the breaking of bread. If what is due to such a place is cared for, all such questions as to reception or any others, ought to be settled before. Think, beloved, in view of Him to whom we are gathered, "the Holy and the True," and in the presence of the emblems which present to every eye and heart all the solemn memories of the Cross,—there people introduced for fellowship without any time given for the larger part to learn the least thing about the persons coming, when many are not even satisfied, yet individuals are thrust upon a gathering, some for and some against. Such scenes (which of late have been frequent) are foreign to the whole spirit of such a place and drag down the most holy season and ordinance to the level of an ordinary meal, and some times even lower. Beloved brethren, is it not high time we should awake to all this, and again seek to learn somewhat of the *modesty* and *propriety* becoming to such a place and such a time? Now if a brief space of time is given for inquiry, when those who are received come, the fellowship will be real and according to the truth. We would *not* say always *a whole* week nor yet *only* a week. Yet in most cases, especially in towns and cities, we believe a week is required. If the person is well known, and all are satisfied, even a week in these cases may not be required. But when the persons *are*

*not well known*, or if there are known to be serious doubts in the minds of any, ample time ought to be given to confer and investigate, so that there may be unity of action. By this we believe several ends will be accomplished; the holiness of God's House cared for; the honor and glory of the Lord Jesus thought of; the unity of the Spirit among those already gathered is kept, and the permanent good of those coming is considered. If wrongs are known in their life, or associations, there is ample opportunity to point it out, and a godly effort made to get such delivered. This we believe is a grave responsibility, little understood by many, and less cared for by some. Yet as divinely true in our day as that of Jeremiah the prophet (Jer. xv. 19-21; Jude 22, 23).

We fear the spirit of things around us has taken possession of many of us, and there has been too great a desire to get people *with us*, to have the numbers swelled; but as to the people themselves perhaps never delivered and set free by the truth. Need we wonder then if soon many swell our ranks, and confusion follow when grave questions arise, which require to be dealt with? morally as at Corinth, doctrinally as in Galatia. Need we be surprised to find instead of standing true to the *ground*, as Shammah the son of Agee (2 Sam. xxiii. 11, 12), they fly off like the faint hearted Israelites of Shammah's day? History does repeat itself, and human nature is human nature still.

Now when we pass inside the doors of such a place, we learn from Rom. xiv.—xv. 7 that there ought to be FELLOWSHIP INDEED. Weakness would not shut one out from our full and hearty fellowship. Nay, they need it most, and that service of love enjoined in

1 Thess. v. "support the weak." "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God," a passage which ought to cover the whole ground and draw true hearts together, that "with one mind and one mouth we glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." This is part of the sweet and precious fellowship to be enjoyed by those whose hearts are by the Holy Spirit drawn together, and so as to preserve a fellowship true and real, there must be the utmost care in reception. Not that one if known, as before said, to be godly in life and association is to be debarred. But what we here press is that there should be the utmost vigilance in every case, and unity of action sought after by the whole gathering, lest roots of bitterness spring up, and leave trouble for long after.

THE RECEPTION OF STRANGERS OR VISITORS. And we are not left in the dark as to instruction concerning this, nor yet without example furnished by the Holy Spirit. Even Apollos, a servant of Christ, a preacher, and a man mighty in the Scriptures, when passing from Ephesus to Achaia, *carries a letter*. "The brethren (not a brother) wrote exhorting the disciples (not a disciple) to receive him." And so beautiful order is preserved, and also fellowship. The brethren wrote,—there was fellowship in Ephesus in writing; no one apart from the other brethren did this, and act independently. This honored servant is sent off with the fellowship of the brethren, and commended by them to the disciples in Achaia, and is there not a beautiful lesson in this act? Why did they commend him to the disciples in Achaia? Because they by this owned they were *not* independent congregations, but they were *one*. They

entered into the spirit of the truth, "there is *one body*," written to them at an after period by the apostle (Eph. iv.). And then when he arrived there, he was received, because the disciples in Achaia recognized the same truth,—they were *one* with those at Ephesus. Miles of distance were nothing to them, they in God's sight were *one*, and in receiving Apollos they owned this. This served many ends. When Apollos arrived there, it placed him beyond suspicion. He could labor unhinderedly. And beautiful fellowship according to God is thus preserved by this order. And need we then be surprised to learn at such a time "who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace?" (Acts xviii. 27, 28.)

Then again we get the case of *Phebe* (Rom. xvi.). Some might say a woman will be least apt to cause any trouble, taking no part in public meetings, no preacher, nor teacher; yet the Scripture does not pass her over, and hence, "I commend unto you Phebe, our sister," was written to the saints at the great metropolis of the Roman Empire. How perfect in its place! She had in her sphere served the church at Cenchrea, and the apostle says I commend her to you. She thus could be received beyond doubt or suspicion, and enjoy while in that city, the hearty fellowship of those gathered to the Lord Jesus. But the apostle adds even more, for if Phebe rendered assistance to the saints at Cenchrea, they now at Rome could render her assistance in the large city where perhaps she would be a total stranger, and so he adds, so beautiful and perfect in its place, "and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you; and adds further, "for she hath been a succorer of many and of myself also."

Now we will pass on to the apostle himself (2 Cor. iii.) Writing to the church at Corinth he pens, “Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation *to* you, or letters of commendation *from* you?” Surely not, we would reply, and so ought every saint at Corinth, for through him they were brought to the truth. (1 Cor. iv.) Yet in this very passage we learn of the “others.” They required letters, namely *strangers* passing from place to place.

This we believe is to guard against people who are not entitled to such fellowship, for do we not learn in Jude 4, “for there are certain men crept in unawares”? The saints were off their guard and the enemy takes advantage and men creep in unawares, and in this very epistle we find he presses the importance of “earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints,” and that because of these “certain men.” Then again in Gal. ii. 2-5, he writes about “false brethren brought in unawares, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage, to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour.” Here he does not speak to the praise of the assemblies. These men “were brought in unawares,” the saints again off their guard. Such crafty men cared not for the “unity of the Spirit,” but crept in to lead the saints astray and bring them into bondage. The apostle gave no place to such and to avert similar trouble and confusion at another time (Acts xx.) he gathers the elders of Ephesus together and gives them the solemn charge (vers. 28-32), “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath

made you overseers; for I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock, also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch," etc. Oh that the Church had thus kept a watchful eye, a prayerful spirit! Oh that God's dear people now would awake to the importance of giving heed to these words of the apostle, and seek more and more to preserve the divine order and example as given in the New Testament. We would earnestly urge all the Lord's people in moving from place to place to seek "letters of commendation," so as to preserve apostolic example and teaching, and avoid any confusion in visiting places where not known. In this way we believe the confusion of late years in some quarters by this neglect will be averted; and as in Nehemiah's day, the foundations once more discovered, joined together, the wall built, and the gates set up with their bolts and bars. Thus order, godly order, will be restored and maintained according to the word of God. We do not pretend to say this will preserve from all after trouble, yet it will from much. There will be the constant need of the watchful eye, of great care, both in reception as we have pointed out, and afterwards for those who have been received into such a place.

The epistles need all to be carefully read, that we may be thoroughly furnished, as to this as all else. In the matter of discipline there are often great extremes; sometimes assemblies are too loose, and sometimes too severe. A few of the different stages of discipline may need a word.

"A MAN OVERTAKEN IN A FAULT" (Gal. vi. 1). This



is a case which needs great wisdom, great caution. The person is not following a persistent course of evil, but has for the moment left his watchtower, and in his weakness has given way to the temptation presented to him by the enemy, ever watchful to take advantage. He is one otherwise devoted, and when we consider such a case and look back over our own lives and remember how near this precipice time and again we have been ourselves, yea more perhaps ourselves have fallen,—this awakens in the Spirit-taught mind tender compassion, and the burden upon the heart will be the restoration of such an erring one. “Ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted.”

WARN THE UNRULY (1 Thess v. ). This is a different case; not weakness giving way in time of temptation, but self-will breaking out and seeking to lead in the things of God, or to despise His order. This if not checked would introduce disorder and confusion into the most holy place upon earth, God’s dwelling place, and hence present to the eyes of men a poor witness for God as to the order and government of His house. Such conduct can never be tolerated, and hence we read, “warn the unruly.” This requires care also. 1 Tim. v. 1 needs to be kept before the young especially. Although Timothy, a young man, had a gift and of such we read, “let no man despise thy youth”—yet this was in his capacity as a servant in ministering the Word. But although gifted and with a ministry to fulfill, yet such an one is cautioned, “Rebuke not an elder sharply but entreat him as a father.” If it is the aged in whom self-will breaks out, and he becomes “unruly” it remains

with those riper in age to rebuke such. To younger men even nature would say, (and so would Scripture, if having to do with one of ripe years who fails,) "Entreat him as a father." This we believe is all intended by the Holy Spirit to guard against iniquity in a most holy place, where the order and authority of only One can be recognized, even Jesus the Lord.

OPEN REBUKE. "Them that sin rebuke before all" (Tim. v. 20). This we believe is failure in a further stage; it might be the same one who upon being warned gave no heed, and hence the failure was open; but still not so far as to call for putting away. To check such a course and put the person to shame, in order that self-judgment and confession may be wrought, but one course is left, "rebuke before all." This if it does not lead the erring one to repentance, will lead others to fear and the standard of holiness will be kept before the people of God. But for all this there needs the utmost caution. We have heard of those who were overtaken in a fault being rebuked before all, but this we believe unduly severe. Bowels of compassion would be rather required there, but when it is an open case of self-will that distresses the whole assembly, and if faithful private warning fails to check, the person falls under the solemn instruction here given, "Them that sin rebuke before all."

A HERETIC. Such, "after the first and second admonition reject," or have done with (Titus iii. 10). Here we get another form of evil—a man it may be pressing points and doctrines in a way so as to cause parties and dissensions in a gathering; doctrines which may be quite true in themselves, yet giving them an unduly prominent place and occupying God's

people with doctrines and questions instead of Christ. If Christ is occupying the right place then each line of instruction will have its right place, all doctrines are connected and lead to and from Christ, if presented in the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, just as all spokes center in the hub of a wheel. Here is the importance of having Christ before the soul, and doctrines in due relation to Him. David's harp had not only one string but ten, so we need not harp upon one string only. God has variety and yet in all truth a perfect unity. But a heretic is marked by a different course: certain doctrines and theories are favorites with him and to carry out this he presses them; parties are formed, and distraction is sure to follow.\* Now if Titus, a servant, met such a man, he was to admonish him once and twice. If there was not self-judgment, and if this did not effect the desired result, have done with him. Here we do not yet get the instruction of 1 Cor. v., “put away from among yourselves.” So far it is mostly individual, yet for “damnable heresy” as 2 Pet. ii., it would require the extreme act of 1 Cor. v. Damnable heresy could under no consideration be tolerated in an assembly of God's people according to the truth, nor yet fellowship in a social way (2 Jno. 9-11). Yet Titus iii. does not go that far, and hence there is still grace, but righteousness so far will “have done

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\* [While it is true that a heretic may not always teach fundamental error, it can hardly be said that he simply presses some truth unduly. Truth out of its connection is in reality error, and will sooner or later be manifested as such. Party making around a doctrine is not merely schism, but a menace to the truth. The gravity of such a course is seen in the severity with which the heretic is to be treated, “knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.” Ed.]

with." Such cases if dealt with faithfully, and there was no check, we believe would most frequently meet the apostle's desire expressed in Gal. v. "I would they would even cut themselves off which trouble you" (Greek). Then the saints are free. Rom. xvi. 17, 18, would give instruction how to treat such cases, and is a passage which needs to be carefully adhered to. "Mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrines ye have learned: and avoid them."

A. E. B.

(*To be Continued.*)

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**B**ETRAYED, denied, forsaken by Thine own;  
 Left to be mocked, and scourged, and spit upon;  
 Crowned with the thorns, and led away alone  
 To die upon the cross—Thou Holy One !

Deeper than all the depths of sin and woe;  
 Under the awful judgment we incurred;  
 Thy heart of love did bring Thee down, below  
 It all, and Thou hast borne it all, O Lord.

Forsaken by Thy God ! (O Jesus, Lord !)  
 In deeps unmeasurable and unknown;  
 Yet glorified by Thee, His claims made good;  
 His answer is—Thy seat upon His throne.

In spirit, Lord, we view it all with Thee;  
 Our hearts run o'er with gratitude and love;  
 We long the more Thy blessed face to see,  
 And give Thee *full* and *perfect* praise above.

NEW ZEALAND, *April, 30, 1891.*

W. E.

*Tune, "Abide with Me."*

## CONFIDENCE AND SUSPICION.

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HOW beautiful is that condition among the people of God when they have the fullest confidence in one another; when dark suspicion is absent. Power, peace, love—all the sweet fruits of the Spirit are exhibited then, unhindered by that which must check. We look up into God's face with the confidence of simple faith: no cloud of suspicion hides His love from us. We look into our brother's face in confidence too—confidence in his character, his uprightness, his love; no suspicion casts its shadow on our thoughts of him. How lovely is such a state! How is it brought about? what is its basis?

For all true confidence must have a solid basis upon which to rest. That which has not is mere blindness or weakness, not the fruit of the Spirit of God. It is mere stagnation which, like a sluggish pool, hides beneath its quiet surface possibilities of corruption and disease. Such a negative state is always dangerous; it is like the calm which precedes the storm. The form of confidence without its reality is worse than worthless. Nor can it be said that this is a danger which does not frequently threaten the people of God. If the confidence be a real one, resting upon a scriptural basis, why should it be so often shattered or replaced by lurking suspicion? Let us then see what is the scriptural basis of true confidence and what are its characteristics.

Putting it negatively, we might say that it is not "confidence in the flesh." If I am ever to have confidence in my brother, I must first of all have none in myself. "I know that in me, that is in my

flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. vii. 18). The abiding knowledge of this opens the way for deliverance from the "law of sin and death" through the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 2). The soul is brought out into an atmosphere of light and truth,—of love too, we may say—where we can have perfect confidence in Christ, because self is seen as it truly is. Self has been judged; the old nature has been learned, and, after the sharp pain of a hopeless struggle, we have accepted the sentence of death—"our old man was crucified with Him"—and passed out into the rest, peace and joy which are the portion (did they but know it) of all the people of God. "Christ is all." In the light of His love there is no room to have confidence in ourselves, no room to have suspicion of Him. Confidence thrives in such an atmosphere. The roots of suspicion—pride, selfishness, self-occupation—are judged and kept down. Our confidence in the Lord gives tone and character to the whole life. It is a characteristic of the new nature to trust.

But neither is this confidence based upon the flesh in another. That which has been judged in ourselves is the same in our brethren. No flesh can glory in God's presence. "Let no man glory in men." How often do we need to be reminded of this. We instinctively desire to think well of others. It is humiliating to think that "no confidence in the flesh" has to be applied to our brethren as well as to ourselves; that they have the same nature as ourselves—the same weaknesses, the same temptations. We can understand how Cornelius looked upon Peter as one who was more than a man, and would do him reverence; and we, equally with Cornelius, are

taught by the words of Peter, "I myself also am a man."

Instead of checking confidence however, this humbling discovery gives it true liberty. We are turned to Christ to see our brother in Him—and as we remember with all confidence our blessed Lord, we can trust Him for the work of grace, He has wrought in our brother. Was not it something like this which led the apostle, who had just said to the Galatians, "I am afraid of you" (Gal. 4. 11), to comfort himself with the words, "I have confidence in you through the Lord" (Gal. v. 10)? Looking at them as men in the flesh, seeing their legalism, their self-righteousness—he stood in doubt of them, did not know what to think of them; looking at his and their Lord whose work had been begun in their souls, he had confidence in them, *through Him*, that they would even yet extricate themselves from the fearful snare into which they had fallen. How blessed is this! Our confidence in the Lord gives us confidence in His work in His people!

But it is *His* work in which we have confidence—the work of His Spirit upon the heart and conscience. The Spirit of God—the Spirit of truth—ever uses the word of truth, the word God. The word of God does its work not merely upon the mind—"knowledge puffeth up"—but upon the conscience as well. That is ever the mark of the work of the Spirit of God. When we see one whose conscience is under the power of the word of God, we have confidence in him, because of the Lord's work in him. This is the basis of confidence. Here we have one who is judging himself and his ways by the word of God. We can trust God's work. How beautifully this is

seen in the case of the Thessalonians: "But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you" (2 Thess. iii. 3, 4). He was to put their obedience to a severe test—to command them to withdraw from brethren who were walking disorderly—but with the word and Spirit of God controlling their consciences, he had no fears for them. Here then we are at rest. Is there subjection to the word of God?—not merely its letter but its spirit—then we can trust one another.

What a safeguard we have here against the evil all about us. Satan's messengers may be clothed as angels of light—they usually are; good words and fair speeches easily deceive the hearts of the simple. A gracious, pious manner may cover most deadly error. How shall we be on our guard against such? "If there come any unto you, and bring not this *doctrine*"—We look not at the man merely, but the doctrine he brings: is that according to the word of God? Though he were an angel from heaven (Gal. i. 8) we are to reject both him and his doctrine, if it is not. We have no doubt that there is a need for the people of God to be reminded even of these extreme cases of evil, "For many deceivers are entered into the world" (2 John 7-11).

It is evident that there may be degrees of confidence, varying according to the amount of subjection to, and knowledge of the word of God. Here is one whose conscience is sensitive as to what is termed moral evil. He is quick to detect and refuse the grosser forms of sins: we trust his moral character. On the other hand he may not have seen the truth



that we are crucified with Christ to the world; hence he is not fully detached from it; he still seeks something here,

“Where naught can lasting joy afford.”

Now where questions arise involving the pilgrim character of the Christian, calling for distinctions in spiritual judgment, and where perhaps no direct quotation from Scripture can be given, as “Thou shalt not steal,”—the brother cannot be trusted, for his life is not under the power of these truths.

Again, the brother may be under the power of much divine truth as to his individual walk, and we can have confidence in him personally; but suppose he has never learned those truths of the word of God which relate to the Church of Christ, its nature and its responsibilities; suppose he not only ignores but refuses the scriptural principles which are to inform our consciences upon this most important subject, so closely affecting our Lord's honor: it necessarily follows that our confidence in him could not extend to his position on Church questions. The reader will easily think of other illustrations—all proving that the basis of true scriptural confidence is the subjection of a person to the word of God.

We might add, as growing out of this, that confidence can abide only so long as this subjection abides. It is sad, but perhaps necessary to remember that should one depart from this place of subjection, our confidence in him must depart also. Here is where the people of God are being constantly tested. We dare not follow any man blindly; our eyes must be ever upon the Lord. We shall then be able to appreciate our guides, for we will ever test them by the word of God.

Conversely, our confidence may grow, as we see knowledge of and obedience to the Lord's word increase. How blessed it is when such is the case! What joy there must be when lost confidence has been restored in a scriptural way. It was to the Corinthians, whose state had been so wretched, that the apostle writes, "I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things" (2 Cor. vii. 16). But through what exercises did the saints have to pass before the apostle could say this—what carefulness, what clearing of themselves, what vehement desire (vers. 10-15). They had been puffed up: they were now lowly and subject to God: his confidence is therefore restored.

And how fully can confidence be restored! Peter recovered to the Lord, was trusted as he never could have been before. Deliverance from error, when real and thorough puts one on a more solid footing than before. The past is forgotten, or remembered only to thank God for the change, and to remind us of our weakness.

In the epistle to Philemon we have a beautiful illustration of the power of confidence. Onesimus had defrauded his master and then run away from him. God had laid hold on him at Rome, and the grace which had rescued him was now to lead him back to his master to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour." It was a delicate matter. The master's feelings were naturally outraged; his resentment against his servant might be strong. But he has had confidence in the apostle, who therefore throws himself upon that confidence. Beautifully too does the apostle make use of his own confidence in Philemon, "Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote

unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say. But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you" (vers. 21, 22). How human is this and yet what divine grace is also exhibited in it.

Turn for a moment to that dark word, Suspicion. Is it not hateful as we look at it in the holy light of what has been before us? It springs from a mind out of communion with God, ready to listen to the whisperings of the devil. It is he who sows the seeds of suspicion—of God, of our brethren of all except ourselves. He would always make us have confidence in ourselves. What wreck has come in where suspicion has found a lodgment. Whisperings, backbitings, envy, take the place of love, joy, and peace. The Spirit is grieved and Satan triumphs. The worst construction is put upon what is done or said: the charge of falsehood is readily given, and even where the word of God is at work on the conscience, its efficacy is marred and hindered by wretched suspicion. Let us ever judge it as an evil thing to be put out of our hearts. Lack of confidence, loss of confidence, there may be—sometimes there *must* be, if we are to go on with the truth of God. But let us ever abide in the quiet, holy place—in His presence, "in all lowliness and meekness." Truth there must be, firmness there must be, patience too there must be; but let us cast suspicion from our hearts, as a thing hated of God.

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God always gives the strength we need for the work He gives us to do, and His strength is made perfect in our weakness.

## DISCIPLINE. (Heb. xii. 5-11.)

(Thoughts for the sick chamber.)

THE more precious and valuable the fruit the more constantly does the gardner care for the tree. He prunes with a more careful hand, and is desirous of removing everything that would prevent the development of the fruit he esteems.

The more precious and valuable the metal is, the more intently does the refiner watch the process of refining (Mal. iii. 2, 3). He sits, he watches, until the fire separates all the dross and he can see his own likeness in the gold or silver. He then is satisfied, yea, delighted with his own work.

What a cheer this is; what a comfort to the child of God when upon a bed of languishing he can rest satisfied, remembering his Father knoweth.—He *loveth*, He *careth*, and it is *He* that is “pruning.” It is He that sits as a refiner, and “whom the Lord loveth He *chasteneth*.” So to the tried, the weak, the afflicted, we would say, just remain passive in such a wise, tender, yet all powerful Hand. The knife, although sharp, will only remove the things the Husbandman knows would hinder the “fruit” “the more fruit,” “the much fruit,” He so much prizes and seeks after. (John xv. 2, 5.) The fire, although hot and testing, is meant only to melt the precious metal, and purge away the dross; and then,—what joy and pleasure—it reflects His image!

But at such a time and in such a place as the sick chamber, His promises are ever true. “The Lord will strengthen him upon a bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness” (Ps. xli. 3), and adds in the language of the New Testament—“My

grace is sufficient for thee." The Father knows well, as He watches the child, when the lesson is learnt, He knows when to remove the book, and lay aside the rod. "He maketh sore and bindeth up, he woundeth, and his hands make whole" (Job. v. 17, 18). Could we, then, at such a time, afford to be without the lessons? What prayer, what dependence, what true devotion, yea, what joy, what praise, characterize His people! Here, the Husbandman already sees the tender buds, the blossom, the fruit; the Refiner sees His likeness in the object of His toil. Here the Master sees the pupil making progress in his lessons; and here the Father sees the exercise of heart and mind in His child which will fit him for some future and important work.

A. E. B.

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## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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**QUES. 28.**—How do you explain the first clause of 1 Cor. x. 17, with the last clause of verse 16—"The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? for we being many are one bread and one body"? And what force has the "for" that seems to connect the two clauses? Has not the bread (one loaf) a double significance in this passage?

**ANS.**—The general meaning of the passage is quite plain. Just as Israel was a partaker of the altar because of eating the sacrifices, so he who ate at an idol's table would have fellowship with the idol. We partake of the one loaf because we are one body and exhibit our oneness by so doing. It would seem that the "for" links very closely the two clauses, and it would be scarcely possible to think of the loaf without thinking not merely of our blessed Lord, but of His people for whom He died to gather them into one. In Lev. xxiv. 5-9 we have the show bread, evidently type of Christ the food of His people (who are now all priests). Because it is in relation to Israel these are twelve loaves, representing the national unity—the

twelve tribes. So the loaves represent not only Christ, but His people as identified with Him. Does not this correspond with the one loaf now? The Church is *one*, not twelve, and while we see in the loaf Christ's body given for us, of which we partake, we are at the same time reminded of our oneness in Him? Once and again in this epistle the apostle identifies the Church with Christ. "Is the Christ divided" (1 Cor i. 13). "As the body is one, and hath many members . . . so also is the Christ" (1 Cor. xii. 12) (See J. N. D's. version). The use of the figure of the loaf the second time shows that there were not two loaves but one, type of Christ's body given for us, and at the same time (amazing grace!) representing His Church one in Him. Is there not instruction in this—the close and intimate link of our Lord with His people? In the feast that presents Himself before us constantly, we are ever reminded of the one body, the Church for which He died.

QUES. 29.—What does withdrawing from a brother in 2 Thess. iii. 6 mean? Would it be the same as 1 Cor v. 13 "put away from among yourselves"?

ANS.—The withdrawing in 2 Thess. is from disorderly persons—not working and being busy-bodies. The connection shows how such idleness could result from an *abuse* of the truth of the Lord's coming. Persons thus disorderly were to be admonished and withdrawn from. This does not go to the extreme of putting away, though a disorderly walk if unjudged may result in wickedness. It is rather the faithfulness which would prevent the other. It is rather individual than by the assembly as a whole. How much recovery there might be if the Lord's people were in a state to carry out this scripture. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend," and where love is in exercise it will frequently be best shown (where there is need) by avoiding those whose walk is not according to God. Such persons might still go on in the assembly, but would be under reproof, and if truly exercised would be blessed by the firm treatment. Let us guard against covering malice or pride under the plea of faithfulness; *that* would be truly evil; but love may lead to refuse the hand to or, if not going so far, to avoid the company of a brother whose walk is disorderly. Of course, putting away is the extreme, and when it must be resorted to, there should be no intercourse with the one thus dealt with.

“THE  
ARROW OF THE LORD'S DELIVERANCE.”

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(2 Kings xiii. 14-19.)

**E**LISHA, the successor and in many respects the continuator of Elijah, is also, in much, a contrast to his great predecessor. Elijah, “my God is Jehovah,” the stern uncompromising witness for God in an age of well-nigh universal apostasy; the executor of judgment, who can call down fire from heaven upon God’s enemies—he is the figure of John the baptist, calling in a later though similar day Israel to repentance. Elisha, “my God is Saviour,” beautifully answers to his name in his ministry, which is largely in blessing rather than in judgment. How God would seek in every way,—by severity and by gentleness, by famine and by plenty—to reach the heart and touch the conscience of His poor people! Alas! whether Elijah or Elisha, whether judgment or grace, neither kings nor people profited much by the presence among them of these men of God. Of them it could be said as of the Jews by our Lord when He was here, “Whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, and saying, We have piped unto you and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say he hath a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.” (Matt. xi. 16-19.) Man is the same in all times—as indifferent to-day as in those days. It is good to remember that even in such times there are “wis-

dom's children," who will not bow to Baal, nor join the careless throng of the indifferent.

But, whether hearkened to or despised, Elisha's time has come to die. All his service of mercy is to end—so far as sight goes—in the grave. There comes a time when God withdraws the witness and leaves the despisers to themselves. Dark indeed had been the history of Israel and her kingdom. Begun in rebellion and schism (no matter how clearly foreseen and foretold, nor how much it was the result of and judgment for Solomon's departure from God); established and confirmed by the idolatry of the golden calves at Dan and Bethel,—sad reminders of an earlier apostasy in the wilderness, and proving their unchanged hearts—there had been little to attract, less to commend. The partial and infrequent reforms, as under king Jehu, never brought them as a people back to God, never passed the barrier of that first unjudged sin—fruitful source of all their later departures.

Now, however, as the lonely and patient man of faith is about to leave them forever, the heart—shall we say conscience?—of the king is touched. He remembers, doubtless, the succor given by the prophet, his many acts of mercy, his constant and faithful witness for God in the midst of Israel, and he realizes the solemnity of such a man departing. A sense of his and Israel's loss sweeps away for the time the hardness of his pride, and, like a child bidding farewell to a loved parent, he weeps over his face, crying out, "O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!"—a repetition of the words used by Elisha as he saw Elijah taken up and apparently with similar meaning. Well may the



king weep, for the flickering lamp of Israel's hope seems dying in that lowly chamber; and well might the prophet have replied, “Weep not for the dead, neither bemoan him; but weep for him that goeth away, for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.” (Jer. xxii. 10.) Soon would Israel be carried captive from her land, to return no more, until God Himself brings her back in a day yet to come.

But when did the God of all mercy ignore—at least in this the time of mercy—tears of distress? How amazingly does His willingness to spare come out, in the narrative of Abraham’s intercession for Sodom. Even ten righteous would save the doomed city—ten, alas! not found. Though the turning to God is but partial, though his tears are rather those of selfishness, in view of Israel’s danger, and not of repentance for Israel’s sin, God meets the poor king’s need. The wretched king Ahab furnishes another most striking illustration of this goodness and mercy in God. (1 Kings xxi. 25–29.) After the horrible murder of Naboth and the solemn sentence of God’s judgment upon him and his house, Ahab, moved no doubt by fear, puts on sackcloth, fasts, and walks softly; and at once the word of a just and patient God says to Elijah (doubtless He spoke to unwilling ears, for Elijah loved judgment), “Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before Me? because he humbleth himself before Me, I will not bring the evil in his days.” How true it is for the lost, that it is because of *their* hardness of heart, of their despising God’s mercy, that He is compelled to execute His “strange work.”

So in answer to the tears and entreaties of king Joash, grace will give help and blessing,—give until

it is hindered by the recipient from giving any longer. Mercy will meet the king as far as he will let it. The dying prophet bids the king take warlike weapons, the bow and arrow, suited for long distance warfare, not the hand to hand life and death struggle with a foe that has well-nigh mastered him. Little power had such weapons in the king's hands; this had been shown already; for Israel was hemmed in by powerful foes. But now, upon his incompetent hands are laid the trembling hands of the dying prophet. Of what avail? What can such feeble hands do, already stiffening in death? Ah, they are the hands of God's man, and this is ever God's way, always above nature, most frequently contrary to nature. These stiff, trembling hands of the old prophet have the power of omnipotence behind them—laid on the bow held in the king's feeble grasp, they make all the difference between man's incompetency and God's all-sufficiency.

Applying these lessons to our own times, we find many points of resemblance. Like Israel, God's people have shown utter weakness, lamentable failure. Like Israel, they have received many a prophetic messenger, bringing words both of gentleness and severity. Like Elisha's death, the messenger may fail and the message seem to fade away. Like Israel's king, God's people may and should be awakened to their danger at the seeming departure of God's word—old truths losing their vividness and power. The foe presses upon us; our danger is imminent—horses and chariots seem about departing. It has been always thus with God's people, both individually and collectively. The Lord was personally with them but a short time, and left them, so far as

the world saw, a cross and a tomb. Every fresh help has been followed by the dimming of it—always because of man's unbelief and failure. So far as sight is concerned, this lowly chamber of death is the fitting figure of the condition of God's people. The cross and tomb of Christ is all that earth sees, all that merely human hope has, and as we realize afresh how nothing lasts here, how no blessing abides of itself, we are brought where Israel's king was brought—to the chamber of death. Blessed be God there is more than this,—but the sentence of death must be felt, we enter into blessing through death.

But whose death? Whom does that dying prophet prefigure? May we not say Christ? May we not say that death chamber speaks of His death, and those hands laid upon the bow held in our helpless hands, of Him who was "crucified through weakness"? Blessed be God, there is the open window eastward too.

The king is told to open the window that looked eastward, and shoot his arrow through that open window, and as the gleaming shaft wings its flight, the dying prophet exclaims, "The arrow of the Lord's deliverance." There are two words for east in the Hebrew scriptures—"the sun rising," and "that which opposes." It is this last which is used here most significantly. The king was bid not to open the window westward, where the great sea and the Philistines were, nor north, with its unknown and hostile tribes, nor south, towards the wastes where once Israel wandered forty years,—he was to open the one which looked in the face of the opposing enemy. He was not to blind his eyes to the real condition by which he was confronted. With window

open toward the opposing hosts he was to send forth the arrow, at once a defiance, as it were, and a pledge of victory—"the arrow of the Lord's deliverance."

We too must face our foes, what opposes us, if we are to see the Lord's deliverance. We are not to look westward, for that is to look backward. "Forgetting the things that are behind," is the Christian's watchword—part of it at least. What do we gain by always looking backward? "Bitter memories" crowd thick and fast upon us till we are well nigh "swallowed up of over much sorrow." "It might have been,"—ah! it *might* have been, but that is past now, gone behind into the great sea, "the hinder sea," thank God buried in His grace. Why should we look out of the westward window? Nor is it wiser to look northward. North is the cold dark land of mystery, away from the sunlight. How many turn with bitter sighs of unavailing regret from the backward gaze, only to look north to what *may* perhaps be. What dire and dread contingencies has the future for us—what of sorrow or of trial, yea, what of heart-breaking failure. Thank God, it is too dark to pierce through. We do not, cannot, and surely we can add, we *would* not know what the future has in store for us. Nor let us turn to the south window. Very soft and soothing may be the winds that blow from that quarter, but they are proverbially deceitful. (Acts. xxvii. 13-15.) The "streams of the south" are oftener dry and empty than filled with water. Ah! let us leave our castle building, our dreamy hopes, our south windows, and face the *east*, that which really lies before us. The clear daylight shines upon it; it may be stern and forbidding—may fill us with dread, but there is no deception in it, and there is no needless

mystery in it,—above all it is *before* us, and *that way lies our path*. The enemy is there too, the Syrian who waits his opportunity not merely to rob us, but to carry us off if he is able—away from the heritage given to us of God.

But can we think of "eastward" without other and brighter thoughts pressing upon us? Eastward is the sunrising. Through the night, no matter how dark and how long, the watcher, looking for day, has his face set eastward. If he knows the secrets of the heavens, he can tell the approach of day

"Before the sun shines forth in majesty"—that clear bright star that rises while all is yet dark is the sure harbinger of morning—it is the morning star. Are not our faces set toward the day, and are we not "children of the light and of the day" though we wait with the darkness all about us? The day is before us. We face *it*. Dangers there are, obstacles, enemies greater and stronger far than we—these are all before us—*perhaps*,—but the day is *surely* before us; how soon the "bright and morning star" may rise!

And does not this beautifully connect with the chamber of death? If that figure for us the tomb of Christ, it is a tomb with its door open toward the day. The arrow has flown from that empty tomb—"the arrow of the Lord's deliverance." It is the Lord Himself, risen from the dead, who has passed on into God's eternal day, for *us* has passed on. "Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over Him." "The Lord has gone up with a shout," the shout of victory. The disciples who stood steadfastly gazing into heaven as they watched the ascending Lord, were but watching the

gleaming flight of "the arrow of the Lord's deliverance." The keepers by the side of the sepulchre who for fear and dread became as dead men, are but samples of the victory won for His people by our risen Lord. "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive." Oh, beloved brethren, as we contemplate our risen Lord, as we see Him perfectly, fully victorious over all His and our foes—even death vanquished,—does not a holy triumph take possession of us? Do we not already begin to say, even in view of death itself, "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"? And, lest any should think that such a shout of triumph means merely the shout of anticipated victory *at last*, to evaporate into deadly weakness and failure by the way, the apostle adds, "*Therefore* my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." (1 Cor. xv. 57, 58.)

The resurrection of Christ! How perfect, how complete the deliverance! Beginning with the assurance of peace to the anxious soul—"raised for our justification"—it speaks its emancipating message at each point in the believer's onward progress. Sin can have no dominion, for its chains have been broken; the law, holy and just, yet made the occasion for sin's sway to be the more dreadful,—we are out from the sphere to which that has to say; the world, alluring, clinging, defying—we have been delivered from its thralldom; "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above;" the thousand daily tribulations that meet us—we can glory in them, for they have neither power to harm or to hold us back since Christ has risen. And this

triumph is but consummated at the Lord's coming again. It will be manifest to all the world then. As in the history of a previous king of Israel, who traced the signs of the complete rout of the enemy by the garments and vessels cast away in the haste of their flight all the way to Jordan (2 Kings vii. 15), so we can face our foe in the same confidence, for he is a vanquished foe. Our Lord has risen and flashed defiance in the face of all that lies before us. Let us, then, face eastward. Why drift aimlessly on, in weakness doing nothing, till we find ourselves hopelessly held in the strong grasp of a foe that might have been a conquered foe, had we had faith.

For after all, this wondrous victory, this arrow of the Lord's deliverance, may mean almost nothing, or but little for us. After he had seen the arrow flying eastward, the king was told by the prophet to smite with the arrows in his hand, upon the ground. He smote but thrice, and this the prophet tells him means but a partial victory over his foes: "Thou shouldst have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it, whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice." Either his faith, or his zeal, or both, were not sufficient. The Lord's deliverance was perfect; the faith which made use of that deliverance was but partial, the actual conquest, therefore, was but partial.

Very simple is the application of this, but most needed and most wholesome. We have seen the perfection of our Lord's triumph in His resurrection, nothing was lacking—He has passed beyond all His and our enemies into heaven—pledge and forerunner of what is ours. But now we take up the weapons of our warfare, and smite. It is not merely Christ's

victory for us, but our practical appropriation of this victory. How often do we smite?

Three is a good number in many connections. If we did not have the prophet's reproof, we might have thought it spoke of resurrection here. But the arrow that was shot spoke of that. Three is also the number of manifestation, and may it not here be used to manifest the strength, or rather weakness of the king's faith? It was but partial. He thought three victories enough—they would drive the enemy back to their own country, so that they would vex Israel no more during *his* lifetime, and with this he was satisfied. Perhaps deeper yet there may have been a secret friendship for the foe which would spare him: "He is my brother," said another king of Israel of a foe whom he should have slain. In like manner Saul spared Agag, and Lot longed for Zoar. Ah! how often do our secret likings betray the cause of our partial victories. Does holiness seem too austere, does the world seem fair, "if kept in its place"? Oh, my brother, does this explain why we have smitten but three times? Then it is indeed the number of manifestation. Or does full victory seem too great? Does to walk even as Christ walked seem an impossibility, and have we let our hands hang down through sheer unbelief? If we have lowered the standard, small wonder if we fail to reach that, after which we have not aimed.

No, in God's name, no. Let us not halt, let us not falter. Let there be no partial work. "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." He is the partial victor. And how sad is partial victory. It speaks of what *might* have been, just as well as of what has been accomplished. But let us look at



these other numbers, five and six, and see if they do not have encouragement for us.

Five is made up of four and one. It is the number succeeding four. Four speaks of the creature, therefore often of weakness and of failure under testing. Five is One added to the creature's weakness. Need we say there is no weakness then? Ah! if we realized our weakness, and claimed His strength, there would be practical victory worthy the name. Let us smite five times. Let us own fully our failure, our helplessness, but with it let us claim the living God as our strength. There will be no partial work then.

Six but carries on the thought on the other side. It is the number of restraint, the limit put upon the creature's work and power. It tells therefore of victory over evil. While thus it is the number of the beast, the greatest of all the human enemies of God, it is the number which tells of his defeat; and with his defeat that of the Antichrist, the false prophet, and of Satan himself. Let us then smite six times too, for this means no partial, but a complete victory.

How is it with us, beloved brethren? If as to the past we must confess failure, let us remember, the arrow has flown eastward, and as we mark its triumphant course, let us in the energy of renewed faith take up those weapons of our warfare which are "not carnal but mighty through God," and smite again "five or six times," till the clash of conflict shall be exchanged for the day, "the morning without clouds" which is eastward, and soon to dawn.

"Grace begun shall end in glory,  
Jesus He the victory won,  
In His own triumphant story  
Is the record of our own."

## FELLOW-HELPERS TO THE TRUTH.

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“We therefore ought to receive such that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth.” (3 John 8.)

**T**WICE in the short epistle from which the above quotation is taken, is the truth personified: in the above quoted passage and in verse 12 where it is stated that “Demetrius hath good report . . . of the truth itself.” The truth is looked at as a person in the world for God, doing God’s work. We are invited to be fellow-helpers with the truth, to identify ourselves with it. We can do this in various ways. One way, spoken of in this verse, is to receive those who are engaged in the cause of truth.

The truth made the children of God what they are; they are “of the truth;” they owe their existence as the children of God to the precious truth. It has wrought in them; it has begotten them. “Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth” (James i. 18). It is the instrument that the Spirit uses in their sanctification; “Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth” (John xvii. 17). It frees them from bondage. “Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free” (John viii. 32).

There is a natural object—light—which the word of God constantly employs as a symbol of truth. How precious light is! It is the purest of all natural elements and a great purifier. Solomon says, “Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun.” Who would like to be without sunlight? It is one of God’s sweetest natural gifts to man. Truth is spiritual light. How grateful should those be whom God has made the recipients of it. The children of God are the “chil-

dren of light." It is not merely that they have light, which a sinner may have, but they are the children of light, have been fashioned and moulded by it.

This great spiritual blessing has come to us largely through human instruments whom God employs to convey it to others. Christ is the fountain of light; He is the truth; but it comes to us through human channels. The moon reflects nightly the glorious light of the sun which otherwise we would not then have. It is the same light as the sun gives us directly during the day. During the night the sun gives us his light instrumentally through the moon. On account of the physical condition of the moon light comes to us somewhat dimmed, yet what a blessing it is to receive it though it has lost a little of its brilliancy because of the imperfect object that reflects it. So those who bring the spiritual light to us may darken it somewhat because they are imperfect. I have no reference here to inspired men—God communicated through them His precious truth in the very words of the Holy Ghost,—but to instruments that God now employs to spread His truth. We often express imperfectly what in itself is so perfect and pure. And as it is with our words so it is with our ways. The truth we livingly express is dimmed because of our imperfect ways.

Who should not be most eager to help on that which has proved such an inestimable blessing to us? Who that has tasted the sweetness of spiritual light could not desire to share it with others? Who that has experienced its power to free the soul from corruption and vanity could not wish that others might likewise have the freedom that it has effected for them?

Now God, who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth, raises up instruments to make it known. It is God's will that those only who have experienced its saving and transforming power should carry it and help it on its way to other hearts. It is through those who have left house and home perhaps that the truth has come to us. How much self-denial there may have been on the part of those who have made us partakers of this eternal wisdom. To propagate God's truth involves suffering, for it comes in conflict with that which is its opposite—darkness. But as in nature, the light drives away darkness, so error has to flee before truth, for God is with His truth.

It should be surely considered a precious privilege to receive those who are in deed and in truth God's messengers. Yea, it is more than a privilege: it is a solemn obligation binding on those who have received truth savingly—"We *ought* to receive such."

"For His Name's sake they went forth taking nothing of the Gentiles." This passage makes it very clear whom we are to receive. They went forth for His Name's sake. They had no other motives than that the Name of Christ might be magnified and honored; there was no self-seeking, no covetous aims. The Name of Christ, Christ Himself, filled their hearts; they loved it and knew there was virtue in it because to it they owed their all. Some went forth who were deniers of His Name. His Name expresses Himself. Such deceivers were not to be recognized. There was to be no identification with them. Anything that could be construed as meaning fellowship was to be avoided, such as lodging and greeting them, — nothing which in the least

would sanction their teaching or help it on in the world. The truth as to this dear Name must be preserved and defended. Any teaching that affects it injuriously must be condemned and discountenanced. To be for the truth of His Name one must be against all that militates against it.

The truth is fighting its way in the world; it goes forth conquering and to conquer; it conquers human hearts and brings them into happy submission to God and into unison with His blessed mind. We can do nothing against the truth. It is like a great rock against which the waves of human passion dash in vain. God Himself is on the side of truth, therefore it will prevail. If God be for it who can be against it? If we can therefore do nothing against the truth, it is not said that we can do nothing for it. It is distinctly stated we can do something for it. Who would not like to identify himself with this giant-conqueror? Who would not like to be a fellow-helper with it? O beloved brethren, the day is coming when the truth shall have prevailed over all. We will surely not regret then that we have been on its side. What a satisfaction will it be to us to be able to look back to the time when truth was on the battlefield and we, by grace, were for it and not against it.

Truth has come to abide, yea, to abide with us forever (2 John 2). Whatever else shall pass away, truth never shall. Our supreme wish should be so to behave ourselves that the truth can commend us. "Demetrius has good report . . . of the truth itself." The truth commends those who walk in it and help it on—those who are for it in a time when it is attacked and despised.

3 John was addressed to Gaius who for the truth's

sake had become noted for his hospitality. His soul was prosperous,—the truth was in him and he walked in the power of it. In Romans xvi. 23 we see Gaius as Paul's host. I presume it is the same person that John addresses, only there the Word states nothing respecting his spiritual state. John shows us it is the one whose inner and outer life was governed by the truth, that by his temporal goods furthered the cause of truth in the world. What a pleasure it must have been to him to have those under his roof who propagated the truth he so much loved, the truth to which he owed his spiritual life, his sanctification and freedom from what had formerly enslaved him. It is in proportion as people get away from God and become worldly that they hesitate to identify themselves in this manner with the truth. They may minister to a servant of their means, but their houses will be closed to him. Perhaps those that carry the truth are beneath them socially: perhaps they lack refinement and polished manners which now they increasingly value. As Christ is more and more lost sight of, what is of man acquires more importance. Or if the house is still open to receive the messengers it is only so to a certain class, to those who are in the same place with themselves socially and morally. If one comes along who is worldly, who does not make too much of Christ but a great deal of himself, he is still received; others are excluded however much the truth may commend them.

The house of Gaius was open to all who went forth for the sake of Christ's Name. His wish was that the truth of that glorious Name might spread, that what was so dear to his heart might become dear to other hearts. He knew his Lord, he tasted His grace and

the sweetness of His truth, and longed that others might know it. All that were engaged in the furtherance of Christ's cause, were welcomed by him. Christ's interests were his interests, and apart from these he had none.

May God raise up many a Gaius who by grace shall find his delight in serving his Master in the way Gaius of 3 John did. His reward will be great in that day when God will recompense His own.\*

J. B. G.

[\* The writer has purposely dwelt upon but one feature of fellowship in the Lord's work, and we would therefore only remind the reader that there *are* other ways in which that fellowship may be shown. Many may not have the ability, nor the opportunity to receive into the house, whose heart is in fullest accord with the Lord's work. We need only remind such that a cup of cold water will not fail to catch the Master's eye. A true sympathy will show itself in prayer, in loving interest, it may be even in an encouraging word or affectionate greeting. Then, too, perhaps a word need be said as to beloved saints burdening themselves beyond their ability: this surely is not required; where health, means, or the crowded state of the household would prevent reception into the house, "it is accepted according to that a man hath." On the other hand we are sure our brother will agree with us in saying that hospitality should never be demanded as a right, nor accepted as a matter of course, but in grateful and loving appreciation. How beautifully does the apostle appreciate and commend the hospitality of Onesiphorus (2 Tim. i. 6). Ed.]

OH ! for laborers who, after God's heart, might present Christ to souls. It is the testimony that is wanted—after that, judgment. The wickedness of the world brings grace and testimony—the failure of testimony, judgment. And we are living in serious times. A poor half-way testimony without faith is what is sought for now, when certain truths cannot be denied.—J. N. D.

# GODLY ORDER; OR, "THINGS THAT ARE WANTING."

(Continued from page 186.)

**P**ERSONAL TRESPASS needs also a few lines ere we close this part of the subject. "If thy brother shall trespass *against thee*, go and tell him his fault between thee and him *alone*, and if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, take one or two more that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established; and if he neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven" (Matt. xviii. 15-18). This is the way to act in every case of personal trespass. How much trouble would often be averted if this course were adopted,—to go to such an one in the spirit of the Shepherd of this chapter (verses 12, 13), and seek to recover the offender. We are all guilty ones, and if we had been left by the Shepherd until we came to Him and owned our guilt, we would never have come. He knew our guilt, our rebellion, our pride of heart; but notwithstanding all that He sought us, the erring ones, and found us, and we were brought to confession and repentance, yea were delivered; what grace! Now our Lord Himself would by this example even teach us how we are to deal with those who do us a personal injury. "Go and tell him his fault"; go in love to the person himself. But how often instead of this, pride of heart gets the advantage. Our reputation is first, and we tell almost everyone else



but the person himself; does this better matters? surely not. For in this way a trouble which a personal talk in love might settle forever, the erring brother be thereby gained, is left sometimes for years, and roots of bitterness nourished which trouble and defile many. Oh for real faithfulness with one another in this respect.

But if after this effort fails to reach and gain the person, take one or two more; and if this second effort fails, the last effort to reach him is, "tell it to the Church." Now the desire of the whole gathering ought to be to reach and gain the offender, get him to see his sin and trespass and seek to reclaim him. If such a course were pursued, in most cases of personal trespass, we believe restoration would follow. But how often we meet to give the offender a good lecture, instead of in love and grace seeking to soften him. How ready we are to take the judgment-seat, instead of, even as a gathering, seeking to effect restoration.

But if all effort fails, surely the state of such a heart must be lamentable, and needs now another course of action. *Grace* has sought his recovery; but when it has failed, righteousness must now give him the place of distance until the sin is owned, and judged. The Lord therefore adds "let him be unto *thee* as a heathen man and a publican." This is the course the Lord teaches us to pursue, although it may cause sorrow of heart to do so, yet the Lord sanctions it and adds "whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." This leads us on to the last and final act of discipline as presented in 1 Cor. v. yet even in this the restoration of the offender is thought of.

PUT AWAY FROM AMONG YOURSELVES. If this chapter is carefully read, we see when evil develops in an individual, either doctrinally as in 2 Jno. or morally as here, the only course to pursue would be (verses 4, 13) when the whole assembly is gathered, "put away from among yourselves." This is not the act of one, or a few, but the action of the gathering as such. A serious and trying task; would that it was always considered so; there would be care and caution; each would move and act only according to the Word, and with the care and caution that they did of old in the case of leprosy (see Lev. xiii, xiv). Yet if after investigation and waiting upon God the wickedness is clearly proven, then the gathering must act with Christ's authority and the wicked person must be "put away." True, this is not evangelistic work, but which sometimes follows it. The same Lord who gives authority to His own to preach the gospel (Matt. xxviii.), gives His people this authority also to act (Matt. xviii; Jno. xx. and 1 Cor. v. 4). The evangelist seeks after the unconverted and does so by Christ's authority; the assembly cares for the holiness of God's house and does so by the authority of the same Lord. One is as much the work of Christ as the other. One is gospel work, the other righteous discipline upon one gathered in by the gospel, but whose walk, or conduct, or teaching, would not permit his continuing in the fellowship of God's people walking according to the truth. One (the Gospel) is *the delightful work* the heart loves to pursue; the other is the serious, yet righteous work that falls upon those who keep His word.

1 Cor. v. 11, gives some of the kinds of evil for which one was to be put away; among them railing is

mentioned. We fear this is a sin thought too lightly of by many to-day. God cares too much for the peace of His people to allow such a course to continue, and when it is not judged by the individual the word abides “do not ye judge them that are within?” —“therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.”

THE OBJECT OF DISCIPLINE we again say is care for the *glory* of God, the *holiness* of His house, and the restoration of the offender. Hence, while denied for the time all christian fellowship in a religious and also social way, as 1 Cor. v. would teach, yet we should ever be on the watch for the marks of repentance, and this not only looked for but also the burden of the heart in prayer, if the person under discipline is really the Lord's. When repentance is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, how beautiful it is to see grace again permitted to flow out, as in 2 Cor. iii. “Sufficient to such a man is this punishment . . . so that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.” We have seen already how such an act as putting away, was by the Lord's authority on high—“Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven,”—and now if restoration is effected, the same Lord in His tender compassion also adds, “Whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” This we say is the object and desire in this extreme act of discipline, and we believe everything that would hinder this righteous work needs to be carefully guarded against.

HOW FAR DOES THIS DISCIPLINE EXTEND UPON EARTH. This if understood will be a great help. We verily believe if God's people everywhere understood their

relationship with one another, and their direct responsibility to the Lord, such acts of discipline would be owned everywhere. The offender would be held to be in the place of *distance* by every rightly gathered company of God's people, as much as in the very gathering where such discipline took place. This is an important principle to lay hold of. God's people in every place ought to seek to act together, and the same relationship and responsibility is as binding although miles separate. If this is not owned and there is not an earnest desire among all to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," then independency is the result, and all over the world we would have merely independent congregations—discipline in one not recognized in another. How could the "Holy and the True" endorse such independency? We believe seeing the truth of our oneness, and having the authority of Christ for each act of discipline, such an action is binding wherever His authority is owned. Thus the holiness of God's house is cared for, and the permanent good of offenders sought after. If gatherings are scripturally gathered, several in one town, one state or province, yet they are one in heart and ought to be one in practice. We own but one authority, one relationship, one discipline, and one body, and we have but one common object, the glory of the Lord Jesus and the permanent good of all God's people.

We are quite aware some gatherings have overstepped the mark in discipline, and in haste have acted wrongly, yet in such cases if our relationship is rightly understood it will be easy to solve this difficulty. A person is put away at gathering No. 1. Now how ought gatherings No. 2 and No. 3 to act?

Our answer would be, Without suspicion accept the action. But if facts are presented which would lead us to doubt whether such an act was right, we believe here there would be great need of caution. The remedy would not be to receive the individual, but to go to the place where he was put away and investigate carefully both sides, and if clear proof is given that it was a righteous decision, the offender under discipline could under no consideration be received at No. 2, or No. 3, for gatherings 1, 2, and 3, own the authority of the same Lord and hence act together because before God they are one, and they express this oneness by “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

But if after investigation it is clear from facts gathered, and the Word by which we are all judged, that gathering No. 1 has acted unrighteously and they are the guilty persons, and the one or more under professed discipline innocent, our remedy would not be to stand apart on neutral ground and receive from either. Such an act, would be a serious denial of our whole relationship and gloss over evil of a serious nature. If gathering No. 1 has acted wrongly, would not the godly way be to seek to reach their consciences, and by doing so seek to get them to retrace their steps and lead them to repentance? This might take weeks; patience and love would *be required*, and, where exercised, have resulted frequently in blessing and restoration. Thus fellowship is *re-sumed* according to holiness and truth.

If gathering No. 1 refused to own their unrighteous act, after, in grace, a space of time for repentance had been given, then gatherings No. 2 and No. 3 would refuse them further fellowship, and own the other or

others. Even during this time of investigation the assembly might be treated as the house in which there was supposed leprosy (Lev. xiv.), and of which we read "he that goeth into the house all the while it is shut up, shall be unclean until the even."

We would earnestly press upon each reader the importance of these things, because of late, we believe, the enemy has been seeking to overthrow in the minds of some this godly order and care, which should ever characterize the people of God. And we would also press upon the Lord's people in every case when the extreme discipline of 1 Cor. v. is the only course, that grace and patience should ever characterize us. When this has been wanting in some places, weak believers not understanding the principles at stake, have been stumbled at the spirit and manner of those who otherwise were carrying out the government of God's house.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS REQUIREMENTS, in the case of sin committed by an individual, or a gathering, and dishonor and reproach brought upon the Lord's Name. We believe the righteousness and holiness that characterize God's dwelling place demands more than mere reformation—it calls for repentance and self-judgment. This is ever true in the sinner; reformation will not do for God,—a very clear principle. "God requireth that which is past," and this principle is ever true in the lives of God's people. Years may run their course, and reformation in life and practice be effected by this circumstance or that, yet for God and those who care for the principles of truth and righteousness, repentance and self-judgment are required. True, we are not now in apostolic days, and that visible unity once so fair is not pre-

sented to our eyes; yet apostolic order and teaching ever abide. We can truly say we are in the days of 2 Tim. Yet we have a faithful God, who never forgets His people; and hence amid all the confusion of the closing days of Christianity, He even here, in these days of ruin, provides for those who desire to walk with Him in holiness and truth. Such a path is in separation from iniquity, as 2 Tim. ii. 19, 21—gathered to the Lord Jesus as a centre, and following righteousness, faith, love, peace, with those who call upon the Lord with a pure heart. To this we would add the apostle's exhortation, "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Rom. xiv. 19), and somewhat of the joy which will fill the hearts of God's people by-and-by will be ours even now. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Ps. cxxxiii.)

A. E. B.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 30.—In Phil. ii. 27. Why is it called "mercy" on Epaphroditus, when Paul says "to depart and be with Christ is far better?"

ANS.—It is in view of his sickness that the apostle says God had mercy on him—not in contrast with being with Christ which surely is ever far better. But as one sick unto death God's mercy was shown in raising him up—a special mercy to the apostle too lest he should have "sorrow upon sorrow." This does not in the least touch the greater blessedness of departure to be with Christ.

QUES. 31.—Please explain 1 Tim. vi. 16, "Who only hath immortality." Does it refer to Christ glorified or to God? and does the verse before, "King of kings and Lord of lords," refer to Christ or God, or is it the same as chap. i. 17?

ANS.—The whole connection would show that it is God in His

uncreated glory who is spoken of in these clauses (as also in chap. i. 17). He it is who will manifest, at the proper time, Christ Jesus the One who had as faithfully witnessed for God before Pontius Pilate. God, who is King of kings and Lord of lords will then exhibit in all His glory, that One who took His place in lowliness, but in full faithfulness before an earthly potentate. This seems to lead the apostle on to an ascription of worship. God only hath immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light; no man has ever seen Him. How blessed it is to remember that Christ was "God manifest in the flesh." "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." (John i. 18.) While the scripture we are considering speaks then of God in His uncreated glory, it is important to note that a similar title is given to our Lord when He comes forth to reign "King of kings and Lord of lords." (Rev. xix. 16.) All that God is, the Son is. As in the 102d psalm, the words of the Lord, in suffering, to the Eternal God are in Heb. i. applied to Himself, "They shall perish, but Thou remainest."

"All the Father's counsels claiming  
Equal honors to the Son;  
All the Son's effulgence beaming,  
Makes the Father's glory known."

**QUES. 32.**—Please explain 1 Cor. ix 19-22. How far could we carry out this principle to-day, especially ver. 20? How would this affect our position towards all denominations? Did not the apostle act by the Holy Spirit?

**ANS.**—The apostle surely is giving an inspired description of a God-given ministry, in contrast throughout the chapter, with the spirit of ease, pride, and self-exaltation of false ministers. It is this which makes him speak so solemnly at the close of the chapter, that a man might be a preacher of the gospel and yet a castaway. As to himself, he had not used his apostolic prerogatives, but had been content to be the servant of all, that he might win some. Therefore he took his place, so far as he could, with those to whom he ministered. He was "all things to all men" in a godly way, bearing with their weakness or their ignorance—not raising questions until God had raised them in the consciences of the people. So to the Jews he was as a Jew and as under law, in order that he might minister Christ to them. For this reason he circumcised Timothy, the son of a Jewish mother. But when Judaism had arrayed itself against



the truth of God—when it was a question of the gospel and of the honor of the Lord, he gave no place to the “weak and beggarly elements.”

As to the application of this principle at the present day, the greatest care would be needed, for the conditions are different. The errors of Christendom, while frequently Judaistic, are not Judaism: for *that* had been originally given of God, and He led His people very gently out of it into the pasture of Christianity (John x.). But a lapse back into error is another thing. Again, regard must always be had for the effect our subsequent testimony will have upon Christians in denominations. If they receive us to preach the gospel among them—in their churches—ignorant of our testimony against much that is done among them, may they not say when these things do come out, that we deceived them? Of course we cannot lay down rules for one-another, and the Spirit of God is competent to guide in each case, but we think that in the main it is best to let persons know our position, before accepting invitations to go into their churches. On the other hand care should be taken not to antagonize needlessly, but to use all grace and gentleness—in the truth. As we said, the Lord alone can guide in each case and He *will*.

QUES. 33.—In “Notes of a reading on the Epistle to Ephesians,” at chap. iv. 8, we have these words as interpreting “Thou hast led captivity captive” namely: “Here I apprehend is what we have in regard to the old Testament saints delivered from their captivity in Hades and going up to be with Christ—a multitude of captives they were.”

I would ask whether the original will allow of such a liberal interpretation (without forcing the meaning) of the words, and if so, whose captives had they been in Hades, and in what sense now led and where—to Paradise?

May not the thought be that enunciated by the Apostle as to himself in 2 Cor. ii. 14, “leadeth me in triumph” (*R. V.*) alluding to the custom of the victorious army leading its prisoners in triumph on its return from the decisive battle—just as it was in fact in Christ’s triumph over Satan and his host when He spoiled principalities and powers on the cross and made a show of them openly? Col. ii. 15 and Heb. ii. 14; Judges v. 12 would seem to be in point. I notice in your answer to question 25, page 140, *Help and Food*, this met in some respects; but there are points in addition that I would be glad to have met by

the Word. Admitting the statement to be correct as to Old-Testament saints, what are we to understand by His assurance to the thief on the cross? Was that going into the presence of the Father with His body of glory? He says to Mary "touch Me *not*" etc., to the disciples, "I ascend etc." He invites them to handle Him, and eight days afterwards addresses Thomas in like manner; where was He meanwhile? Heb. i. speaks of His own act in taking His place on High. Psalm viii. speaks of it as the act of God. As to the saints (Old Testament,) and their present status, have Heb. xii. 23 (last clause), Col. i. 12, any bearing on the subject? "Just men made perfect"—how? "Saints in light"—what is their inheritance, of which we are made meet to partake?

ANS.—We think the rendering, "a multitude of captives," though given in the margin of our Bibles, decidedly too free to express the original. We believe that the "captivity" is the power that held captive—Satan and his hosts—and not those held in captivity. To bring into the passage Old-Testament saints would be most forced. We agree with our correspondent as to all the passages he quotes except perhaps 2 Cor. ii. 14. The apostle is hardly in the same position there as the "principalities" in Col. ii. 15. He is a victor and not vanquished. He is being led by a victorious Christ; in fact, he is led *in* the Christ. We repeat again as to all this teaching about Hades and the position of the Old-Testament saints that it is grating to the spiritual sense. This we think is felt by our correspondent, and by all who look at the facts without bias. Abraham's bosom, where was it? in a prison, or in the presence of God? If it is only remembered that until the resurrection there will be no public display of glory, and that while the state of the saved, until that time, is one of rest and blessedness it is a spiritual state—it will be seen how foreign to the subject it is to bring in the question of locality, save to remember that all blessedness is in the presence of God.

Our Lord as to His Spirit until His resurrection was with the Father, "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit." This was in paradise, or heaven—the same thing as 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4 shows; and thither went the redeemed soul of the thief; Stephen also when he was stoned. The place is not emphasized, but the Person with whom the redeemed are.

As to Col. i. 12, we think it includes all saints of all time—pre-eminently the Church, which gives character to all heavenly blessing. The spirits of just men made perfect would refer, primarily at least, to the Old Testament saints.

## FRUIT OR ROOT?

SOME THOUGHTS UPON JOB'S "DITCH."

(Luke xxii. 31-34.)

I HAVE in my mind, beloved brethren, a subject which has been much upon my heart of late and which here and there I have taken up in different ways. I believe it to be a matter of importance for our souls, a subject in which there is much encouragement.

We have in the verses before us, no doubt, a typical case, of how the Lord makes sin to serve Him. I dare say in the way I put it, it may seem a strange statement to make, but after all it is a very simple one. God has His hand upon all, and God makes all things serve Him. "He makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He restrains:" He does not permit one particle of the wrath of man anywhere which He can not make to praise Him. That is, clearly, He makes *sin* serve Him. It does not, in the least, alter the nature of sin, it does not make it less hateful; but it makes God what He surely is, the perfect Master of everything, and it gives us the only comfort that we can possibly get as we look at evil, as we realize its terrible prevalence in human history. What comfort would there be for us, if we were not able to look at it and say, God can get glory out of all this? In a true sense, therefore, God has ordained it to His glory.

Here in Peter you get an instance of this,—a sample of the principle of which I have been speaking. Here is a sin on Peter's part, that the Lord foretells to him: he is going to deny Him thrice. Satan has asked to have this disciple of His, as the trier of God's wheat. He has asked to have him in his sieve

that he may sift him; and the Lord has not prayed that he might not be sifted. That was necessary in a certain sense. Satan claims to be the trier of God's wheat, and the words express that, much more than appears in our version. It is not exactly, "Satan has *desired* to have you." It is much more than that. It is, "Satan has *demand*ed to have you,"—"Satan has demanded to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." But how can that be? What does it mean? Why, it means that Satan is the one who is the accuser of the brethren and who, if he accuse them day and night before God, must of necessity accuse them on the only possible plea which could avail him there—the plea of righteousness. Thus when he accuses Job, even when God puts him before him and says, "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth?" he says, "Does Job serve God for naught? Hast Thou not made a hedge about him?" And he gets Job into his hands upon the plea that Job is professedly God's wheat; so let it be tried if he is really this. He does not believe that Job is just all that he seems to be. Job is in very good circumstances. Everything goes fair with him, and how can he be tested in fair weather like that? Very easy for a man to be good when all circumstances are in his favor! In opposite circumstances let us see, he says, what sort of a man Job will appear. It is all right, take Job into your hand and do so and so, is the divine answer.

I don't doubt there is an instructive type of Satan, in that way, in the book of Joshua, in a very remarkable person who is the first in the league against Gibeon, when Israel is entering the land. Adonizedek, king of Jerusalem, is the person I speak of. Adonizedek is a very striking counterpart, in some sense, of Melchizedek, king of Salem. In the first

place, it is the same city, with almost the same name. Salem, which means "peace," is the same as *Jerusalem*. Jerusalem means the "*foundation of peace*." Then look at the personal name. Melchizedek is "king of righteousness," and the other man's name is Adoni-zedek, that is "lord of righteousness,"—almost the very same thing. But there is one thing as to Melchizedek that you do not find about Adoni-zedek. Melchizedek is priest of the most high God. Adoni-zedek is not that at all. The priest of the most high God is the one who blesses Abraham, the father of these Israelites, when he has conquered the kings and comes back from his victory. Adoni-zedek is the head of a league *against* the children of this very Abraham. Melchizedek is for; Adoni-zedek is against. Melchizedek acts in priestly character. There is no priestly character about Adoni-zedek. Adoni-zedek is the very picture of Satan himself. How everything about him proclaims that he is standing apparently for righteousness. He is the lord of righteousness. He is the king of the "foundation of peace," and the foundation of peace is righteousness. Such is Satan. He is the accuser of the brethren. He is the one who takes them up on the very ground of righteousness. He is Adoni-zedek, with no priestly character about him, but the very reverse. He is the awful contrast to the Lord Jesus Christ, the tender intercessor for men.

How much that affects the state of things upon the earth! What we have here in Luke is only a sample of the way in which Satan is busy. And I believe we all of us have personal interest in it; for I believe there is not one of us that Satan has not accused, and is not accusing, before God, and, I tell you what, beloved, we give him plenty of opportunity to say of us, "These people are not all they profess to be."

The moment you take your place as wheat with God, you take your place, as it were, in Satan's sieve for him to sift according as God may permit it, for him to sift and try and see if you are what you profess to be.

What does it mean? what is the effect of it for Peter? He is terribly bruised in the sieve. The Lord has prayed, not that he may not be sifted; he has prayed that his faith might not fail. He does not pray that he may not break down. He does not pray that he may not sin: He *predicts* the sin. He says, "Peter, you are going to deny Me thrice."

What does He say in connection with that? "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." What does that mean? Of course, "conversion" here does not mean that which we generally call by that name: that is, the great primary turning to God from sin, from the world. It speaks of the turning of a saint, the "conversion," if you like, of a saint, and not the conversion of a sinner. That is plain; but then, how is he converted? Converted from his sins? No: *we* might imagine that. He has to be converted *by* his sin, and *from* his self-righteousness. The Lord has ordained the breaking down of a self-righteous man.

Peter answers the Lord. He says, "Nay, Lord, I am ready to go with Thee to prison and to death." That is the point; that is the very thing he needed to realize he was *not* ready to do. That is the very thing he needed to be converted out of, the self-confidence which is the ruin of men wherever they have it.

Therefore it is that the very sin into which the Lord allows Peter to fall is to be the means of ruining that self-confidence in him and so of turning him to another mind. We make great mistakes in regard to those things. We are apt to look upon

some outward evil, some sin that a man has committed, perhaps a gross one, as if it were the whole matter, or at any rate the great thing; that which is only the fruit of the tree we look at as if it were the tree itself, and we say why did God permit it? when that really means why did God permit the tree to show its fruit? Well, why *did* God permit the tree to show its fruit? Because the fruit makes manifest the tree, and men need, beloved, to be made manifest in that way. They need to realize what they are. If a man does not realize what he is, he may be going on apparently just as Peter was, full of love to the Lord, right in conduct and all that, and you think of the man as going on well. Suddenly he falls, and you look at *that* as the departure, when the fall is only the *fruit* of the departure which has been going on long before; and then the fall is the very thing which may be used to make the man conscious of his weakness and nothingness, — therefore to bring him back; to make him humble that he may now really be strong; that he may find his strength in Another, and that he may perhaps be even the means of strengthening his brethren.

God must break down before He can build up; in order that He may deliver us from sin He must deliver us first from righteousness, and that is a great principle in God's ways. It is a sample of how He uses sin. Sin, of course, is the abominable thing He hates, but while it is that (the thing that He is going to put in hell out of His sight forever, because He hates it), while sin is that very thing, there is not an atom of it God permits on the face of the earth but because He can make it serve His purpose and glorify Him; otherwise He would not permit it. What a comfort it is to realize that God's strong hand is upon things and upon people after that manner. What a

comfort it is that we can look into the most awful pit of darkness that can anywhere be, and see there the glory of God! What a blessed thing to know that there is not a corner of God's earth that is out of God's reach; and, beloved, this is, as I have said, a sample of His dealings with men. He makes, I say, the thing He hates to serve Him, but that does not show that He loves it, or that He is indifferent about it. We make our criminals serve in jail, and God makes His criminals as all else, serve Him, whether good or bad.

I would like to apply that now a little. If we look at man away as he is from God, we see not in him how sin began. In him the stream is far on in its course; before men fell there was a host of beings above them that had fallen. Satan, the devil, was in existence then. We know that, of course, because he was the tempter of man at the beginning. What a question it is, and how naturally we ask it: "however did sin come in?" For man, of course, it came in through Satan: man listened to Satan. But to whom or what did *Satan* listen? who tempted Satan? who made Satan Satan? Why, there was no one at all to do it outside of himself; and how could *he* have made himself that? how could an angel become a devil?

Scripture tells us in that remarkable way in which we have many other of the most important truths brought in, quite incidentally, as it might seem, that Satan fell through *pride*. You have, I don't doubt, the description of him in the king of Tyrus in the 28th of Ezekiel, and there you find it in detail. The picture can hardly be mistaken: "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty: thou hast been in Eden the garden of God . . . thou art the anointed cherub that covereth . . .



thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day thou wast created till iniquity was found in thee. . . . Thy heart was lifted up because of thy beauty: thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness;" —thus we see the very process of such a perversion as has taken place in the fallen angel,—Satan becoming the awful creature that he now is. And how? By self-occupation, self-admiration,—pride. The text we have in Timothy, where in his direction in regard to bishops the apostle tells him that a bishop must not be a novice, "lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil:" that is fall into that for which the devil was condemned.

That is how all the sin in the world came in. "Being lifted up with pride:" that was Satan's snare,—the only possible thing, we may well think, by which a being created in perfect uprightness and apart from any temptation, or from any circumstances of evil, could become evil: at least, it was the original departure from truth and uprightness. There was no evil around to solicit him. There was no evil self in him for him to be taken up with, but there was a *good* self; and the being taken up with that *good self* made him the horrible creature he is! I wish I could ring out that lesson far and wide among men. I wish one could make the people of God learn that lesson by heart. For I tell you what, it is one of the most necessary lessons to learn that possibly can be.

When God creates man and puts him upon the earth after this fall of Satan, you can see that it is constantly in His mind: He alters His methods in order to avoid, if possible, so great a collapse. Satan had been, just as the angels are, one that excelled in strength. Measurably, he was a being so far complete in himself, and independent of others. He was thus

a being who could look at himself with admiration, for beauty and strength; and now the problem is, (if from our human side we may call it so,) how could God make another creature who should be free from the snare of self, and yet a good and a reasonable creature?

God could not make anything but a good being; He must make him reasonable, worthy to be a creature of His hand. He must be tested also; at least, he is to be. All this meets in Adam in a way which should have deepest interest for us, and which shows the divine care and love, in a way to call out our answering adoration.

First of all, He does not make him a creature to excel in strength. He puts him upon the earth in the midst of numerous creatures stronger than himself, a naked, defenseless being. He puts him upon earth in such a condition as to mark his dependence very strongly. His life is to be continued by his eating of the tree of life. Life is not in himself; life is in the tree of life for him; he is warned in the most distinct way of his dependence and put straitly under condition. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil is placed in the garden, and that which we are accustomed to think of as the very thing which helped his fall, is that which in fact should have helped him to remain upright, for it was the constant warning of the danger of forgetting his dependence. Yet it was a very small thing to be forbidden. What was it for one who had all the trees in the garden to eat of besides, to refrain from just one tree?

Again, if he looked at himself, he found himself, as to his body linked with the animal creation; in a certain sense, I may say less perfect, as far as strength goes, than many others. He finds himself thus in every direction encompassed with the witness of his

infirmity as a creature. God would "hide pride from man." The angel's snare he must, as far as possible, be shielded from. Beautiful it is to see the tenderness of God in this respect.

You would think He had fenced him around so that it was impossible for him to be touched. Nor only so, but when temptation comes to him, God ordains that it shall only come to him from below, not from above. He shall not be tempted by a being manifestly above himself. Temptation shall not come in the form of an angel of light, but in the form of a beast of the field, one of those that Adam had looked at and seen that there was not a helpmeet amongst them all for him. How carefully God had provided for the creature of His love!

With it all, what you find is that the devil tried upon man the very method by which he had been ensnared himself. He turns his heart away from God by putting his very dependence and deficiency before him, instead of the strength he has not; yet still to lift him up with pride in the insinuation of what he may be—of the capacity he has. That is a marked deficiency that he has not the knowledge of good and evil. If he eats of this forbidden tree, he shall be as God, knowing good and evil. Alas, Satan had aspired to be as God, and he knew well what had come of that.

Awful it is to see him practising the devilish art, which he had learned in that way, upon another. "Ye shall be as God," he says, "knowing good and evil." Thus man falls; but how carefully God had guarded him so that he should not!

After the fall he is still more compassed about with the witness of what he is. Men are continued upon the earth by means of the woman. Eve becomes "the mother of all living." But how are men brought into

the world? In the utmost feebleness indeed. An adult man is a feeble creature after all. Put him outside among the beasts without any of the things which he has slowly accumulated about him, out among the beasts of the field; and see how he will fare. But feeble as he may be in his full grown strength, how feeble is he as he comes into the world, dandled in his mother's arms, slowly and painfully acquiring the wisdom he is so proud of, learning through years of feebleness to submit himself to the will and care of others. Debtor to the love of others for all that he is, he could not possibly live, if he were put out to live as others, not so far from kin. How God has borne witness to him of his nothingness, how God would abase him in his own eyes, and hide pride from him!

Yet, after all, man's constant snare is still himself. When a man turns to God, what do we find? he has to be brought down from this, down into the dust, down to learn not only that he is a sinner, but that he is an *impotent* sinner too, a sinner and without strength. How do men find that out?

*Constantly by struggling to deny it;* constantly by fighting with it, as hard as ever they can; fighting until they have to surrender. How does God help us to this end? by allowing sin in man, just when he wants to be very righteous and very good; just when he wants to come to God, and say, "God, I thank Thee I am not as other men," God has to humble him and smite him into the dust (Job's history over again); and when he comes up again, and washes himself and thinks he is never so clean, God plunges him,—so Job has it,—into the ditch again, and his very clothes abhor him. God is using sin against sin, using sin to defeat itself. If in the devil it might seem as if goodness was its own snare, God says, now sin shall

be its own destruction. He lets the man sin. He tumbles him into the ditch; and when he finds at last that he is without strength, *then* he finds, blessed be God, that "*when* we were yet without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly." What a long while it took for that due time to come! what a long history of man in the Old Testament, and what comfort do we get from it? Not much I fear; and in truth the comfort comes out of discomfort; what carefulness there is through all God's history of man, to show the poor creature that at best he is! God's righteous men are still sinners; none of them without some flaw, in which they become warnings, and not for imitation. It seems as if a painter were at work to make a beautiful painting and then some other hand had splashed the color over it. Scripture biographies are unlike all mere human ones; but they are written in divine wisdom—to prevent man from glorifying man, to prevent man's goodness ministering to man's besetting sin.

God seems often afraid of man's goodness, as He is not of his sin. For man's sin Christ died, and not his goodness. In God's wonderful grace, man can come to God and say, "O God I am a sinner and Christ died for sinners," and find his resting place there upon the solid, immovable rock. Thus the same method prevails, God is using sin itself against sin, in His grace to man.

The lesson is thus learned as to righteousness: it is found in Another—in Christ. And he who has learned it says, "Thank God, I know my righteousness to be in Christ; God has taught me wisdom." All well, and so it is indeed. But the same man starts now on a fresh quest; and here his old lessons seems to avail him nothing. He is now after holiness; and if righteousness is in Another, *holiness* at

least must be in himself: true, but not all the truth. But with that word up comes afresh a busy, earnest self, attractive in its search for holiness,—alas, too attractive—once more the good self fatal to an angel once. Holiness is to be realized in a self-conscious way; and in this self-consciousness lies the evil and the snare. He wants to be able to look at himself, and realize himself to be just the thing for God. God's grace ought to be fruitful in him; he ought to find power in it against evil, and for good: all true, surely; but with so much true, he cannot see the deception that yet lurks in it,—the potent Pharisaic spell under which he is.

So the old remedy is ordained for him,—the stain upon all human glory. Job's ditch is ordained to save him from the greater precipice; and, once again, God makes the sin He hates to serve Him. The law of sin is in his nature. Nor can he in this way find deliverance from it. When he would do good, evil is present with him; and how to perform that which is good he finds not.

There is no hope in this direction. The cry can only be, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" And now, in the infinite grace of God, he finds, not deliverance merely, but a Deliverer. Sanctification is, after all, in Christ; if the holiness resultant is yet to be in us: just as surely as the sunshine is in the sun, by which we are brightened. So now the soul is turned from the impracticable self of experience, to find for faith the true self in which we abide before God. Here is the satisfaction for our hearts as for the heart of God. Here is communion with Him fully attained. Here is a heavenly Object to draw off the heart from the world and from the snare of self together. Here holiness is found, but found in self-forgetfulness; or if self be revealed in

connection with it, it is for the Spirit of God to show us by contrast with the true Man for God, our own mere unlikeness and evil. We learn to "rejoice in Christ Jesus" and to "have no confidence in the flesh."

There is not a truer sign of a man walking with God than this utter self-forgetfulness. God has provided for it in His grace, when man turns in upon himself again, and sees this horrible thing within him. How can God go on with that? But, says the word of God again, God has not gone on with that. He has put that away by the cross of His own Son. God has put away sin altogether away from before Him, root and fruit in the cross of His own Son; and now then you are in Christ before Him. Look up there. You can never see yourself aright except as you look out of yourself; and if you do that you shall find the most attractive self you could possibly have. You shall find a self that you can glory in. So says the Apostle, "I knew a man in Christ, of such an one I will glory." Yet it is himself, it is the man *in Christ*. It is himself in Another, in the Christ before God for him; and finding himself there, he can fall in love with himself as much as ever he likes; but the self he falls in love with is that OTHER self who *draws him out of himself*.

How perfect is God's wisdom! how beautiful it is to see that He has ordained by the very evil in man to antagonize the evil in man. No wonder we ask, how is it possible? A great many Christians think it is not possible. Why should it be that it is impossible for me to get rid of this sin within me? how is it, I have got a nature that I cannot get rid of, like a dead carcass strapped to me, a "body of sin?" If it be really so, there must be some way of justifying it. There must be some good in it after all. The very

evil must be some good in some way. God could not allow it, unless it was good for us; good to carry about with us the thing we hate; good that we should get exercised about it, have to look at it, and see what a horrible thing it is. Thank God, as I have said, in this way we learn to turn from ourselves because whenever we don't turn from ourselves we find it there. It confronts us; it frightens us from ourselves.

I have often said, that a man taken up with the kind of self-cultivation so natural to us, is just like a man who is cultivating his garden in the crater of a volcano; and it may be very productive soil for awhile, as long as the mountain will keep quiet. But when the mountain will not keep quiet! a little shake, a rumble of the mountain! the evil hidden within bursts out, and the garden is spoiled. That which seems but evil is God's way; it is God's own remedy; it is God's own way of victory over evil; just because it is God's own way of turning the creature away from himself forever, and giving us lessons which shall last through all eternity. It is a lesson which we learn here upon earth and which we could not learn anywhere else, which we learn as sinners, learn from the very sin itself, and carry with us through eternity to His praise and for our own sake.

God is not working merely for time, and it is not merely a question of how He will keep us clean for the few years we are here. I do not want to make light of that, not at all; but yet there are worse things than even the outward sins which soil our lives alas, so much. He who can make light of sin makes doubtful the truth of his own conversion; for the man in the experience of the seventh of Romans, though he has not power over it, *hates* the sin he does. He may be sin's slave, *but not its free man.*



He who serves it freely will get its wages. And "the wages of sin is death."

But yet a worse thing than the outward sin is that pride of heart which by making us something, puts us in the way of repeating the awful history of the first sinner, Satan.

That is something worse, and in a Christian is what necessitates the other. The spirit which was in Peter here could only be got out of Peter by that awful fall in the High Priest's palace; the awful sin of denying his own Lord with curses; that was to teach him what Peter the Saint was; what Peter who loved his Lord was, and in spite of his true love for Him. It was to destroy in him his self-confidence and self-righteousness; it was to manifest his weakness, but to reveal to him His strength; to make him utterly weak, and then to lift him up in the arms of Eternal Might and enable to go forth to strengthen others.

If we look at the Old Testament history with its sad picture of man, we naturally say, the people were under the law, did not know God's grace; they were an earthly people, a nation in the flesh; but now then, if we turn to the history of Christianity should it not be quite different? And has it been so? God's history of it has been written—briefly, no doubt,—beforehand: is it a comforting one to look at? In the apostles' days the "mystery of iniquity" was already working. When John wrote his epistle there were already "many antichrists"; and by this he knew it was the "last time." The time since, therefore, could not be different; and in the last days we are assured that "perilous times" should come. They close with apostasy and the man of sin, "whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth, and destroy with the brightness of His coming."

Man's history of the Church has doubtless been badly enough written; but the main features of it are nevertheless quite unmistakable. The whole Church has fallen into fragments; the largest of which is morally the worst. The dark ages were the time when the Church ruled the world, and when the world found its yoke an intolerable tyranny. Protestantism enlightened by the Word is the most painfully divided. I do not dwell on it; but what a history it is! Does it not repeat forever the discouraging text, "Cease ye from man"? And discouragement, discouragement, discouragement, seems to face us everywhere. Yet God is the "God of all encouragement!"

After all, do not these things go together? Let us reach but this point, and what is all this discouragement about the world and the Church, about man, even if he be a saint, but encouragement to hold fast to God alone?

Blessed be God, if we are losing confidence in ourselves altogether! Well we may: we have had superabundant proof of what we are. Had we thoroughly learned to "have no confidence in the flesh," we should be learning indeed the corresponding joy of "worshipping God in spirit" and "exulting in Christ Jesus," and should take a new start in divine things. God grant that we may do so! As man counts for much, God counts for little. As man descends in the scale of our estimation, God proportionally acquires the glory that is His own. In the knowledge of the new man, as we find it in Colossians, "Christ is all"; and the sum of wisdom is to maintain this. That "God shall be all in all" is the expression of the glory of the eternal state, and of its stability as well. The creature can no more come into competition with Him: the necessary end of which is the darkness of hell, as the opposite pole is the glory of heaven.

## SOLDIER, RACER, HUSBANDMAN.

(2 Tim. ii. 3-6.)

THE second epistle to Timothy gives us truth relating to the Church, but now no longer, as in the first epistle, the Church as the house of God on earth, the pillar and ground of the truth. Declension and ruin have come in; there has been departure from the teaching of the apostle, and from himself as a faithful witness for the truth. As a result, the man of God has to find his path in the midst of disorder rather than administering the settled affairs of a well regulated assembly. All the teaching of the epistle is consistent with this, and is calculated under God to furnish the one who will walk for God, for his path.

In the verses noted above, the Christian is presented in a threefold character, each indicating the nature of his testimony and service, from which we may draw profitable lessons for our guidance and admonition for the days in which we are living.

“Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath called him to be a soldier.”

One of the first and most constant requisites for a soldier is that he must be capable of enduring hardship. His duties may call him to sustain fatigue in long marches, in lonely night-guard, in privation, as well as in actual conflict with the enemy. To render effectual service as a soldier, he must not be entangled with anything else; he must be untrammelled. His one object is to please the one who has called him to service. We too are in a warfare and have been called to be soldiers, by Him who is also the

“Captain of our salvation.” At all times is it necessary that the Christian should be a good soldier, but never is the call to endure hardness more urgent than in times of declension and weakness. The enemy must be met and overcome—Satan and error and evil of all sorts. The very lassitude that pervades is but the trumpet call for faith to arise. The soldier’s lot is not an easy one, as we have seen, neither is that of the Christian who has enlisted in his Master’s service. If ease, gain, pleasure, the affairs of life are objects, let it be at once understood we are in no condition to endure hardness, and are therefore in no condition to fight or win battles. The path of faith is never an easy one; there must be courage and self-denial. How blessed too it is to see the object of this service: it is not success, nor merely victory even over evil, but to please Him who called us—to please *Him*. Let us ever keep that before us in the thickest of the conflict, and may it encourage us to endure the hardness of the way; to suffer, to deny self, to lay aside all that would entangle us.

The racer suggests different thoughts. He has a prize in view, but to win it he must conform to the rules of the course, he must strive lawfully. He must enter the lists, must run the prescribed course, must reach the appointed goal, if he is to win the prize. It will not do for him to take a short cut, to overleap bounds. Any such advantage will be unfair and will deprive him of the reward. For a picture of the racer see Paul in the third chapter of Philippians. First, he is stripped of self-righteousness; then “forgetting the things which are behind and reaching forth unto those which are before,” he presses forward never resting until the goal be

reach, the prize on high he won. Will such an one encumber himself with weights? will he not rather lay aside *every* weight and run with patience? To win a prize suggests that there are some who will not. Particularly in days of declension is the call given for the overcomer, as in the addresses to the seven churches (Rev. ii, iii). What joy it will be in that day to have a crown to lay at the feet of Him who has finished His course, having left us a perfect example.

The thought of the husbandman brings us into a different atmosphere, though even here is the suggestion of striving and overcoming. "The husbandman that *laboreth* must be first partaker of the fruits," or as a more probable rendering has it, "The husbandman must labor before partaking of the fruits." Here is not the warlike clash of arms, nor the speeding forward of the racer; it is the quiet, daily plodding work of cultivation of that which is good. The husbandman prepares his soil, puts in his seed, waits for the rain of heaven, cultivates the tender plants and, after long patience, gathers in his fruit. It is peaceful careful work. The end is looked on to, when he shall enjoy his fruit, but the plodding care is what is suggested in the figure.

How beautiful and comforting too to know that even in the troublous times of this epistle, provision is made for the upbuilding work of the husbandman. It is not all warfare, not all racing—here is precious fruit. Let us remember this, nor be satisfied with the comparatively negative results of conflict. Let the word of God be used constantly for the upbuilding and instruction of His people. Like Gideon let us gather the precious grain in the very face of the Midianites.

On the other hand it must not be forgotten that if the peaceful calling of the husbandman is to be followed it must be, to a certain extent under the protection of the soldier. The enemy would trample down the fairest fields of grain, were he not resisted by the firmness of the soldier; and the quiet husbandman, on the other hand, is preparing for the soldier's place, as was Gideon.

The *end*, ah the blessed end is near. Soon will warfare, racing, husbandry cease; but then will be the time for enjoying the fruits, for receiving the reward—above all for hearing the blessed Lord say, “well done.” How it bows our hearts with shame as we think what poor soldiers or racers or husbandmen we are. Surely no eye but that of perfect love and grace could rest with complacency on us. The Lord awaken all His beloved people to their responsibility in these days.

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## FOUR MEN.

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**T**HERE are *four* men that appear at very important times and from whom we can learn important lessons.

First, ADAM. By him sin entered, (Rom. v. 12) and through his fall creation fell also (Rom. viii. 20, 22). Every sigh, every groan, every heart sorrow—all that mars God's fair creation to-day—is the result, the effect, of the great cause—Sin.

One drop of poison destroys the whole vessel of water; one dead fly in the apothecary's ointment destroys the whole. One sin mars all creation. The lesson we learn from the first man is SIN and its far reaching effects.

Second, NOAH. With him the world gets a fresh start, after the flood was past, and judgment had done its strange work. Through Noah GOVERNMENT enters and is established upon the earth (see Gen. ix. 1-7; Rom. xiii. 1-7). Government was intended by God to suppress and keep in check evil of every form that had entered by the first man. The first man fails. Noah also fails, and men to-day "despise government" the very institution of God (see 2 Pet. ii. 10; Jude 8).

Third, MOSES. Through Moses the LAW enters. The ten commandments, written upon tables of stone, and deposited in the Ark. Israel were placed under this law for 1500 years (Gal. iii. 17, 25). Neither gentiles, nor yet Christians ever received the law (Rom. ii. 14; vi. 14). The law is the measure of man's responsibility towards God and towards his fellow-man. By this man learns he ought to love God with all his heart, soul, and mind, and also love his neighbor as himself (Matt. xxii. 36-40). In this also man fails (Jno. vii. 19).

Fourth, JESUS CHRIST. By Him came GRACE AND TRUTH (Jno. i. 17); by Him sin was put away; by Him sin was condemned in the flesh; by Him atonement was made. By His death all under the law are delivered from it (Rom. vii. 4-6; Gal. iii. 24-26). By Him eternal life, eternal salvation, eternal redemption are given to all who "repent and believe the gospel," and the promise of eternal glory. All Adam failed in, all Noah failed in, and all Israel (who received the law by Moses) or man failed in, Jesus—the second Man, the last Adam—assumed, and fulfilled perfectly. In life He magnified the law and make it honorable, He (eternal praise be to His

Name) knew no sin, (contrast to Adam); He maintains government according to God and shall yet rule over this disordered earth (contrast to Noah, Isaiah ix. 6). He fulfilled the law's requirements (contrast to Israel) and by Him came grace and truth, which continue to flow out and on.

Many crowns shall be upon His head. Many are the glories that belong to Him. A. E. B.

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## THE OPPORTUNITY IN TIMES OF FAILURE.

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**T**IMES of failure appear in every dispensation. Opportunities for faithfulness will never, therefore, be wanting. Shall we have the courage and the readiness to avail ourselves of them? This is the question.

In the closing days of the apostle Paul's ministry, failure was manifesting itself. Timothy, who would survive him, was to learn how to conduct himself. A flowing tide of victory, to be borne on the crest of the wave to the shore, was not to be expected. Evil was increasing, coldness was spreading, unsound teaching was boldly rearing its head. Hymenæus and Philetus were teaching that the resurrection was past; spiritualising, it would seem, that important doctrine. Concerning the truth they had erred, and some listening to them had been upset as to their faith. The power of evil was present, and appeared to be gaining sway.

Yet faithfulness was to be manifested, and encouragement is given. "The Lord knoweth them that are His." Their fellows might reproach those desiring to be faithful, and vilify them before others—a common plan of the enemy—but "the Lord knoweth



them that are His" (2 Tim. ii. 19). How cheering! how stimulating! Then the path for such is plain: "Let everyone that nameth the Name of the Lord" (not Christ) "depart from unrighteousness."

But how? it might be asked. What can I do?—an individual in a crowd—a unit in a company! Clear and distinct is the answer: "In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor"—an illustration this is from common life, so like the Master in His way of teaching. Now comes the word of guidance: "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim. ii. 20, 21). If a man, or rather anyone, writes the apostle. Again, individual faithfulness is inculcated. One may not be able to divert the current of things. Everyone has not commanding genius, or the eloquence of an Apollos or a Chrysostom; but everyone can be faithful. 'Tis true, the purging oneself as directed may bring obloquy on one's head. Be it so; but let us remember who is the Master whose Name we bear, and to whom we are really accountable. What? stand alone? some may say. Be pointed at as singular? Be defamed? Be faithful, is the Master's word; and He would encourage His servants in that. The faithful ones He can use, and surely He will. And these will have true influence, who are used of Him. Nor need they fear being alone on earth, though for a time they may be in that condition *locally*. "With them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" the Master will number them, and put honor on them by using them.

But can it be that Christians may have to tread a path like this in the midst of Christians? Yes; it may be so. Paul foresaw the possibility of it. Paul warned Timothy as to it. Paul ministered encouragement in connection with it. To be used of the Master! What an honor! How will that be regarded in the future? An opportunity indeed! May we know how to avail ourselves of it.

Then if the apostle would encourage saints to be faithful, whatever the trials incident may be, how much more would the Master. The apostle holds out encouragement as to the *present*; the Lord points the people on to the *future*. A vessel unto honor, fit for present use, writes Paul. "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will My Father honor" (John xii. 26), said the Lord.

When He was on earth, people, women ministered to Him of their substance (Luke viii. 2, 3). He would soon leave earth. Such ministry would therefore necessarily cease, but service to Him would be within the reach of all. Individual, however, it might be, and His words plainly intimate that. The servant might find himself doing it somewhat without the companionship of others. That, however, was not to damp his energies, or to check his ardor. "If any man serve Me, where I am there shall also My servant be." What favor!—the servant with the Master, and that on high! Further, such an one would be honored by the Father. He will show His appreciation of anyone now serving His Son by following Him. But again, we would remark, it is "*If any man*," etc.—no thought of a popular movement, or the going forward with a crowd. Are we content

to go forth, like those who went outside the camp, to follow the Lord for a little time on earth? What inducements are held out! But, oh! how dull are we surely in heeding them; how slow, how fearful often, is it not the case, in profiting by them!

We have pointed out that we are not to wait for a multitude, nor halt for a leader, but just to do what we can, as we can, and when we can. Times do not generally get better, but the reverse. How Israel's history illustrates this; yet illustrating it tells us also of the faithful service and fearless conduct of some in times of national declension. Nothing of that was forgotten. The record is on high, and the names of just a few are embalmed in the New Testament as encouragement for us that individual faithfulness will be remembered, and meet with its meed of reward. "Time would fail me," we read, "to tell of Gedeon, of Barak, of Samson, of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets" (Heb. xi. 32). Forward in their service each of these went, and God was with them in it, and this was written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages are come (1 Cor. x. 11).

To serve, to follow, this is put before us. "If any man" is the word. But how to serve? That is left undefined. The circumstances of those just named were different, yet each found his path in his day. Ours, too, may be different, but let each go forward as opportunity arises: now to be a vessel unto honor; if faithful, by and by to be with the Master; and, oh how wonderful, if faithful here, to be honored of His Father.

C. E. S.

*From "Words in Season."*

## PSALM XVI.

Michtam of David.

**A** MIGHTAM, means something engraved.

He is the servant of God, servant of man also.

He is meek and lowly in heart. We are not yoked up with Him, for His is not a yoke that we share, but His will to which we are to submit ourselves, He is the Master and we the servants; we are to serve Him; the yoke is a yoke He puts upon us.

His goodness does avail before God. "I don't put it up before Thee" (ver. 3), "but to the saints that are in the earth" (see Ex. xxi. 5, 6).

"Jehovah is the measure of my inheritance and of my cup" (ver. 5); the inheritance—all that lies before Him; the cup—the fulness of present enjoyment. Jehovah is his portion. Obedience and dependence characterized His life down here among men. The Levite had God for His portion. We must find our all in Christ, not Christ and something beside. Christ is all in all, is the knowledge of the new man (vers. 5, 6), yet He was on His way to be forsaken. Christ's portion is offered to us, so He is the measure of our portion. If we are true priests He maintains our lot.

(Ver. 7.) Wonderful that He should need counsel; He Himself looks up to God for wisdom, He learns the path He walks day by day. His reins—His inward parts, instruct Him in the night season. That is the path of the just engraven on our hearts.

Beloved, He is before our hearts as an object, a whole object to delight our souls with, while His path is our path. Has His goodness passed before

us beloved? well let us follow; soon we shall see Him, then we shall be truly like Him, no shadow to darken His beauty, no failure to mar our peace and call for self-judgment. But now, just now, does He ravish our hearts? Ah, how slow we are. Are we not His delight? does He not call us the excellent of the earth? So He says, Behold my goodness and follow me. Dependence and obedience marked His path down here, beloved; and up there, as beholding His glory, we are changed into His image. Let us follow on, oh let us follow on and be not dismayed. He is for us, beloved; God is for us; the Holy Spirit is with us, and though while here we walk through the valley of the shadow of death we need fear no evil, for He is with us with rod and staff to comfort.

“Green pastures are before me,  
Which yet I have not seen;  
Bright skies will soon be o’er me,  
Where the dark clouds have been.  
My hope I cannot measure,  
My path to life is free;  
My Saviour is my treasure,  
And He will walk with me.”

*Gleanings from a Reading.*

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

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DEAR BROTHER:—It would be well to put a warning in *Help and Food*, as to the Collins Bible, Glasgow Teachers' Edition Minion type. It is an attractive, well bound edition. In the addenda, outlines of Genesis and Exodus contain the infidel folly about different documents, Jehovistic and Elohist, etc; and Dr. Schaff's article on inspiration has something, in the part I read, about "extreme" views. This is bound up thus in a beautiful edition of the word of God. If the Sunday School teacher turns to this article, he is told the Bible "*contains*

the word of God," and the "critic" will tell him what part of it he can receive. These men—false shepherds—will bear their judgment. "And as for my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet" (Ezek. xxxiv. 19). Such men know not what they say. God will be their Judge. It is for us to warn and exhort. May confession and prayer be ours as in Daniel ix.

E. S. L.

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*Adophustown, August 20-25th.*

It is a lovely country—a good deal of water around, a little hamlet here and there, but all farms; the brethren are indeed very hospitable,—our host especially so.

Our readings are on 2 Timothy. We had this morning the latter half of chap. i. and the first part of chap. ii. It comforted and blessed me much. The true reading of "endure hardness," etc. is "Take thy share of the afflictions, as a good soldier," and by this,—“the Scripture which cannot be broken”—the only path there is after Christ was made precious afresh to my soul. A man going to war surrenders his all to obey him who has enlisted him, and following Christ involves a war from which there is no discharge.

The present is a period of testing in many ways and in many quarters. Let us rejoice that we are found worthy to endure affliction in any measure in connection with our Lord. 2 Timothy greatly refreshed me. As I looked at that dear man's words in chap. iii. 10, 11, I felt ashamed of the thought that I had anything to endure. Were our life at stake day by day, or the Roman block already in view to lay our head upon for the Name of our Lord, how small and puny would then seem our real share of the sufferings of Christ!

The mornings were taken up with readings; the afternoons with lectures; the evenings with the gospel,—the people round about coming to hear with marked interest.

The last lecture of Mr. R.—this afternoon on Ps. lxxxvii. filled all our hearts to overflowing. "My cup runneth over" was, I believe, the honest language of most.

\* \* \*

## THE CROWNED CHRIST.

*“And upon His head were many crowns.”*  
(Rev. xix. 12.)

## PREFACE.

FEW prefatory words can be needed to introduce to our readers the series of papers which, if God grant time and ability, may follow this. I propose to take up, in reliance upon divine grace to enable me, the personal titles and glories of our Lord Jesus Christ, as Scripture declares them to us, for the worship of our hearts, and that, in meditation upon so fruitful a theme, we may perhaps realize more distinctly what He is to us, and, as it were, crown Him with His many crowns. For this He looks for from us, to give Him the glory which is His: in doing which our own souls will surely enlarge their possessions, and find more the wealth with which He has endowed us, living in the blessed beams of that effulgent glory, and being brightened by it: “with open face beholding the glory of the Lord,” and being “changed into the same image from glory to glory.”

Our study will be, therefore, above all a devotional one, if God grant the desire of my heart, as He knows it. Perilous, indeed, it would be to approach such a theme in any other than the spirit of a worshiper. To look into these divine infinities without realizing in whose Presence we stand would be profanity. Yet our safeguard is not in refusing to draw near where grace invites and welcomes us, but the opposite. The place of nearness is where alone we are safe: the sanctuary is our refuge. And while we look upon Him of whom it is written, “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father,” our comfort and assur-

ance lie in this, that, in so far as Scripture speaks of Him, it speaks to be understood; and the only thing that can be the part of faith is to seek to understand it.

We have only, then, to be humble,—to follow Scripture, not to go before it,—to stop where it stops, or where our knowledge of it fails, to own this,—and surely we shall find, here as elsewhere, that “all Scripture” is divinely “profitable.” Let us be learners simply; not speculators or critics, but disciples; and at the feet of Jesus we need feel no fear.

Our study will necessarily therefore be doctrinal: it could be nothing else. We shall not be satisfied with putting together texts of Scripture: we shall ask what they mean, and what when put together they mean. It is the character of the word of God, in its apparently simple, as well as in its most difficult passages, to invite research, and to hold back something to be the reward of diligence. It is a land never exhausted by the harvests that it yields; nay, which acts towards us as though it were enriched by them. And as God gave all His people of old title to the land He gave them, and would make agriculturists of them all; so, in a more complete way has He given every believing soul interest and title in this good land of his inheritance, which it is his by his own diligence to make fruitful.

Thus it is ours to develop from Scripture its doctrines in such a way as to get more than what is on the surface, and what as being the result of our own industry, our own work in Scripture, will necessarily provoke the question, Is it, then, after all, really what Scripture says? It is to develop a “creed,” as we say; and a human creed is never in



itself authoritative, just because human. It can only point to the scriptures from which it is derived, and say, *there* is my authority. But that at once leaves room for and necessitates all kinds of various exercise, which the careless and slothful and timid would alike eschew, but in which lies the maintenance of true spiritual health. *My* creed represents *for me*, not my own thoughts, but the effect of Scripture upon me, as I have learned it in more or less daily intercourse with it and with the minds of others, and in the application of it to practical needs. In *my own* creed, gained after the manner named, it is Scripture and nothing else to which I bow, which I own as authoritative: it is the effect on me of its authority; and not to have it would be to mean the lack of living acquaintance with the living Word.

Yet here, at once, is the opening for controversy, which, whatever our dislike of it, we cannot escape, save by cowardice or indifference. So that instead of a harvest-field Scripture looks like a battle-field. The Christian centuries ring with the din of strife. And we cannot but see, moreover, that God was over all this for good. The generally accepted "creeds" which, whatever may be their defects, yet embody so much of the fundamental faith of Christianity, were won out of long conflict with successive forms of heresy. And that in which they are most defective is that as to which little or no controversy had yet arisen. Warfare we need not fear, if in it we have not the mere spirit of the warrior, but the bands of Benjamin go forth under the leadership of "fruitful" Ephraim (Num. ii. 18-22). Truth has certainly to fear no conflict. Its banners never fell in a fair open field.

Is this, then, what Scripture leaves us to? Yes, to the need of having an ear to hear if we will be "overcomers;" to be men of God, if we are to have the profit of Scripture. Truth cannot live without warfare in the midst of a world away from God; and God has not taken pains to make things so plain as that every careless soul shall, spite of his carelessness, know what is truth, but the earnest and exercised shall know: as the Lord has said, "Every one that is *of* the truth heareth My voice" (John xviii. 37). And this has its proportionate application in the case of every Christian.

The crowns upon Christ's head are either His personal glories, or at least in most direct and intimate connection with these. Hence the moment we take up these, we enter upon fields of incessant controversy. The effort of the enemy has been, in all ages, against Christ Himself, and even in the present day new forms of error have arisen, which it will not help souls to ignore, but which rather must be kept in view throughout. Nor will it do to say, "Let us keep to the words of Scripture," apart from the serious inquiry as to what its words mean. Satan's manner is to plant his batteries a long way off, and hide them from view as far as possible, but where he knows they will nevertheless do effective work; nor can we spike his cannon without unearthing his batteries. He is much more careful as to things than words; and to answer him we must show that *words* mean *things*.

But while we cannot ignore the forms of error which are in the present day so numerous, and oftentimes so much disguised; yet to put forth Christ in all His fullness, in the various glories in which the

Word presents Him, this I would fain have the aim of the papers here beginning, from first to last. No higher aim can be, though one may realize all the more the poverty of attainment. Yet here, if one be true in it, the help of the Spirit of God may assuredly be counted on. He is among us to glorify Christ; to take of the things of Christ and show them unto us. And the poorest and feeblest, if heartily and honestly (let us add, humbly) in His hands for this, will surely prove what is more than human energy for the attainment of it. May He grant it now.

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## CHAPTER I.

### *The Deity of Christ.*

For one who is in possession of the New Testament, it scarcely needs to quote a text to prove the deity of Christ. It is only *will* that can fail to find it there; though it would be another thing entirely to say that there are no difficulties in the comprehension of it. *Of course* there are difficulties. That a babe born in Bethlehem, growing in wisdom and stature in the carpenter's house in Nazareth, should be at the same time the God of all men, this is a difficulty which no one thinks of denying. The Old Testament states it, however, and draws attention to it twice over, for the wonder of it, in words that were written, as every Jew is clear, long before the day of Christ. So Isaiah (ix. 6): "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Father

of eternity, the Prince of peace." And again, Micah (v. 2): "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall He come forth to Me who is to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

Mystery it surely is, but no less clear that the fact is affirmed, and affirmed of One to whom from the beginning, as the "Seed of the woman," the generations of men looked forward,—to whom, since He came, the generations have looked back; and He the unique Man in human history! The marvelous explanation suits well the marvel of fact, while it concentrates every faculty of the soul upon it. He who made the world, from whom it had slipped away, has entered it again, in strange guise indeed, but so as to show the most tender interest in it. When we know Who it is, the self-abasement, the child-speech of the Eternal, learning the conditions of creaturehood, but so far removed from paradise: what a revelation is in this obscurity He has assumed!

Himself has come after us! who, after all, so likely as He? Shall we measure Him by the height of His throne—and then He is far from us indeed; or by the depths of a divine nature, which has planted even in man (capable of being seen in him still, spite of his ruin) the capacity of a self-sacrificing love, which can only be the dim reflection of his Maker?

Can it be another than He—a creature—to whom He has left it to win our hearts *away from Himself* by the glory of so great a work achieved for us? No, impossible! And when we realize this work, not as provincial merely, as done for a mere corner of creation, but as under the eyes of angelic principalities

and powers, "that He might show in the ages to come, the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness to us,"—how impossible for it to be any other than Himself who should do this!—for it to be no manifestation of God at all, but of some creature merely; God, in His central glory of being, yet unknown!

"All things were created by Him and for Him" (Col. i. 16) is said of Christ; and such sayings are almost more positive affirmations of His Godhead than the most direct statements could be. How impossible to imagine a mere creature centre for the universe to revolve about! or even an inferior God! Go back to the account of creation, and how naturally it reads now of Him who is God and with God, as the gospel of John declares Him, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness." Or again, look forward in thought to where we are carried in that prophecy of Isaiah with which we began, by that title of His, *not* "the everlasting Father," as the text of the common version has it, but as the Hebrew and the margin of the Revised, "the Father of eternity:" the One who having made all things at the beginning, shall give them at the last their final shape.

Thus we realize that at the Centre of the universe there is not merely a Power that controls and holds it together—which is again true of Him "in whom all things consist" (Col. i. 17),—but a Heart: perfectly told out as the *moral* Power which is manifested now as the "Beloved" of "Love" Itself. Here in the Incarnation and Atonement is it told out to us. There could be no other. It is no satellite which has become a sun, but the diffusive Sun itself,—yea, the Sun of all suns.

F. W. G.

(To be Continued.)

## “PUBLICLY AND FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE.”

A few thoughts on the nature and method of Gospel work.

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“**D**OTH not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of the high places, by the way in the places of the path; she crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.” (Prov. viii. 1-3.) Such a scripture as this shows that the truth of God has nothing to conceal. God is light, and He sends out His light and truth,—not to the few merely, but “to every creature under heaven;” “Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.” (Rom. x. 18.) In beautiful consistency with this world-wide proclamation of the gospel is the scene at Pentecost, where there were representatives of “every nation under heaven,” who could hear in their various languages the wonderful works of God. Peter stands forth boldly before the assembled multitudes and proclaims both the sin of man and the mercy of God. Again and again, through the book of Acts, do we hear the message of God’s grace sounded out to the crowds,—at Jerusalem, Antioch, the cities of Asia Minor, and Greece; in the temple area, in synagogues, in the market-places, or on Areopagus, at Athens. Wherever there was an opening for the gospel, there the Lord’s servants went, proclaiming to Jew and Gentile alike, “repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.” They went everywhere preaching the word, and illustrating the apostle’s statement, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power

of God unto salvation to *every one* that believeth.”  
(Rom. i. 16.)

When we remember what that gospel is: how it has saved *us*; well may we long to cry it out from the very housetops, and seek in the most public way to proclaim it to a ruined world. Is it not the revelation of the very heart of God, telling out His love to lost sinners? Does it not display His matchless wisdom, in providing a salvation consistent both with His love and His righteousness? reaching down to the lowest depths of the sinner's need on the one hand, and on the other, rising to the very throne of God—in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ? Oh! what a gospel we have to proclaim,—its simplicity,—its suitability,—its freeness, and, above all, its divine truth! Well may we

“sound it out so loud  
That earth and heaven may hear.”

It is, therefore, natural and right that the gospel should be proclaimed in the most public way; and this has usually marked any special awakening. Whitfield and Wesley preached in streets and public squares; on the hillsides in the country places; to the laborers as they went to and from their work. Form and formalism were set aside in the energy of the Spirit of God; these and hundreds of other faithful servants of Christ proclaimed Him to the crowds. What a glorious sight!—thousands drinking in the words of peace and life, and blessing God, as they will to all eternity, for such a proclamation of His grace.

Let us, then, go forth, and pray the Lord of the harvest, to send forth more laborers into this white field. Let the message be sounded forth to all: let

us go into the streets with it, wherever we can find the concourse of the people, and the Lord opens the way, and tell out to thousands or to hundreds the precious words of life. May the Lord awaken His beloved people everywhere to this.

The time is short. Soon all the redeemed will be gathered home to enjoy the praise of Him who hath loved us, forever. Then there will be no further opportunity to preach the gospel, and the world will be left helpless, waiting for judgment. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. As our hearts yearn for that, let them yearn for the salvation of souls. These two thoughts are beautifully blended in Scripture : "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. xxii. 17.) Here we have the cry of the Spirit in the Church, the longing cry, "Come, Lord Jesus." Whoever hears the message of love in his soul joins in that cry. But while waiting and longing for the coming of the Lord, we turn to the unsaved and say also, Come—come to Christ, ere He come to take His people away. Thus both "comes" blend together; and in proportion as we are truly waiting for the coming of the Lord will we be calling in the sinner too.

This much as to the publicity of Gospel work. Whoever will and can—as led of the Lord—may preach to as large crowds as he can get to listen to him. There need be no form—in public streets or squares of the city; in tents and school-houses in the country; let the blessed work go on.

But no mere casual reader of Scripture even can have failed to notice that much of our Lord's work,



and that of the apostles too, was with individuals. He sifted the multitudes that followed Him: “If any man come to Me and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.” (Luke xiv. 26.) “Ye seek Me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled.” (John vi. 26.) There is danger in a crowd: mere excitement may prevail, and many be induced to take a step which finds no response in their souls. Many stony-ground hearers are gathered in at these times, to fall away when persecution or trial comes. The public preacher must be faithful in his warnings, and not seek numbers, but reality.

But in the gospel of John particularly, we notice how our Lord deals with individuals. The call of disciples in the first chapter is largely that—one calling another. To Nicodemus, who comes to Him by night, the Lord unfolds both man's need and how it can be met. The need of new birth, the cross, the love of God, and faith,—what wondrous themes to be poured into the ear of one man! The same is seen with the woman of Samaria (John iv). How tenderly and patiently does our Lord deal with that one soul. And it is in connection with His labor with that one individual that our Lord speaks of white fields and labor in them (vers. 35–38). Did each of our public meetings result in the conversion of one soul, well might we rejoice. May not our desire for meetings sometimes interfere with our desire for souls? Two other instances in the gospel of John might be dwelt upon with profit; we merely mention them for the meditation of the reader: the woman in the eighth

chapter, and the blind man in the ninth, both illustrate the blessedness of this individual work.

Passing to Acts, we have two most interesting cases in one chapter (Acts xvi.). The apostle, guided by the Spirit, leaves Asia Minor, where much blessing had attended the preaching of the gospel, and goes to Europe, where he knew no one. A very striking case, similar to this is that of Philip (Acts viii.). He leaves a work of great magnitude at Samaria, where there had been much blessing, to go to a desert part, where, as far as he knew, no one was to be found. How richly was his obedience rewarded in the conversion of the Eunuch. So in Paul's case: he leaves the work in Asia, and enters upon an untrodden field. Reaching Philippi, they go out to the riverside, and talk with the women who resorted there for prayer. Doubtless they were few in number; but one of them has her heart opened to hear what the apostle tells and is brought to the knowledge of Christ. In the same chapter they are put into prison—apparently a further check upon the gospel—only to find an open door and an opened heart in the jailer himself. Well might the Philippians understand the apostle when in writing to them afterwards from Rome, in chains, "But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel." (Phil. i. 12.)

Let us not, then, despise work with individuals, or that which seems small in men's eyes. We would especially commend these thoughts to the assemblies of the Lord's people, where there are no special "gifts." If none feel equal to taking a public meeting, and holding the attention of a crowd, all should be able to take their Bibles and tracts and go from

house to house, distributing the precious word of salvation. In this day of agents and solicitors of all kinds, can there not be solicitors for precious souls? How often have open doors thus been found, and hearts prepared by the Spirit of God for the reception of the good seed. Many who would shrink from addressing the public meeting, find a most useful and congenial sphere of service in the modest “cottage meetings,” where in close and familiar intercourse the needs of souls are met, and many an one set free.

How these cottage meetings would multiply were there prayer and simple faith to expect open doors. The Christian could invite a few neighbors into his house for a little meeting; or his fellow workman could be induced to open *his* doors to such a meeting. The tract visitor at the home could find many such open doors, where two or three Christians could go and find precious souls. These are but suggestions, familiar doubtless to many readers of these lines. Many more ways of spreading the gospel might be easily thought of.

As we said, there is danger in the thought that gospel work necessarily means public meetings of large crowds. Comparatively few are gifted in addressing such; and the novice may easily be puffed up in such work. Meetings are but means to an end, not the end themselves. Oh, for more of that love and zeal which, without excitement, but in dependence upon God, take every opportunity to spread the precious gospel!

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THERE is no solid peace when experience is fed on; there is no crop by ploughing, but no good crop without it.—J. N. D.

## SEEKING.

**L**OVE moves under all disguises,  
 Seeking to be known:  
 Glad to be at last mistaken  
 For no other one;  
 Practising us till no other  
 Voice or form or feature be  
 'To us like to our Beloved's:  
 Sole among ten thousand, He.

Oh that mid the dull lack-lustre  
 Of our common lives, the sheen  
 Of that glorious Presence always,  
 Wheresoe'er He moves, were seen!  
 Faith alone it needs that glory  
 Of th' Invisible to see:  
 His who where He is must have us,  
 Where we are must with us be.

Oh for need of Him that could not  
 Bid Him turn aside,  
 Still alone, among His chosen,  
 Stranger to abide.  
 Come so far to have us with Him  
 In the glory, on the throne:  
 There to be without distraction  
 Still and all His own:—

By the glory of that passion,  
 Which He could not share,  
 Where we could not follow,—  
 Standing for us there:  
 In the uttermost gulf abasing  
 All His glory for our need:  
 In that dread disguise of sorrow,  
 Night, as if it had not morrow,—  
 Only—evermore—unhid,  
 Uttermost love indeed.

Yes, from out the inner darkness  
 Now the Light has broken:  
 From the unans'ring silence now  
 Th' Eternal Voice has spoken.  
 Love which now mid all disguises  
 Seeks but to be known;  
 Claims our perfect recognition,—  
 Claims our trust without suspicion,  
 Ours who once have seen, have heard  
 Christ the Word.

Come, Lord, make Thyself a place,  
 Ans'ring to Thy matchless grace!  
 Set us from Thy rivals free,  
 Ev'rywhere to walk with Thee.

F. W. G.

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## CHRISTIAN SERVICE.

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**C**ONNECT your service with nothing but God, not with any particular set of persons,—you may be comforted by fellowship, and your heart refreshed; but you must work by your own individual faith and energy, without leaning on anyone whatever,—for if you do, you cannot be a faithful servant. Service must ever be measured by faith, and one's own communion with God. Saul even may be a prophet when he gets among the prophets, but David was always the same, in the cave or anywhere. Whilst the choicest blessings given me here are in fellowship, yet a man's service must flow from himself,—else there will be weakness. If I have the word of wisdom, I must use it for the saint who may seek my counsel. It is “Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.” But also, “Let everyone prove his own work, then shall

every man have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another."

There is no place grace brings us into but is a place of temptation, and that we cannot escape, though we shall be helped through. In every age the blessing has been from individual agency, and the moment it has ceased to be this, it has declined into the world. It is humbling, but it makes us feel that all comes immediately from God.

The tendency of association is to make us lean upon one another.

Where there is great arrangements for carrying on work, there is not the recognition of the inherent blessing which tarrieth not for the sons of men.

I do not tarry for man if I have faith in God, I act upon the strength of that. Let a man act as the Lord leads him. The Spirit of God is not to be fettered by man,—all power arises from the direct authoritative energy of the Holy Ghost, in the individual. Paul and Barnabas (Acts xiii.) were sent forth by the Holy Ghost, recommended to the grace of God by the the church at Antioch, but they had no communication with it till they returned; then there was the joyful concurring of love in the service that had been performed. He that had talents went and traded. Paul says, "Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." When there is a desire to act accompanied by real energy, a man will rise up and walk, but if he cannot do this, the energy is not there, and the attempt to move is only restlessness and weakness. Love for souls sets one to work, I know no other way.

J. N. D.

## THE LIGHT OF NATURE AS A MEANS OF SALVATION.

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**I**T has been said that the testimony of creation may be used to convert men in heathen darkness—that is, that on the basis of the work of the cross, men may be turned to God and be saved by the testimony of creation, having never heard the gospel—that is, without the gospel.

But if this were so, what need of the gospel? Why should men imperil their lives in heathen lands? and why should Paul say, “Why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing, I die daily.” And again in 2 Tim. ii. 10, “I endure all things for the elect’s sake that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.”

But where does Scripture warrant the thought of creation’s testimony leading men to God? It says, “There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved” (Acts iv. 12); and again, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.” The water is the word, the word of the gospel, not the witness of creation; a word that must be believed as in 1 Pet. i. 23, “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever . . . and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

This being true, surely Scripture decides this question for us. To be saved a man must be born again of the word—which word can only be received by faith, “Of His own will begat He us with the word

of truth, that we might become a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James i. 18).

This is the teaching of Scripture that by the word, through faith, and in no other way can the soul be saved.

As to what is recorded in the first of Romans about the testimony of creation; it is recorded to show that men are without excuse, not at all to show that that testimony converted any one—"For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness," and then follow details of wickedness wrought by the nations, showing clearly that as under law, so under the testimony of creation, men were only, and universally hardened, while responsible and without excuse. No one was saved of this creation-witness. That could only be by the word and the Spirit. So in the second chapter, seventh verse, those who are accepted of God, in any time and place, are supposed to know the gospel; that is, they are those who seek for glory, honor and incorruptibility. They know about the revealed glory, and the resurrection when "this corruptible shall have put on incorruption." Chap. ii. 14, where the Gentiles do by nature things contained in



the law, speaks of good fruit in the Gentiles, but it is not salvation; it was better to be a moral and industrious Gentile, than to be an immoral Jew. Salvation is not in question, but rather that the example of upright Gentiles was a rebuke to Jews whose ways caused the name of God to be blasphemed among the Gentiles. Therefore the conclusion of the third chapter naturally is that all have sinned, there is none righteous, no not one, none that seeketh after God. Neither the testimony of creation (as in chap. i.) nor the law (as in chap. ii.) had brought anyone to God. They were all, without exception, simply proved without excuse and under condemnation.

But a man cannot be saved by the word, except knowingly; he must hear the word, be exercised by it and believe the gospel. All this is essential by the nature of the case, and proved by Scripture—by scriptures already quoted from James i. and 1 Pet. i. and John iii. In Acts xvii. where Paul speaks, at Athens, of God's dealing with men apart from His word "that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him" we find God's goodness to men in His government, as in the testimony of creation.

But while He so governed that they might seek Him, still we know the result from Rom. iii. ; not one responded to His goodness! "There is none that seeketh after God." Could we think that His voice in creation and government would do what the law, His plainly expressed will, could not?

There may be formed wise reflections to a degree as to life and death, in the writings of Cicero, by the light of creation and government of God, but evidence of repentance will not be found, and could not.

“Repentance toward God” goes with “faith in our Lord Jesus Christ,” and cannot be found or thought of elsewhere—cannot be supposed apart from the gospel.

An error here would cripple zeal in the gospel; for if men can be saved without it, as before said, Paul might well have said as to this what he did as to the denial of the resurrection, “Why stand we in jeopardy every hour?” (2 Cor. xv.) And why should men hazard their lives, and deny themselves, to communicate a gospel which if this error were the truth, would not be essential. But Scripture clearly excludes this error, and shows that without the gospel no man can be saved,—that is, without hearing and believing the word of truth.

Solemn as is the condition and prospect of the world at large, of the nations of men, we must leave all that in God’s hands, who “so loved the world.” We can rest with perfect repose in this word, “so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Still, “they that have sinned without law shall perish without law” (Rom. ii. 12); “and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.” Without this gospel, men must perish. Let us be fully persuaded of this, and let us hold forth the word of life to men, and our own souls will be sanctified by the truth; while on the other hand, every error corrupts.

“Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth.” Error is a wile of Satan, and he is ever

ready, we know; for we wrestle not against flesh and blood. Therefore we must "put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." Let us "be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might;" and having done all, we are to "stand"—"praying with all prayer and supplication." Humility is needed that we may not be a prey to the enemy. We must walk softly, or be thrown down, sooner or later. May the consolation of the truth be ours, that we may be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. xv. 50.)

E. S. L.

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THE Church has neither times, seasons, days, months, or years (Gal. iv. 10), which belong to the Jew.

Neither has it any carnal ordinances, which are for those living in the world (Col. ii. 20); we are dead, and should not be subject to ordinances which all are to perish with the using, but we shall never perish. The assembly (Church) was "chosen in Christ before the world began, to the praise of the glory of His grace wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved," and as a heavenly people we need not the things which belong to the world and time, but we are for heaven and eternity. Our ministry is of the Spirit, our unity one body, our hope the Lord's coming.

W. M. McK.

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THE Lord must be known intimately in order to be able to walk in a way worthy of Him.—J. N. D.

## A PARALLEL BY CONTRAST.

IT is the desire of the writer to call attention to one of those beautiful harmonies, which, occurring so often in unexpected places, touch up and revivify with a new beauty some familiar portion of the Word, and thus keep the reader in that expectant attitude which becomes him who at any time may find a rich treasure beneath his feet and would not pass it by unwittingly.

So many similarities have been found between the teachings of Paul and the Gospel of Luke, that some learned critics have wanted to make out that Paul referred to it, when speaking of "*my* gospel." However we may differ from them as to this, we may still welcome all correspondence that can be pointed out, as witness to one Master Hand, controlling and combining the music of these distant and various players into one grand symphony of praise. "He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him," but how much sweeter the song of those chanting,—

"Wondrous stories of the glories of His grace."

A verse in the tenth chapter of John, says, "When He putteth forth His own sheep He goeth before them," and what I want to point out is, how Paul seems to respond, in those wondrous seven platforms of grace in the second chapter of Philippians, "But when the lost sheep wandereth away, He followeth in every footstep." Luke gives the footsteps of the sheep; Paul, of the Good Shepherd. Let us ponder them together, and think as we do, of the apostle's exhortation, "Let this mind be in you."

The first antithesis is this, "Who being in the

form of God, thought it not robbery (a grasping), to be equal with God." Luke, "And the younger of them said unto his father, Father, give me the portion of goods which falleth to me." Here we have in a nutshell the whole course of the first Adam portrayed. What privileges he lost by his grasping spirit. Luke gives them with a touch of the pen, when he says, Adam was the son of God. Likewise the prodigal ! Not content with his happy home, an overflowing abundance, he must have something which he can point out to an admiring world as his own, as completely in his power; the title fully his, not his father's any longer. "Thus no doubt," he ponders, "I shall be respected and looked up to, as my father is; I will have power." Ah, fellow-Christian, cannot we recognize the old tempter's voice again, "Ye shall be as God, as your Father." The younger son will let his father divide his *living*, to gratify his own grasping spirit. How beautiful the contrast in Philippians, where we see One, with title to the whole universe, not grasping after it, but with a spirit ready to *give up* everything. The blessed Shepherd thus blots out the first soiled footmark of the lost sheep.

And now for the second antithesis. Luke, "And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance in riotous living." Paul, "He emptied Himself" (literal rendering). Two emptyings here: but how different ! How short an answer, but what a large field for meditation. Do not pause with the mere pittance of thought here written, but revolve it over and over, and God will bless it to you. "He emptied Himself," but how much must

have been laid aside for One equal with God to empty Himself. Let us look at a few Scriptures in this connection. He was "the brightness of God's glory and the express image of His person," and yet as we ponder it, we hear Isaiah's low undertone adding its soft minor chord and making both inexpressibly sweet, "We saw no beauty in Him—His face was *so* marred, more than any man's and His form more than the sons of men." Reverently let us respond.—

"O Head, once full of bruises,  
So full of pain and scorn,  
'Mid other sore abuses,  
Mocked with a crown of thorn."

Brethren, we tread upon holy ground. It reminds me of the words, may I not say, admonition, of a Christian upon first seeing that beautiful hymn, the seventy-first in the appendix: \* "Oh, it seems almost too sacred to sing, does it not? Again we are told, "He upholdeth all things by the word of His power," but the Psalmist prophetically exclaims, "My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and thou hast brought me into the dust of death." "All things were made by Him," and yet, "Jesus being a wearied sat thus on the well." How we might multiply quotations. He thus stripped Himself, for we had also done so, but alas! in riotous living.

Now comes the third step and third antithesis. Luke says, "And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country," and Paul answers, "He took upon Himself the form of a servant." The former seeks to serve himself by serving another; the latter

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\* "Little Flock hymn-book."

to serve others gratuitously. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. The gospel of Mark beautifully exemplifies this character of our Lord's life. Here we have those "immediatelys" and "straightways," which picture so vividly the busy Servant, having no time of His own. The people so learn the readiness of His touch that they know themselves welcome even when intruding upon His private moments. "And from thence He arose and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into a house and would have no man know it; but *He could not be hid.*" No wonder Paul delighted to preach "the *untraceable* riches of Christ" (literal rendering). So many were the dark corners into which the Lord carries and has carried them, through so many "holes of the door" has His arm been lovingly stretched (Cant. v. 4), that the bewildered gaze of man cannot follow. Man's path, on the other hand, can easily be seen; he bestows his goods upon himself. Man's goodness is very patent, for he blazons it abroad with a trumpet. "How beautiful upon the mountains," have been *His* footsteps, blotting out once more all traces of the prodigal's soiled, self-serving path, in "joining himself to a citizen of that country."

"And was made in the likeness of men." The antithesis here is not so clear. In the next phase of our story the prodigal is seen in the fields feeding swine, and in a state of such destitution as to long for the husks which the swine eat, "and no man gives unto him." Have we not here, however, a sketch of what man really is? He is a creature of wants, never satisfied, dependent upon others, especially in these days of "division of labor" and "co-operation." Does

he not, too, sometimes yearn after husks, the food of swine, because he has wasted his Father's substance? How graciously the Lord also took a position of dependence, as at Sychar's well, for instance. He was wearied, He was hungry, He was thirsty, and in our prodigal state did we ever give unto Him? Is not the Good Shepherd *still* on the track of His lost sheep? Let us watch His next footstep.

"He humbled Himself"! This is *not* characteristic of man. The opposite mind has so taken hold of him, that to-day he is trying to convince himself, as hard as he can, that he never has fallen. The prodigal, however, has learned better. He goes to humble himself before His father. I don't believe his motives were *all* right. I think self was still an object to him. It is only because of what he *is*, he now steps *up* in stepping down. Perhaps he has heard a footfall upon the mountain. Perhaps in his destitution he has caught a glimpse of a "shining One," bending pityingly over some dark stain upon the rock. Perhaps he has heard a whispered, "Come unto Me," like a sweet strain of far off music from a father's house. Perhaps! Dear brother, can *you* tell me what it is now brings him home? Does it not bow our hearts to think that the *Good Shepherd's* face was towards no home when He humbled *Himself*!

"And became obedient unto death." Is not the parallel close here? His path is now especially emphasized as one of obedience to His Father, while in Luke it is the *father* that says, "This my son was dead."

"Even the death of the cross." That death was one which involved the curse of God's law, and sep-



aration from His Father, while in Luke the death is characterized by the words "was lost." Ah, now the last stain is gone. The utmost penalty has been paid, and the music of the father's house bursts upon our ear; yet it seems amid it all we may turn back and wonder, "*How He followed in every footstep.*"

F. C. G.

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## CHASTISEMENT.

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"**W**HOM the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore and repent." God chastises His children that they may be more and more conformed to His mind, or as the apostle expresses it, that they may "be partakers of His holiness."

There are three ways of treating chastisement mentioned in the word of God. One is to *despise* it. "Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord." To say in effect that we did not need what has come upon us, is really to despise it, and the One who has sent it.

A second way of treating chastisement is to *faint* under it. "Neither faint when thou art rebuked of him." The one who faints under chastening, does not see and own that it comes in love,—that the Hand of love has brought it for good,—and so faints under it.

The third way is to be *exercised* by the chastisement. "Now no chastisement for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous, nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceful fruits of righteousness to them which are *exercised* thereby." The person

who is brought to true exercise of soul under chastisement will not be indulging in nice sentimental thoughts, but will be saying the Master's touch means something; and will be diligently enquiring what that meaning is. Is there not something in my ways, the soul will ask, which is displeasing to Him? Have I not something between myself and Him? He is a jealous God, and will not give His glory to another. The exercised one who knows God, will also say in effect, He has sent this chastisement in love,—He means it for blessing to me. He wants my whole heart and life. Oh, if this exercise goes down deep, the soul will see things as God sees them, that is according to its own little, finite measure, and thus will be finding “a path which the vulture's eye hath not seen,” and which will shine with growing brightness until it enters the perfect and eternal day. In short this deep exercise is the way to real blessing. “*Afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them which are exercised thereby.*” No blessing in despising chastisement,—no blessing in fainting under it; but simply in being truly exercised by it.

Oh, happy if through chastiment we are brought down from the deceptive clouds of our own vain thoughts, to the *terra firma* of God's solemn realities. Full blessing is had by fully and practically getting into the current of His thoughts. Full blessing is had by taking sides with God against much that He has seen in us and our ways, deeply offensive to Him. This is self-judgment. Fruit suited to God's taste will follow.

R. H.

## THE CROWNED CHRIST.

“*And upon His head were many crowns.*”

(Rev. xix. 12.)

(Continued from page 259.)

## CHAPTER I.

*The Deity of Christ.*

THINK of One who could say of Himself that *He* was the “Light of the world,”—excluding all other! Light—self-witnessing, as light is: so that rejection of it could only be on the part of men who “loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” And this light was not merely that of His sayings, a message that He brought, a revelation which was committed to Him, though there *was* that also: but He was *Himself* the Light, as He says, in the exactest possible way defining this,—“As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world” (Jno. ix. 5).

His sayings would, indeed, live after He was gone; the revelation He made remain for other days. None the less, it would be night for the world when He was gone out of it. Nothing could replace the Sun. Of course, there are little “lights” enough—torch-lights, bon-fires, here and there a calcium light: but no one of these could be confounded with the sun. Even the moon shines by its light, and nature itself bears witness which we do well to listen to, that the light of the world must be a light *outside* the world; nothing bred of it is competent for its illumination.

“God is light:” and here is One who claims to be in the world so absolutely that, that if a disciple express still a desire to have the Father shown to him, He can rebuke him with “Have I been so long

time with you, and hast thou not known *Me*, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath *seen* the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" (Jno. xiv. 9).

Nothing could be more absolute in statement that as to God Himself, morally, there was none else to see,—there was no one back of Him, who was "the brightness"—or, as in the Revised Version, "the effulgence of (the Father's) glory, the exact image of His Person" (Heb. i. 3), "the Image of the invisible God" (Col i. 15).

He is thus the Revealer, or (according to the title which John alone gives to Him,) the "Word of God." The opening of his gospel, which is that in which the divine glory of Christ is the peculiar theme, presents Him in this character. "In the beginning"—when anything that *had* beginning began,—the Word (not began, but) *was*. Revelation began with creation: the work must necessarily in some sort bear witness of the Worker; but this is not enough to say here; for the Personal Word, there at the very beginning of creation, speaks of *design* on God's part that He should be known. He must intend, therefore, to have those to whom He can speak; and the Word of God is thus the Creator: "By Him were all things made; and without Him was not anything made that was made." Creation is, in scarcely a figure, the actual speech of the Word of God.

"The Word was *with* God"—a distinct Person; "and the Word was God"—a divine Person; and "the same was in the beginning with God"—always personally distinct, as always in communion with the Father.

It is too little remembered—to some seems to be unknown—that the Word was the Creator. The so-

called Apostles' Creed ascribes creation solely to the Father. Scripture says of the Father, "*of* whom are all things," and of the Lord Jesus Christ "*by* whom" (1 Cor. viii. 6). Paul in Colossians, as already quoted, declares of Christ that "all things were created by Him and for Him" (i. 16). John may enable us to understand better this last expression. As the Word, the Revealer, we can see that He has special relation to what He has made; so that when we find that it is He, the "Word," who is "become flesh," this coming into His own creation, with all the wonder of it, has a divine suitability; and we, "created for Him," are thus to have the whole heart of God declared to us, and to be brought nigh in accordance with the eternal counsels of love, in which all the Persons of the Godhead have their part.

We pass on to John's epistle, and we find Him there before us as the "Word of life," where the same idea of revelation attaches to it: "for the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested unto us." This is thoroughly in keeping with the character of the epistle, but we have not yet reached to this.

And once again, in the book of Revelation, Christ is presented to us as the Word of God, where He is still manifesting God as ever, but in judgment. Here as Rider upon the white horse, the sword of judgment proceeds out of His mouth,

For us how blessed to realize in this title of the Son of God, the divine purpose, from eternity, of revelation, and that we were given of the Father to the Son, from the beginning of creation according to this purpose—"created for Him." The Lord's words

in His prayer to the Father for those given to Him out of the world, though seeming to have a narrower scope, only show us the same purpose in progress, now defining itself in view of human sin and its fatal consequences. To those given to Him He manifests the Father's name, and communicates the Father's words. One who had his place with them had dropped out; but *he* was a "son of perdition."

There is no need to entangle ourselves with the questions that arose early in the Church with regard to the doctrine of the Word or Logos. Scripture is transparently clear with regard to it; and upon such subjects not a ray of light is to be got elsewhere.

Being, then, such as we see, we do not wonder that He claims to be the self-existent One, as in His words to the Jews: "Before Abraham was I AM" (Jno. viii. 58). This is the incommunicable name of Deity, by which He revealed Himself to Moses and to Israel: "I AM hath sent me to you" (Exod. iii. 14). Being always the Word, the Revealer, this older voice was, of course, His own. He is thus the Abiding, the Unchangeable, the Eternal. Jehovah is but the synonym of this; and so the glory of Jehovah, which Isaiah saw in his day, is declared to be His glory: "these things said Esaias when he saw His glory, and spake of Him" (Jno. xii. 40, 41 with Isa. vi. 9, 10). The Old Testament thus, as well as the New, is full of His Presence; only that now He has taken that tabernacle of flesh to display His glory in, in which all His purpose to be near us, all His delights with the sons of men, have fully come out. He is now truly Immanuel, "God with us;" and the blessedness of that for us will fill eternity.

That He should claim equal honor with the Father

Himself is in this way clearly intelligible, as it of itself also declares fully who He is: "that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father" (Jno. v. 23) is the most emphatic assertion of equality; which Thomas's "my Lord and my God" (xx. 28) yields Him, with full recognition on his part of the truth of his too tardy faith.

F. W. G.

*(To be Continued.)*

## A

### CHAPTER FROM THE WILDERNESS-BOOK.

(Num. ix.)

IN each of the books which have to do with Israel as a nation we have that which is appropriate to and consistent with its main theme. Thus in Exodus, which treats of redemption, by the blood of the lamb and by power, all the contents of the book are in harmony with that thought. In the first part, before the passover, we have the house of bondage, with the judgments that fall upon it: in the part after redemption has been effected, we have the house of God, which He sets up in the midst of a re-deemed, subject people. Coming to Leviticus, we pass into a different atmosphere. It is, we might say, the internal character of redemption rather than the external; access to God, rather than shelter from judgment; holiness as contrasted with, though not exclusive of, righteousness; priestly fitness, privilege, and worship. Therefore it is in that book we find sacrifice so prominently and variedly put before us. The character of God and the grounds upon which we have access to Him are emphasized in this. In the book of Numbers, on the contrary, the world is

again faced; no longer, however, a place of bondage in which we need redemption, but as a place where the Lord's free people exhibit both the power of that grace which has set them free, and the practical separation from defilement which it is now their responsibility to maintain. Thus we might say that the characteristic theme of these three books respectively is redemption, sanctification, and a pilgrim walk. It is of this last that our chapter speaks.

But if these books are of distinct and separate character, none the less are they connected together most closely, and in the order in which they stand. They represent not merely for Israel literally, but for ourselves typically, the order in which grace meets our needs, and the experience of the soul in the apprehension of that grace. For us as for them, before there can be any true knowledge of God, before there can be any true testimony or walk for Him in this world, redemption with its accompanying deliverance must be known as an accomplished fact. Where this is not the case, there will always be an uncertainty and a wavering that makes the superstructure as fragile as the foundation is unstable. Thank God, *His* foundation is sure. He knows them that are His, even if they do not know themselves. Alas for the weak and faulty teaching that makes such a state of things possible; but practically, if redemption is not known and enjoyed, it is as if it did not exist. Thus redemption comes first; then the truth as to access to God—the sacred privileges and joys of His holy presence—can be truly appreciated, and this in turn opens the way for the narrow path of separation that marks our pilgrim journey in this world.



But we cannot thus rapidly glance over these precious and familiar truths without pausing to admire the wonders of that love that has made such full provision for us, His unworthy people. What gentleness, thoughtfulness, provision for the weakness and helplessness of His people is here represented. He calls to no hard service; He calls *from* hard service. The first object that meets their eyes as they turn from the brick-kilns and the taskmasters' lash, is the unblemished lamb and its sheltering blood. What peace comes from that blessed assurance, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." Again, before they set foot upon the testing part of the wilderness (for all before Sinai had been pure grace—eagles' wings), they are introduced into a Presence which, if holy is holy with the perfection of peace and love. How our God would ever remind us that we are dealing with perfect love. Well would it be for His beloved people if they were well grounded in these blessed facts before entering upon the testing experiences of a journey which will bring out every weak spot in us. Stumble we doubtless will, and learn humiliating lessons as to ourselves, but oh the joy of being able to turn to a love that is well known, to a grace which has already perfectly proven itself. We repeat, let not the familiarity of these truths deter us from making constant use of them, and let nothing be harbored that will mar the simplicity of our joy in the wonders of redeeming love. But we must not anticipate our chapter.

All has been arranged: sacrifices prescribed, the daily routine of holy services and provision for special cases; the tribes have been gathered in goodly order round the tabernacle, linked together by

that center and by the Levitical ministry; the camp has been cleansed, and the dedicatory gifts of the princes have been offered. They are now facing the desert in reality, and have entered upon a new year. The chapter before us marks this new beginning in a very clear way. It lays down for their guidance certain simple but most important principles which are to mark the whole of their subsequent journey through the wilderness. For ourselves, then, this chapter is of the greatest value, for it tells us how we can truly be pilgrims in this world.

There are three clearly defined subjects in the chapter: the passover, provision for the defiled, and the pillar of cloud as their guide. These three give us in brief outline the guide for our pilgrim way. Let us look at them briefly in their order.

First, we have the passover. How different were the circumstances under which this second paschal feast was observed from those of the first. Then they were still, to outward appearance, bondmen; and that, too, in a scene where judgment reigned and where the final act of that judgment was impending. Between them and the Egyptians there was nothing to mark a difference, save what to sight seemed a small distinction. But that was everything. The blood of the lamb shielded them, while it declared the certainty of judgment for all who were not beneath its protection. What searchings of heart there must have been among the Israelites on that eventful night,—“a night much to be remembered.” The memory of their own sins and unworthiness might well make them serious; and if there were not the simplest faith in the bare word of God,—God whom they knew not very well

—there might well be trembling and uncertainty until the dreaded hour was past. Even where faith was in simple exercise, the stir, the forsaking Egypt, with all the attending circumstances, would stamp as unique that one night in all their history.

And as we remember the time when we first came under the shelter of the blood of the true Lamb of God, as we think of the conviction of sin that preceded it, of the soul anxiety, the upheaval of all that seemed most solid in our life,—when we remember the fear and trembling with which we took our place beneath the shelter of the cross,—did it not mark an event which stands out in all our lives, even in our own experience; how much more when we remember that apart from all the feebleness of our apprehension of it, then we passed from death into life, from the doom of judgment into redemption.

We say under what different circumstances Israel celebrated the passover in the second year. They were now a redeemed and pilgrim people under the gracious government of God, and had learned many lessons since that eventful night. So for ourselves, we have become established, perhaps, have learned much of the word of God, and something of His ways. Will not this change in our condition be correspondingly marked by a different place, or a different order in the observance of the memorial of redemption? God had said it was to be “the beginning of months” to them, the new year. But that was when they were a nation born in a day. Did not something else eclipse that now? Let us mark well what the answer must be for them and for us.

*Nothing* could displace the passover. It was to be first ever, in their thoughts and in their observances.

It was to be kept "at his appointed season." Redemption was first. It was to be observed without modification, "according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof." There was to be no mutilation of it; the unleavened bread, the bitter herbs, the roast lamb,—all were to have their place; forever after in their history was this to be the case. Nor is it different with us. No matter what may have intervened; how deep and many the experiences we may have passed through, the blessed precious fact of redemption stands out in unchanged character. Time has not altered it, neither its value, blessed be God, nor the stamp of death and condemnation it has put upon the natural man. As at the first, it maintains its pre-eminent place,—nothing can supersede it. It is ever to us as to God, the "beginning of months."

This is the keynote of the wilderness walk. The believer's whole life is marked by this—the pre-eminence of redemption through the cross of Christ. It has the first place; no subsequent truth can displace this foundation fact. It is emphasized in the Christian feast of the Lord's Supper. We show the Lord's death till He come; and the frequency intimated in the New Testament (see Acts xx. 7) is none too often for those who remember that in heaven itself the song will still be "unto Him who loveth us, and hath washed us from our sins in His own blood."

"As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." (Col. ii. 6.) How did we receive Him? What place did He occupy in our thoughts then? So is it to be throughout the whole walk. We are to walk *in* Him. And so far from this check-

ing growth, it is the one essential to all true progress. Where is there a Christian to whom the redemption of Christ is the first thing, who is not "rooted and built up in" Christ? But this brings us to the second part of our chapter.

The world is a place of defilement. It is pre-eminently that, because it is away from God. Nothing alienated from Him can be truly clean. It is the cleanness of death that is in the world, the whited sepulchres of which our Lord spoke to the Pharisees. So we need not be surprised to learn that such defilement had come into the camp of Israel. We need not dwell much upon what this typifies for us. If death is everywhere present in this scene, if alienation from God is stamped upon it all, we need not be surprised if the believer is in danger of coming in contact with it. Wherever we turn, whatever we take up, there is this danger of coming in contact with death. If one goes into business, he finds it there; none the less in the proper and necessary relaxation from business; in the home circle, it is there; and should we retire into the inmost chambers of our hearts, there we still find this defiling influence.

But is not this overdrawn? Does it not cast a chill over one, and check altogether the aspirations after holiness, which mark any true Christian growth? We answer no; quite the reverse, in fact, when we remember that if defiling influences are everywhere present, we are not thereby defiled. That there is danger we need to remember; that there is necessity for defilement is most untrue. Look at our blessed Lord as He passed through this death-scene. Did His holy footsteps shrink from any scene of sin and

death? Were not His hands laid upon the leper,—the very bier of death, too? But what spot remained upon Him? He scattered blessing and cleansing in the very place of defilement, instead of gathering as we, alas, too often do, spots and blemishes as we pass along.

But He has “left us an example that we should follow His steps,” and the power as well to keep ourselves in the midst of all that presses upon us. It was the uncovered vessel that gathered defilement from the chamber of death (Num. xix. 15). Let the heart be kept covered; let Christ Himself be that covering, and there will be no possibility of defilement; we can pass through this scene with garments unspotted.

To return now. Certain Israelites were defiled by the dead body of a man, and were therefore outside the camp (Num. v. 2), unable therefore to unite with their brethren in the holy feast. This they feel most keenly, both as a reflection upon themselves as Israelites perhaps, and as a deprivation of their proper privileges. They demand their rights, and Moses waits upon God for His answer. That answer meets both their difficulties at once, and at the same time establishes the great truth of God’s holiness and His government.

They were to eat the passover. That settled the question of their being Israelites, and thus entitled to all their redemption privileges. But *when* were they to eat it? In the second month; and that maintained the holiness and government of God. During that interval their cleansing by means of the water of separation could and must be effected (Num. xix.), and thus neither their privileges cease nor God’s ho-

liness be violated. All this is most interesting and instructive, too, for us in these times. We are living in times when anything like order, or the maintenance of scriptural government, is considered either legal or arbitrary. Is not every believer a child of God, and therefore entitled to all privileges as such? How dare we draw a line between the people of God, and make a difference? With this portion of God's holy word before us, we need not be moved by such objections. Let it be marked well that the question of defilement does not raise the question of sonship. Thank God, that was settled once and forever for us when we came under the shelter of the blood of the Lamb. Nor is the right of the believer to all the privileges of the Christian questioned; but the holiness of God's government is emphasized, and until he is restored according to that holiness he is unfit, nay it is impossible for him to enjoy what is as truly his as the privilege of any child of God.

How significantly does this passover in the second month suggest not merely the effect but the cause of the defilement. Does not God say, as it were, You have put redemption in a secondary place? Something else has been allowed to come in and usurp the unique place which the cross should occupy in all our hearts. It may not be open sin into which the believer has fallen: it usually is not, though it might easily lead to that, did not God in mercy intervene. The complaint against Ephesus (Rev. ii.) was that she had lost her first love,—first in pre-eminence as well as in time. Oh, beloved brethren, if the love of Christ has found but a second place in our hearts, need we be surprised if our joy, our worship, our liberty, are of a secondary character as well? Need

we be surprised if defilement by death-contact has come in, and it is not possible for us to "keep the feast?"

How touching, then, does this passover in the second month remind us both of our own failure—the fruits of it—and of the patient grace of our Lord, who has stood still and waited till, restored by the "water of separation," we have returned to Himself again. The only reminder of our folly being the second month, as in Peter's recovery the only reminder of his folly was in the fire of coals and the thrice-repeated question, "Lovest thou Me?" Ah! as we gather about our Lord in remembrance of His death; with so much that speaks of the second month, so much feebleness of worship, so much necessity for the cleansing by the water of the Word, may tears of real shame and sorrow be ours that such is the witness, the proof of heart-departure from Himself! Poor indeed is the excuse that pleads we were necessarily defiled,—business and cares pressed so, or we were on a journey. Rather let honest confession put us into our true place before Him, and He will then have His true place in our hearts.

"And yet to find Thee still the same,  
'Tis this that humbles us with shame."

In leaving this part of our subject, we will simply notice that this passover in the second month seems to signify the restoration of the ten tribes to the Lord in the future day of Ephraim's blessing; and in harmony with this, as well as for other reasons, Hezekiah's passover was held in the second month. (2 Chron. xxx. 1-3.) The ten tribes have taken a long journey away from God, and have become not only defiled by the dead, but have themselves become



as dead and buried among the nations. (Ezek. xxxvii. 11-14.) When they are raised up and restored back to Him, they will again enjoy all their privileges which they have forfeited through their unbelief: "Then shall ye remember your own evil ways and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations." (Ezek. xxxvi. 31.)

But we pass on to the last portion of our chapter. The wilderness is a journeying place; and if there is the danger of journeying away from God, there is the blessed and happy privilege of journeying with Him. The first step of their journey, even in Egypt, was taken under the guidance of the pillar of cloud and fire. And here, when the tabernacle was set up, the cloud hovered over it, moving only when the people were to journey, and returning to its station at each stage of their progress. They were to follow implicitly that unerring guide. When, it rested, whether a day, a month, or a year, they were to abide quietly in the camp; and when it lifted, whether by day or night, they were to follow unquestioningly.

How beautifully was this cloud in contrast with their surroundings. Was it in the day-time, there was a cloud, darker than the garish brightness around them, but shielding them from the heat as it came between them and the sun: was it night, the darkness did but manifest the brightness of a presence whose reality and beauty were but enhanced by the surrounding gloom. We have this blessed presence always with us in the person of the Holy Spirit, who abides with us forever. All through our journey, until we take the last step of our pilgrimage, He is pledged to be with us; "we are sealed unto the day

of redemption." When all shines bright in the world about us, His holy witness may seem a cloud by contrast, yet a cloud that affords most grateful shade from the false glare about us. Ah ! did we note the cloud, did we listen to the warnings and checks of the blessed Spirit of God ! But when the gloom of this world settles about us, when all else is dark, how brightly does the presence of God shine, through the ministry of the Holy Ghost. Oh ! sorrow, pain, grief, loss, are but the foil upon which the consolations of Him "who giveth songs in the night" do but shine out all the more brightly.

This holy presence was to be Israel's guide all through the wilderness, and it is to be ours also. How simple it made their journey ! No need for anxious thought for the morrow ; no restless peering into the unknown future, still less any entreaty of a child of the desert "to be to us instead of eyes" (Num. x. 31) ; we have the guidance of One who "neither slumbers nor sleeps," to whom the darkness and the light are both alike, and who has pledged His word "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest" (Ex. xxxiii. 14),—a word given, as the connection well shows, at a time of fearful unbelief and departure from Him. Well may we sing—

"O Lord, how blest our journey,  
Though here on earth we roam,  
Who find in Abba's favor  
Our spirits' present home."

A blessed journey indeed, where not one step is taken ahead of our blessed Guide, where we need never leave the sweet secret of His holy presence. What a remedy for all anxiety, all restless Martha-service, all hasty Peter-warfare. It occupies us, not

with the way, whether it be smooth or rough, whether it be easy or perilous. It fixes our eye upon Christ, as reflected by the Holy Spirit, and we follow as He leads. Our one, our only care is just to abide in His presence. Does that presence beckon us onward? let us move forward unfearing; does it stand still? let us learn our lesson of patience. If in the darkest hour of trial it lift and move forward it is for us simply to follow,—to follow not for the sake of mere progress, but simply to continue in communion with our blessed Lord; for if we fail to go on when He leads we lose our communion, just as we do if we press on in undue or self-confident haste. May our gracious God teach us His holy lesson, to abide in His holy, blessed presence.

We have, then, in these three portions that which is to mark our pilgrim way:—Christ and His redemption ever first in our hearts; restoration when there has been failure; and the simple abiding in the presence of God. Could anything be simpler? No intricate code of laws, no following of this or that one, simply abiding in His presence who will soon take us to be forever with Himself.

“And now little children, abide in Him.”

“My Jesus! as Thou wilt!  
Oh, may Thy will be mine;  
Into Thy hand of love  
I would my all resign;  
Through sorrow or through joy  
Conduct me as Thine own,  
And help me still to say,  
My Lord, Thy will be done.”

“My Jesus! as Thou wilt!  
All shall be well for me;  
Each changing future scene,  
I gladly trust with Thee:  
Then to my home above  
I travel calmly on,  
And sing, in life or death,  
My Lord, Thy will be done.”

## SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE.

No. 4.

## SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE AS TO WORSHIP.

**T**HUS far our meditations have brought us: and we have seen, that to worship the true and living God one must be led, guided, by the Holy Ghost into God's thoughts about His Beloved Son, and thus to present a sweet savor of Christ to God the Father. And we need but two scriptures to make this as simple and plain as possible,—the fourth and sixteenth chapters of John's gospel.

In the fourth chapter, beginning with the 20th verse, we hear the woman of Samaria saying to Jesus, "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, but ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." How sad it is, in these days in which we are living, there are so many Christian people,—I say Christian people, because they have taken that position, have put on the Christian profession, I do not say "children of God," though many of these are in great darkness, who are on no better ground as to worship than the woman of Samaria. They do not know Christ. They do not know that they are saved, and they do not believe it is possible for any one to know that he is saved now in this present time. But they do know that they have "got religion"; or perhaps this is stating their position too strongly; but they are not afraid to say "I know that I am a professor of religion,—a member in good and regular standing" in some recognized denomination: and they expect to live and die in that faith. Nor do they seem to want anything better than that; and

no one but the Lord Himself can show them anything better.

Sometimes they say it doesn't make any difference if one is only sincere and honest, for we are all going to the same place. And so the woman of Samaria might have thought; and so she might have added "Surely God ordained blessing on Mount Gerizim." (Deut. xxvii. 12.) But let us look at His answer to her queries.

"Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, *and now is*, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

And now we have before us three distinct points as to worship: First, "Our fathers worshiped." Second, "Ye say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Third, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Now as to the first: "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain." What was there wrong in that? Why could not the people of Samaria build a temple in Mount Gerizim, and worship there in their own city, and according to the dictates of their own conscience? Why could not God own and bless them there as well as at Jerusalem? For this Mount Gerizim was the place where God commanded blessing to be pronounced when they had taken possession of the land. (See Deut. xi. 29, and xii. 5, 6; 12-14.) "But

unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put His name there, even unto His habitation shall ye seek, and thither shall ye come: And thither shall ye bring your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and your heave-offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks."

Mark this, beloved reader: "the place which the Lord your God shall choose to put His name there." Notice now the eighth verse: "ye shall not do after all that ye do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes. For ye are not yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the Lord your God giveth you to inherit. . . . *Then* there shall BE A PLACE which the Lord your God shall choose to cause His name to dwell there." (ver. 11.) "Thither shalt thou bring all that I command you." (ver. 12.) . . . "Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt-offering in every place that thou seest."

In the wilderness they had been acting on the principle that so largely prevails now everywhere,— "doing that which was right in their own eyes." And this, beloved reader, is the citadel of Satan's power over men from the day that Adam succumbed to him in Eden. The citadel of Adam's strength was to abide in the will of God, but this he lost when he surrendered to Satan, and henceforth himself and his posterity became the bondslaves of Satan. This is the key to all the sorrow that the world has ever seen or felt. And there is absolutely no deliverance from this bondage except through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And this fact is abundantly sustained in the teach-

ings of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. We need only to hear Jesus saying to the Jews "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." (John viii.44.) And in the same chapter (ver.36), "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed"; 40th verse, "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." This is clearly illustrated in Israel's passing through the river Jordan from the wilderness into Canaan.

The waters of death were rolled back, and they took up twelve stones out of the bed of death, representing the twelve tribes of Israel, in resurrection, typically; and twelve other stones pitched in the bed of Jordan (death), as typically representing the twelve tribes dead and buried,—the end of man in the flesh, the natural man,—while the twelve stones in the heap at Gilgal represent typically the twelve tribes in resurrection life, now to go forth in the power of the Spirit to conquer the land.

And now, beloved reader, have you got the answer to those questions as to Mount Gerizim? There was but one place on the earth where God had set His name. Mount Moriah (provided by Jehovah) at Jerusalem. "God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt-offering." (Gen. xxii. 8.) And so he found it, when he had, in the obedience of faith, offered up his son Isaac,—God accepting the will for the deed,—since the willing mind is first accepted. (2 Cor. viii. 12.)

It is not, then, where man chooses to worship that he can be accepted, but where God has set His name.

From this we see that no offering of sacrifices, however perfect and without blemish, by an Israelite, however conscientious, sincere and honest, could be accepted at Gerizim, but at the place which God had provided, and where he had set His name—Jerusalem.

But Jesus said "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." And He also added "the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

And this brings us to the sixteenth chapter of John's gospel, beginning with the thirteenth verse: "Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth." . . . "He shall glorify Me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine and shall show it unto you."

And now, beloved reader, do you see how this fits our theme? The Holy Ghost dwells in the believer. What for? To guide! Yes, to guide into all truth. And what is this "all truth"? "All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine and shall show it unto you." And this leads us to worship in spirit and in truth. By the Spirit led into all truth,—not by the Spirit led according to the dictates of your own conscience, much less every man into that which "seemeth right in his own eyes." No, no! but as God appoints.

The God-appointed place where He had set His



name was the only place on earth where acceptable worship could be enjoyed. This was true during the one thousand years between Solomon and Christ. It was a God-ordained system and ritual, by which man "in the flesh" could be accepted as a worshiper.

Mark this, beloved reader: "man in the flesh," in contrast with man in the Spirit. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." (Rom. viii. 8, 9.) Note also Phil. iii. 3: "For we are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." This is New Testament ground: not man in the flesh, but a man in Christ and in the Spirit, because the Spirit of God dwells in him.

And this is God's thought of every believer in whom the Spirit dwells. This was not true in Solomon's day; not true while the ritual of the law was in order for man in the flesh.

Let us look at the first meeting held in the temple built by Solomon (2 Chron. v. 13): "It came to pass as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, For He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever; that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God."

This was man in the flesh worshipping: hence everything was suited to that state of things,—

trumpets, cymbals, psalteries, and harps,—everything in the line of instrumental music. And, beloved, do we not know that the flesh in us delights in that kind of worship? And that kind of worship cannot be owned of God now, since Jesus has died and risen again, having swept away the whole scene of man in the flesh as having any standing before God. He is condemned already, judged already, root and branch; and now no man has any standing of acceptance before God but in Christ, as the head of a new creation.

In the fifth chapter of Romans, beginning with the twelfth verse, we get the two headships: Adam, as the head of the old creation, by whom sin and death came in; and Christ, the Second Man, or head of a new creation through death and resurrection. This is most important to see clearly, since there can be no intelligent service, much less worship, while this point is not understood.

In the sixth chapter we read, “Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Christ by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Rom. vi. 3, 4; also 2 Cor. v. 14–16.) “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if One died for all then were all dead: and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (crea-

tion); old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new!"

These two scriptures are most important, as showing the difference between Christian worship and Jewish worship. The Jew, on the ground of law, as a man in the flesh, the natural man, worshiping by proxy, through a priest and sacrifices, in a ritual of services which could only appeal to the flesh, or natural man. While the Christian, on the ground of death and resurrection, as a man in Christ, indwelt by the Holy Ghost, and entering into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, accepted in the Beloved, offering up spiritual sacrifices, in which the flesh can have no part; since the moment it becomes a fleshly thing, or even in part flesh, it ceases to be a spiritual thing, and is sin, since whatever is of the flesh cannot be of the Spirit, and that which is not of the Spirit is not of faith, and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." C. E. H.

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### PRIDE.

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WHAT an awful sin pride must be to God's eyes in one of His children, for each one has cost Him the sacrifice He made in sending His beloved Son into this world. This blessed and only Son of His had to stoop down from the throne of His glory, even to the death of the Cross to redeem each one of us. We were vile and guilty, and this awful humiliation of Christ was of absolute necessity to reach our case. How dare we then lift up ever a proud look, harbor a proud feeling, look down upon any fellow-being because he happens to be in different circumstances?

True, sin has produced revolting and disgusting

scenes, and they spread before us on every hand. They may and they do sicken the heart at times, but a meek spirit remembers it is that *in himself* which caused the Saviour's awful cry "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken Me?" Oh, who can lift a lofty look, or utter a lofty word, or entertain a lofty mind, if that dark scene of the Cross stands before the soul?

There are joys for such; joys which the loftiest minds know nothing of; joys in resurrection, for Christ is risen; joys from another world and another scene, for Christ has returned to heaven and made Himself our Centre and our Hope there. We joy with the joys which rise out of that scene; it is a joyous scene, for death, guilt, sin, sorrow, pain, are unknown there, or if known 'tis but in remembrance, to enhance the rest and peace now enjoyed; but the joys of that scene foster no pride, do not produce one haughty thought. Eternally the spirit that proceeds from there makes its citizens proclaim in joyous meekness "Unto Him that loves us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; *to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.*"

It is not necessary to be rich and high in the things of this world to be proud, though humbleness of mind may find much more hindrance to its growth in that soil. The very rudeness and forwardness in some of the poor and low betray the same pride which makes the rich and high turn away with disdain. That same pride makes the poor say: I am as good as you, and I am going to make you feel it as much as I can.

The grace of Christ destroys this awful thing in both. It gives holy, chastened freedom before God our Father; and as we go from that Holy Presence

to stand before men, its hallowed influence lifts us above high or mean self; the towering element of the mind is "*All flesh is grass*, and all the goodness thereof as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." (Isa. xl. 6-8.) P.J.L.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 34.—In a reading on 2 Cor. iii. 11-17 it was stated that the word "Spirit," verse 17, should be read with a small s, and not with a capital S, as in the Received Text, and that in every instance where the word occurs it should be read with a small s; in confirmation of which he affirmed that *the Lord was not the Spirit*, that it was simply an allusion to the ministry of righteousness in contrast to that of condemnation, of the former of which Christ was the *spirit*.

On verse 17 Mr. Darby writes, "when it is said 'now the Lord is that Spirit' (capital S) *allusion is made to verse 6*; verses 7 to 16 is a parenthesis." (Syn., second edition, page 324.) The Revised Version gives verses 17, 18 with a capital. I notice that verse 6 gives the word "spirit" with a small s.

If "*in every instance where the word occurs*" we are to read it with a small s, what about the following texts, namely, Rom. viii. 9; 1 Pet. 1-11; 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19; Gal. iii. 5, and other scriptures where the Spirit is spoken of?

ANS.—As to never using a capital in the word Spirit, we think there must be some mistake; surely whenever it refers to the Holy Spirit it should be written with a capital. To deny it would be to question His personality. As to the passage in question, the use of the capital in verse 17 would not suggest that it referred to the Holy Spirit, but that referring to the Lord, it was so spelled. Such use might be questioned, however. The meaning seems to be that the Christian dispensation, as centering in the person of Christ, is spiritual as contrasted with the law. Of course, the second use of the word "the Spirit of the Lord" would suggest the Holy Spirit. Then, too, this whole dispensation is that of the Spirit. It is sometimes difficult

to draw the line between the operations of the Spirit and the Person. This is particularly true of this passage. Its general meaning is plain.

QUES. 35.—How did the Holy Ghost speak to man?—in an audible voice? For example, “Separate me Barnabas and Saul.” (Acts xiii. 2.)

ANS.—The matter of first importance is the *fact*, not the manner of the Holy Ghost’s speaking to men. “Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” (2 Pet. i. 21.) “In the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth.” “He that is spiritual judgeth [discerneth] all things.” (1 Cor. ii. 13, 15). We gather from these scriptures that the Spirit acts upon the mind and judgment, moving by His almighty power and wisdom the instrument He has chosen. Of course, that instrument would make known the mind of the Spirit in an audible voice, as was doubtless the case at Antioch. But the Spirit Himself would act—as God usually does—in the still quiet, unobtrusive way, so different from man’s thoughts.

QUES. 36.—Who are “the rest of the dead” in Rev. xx. 5? Some say it is the Old Testament saints, and that they do not rise till after the thousand years,—that is, do not rise when the “dead in Christ” rise. (1 Thess. iv.) Please give scripture to refute this, if it is error.

ANS.—The scripture already given (1 Thess. iv.) refutes it clearly,—else the Old Testament saints are not “in Christ,”—“they that are Christ’s.” (1 Cor. xv.) Moses and Elias are given as types of the sleeping and translated saints partaking in the glories of Christ’s kingdom. (Luke ix. 30, 31.) Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are in the kingdom. (Matt. viii. 11.) Doubtless the Old Testament saints are at the marriage supper of the Lamb, as guests. (Rev. xix.) Our blessings and theirs are connected together. (Heb. xi. 40.) Such scriptures preclude entirely the thought of their having no part in the first resurrection. And this is emphasized when we remember what is the character of the second resurrection. (Rev. xx. 12–15.) It is the prelude to the judgment of the Great White Throne, where none but the ungodly stand, and is unquestionably the same as the resurrection of damnation, or judgment (John v. 29), the resurrection of the unjust (Acts xxiv. 15). It becomes a grave error when the beloved people of God are in any way connected with the ungodly. There are, no doubt, reasons why such teaching should be advanced. It will surely be sufficient to guard our readers against accepting it.

# “NOT ONE THING HATH FAILED.”

(Josh. xxiii. 14.)

ALL things earthly have an end; and Joshua, the man of faith, the true witness for God in the wilderness and the unconquered leader of the people in the land, is about to leave them—going “the way of all the earth.” In the land he had been a type of a Greater than himself so completely, that his individuality had been merged into his official character, and we think of the One whom he represents. But he has conquered all, and having held the sword for many years, he lays it aside and with it his leadership, and becomes simply the man of faith, who has got a word to say for that faithful God whom he knew so well.

He appoints no one as his successor, no one who could carry on the work where he had laid it down. In His wondrous wisdom God has guarded against the very thing that the wise men of earth think the proper plan to secure order and good government—the plan of succession. No supervision could have been more complete, no authority more absolute, no care more minute, than that of the apostles. The infant Church was indeed cared for “as a nurse cherisheth her children.” But there were no successors to the apostle’s—save indeed the “grievous wolves” who would not spare the flock. (Acts xx. 29.) The church was thrown on God and the word of His grace: to human eyes it was helpless indeed; but that very helplessness did but compel the saints to lean on God. Would that such dependence had always been realized.

It was with the consciousness that now the people were to be left without a visible head, in the midst of

dangers in one sense greater than those which beset them in the field of conflict, that the departing servant spoke for the God he loved so well. With the memory of his course still vividly before them, with the conscience, too, in some measure awakened at the thought of his departure, they doubtless drank in eagerly all his words. And what words they were ! how he spoke for God ; how he pointed out their dangers, gleaned lessons from the past ; how he urged upon them faithfulness for the future.

True it is that to the Old-Testament saint was vouchsafed no such view into the opened heavens, and the world beyond, as it is our happy lot to enjoy ; but who, as he listens to the calm and beautiful words of Joshua, can question that for him, as for God's people at all times, a light was shining, which made death but a dark line between this life and eternal brightness. He knew God, and that made all plain ; he could speak for Him and then go to Him.

But it is our purpose, beloved brethren, to look a little closely at the words at the head of this paper, and gather from them food for profitable thought, as we draw near again to the close of another year. How swiftly the years pass—bringing us ever nearer to that eternity which, through infinite grace, has no terrors for the people of God. Well may we pause and think—taking a good look at the past ere we turn afresh to the unknown future. We do not observe times and seasons, nor would we by a single line encourage anything like lack of sobriety and circumspection at *all* times ; but we have no sympathy with that indifference to the transiency of all about us, that can contemplate unmoved and unexercised the passing away forever of another portion of our brief life.



Who can prevent thoughts of sadness, alas ! of unavailing regret, if the memory of the past recalls wasted hours, neglected opportunities, that have fled forever. Very sobering is it to take account of how we have used our stewardship, and the close of the year is a fitting time to do this. It puts us into the spirit of that day of review when “every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” It is well to live in the light of that day.

But our scripture is concerned chiefly with another and brighter side of things—even the remembrance of God’s faithful love and care. In the 105th and 106th Psalms we have the same history gone over from two different points of view. The latter psalm shows the unbelief and disobedience of the people, and is therefore a record of failure : the former, on the contrary, celebrates the acts of God, and is bright with instances of His goodness, love, and care. Let us look, then, at that side, that gratitude, love, and obedience may be stirred in our hearts.

“Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you ; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.”

God had visited them while yet in the bondage and under the guilt of sin in the land of Egypt. He had promised to bring them out from that bondage, to set them free, and give them a place in the “good land and large” which He had spied out for them. Had He kept His word—spite of every obstacle, of all their unbelief ? Joshua could appeal to them, with the knowledge that they could give but one answer, “*Ye know* in all your hearts and in all your souls.”

Glance back, dear brethren, to the time when we

were under the doom of our countless sins, and in the iron grasp of a despot more terrible than Pharaoh. How has the deliverance been effected? Is it complete? Oh, as we behold the cross of Christ, and think of His finished work,—as we see Him risen triumphant from the grave, with sin forever vanquished, the cry of victory bursts forth "unto the Lord who has triumphed gloriously," and we know in our souls that naught has failed of His good word.

Let us pass on by faith into all that He has won for us, remembering that we are "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;" that all things are ours, "whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's"—in view of the abundant blessing, do we not know in our souls that "not one thing hath failed"? Let it be clearly understood, boldly confessed; for one of Satan's subtlest wiles is to introduce unbelief under the guise of humility. Nothing can be added to redemption; it is absolutely perfect. Our blessings are entire and complete; we wait for no "second blessing." True, our apprehension of these things is but feeble, but *they* are not feeble; they are before us as our portion—ours to enjoy even now.

But if we come to look at the mercies that have strewn all our way; patient love and care, temporal needs met as well as spiritual—we are still constrained to say, "Not one thing hath failed." What have we deserved? but what have we received?

But it is said by one and another, "*My* path has not been all blessing; my past has been one of sorrow and gloom." Could such an one truly use these

words? Who has a better right? We have never been promised exemption from trial and suffering; in a world where sin reigns and its fruits are everywhere manifest; where our blessed Lord was “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief”;—who has the right, we might add, who the desire to escape the lot of all? Those who suffer, who mourn, are but the companions of the great Sufferer. And in that companionship is found the fulfillment of our word. Sorrow and grief shared by the Lord! who that has had the holy joy of His sympathy, the uplifting of His strength, would exchange it for that which, however bright, bears the stamp of change and decay? Let the bereaved Christian, the tried saint, testify, and if he has learned his lesson well, he will gladly join with those whose path has been brighter in saying, “Not one thing hath failed.”

For indeed unless this lesson has been learned there is doubt of the love of God, discontent, murmuring, and all the restlessness that speaks of an empty heart. The very best medicine for such a state is to learn God in the trial that apparently has produced it,—until the soul can say, “It is good for me that I have been afflicted.” How all this is infinitely above the poor consolation that the world has to give of “brighter days to come,” or, “others too have suffered.” With the apostle we can say, “Nay, *in* all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us;” and “our light affliction which is but for a moment, *worketh* for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

Grief-stricken parent, as you look into the grave of your hopes in the child you have laid away; crushed and disappointed man, as you face the ruin of your

business and the threatenings of poverty—can you not as you think of the consolations of Christ say these words?

And so will it be throughout all our days; whatever they may have for us, they cannot rob us of His love, of His promise, of His joy. And when we have reached our rest, our home, these same words will have their place, or be changed for others, as wonder fills our hearts—"the half had not been told."

What shall be the effect of this precious truth upon us? We see how Joshua used it—warning the people against a departure that would bring upon them just as surely the chastening hand of God; urging them to entire obedience, and the putting away of all that would hinder them in that path. So let it be with us. As we think of the eternal faithfulness of our God, let us arise, and, as never before, press forward in the way His holiness and His love have marked out for us.

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THE Holy Ghost dwells in every true Christian; but it is another thing to be so filled with Him that He may be the source of all that is thought, of all that is done, and that all that the heart, which is His vessel, produces, may be the fruit of His presence; that there may be no doubting, no shutting up in the career of love, that Jesus may be faithfully confessed before men. The heart is set free from its own love, and loves according to the love of Christ. Liberty, true liberty, is found, and the practical life, and its fruits are the fruits of the Spirit.

What a blessed state! And whatever may be the ruin of the Church, in principle this state belongs to-day to every Christian; circumstances may hinder the form that existed in the days of the apostles; but the Spirit of God, at the bottom, is more powerful than circumstances.—J. N. D.

## THE CROWNED CHRIST.

*“And upon His head were many crowns.”*

(Rev. xix. 12.)

(Continued from page 285.)

## CHAPTER II.

*The Eternal Son.*

THAT Christ is Son of God no one who believes in Scripture can for a moment deny or question.

But the moment we come to consider how and in what sense He is the Son of God, we begin to encounter, not merely the strife of tongues with which unbelief has ever assailed His glorious Person, but to experience also the mystery of it, which faith itself most thoroughly confesses. Nor only this, but we find from Scripture this title of His as Son of God to be two-fold—His title in Deity and His title in humanity; and we have got to ask ourselves its import in both ways, and to consider in what sense each scripture is speaking, if we would rightly understand what is revealed concerning Him.

This responsibility, it is plain, God puts upon us, and from it we must not seek escape,—that of understanding the word of God. People seek refuge from it in what they think simplicity, but which often is mere vacancy of thought. They believe the statements: they think it wise not to look too closely into them. They are so afraid of error that they dare not inquire as to the truth; but the truth itself is the only bulwark against error. “Thy words were found,” says the prophet, “and I did *eat them*; and Thy words were unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.” (Jer. xv. 16.) The strong expression intimates the kind of reception that the word of God re-

quires,—to be laid hold of, broken up, analyzed, not the outside of it but all that is in it assimilated and made our own. Thus is it that it nourishes us, and we grow by it, and it becomes indeed the “joy and rejoicing of the heart.”

We cannot but remember that the Lord uses the same striking figure in reference to Himself. He is the bread of life: His flesh is meat indeed; and His blood is drink indeed. What a deceit of Satan has it not been to persuade the people of God that this is just the literal taking of the Lord's Supper, or what is involved in it,—turning into partaking of an ordinance (even though they may qualify this by insisting on the necessity of faith) that which is the entering into and appropriating of Christ in His fulness for us. Here there is no death for us, but only life, and the strengthening and perfecting of the life which divine love has communicated to us.

For this we must seek to know, and ever better, the truth as to Christ. We could not know Him at all but by revelation: it is by revelation we must still go on to know Him. Texts are the thoughts of God in which He is enshrined for us,—the ministry of the Spirit of God (though not independent of His direct personal energy) to make Christ practically our own. Let us then search Scripture fervently and perseveringly, better to know the knowledge in which eternal life is; and may there be given to us with deepening knowledge a deepening joy in Him which shall be fuller communion with the Father, and power to reflect the brightness that we gaze upon.

Adam was by creation a son of God; and, though the fall has marred the likeness, yet the apostle could

quote approvingly to the Athenians a "prophet of their own" that "we are His offspring." (Acts xvii. 28, 29.) We are this, not merely because created by Him,—for He is not the Father of the beast,—but as possessors of a spiritual nature which fits us for companionship with Him who is Spirit. If "He maketh His angels spirits," they too are spoken of as "sons of God." (Heb. i. 7; Job xxxviii. 7.)

But "that holy Thing" born of Mary, the new Adam of a new creation, is affirmed to be "the Son of God" as not conceived in the ordinary way of nature, but by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. (Luke i. 35). And as Adam, while the father of his race, was yet from the divine side but the "first-born among many brethren," so too is Christ among those "born of the Spirit" and thus "sons of God" upon a higher plane than that of nature. The "last Adam," while, as this means, the Head of a race also, is yet the "First-born among many brethren." (Rom. viii. 29.)

This is not our theme at present, and I do not further dwell upon it here, except to observe that this is all the title "Son of God" implies for some when given to Christ, who earnestly protest against its being applied to Him as a divine Person.\* They urge that "Sonship" implies derivation and thus inferiority to the Father; and confounding the passages which speak of Him as begotten in time (Ps. ii. 7) with those which we must presently consider, maintain that He is only "Son" in His official character.

But one direct text of Scripture outweighs all pos-

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\* For example, Adam Clarke and Albert Barnes, the commentators.

sible arguments; here surely if anywhere, where we know nothing but by revelation. And it is given as proof of the greatness of divine love, in one of the most familiar texts to all of us, that "God *so* loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John iii. 16). This by the Lord Himself; while the apostle who records it, preaches upon it in his epistle: "Herein was manifested the love of God towards us, because God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 9, 10).

The depth of this love is shown then in this, that the Father sent His Son into the world for this: it is perfectly plain then that Christ was the Son before He came into the world. The appeal to our hearts is simple, who know in ourselves, though fallen, something of what a father's love is. And if we look back to the time when God was pleased to show forth in Abraham's case something of the reality of sacrifice, we feel it as a trial beyond nature when we hear the measured words, every word an agony, "Take now thy son,—thine only son,—Isaac,—whom thou lovest; and go into the land of Moriah, and offer him up there a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains I will tell thee of" (Gen. xxii. 2).

We can realize a little what this meant for Abraham. Should the glory of Deity hide from us somewhat or emphasize the appeal of that love in which "God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all"? Could it make no difference to be told that "Son" is here no title of relationship; that



it does not mean all and much more than it meant for Abraham?

Does not "*His own Son*" look as if it were meant to negative this, and to assure us that nothing less than real relationship could be intended?

But the apostle adds that it was "*His only-begotten Son*" whom He sent forth; and if the title "*First-born*" shows that He has "brethren," that of *Only-begotten* as decisively excludes them. He was this before He came forth,—eternally the Son, and thus divinely: of course, without fellows. The "*Only-begotten*" shows that He was Son by nature; and we must not leave out any part of that by which the Spirit of God has chosen to set Him forth.\* Here the stranger the term looks as relating to the blessed Lord, the more closely must we adhere to what is certainly scripture. Here our thoughts can only follow, and not lead: we are safe under the guidance of the Spirit of God,—safe nowhere else.

Moreover the apostle John is the only inspired writer applying this term to the Lord, and *he* is known by all as the one whose special theme is His divinity. He introduces it also in the very place in which he speaks of the glory of God which has been now unveiled for in Christ: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace

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\* It has been said that *μονογενής*, "*only-begotten*" is the word used by the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew *jachid* or "*only one*," (in Psa. xxii. 20; xxxv. 17,) "*darling*" in the common version. But this cannot rule as to the inspired Greek of the New Testament, which is precise and accurate, as the Septuagint is often far from being; and least of all in what relates to the Person of the Son of God.

and truth" (John i. 14). This is the common version; but the expressions are really stronger than these words convey. The word "dwelt" is really "tabernacled," thus carrying us back to that tabernacle or tent in which of old God had gone with His people. The tabernacle now is that "flesh" or humanity of Christ, in which the Word, who is God, was pleased to dwell among us. Thus the glory is divine glory; but with Israel of old it was veiled,—it is now unveiled: "we *beheld* His glory." What was it like? It was "glory as of an Only-begotten with a Father"—"from with," literally: it was just that character of glory, as of an Only-begotten come from the place which yet He never left, of perfect nearness in relationship and love to God as Father.

This in its effect for us the eighteenth verse expresses: "the Only-begotten Son who is"—literally, "the One being" or "abiding"—"in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him" (told Him out). The unchanging intimacy of the eternal relationship is here that which qualifies Him as the perfect Revealer of God; according to what He was before made known to us, to be—"the *Word* made flesh."

Thus we have the sweetest and most competent Witness of God that can be,—ourselves put in the place of children to the Father, that we may be fit to receive such a communication. There is thus made for us a little heaven within, as for the earth the firmament of the second day, through which the glorious Heaven beyond may shine in upon us. Not from afar off, nor in cold lustre, but with the warmth with which our Sun, the Ruler of the day, blesses and gladdens us. Love which is Light: such is the revelation. How could we do without those precious

words "Son" and "Father," back of all dispensations, all economic display, to show what is the nature of God in itself eternally,—the absolute verity of that which has now been revealed?

He is not "love" for an occasion, however great may be the occasion. Nor is the Son become Son for display, however glorious. The Father had no beginning as the Father; nor the Son therefore as the Son. If otherwise, then after all we have not a revelation of eternity, nor of God as He is, but only as He is *pleased to become*—a very different thing. Thank God, it is not so. We know how God dwelt in love eternally: we have the Object of that love made known to us; we are made to know, not eternal silence in the House which now has such glorious music for returned prodigals, but a communion into which we are now admitted, and are privileged in our measure to become partakers.

Nay, the very relationship taken up on earth, as First-born of the heavenly family, is but, as now we can see, the *representation of the eternal* relationship upon an earthly plane, where the "many brethren" may realize and rejoice in it. The eternal reality embodies itself in time, and is made, as far as possible, visible to us. The reaching forth of divine love to us—its eagerness to have us enter into it, how it is seen in all this.

We shall not here dwell longer upon it; but when we fully receive the blessed truth of "the *Word* made flesh," we shall find from this humanity of His itself divine light break forth for us,—"that Eternal Life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us," and "the Life the Light of men."

F. W. G.

(To be Continued.)

## O THE DEPTH OF THE RICHES !

BOTH OF THE WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be made rich.”

WHAT, of all the world could offer,  
Saviour, could compare with Thee.  
Thou the one enduring treasure,  
Dearer than all else to me.  
Time and change may leave me nothing,  
Death pass over all I have;  
But there is no power can sever  
Me from Christ or from His love.

I am poor, I've naught to give Thee,  
Lord, but what Thou'st given to me !  
Yet the gift of God hath made  
Rich, through Jesu's poverty.  
Heir, joint heir with Christ in glory.  
Loved e'en as the Father's Son !  
He, the Light of Life eternal,  
Dwells within the heart He's won !

Holy Spirit, guide and guardian,  
Through this dang'rous unknown wild;  
Faithful Counselor, Instructor,  
Comforter of every child;  
Holy Watcher, Dove of Mourning,  
Ever bearing up on high,  
What no human tongue could utter,  
Heeding every prayer-breathed sigh.

Strange with such exhaustless riches,  
One could ever stoop to toy  
With the worthless gilded playthings  
Which perhaps some passing joy  
May afford, then quickly vanish;  
But no more shall Satan's spell  
Bind the soul that once hath tasted  
Waters from the living well.

Yet how oft this Holy Watcher  
Mourneth as a stricken dove,  
Over sins, and frequent failings,  
Want of watchfulness and love,  
Till the soul in self-abasement,  
Bows at Jesu's blessed feet,  
In communion, joy, and wonder,  
All His praises to repeat.

Wean my heart from every idol,  
Lord, which would communion blight,—  
Cause my pilgrim feet to falter,  
Dull my soul, and dim my sight.  
Let no face,, however lovely,  
Come between thy face and mine ;  
Let no heart howe'er devoted,  
Come between my heart and Thine.

Let no plan of my devising,  
Turn my thoughts away from Thee.  
Let no earth-born blessing, hindering,  
Occupy absorbingly.  
Let no human voice be sweeter  
Than the one by faith I hear.  
Let no name my heart enrapture,  
Jesus, like thine own so dear.

Let me, then, in hope rejoicing,  
Still in patience Lord abide,  
Though I pass through tribulation,  
Thou wilt still be at my side.  
Let no murmuring escape my  
Lips, in moment unaware.  
But instead the fervent breathing  
Of the ever instant prayer.

# “THE YEARS THAT THE LOCUST HATH EATEN.”

(Joel ii. 25.)

THE most casual reader of the prophets will not have failed to noticed their minatory character.

We can scarcely turn a page of the prophetic scriptures, either in Old or New Testament, without finding some solemn reminder of the righteous indignation of a holy God against sin, and threats of judgment therefor. These denunciations are directed not merely nor chiefly against the enemies of the people of God, but rather does the sword begin at His house (Ezek. ix. 6). Usually it is the present condition of Israel to which attention is called—the moral state, and the corresponding results in their outward condition, under the chastening hand of God. But these—both sins and judgments—are but anticipative of what, if they continue unrepentant will be final. At the same time the mercy of God takes occasion to offer blessing and recovery when His people truly turn to Him in the mourning that flows from godly sorrow. No matter how deep and long continued had been the revolt, when the people turned, not feignedly, to God, they found Him the same, unchanging in His love and in His thoughts. He could ever say, “I know the thoughts that I think toward you, thoughts of peace and not of evil” (Jer. xxix. 11).

How lovely are these glimpses into the heart of God—alas that the unbelief of His people and their waywardness, should make them but glimpses, when His desire is that we should ever bask in the full sunlight of His smile. And yet would we, if we

could, have it otherwise? Grace ever reigns through righteousness, and is always perfectly consistent with God's government. His attributes never conflict. Forgetfulness of this often works sad havoc in the life of God's people. The careful study of the prophets would be a wholesome corrective of much carelessness of mind and walk.

It need hardly be remarked that in no way does this touch the question of the perfection of the believer's standing in Christ, on the ground of His accomplished redemption. This ever remains perfect, and is, of course, brought to light in the gospel. Nothing can touch that standing, linked as it is eternally with Him who is risen from the dead. But we are living in times when the fear of God, alas, is well-nigh forgotten; and this incapacitates for the proper appreciation of His matchless grace. The prayerful study of the prophets would correct such tendencies.

The prophet Joel furnishes a very interesting illustration of what we have been saying. In its brief compass it puts before us the sin of the people and their condition because of it, under the mighty hand of God; the further judgments that will follow if they are still impenitent, and the deliverance and blessing of the people if they even yet turn in true brokenness to Him; the full blessing in the last days when the Spirit would be poured out from on high; and the judgment upon the Gentiles who had afflicted them.

In the midst of the call to repentance we have the promise of blessing, not merely new blessing in the future but the recovery of that which had been lost. Israel's land had been devastated by the locust and the cankerworm under the judgment of God;—now

if they turned to Him, the land would not only yield her increase in the future, but the gracious goodness of God would restore that which had been consumed. "I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten" (Joel ii. 25).

How often do God's people, in this day, feel His chastening hand: it may not be in temporal things, but in that to which the locusts would correspond in spiritual things. For even our own follies, the fruits of our own departure from God, He uses to chasten us with. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy back-slidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God" (Jer. ii. 19). The locusts then may fittingly represent those fruits of our own doings which rob us of all joy and communion. What devastation can be more complete than that inflicted by the locusts, save indeed the spiritual dearth of which that was a figure? "The land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness."

How beautiful are the fruits of a soul in communion with God: "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith." Christ has His true place and is a welcome guest. "Let my beloved come into His garden, and eat His pleasant fruits" (Song iv. 16). "Their soul shall be as a watered garden." Alas how quickly and completely do these fruits disappear before the devastating sons of Amalek, the lusts of the flesh, which as a swarm of locusts never end their work of destruction so long as anything green is left. The ruin is all the more manifest in contrast with the previous beauty.

We can bless God for His restoring grace, and the



prophet does not leave us uncertain as to the steps in that recovery. "Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your heart, and not your garments" (chap. ii. 12, 13). All are called to a solemn assembly for this humiliation—elders and children, the bridegroom and the bride. Even the priests were called to "weep between the porch and the altar"—the place and the true use of the laver, for practical cleansing. When there is this true-hearted and entire turning to the Lord, then He will answer them. So will it be in the day of Israel's repentance, and so is it now with every individual into whose life the locusts have come and brought desolation. Contrition, beloved brethren, real and deep, is the pledge, yea the first sprinkling, of the showers of the "latter rain." "A broken and contrite heart Thou wilt not despise." Again the barren fields put on their green, and joy and prosperity take the place of dearth and gloom.

But our blessed God does not rest with seeing mere recovery. His heart of pity goes out with desire to undo the past, so far indeed as grace can. For in a most real sense the scars of the past will ever remain, memorials at once of our folly and a grace that has risen above it. But is there not sweet, blessed comfort in the thought that the barren past can in some sense be covered over by the fruitfulness of the present? "I will *restore* to you the years the locusts have eaten."

"The years that the locusts have eaten." Are there such in our lives? Let this promise cheer our hearts. If in some sense it is true individually, it is none the less so of God's people collectively. Let us

look back over past years:—have not worldliness, strife, selfishness too often devoured our increase? Whence comes the lack of growth amongst God's people, the sluggishness in gospel work and the meager results? Is this to go on? Is our brief time here to be frittered away in what profits not? Beloved, let us awake to our real condition and if there is dearth let us honestly own it and find the tender mercy of our God.

Oh for a genuine revival among the saints! Christ loved in each heart—all linked together with a common object and in a common obedience; the word of God studied as never before; the gospel preached with power, unction and large results; new fields of labor opened and laborers to enter into them. Would that we could have a reversal of the king's dream and see the fat kine eat up the lean ones. Are such things impossible? Looking at this promise, can we, dare we, limit God?

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### "MY JEWELS."

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(Mal. iii. 16, 17; Jude 20-25.)

**I**N a day of closing darkness,  
When the outlook is so black,  
When the hearts of men are failing  
And the feet of saints turn back,  
When corruption spreads her mantle  
O'er the minds and ways of all,  
When the violent doth prosper  
And men's passions rise and fall.

Then, amid the gloom and darkness,  
Shines one feeble ray of light,  
Some, who feel and own the ruin  
Seek by faith to walk aright.

Some, who fear the Lord of glory  
 And who think upon His name:  
 Some, who often speak together  
 Of His glory and His shame.

Some, who often round Him gather  
 To exhort and sing and pray,  
 Some, who prove amid the darkness,  
 They are children of the day:  
 Some, who wait a coming Saviour,  
 And who long His face to see;  
 Some, who wait their hopes fruition  
 Till conformed to Him they be.

God, who dwells in heavenly glory,  
 He beholds this feeble few,  
 He records in His remembrance  
 All the sorrows they pass through:  
 He discerns each true affection  
 And declares "they shall be mine;  
 When I gather up *My Jewels*,"  
*These shall* in my presence shine.

*Selected.*

## THE DEPARTURE OF A FAITHFUL SERVANT.

**I**T will be a matter of sad interest to most of the readers of this periodical to learn of the departure to be with Christ—"which is far better"—of Mr. C. H. Macintosh at Cheltenham, England, on November second, at an advanced age.

At the time of the great revival in Ireland in 1859, Mr. Macintosh was much used in gospel work. At that time he was engaged in a prosperous school, and the calls for service in the gospel were so urgent that it became a question whether he should give up his school or refuse to continue his preaching. Believing the Lord had opened this door to him, he gave up his school, and in simple dependence upon His Master went forth in His

service. That his faith was not disappointed, may be seen from a letter written after forty years of ministry in which he looked to the Lord alone for temporal support. He wrote that during those forty years, he had been enabled to meet his obligations as they rose—although even from his own writings he received no income whatever. Surely those who trust in the Lord shall never be put to shame.

Besides being endeared to a large circle of those to whom he was personally known, and who profited by an oral ministry both in the gospel of salvation and in the unfolding of the word of God for believers, which extended over more than forty years, he reached through his written ministry thousands of Christians in every part of the world, to whom his name is a household word.

For twenty-one years he edited, being almost the sole contributor also, a monthly magazine chiefly for believers, entitled "Things New and Old." In a singularly happy vein he treats, in this paper, a great variety of themes of a scriptural character and always, we may add, for edification. The "Answers to Correspondents" were not merely felicitous, but served as both an incentive and a key to the study of the word of God. Very many of the papers which appeared first in the pages of "Things New and Old" were subsequently reprinted, and in tract form have reached and blessed tens of thousands of readers. "The All-Sufficiency of Christ" "Abraham and Lot," "Gideon," with many more, have indeed helped to edify the Lord's people throughout the world.

But it is as the author of "Notes" on the five books of Moses that Mr. Macintosh is chiefly known. We could scarcely express too strongly the immense good that has been accomplished through those volumes. To multitudes they have been a key to the precious word of God that has opened up its treasures in a way they never

dreamed of. How many have found settled peace through the pages of "Exodus"—or been guided in the path of faith through "Genesis"; or have had a glimpse down the endless vista of beauty opened up in the typical teachings of "Leviticus." The Bible has become to them a new book and they have received not merely the truth presented in the pages of the "Notes," but, what is far better, capacity to go on with the intelligent study of the word of God for themselves. It is no slight put upon the beloved author, quite the reverse, to say that in a very marked way these books carry the reader to a point where he can dispense with them—they educate him beyond themselves.

Multitudes who know nothing of him are to-day intelligently studying God's word through him. We believe "in that day" when the record is gone over, and the Master's approval given for faithful service, that the fruit from these books will for the first time fully appear—to the glory of the grace which first laid hold of and then equipped our brother for this service.

We cannot refrain from calling attention to some of the characteristics of these writings which render them so suitable as instruments of blessing. To a clear and most attractive style—singularly pleasant to the reader,—he adds the force which always marks one deeply in earnest and commanded by his subject. It is not however of the form but of the contents that we speak. The place given to the gospel of the grace of God,—its source in the love of God, its foundation in the finished work of Christ, its vital power through the accompanying influence of the Holy Spirit—was most prominent. The author not merely knew the gospel and its saving power personally, but longed to impart it to others, and eagerly seized every opportunity afforded in the book upon which he was commenting to dwell upon this.

He loved too, to unfold the various stages in the life of faith;—the dangers, failures and difficulties of the child of God, pointing out the only and all sufficient resource for the believer in his God and Father. The lives of Abraham, Jacob and Moses are thus made to furnish most profitable lessons.

We would particularly speak of the place which our brother gave to the word of God. He had not the smallest sympathy with anything that suggested the slightest question as to the inspiration of Scripture. To him "Higher Criticism" was but infidelity under the guise of Christianity and therefore all the more dangerous. Nothing was in his mind worthy of the least respect that did not receive the entire Scripture to its least letter as the word of God. His introduction to the book of Deuteronomy, also printed as a separate tract "The Bible, whence is it? from heaven or of men?" is most clear and straightforward in its claims. We trust that in these days of looseness and weakness many may be awakened to continue the warfare against infidelity.

But we bring our remarks to a close. It is farthest from our thoughts to indulge in fulsome praise—rather to recognize the grace of God vouchsafed to His servant. The faithful are failing from among the children of men. Let those who remain be aroused to all the greater diligence, as they see one and another called home. Let us pray too that other laborers may be sent forth into the white harvest fields.

Christ abides—the Lord of all the work. Let there be the loyalty to Him which, whether there be little or much gift, is worth more than all else. Soon, very soon, the day of glory will be here, the time when the least thing done for Christ shall not fail of His notice. May His love constrain us now to live for Him,