

HELP AND FOOD

FOR THE

Household of Faith.

1910.

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Editor's Notes.

Nearer Home.

How rich the grace which has not only forgiven our sins, crucified our old man, removed all enmity toward God from our hearts, and put us in happy communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, but has also provided a most blessed home for the end of the journey! The home is not in some far-off corner, but *with Him* who loves us and gave Himself for us, where every affection born within us by the Spirit of love will have its fullest satisfaction. Blessed home indeed! We may be weary and worn and forgotten and neglected here, but the light and love of that nearing home brightens the way. As each year ends, it is so much of the way nearer that home—so much of it never to be traveled over again. As a new year begins, it says we may have reached it before its end; that our Lord, with a shout of command, may have wakened His sleeping saints and assembled us all together around Himself, away from this scene of our pilgrimage. Wonderful assemblage! Wonderful meeting again in joy those faces we had parted with in sorrow! No more tears, the good fight is ended, our victorious Lord delights in His mighty victory, and we, falling at His feet in blissful worship, shall share it all with Him! With such prospects before us, well may we begin our new year with rejoicing and praise.

David and Elijah. The flesh in the child of God has very different ways of manifesting itself. In 2 Sam. 24 we see David numbering Israel, though he had so often proved God's delivering power against all odds of his enemies. But pride finds pleasure in numbers; for, says *man*, there is power in numbers. How easily we fall into this! Yet we well know that in "the household of faith" power is not in numbers, but in our God. If it is His face, His will, His word, we really seek, we shall lack no power. If we seek numbers, we shall find but weakness.

In 1 Kings 19 we have quite an opposite picture. Elijah has been a most faithful prophet; he is suffering for it now. So he said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thine altars, and slain Thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away" (ver. 10). He repeats it in verse 14. But the Lord answers him by saying, "Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (ver. 18).

Faithfulness in an evil day brings us into prominence. There is a snare in this. We naturally love prominence. If we do not watch, we find pleasure in being alone, or only a few; we fancy we are the only faithful ones, and that we must be very faithful because we are alone, or so few. This becomes great pride, and our lowly Saviour and Lord cannot walk with pride.

Let us then watch against that insidious pride which can find food everywhere and in all circumstances.

Geo. O. Atkinson. At the very moment of going to press there reaches us the news of the departure, at Key West, Fla., of our beloved and aged brother Mr. Geo. O. Atkinson. Being as well known as he was among us throughout a large section of the country we need say little of his life. His devotedness and piety were an example to many. We first met him in Minnesota over forty years ago, when he had first been learning truths from the Scriptures which had greatly changed his path in life, and at considerable cost. What a hold those truths had in his conscience and heart has been manifested in his course ever since. His race is ended, and the toils are over. Now, in the bliss of the Lord's presence he awaits the final examination by the Lord Himself of all those years of labor, and will regret no trial or suffering which arose from faithfulness to Christ.

In a letter from Key West which brings us the news of his death are these words: "He was brighter than usual on the Lord's day morning; was up early, and went to meeting at 10. 30, and gave a stirring address on Philip. 3:1-14. Also when the hymn "We'll sing of the Shepherd that died" was given out he led the tune. Then after the breaking of bread, as a brother in prayer was ending, at the close of the meeting, he fell from his chair on his knees and in an instant breathed his last without a struggle. The last words of his address were, '*To know Him better*', and a few moments after he was present with Him. We would gladly have sent his body north to his dear daughter but the authorities would not permit it, so his remains lie buried in our midst."

“THOU ART WORTH TEN THOUSAND OF US.”

(2 Sam. 18 : 3.)

THESE words bespeak loyalty and devotion of heart to the king of God's appointment—God's *beloved*, as the name implies—and each word appears as a perfect gem set over upon the time and day in which they were uttered. The *beloved one* was despised and rejected by men, and this not only by the nations around, but his own—of his own nation—received him not. This must have been a great grief of heart to the king. It was indeed a testing-time, a dark and evil day.

ABSALOM (the king's own son) had stolen the people's hearts away by his subtle wiles, under pretext of great love for them, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful, and for a time he usurped the place that belonged to David; so the king had to cross over the brook Kedron and abide for a time in the outside place (chap. 15 : 23).

AHITHOPHEL also had joined Absalom and turned against the king. For him, who had been a chief counsellor and professed friend, and who had walked in company into the house of God, the testing-time had come, and he had departed also. All this reminds us of the Lord's disciples, who departed from Him, and walked no more with Him (John 6 : 66).

SHIMEI too, the son of Gera, threw stones at the king, and cursed him. Great were these trials of heart, and the king felt them keenly, yet *grace* marked his course; he showed grace and forbearance. In all this we see how fully at this time the king was with God; and in him we see displayed the

patience, grace and longsuffering of a greater David yet to come (chap. 16: 5-14).

Leaving the side of rebellion, we can turn and see a lovelier one—how God touched the hearts of men, and by His Spirit drew them to the king during this time of rejection and suffering. These became the companions of David in his suffering, God opening up to them the glory and the preeminence of the person of David. We see, therefore, how well they care for and guard his person in the time of conflict and battle. "Thou art worth ten thousand of us," they exclaim. In this we see, then, the guardians of his *person*, as in a former day Abram was that of the sacrifice, when the unclean birds sought to attack it. "Abram drove them away" (Gen. 15: 9-11). In both these we have very strikingly set forth two foundation truths, dear to every believer's heart: the person and the work of Christ.

With David's servants and companions there are many lovely lessons—their *devotion*, their *loyalty*, their *obedience*. "Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint" (chap. 15: 15). This must have given comfort and strength to the heart of David at such a time. Immediately after this, special persons come to the front.

Ittai the Gittite, attracted to the king from an outside nation, shows almost unparalleled devotion. "Surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, even there also will thy servant be."

Zadok, *Abiathar* and *Hushai* also appear and fill important posts, and give hearty and true service in the cause of the king, with devotion and loyalty of

heart. *Mephibosheth* is not a whit behind any, unable though he be, on account of his lameness, to serve. But his heart is with David. "And Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king, and had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came again in peace" (chap. 19: 24).

Others also, whose names are given later, minister to David when in this outside place—such as *Shobi*, *Machir*, *Barzillai*. Each helped according to his devotion and his ability, and their names appear upon the inspired page for our encouragement (chap. 17: 27-29). In all this, we repeat, God was at work in hearts, and drawing men to see the worthiness of David.

History repeats itself. *We* are in the "perilous times" of the Church dispensation which most resembles that of David's time. Men to-day spurn the inspiration of the Scriptures, and legion is the host of evils that follow such unbelief and infidelity. The truth as to Christ's person is also denied—His true and perfect humanity, as also His deity and Godhead glory. The sinfulness and depravity of man, and the atonement by the cross; the truths of resurrection and eternal punishment, and many other important and cardinal truths revealed in the sacred Scriptures. Nor do those evils mark simply men of the outside place, avowed infidels, as were Paine, Voltaire, and Ingersoll. Such were the enemies of former times, but in our day it is men *within* the Christian profession who are "enemies of the cross of Christ"—destroyers of the truths of Scripture.

The Absaloms and Ahithophels, who ever seemed to run well and give fair promise as good men in the kingdom, have, since the tide of evil has turned, gone, one by one, and to-day they are in the enemy's ranks, planning and plotting against the "Lord that bought them"; men also, as Shimei, are not lacking in their opposition and blasphemy to the Saviour, though cringing and deceitful enough when their interests are at stake.

But God abideth faithful as of old, and His truth, amid all the difficulties and evils around us, abides as stable as the heavens. The Holy Spirit is yet here on earth, and the Church, the Body of Christ, is being called out and formed for God's habitation. Thus the work of God continues amid all the surrounding gloom, and the word of God, given to the infant Church in apostolic days, abides, with all the sacred principles that guided her at first. These will abide for the Church until the dispensation closes and the Lord returns to gather the true Church, the saints that He loves, to Himself in the heavenly glory (1 Thess. 4: 13-18). Thus great comfort and encouragement are given to all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and in truth.

The days will continue to grow more difficult. "Evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse." The Scriptures clearly show us this is the trend of things, which is to continue *until He comes*. But let the word of God be to us more than precious gold or great spoil (Ps. 119: 126-128, 162). Let us "cleave to *the Lord* with purpose of heart," as Barnabas exhorted the young believers of his day, for He is "worth ten thousand of us."

We are, one and all who are called saints, to seek

to guard the honor and glory of *His person* with a devotion beyond David's men—to drive away the enemy with the weapon of Holy Scripture, with a vigor and loyalty beyond that of Abram. We must not yield for one moment to men who do harm to the great truths of Christ's person and atonement by His sacrifice upon the cross. Oh for *Abrams* everywhere now!—men of faith and valor, devoted to Christ as David's men to their lord. Theirs was but a man, ours is both Man and "God over all, blessed forever." Let the greatness of all that is revealed in Him put fire and energy and devotion into our hearts, making us to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

Side by side with the trend of evil that surrounds us, God still works. This we observe both in the home and foreign fields. Noble and self-denying men and women have had their eyes opened to the glory of His person. He is "worth ten thousand of us" has burned in their hearts as fire, and by a love divine they have launched forth into the distant and needy fields to publish the sweetness of His precious name. We rejoice that God is using them, and that multitudes are being drawn to Him to join the ranks of those in the home fields who day by day exclaim as they look up, "Thou art worth ten thousand of us"!

In the home fields God is continually opening up His truth, and souls are being attracted to Christ—His *person*, His *work*, His *word*, His *coming again*. Floods of light are being poured forth in many places upon these themes; many are responding; they feel a drawing together; there is given a kin-

dred spirit, and Christ is in many places becoming the commanding and absorbing object of heart and life. May the truth thus work in all of us, giving freshness, simplicity and devotion, that day by day, as we look up, the language of our hearts may be, "*Thou art worth ten thousand of us.*" Then, as we look forth upon the needy world that surrounds us, the language of life and pen and press will be, "*He is the chiefest among ten thousand, yea, altogether lovely.*"

A. E. B.

TRUE service of love will seek to give according to the need; and because of their need he will never think of slighting the objects of the Master's love because of their necessity. Men taught of God, for His service, go forth from a place of strength, where they have learned their own weakness and their own nothingness. They find that Jesus is everything in the presence of God, and Jesus is everything for them in all things, and everywhere. Such men, in the hands of the Holy Spirit, are real helps for the children of God, and they will not contend for a place, or a distinction, or for authority, among the scattered flock. The communion of a man with God about the Church will show itself in a willingness to be nothing in himself; and such a one will rejoice in his heart to spend and to be spent.

There is great instruction in the conduct of Zerubabel, recounted in the book of Ezra. Heir of the place which Solomon had occupied in days of prosperity and glory, he spoke not of his birth, nor of his rights. However, he is faithful in all the path of separation, of sorrow and of conflicts he is obliged to pass through.

“CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.”

IN view of the rapid and portentous strides made by Christian Science to-day, it behooves Christians to know what is taught by a system which claims to be Christian, to revere the Bible, and to honor Christ.

For those who have neither time nor opportunity to investigate these claims the following quotations have been carefully culled. Unless otherwise stated, they are all from the text-book, “Science and Health, and Key to the Scriptures,” edition of 1909, and are followed by the numbers of page and line.

May the knowledge of what Christian Science is be used of God to the safeguarding of any of His own who may be in danger of becoming ensnared by this “wile of the devil” (Eph. 6: 11).

E. V. W.

“CHRISTIAN SCIENCE” CLAIMS TO BE:

God's gospel—page 11.

The word of God—ed. '01, p. 497.

The Holy Ghost—p. 46, line 30, and p. 43, l. 8.

Divine Science—p. 12, l. 31.

The Comforter—p. 55, l. 29.

• Mind-healing—p. 52, l. 22.

The new wine of the Spirit—ed. '01, p. 8.

The light shining in darkness, which the darkness comprehends not—ed. '01, p. 293.

FROM “ATONEMENT AND EUCHARIST”:

Another's suffering cannot lessen our own liability—p. 40, l. 14.

One sacrifice, however great, is insufficient to pay the debt of sin—p. 23, l. 2.

The atonement requires constant self-immolation on the sinner's part—p. 23, l. 4.

Final deliverance from error is not reached by pinning one's faith without works to another's vicarious effort—p. 22, l. 23.

The eternal Christ, His spiritual selfhood, never suffered—p. 38, l. 23.

HOW “CHRISTIAN SCIENCE” QUOTES THE BIBLE:

“The injunction, ‘Believe, and thou shalt be saved,’ demands self-reliant trustworthiness” —p. 23, l. 28.

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the [seeming] death of His Son”—p. 45, l. 10.

“Jesus was ‘the way’; that is, He marked the way for all men”—p. 46, l. 25.

“CHRISTIAN SCIENCE” LOGIC:

He overcame the world, the flesh, and all error, thus proving their nothingness—p. 39, l. 4.

“CHRISTIAN SCIENCE” BLASPHEMY:

That God-like man—p. 54, l. 29.

At the time when Jesus felt our infirmities He had not conquered all the beliefs of the flesh, or His sense of material life—p. 53, l. 27.

The scourge and the cross awaited the great Teacher. Yet He swerved not, well knowing that to obey the divine order and trust God saves retracing and traversing anew the path from sin to holiness—p. 20, l. 19.

The motherhood of God—ed. '01, p. 500.

“CHRISTIAN SCIENCE” TEACHES:

The soul is not in the body—p. 39, l. 10.

There is no personal devil—p. 16, l. 18; p. 41, l. 32;
p. 46, l. 11.

There is no pleasure in sin—p. 39, l. 32.

There is no pain in Truth—ed. '01, p. 7.

Man is not a mortal, but an immortal—p. 42, l. 28.

There is a Purgatory, or place of probation after
death—p. 36, l. 21.

"A probationary and progressive state beyond
the grave"—p. 46, l. 23.

Our Lord spent a period of probation in the
flesh—p. 35, l. 15.

To have a human father is unnecessary—p. 31,
l. 10.

There should be a discontinuance of the marriage
relation—p. 56, l. 11; p. 57, l. 1; p. 57, l. 27.

Jesus was conceived by the Virgin Mary by the
illumination of her spiritual sense. He was
her ideal—p. 29, l. 17.

The scientific explanation of the atonement is that
suffering is an error of sinful sense which
Truth destroys—p. 23, l. 8.

And all this wicked, blasphemous doctrine deceitfully cloaked
over by the name of "Christian"! [Ed.

TRUTH held in the power of the Spirit delivers us
from self and self-occupation, and engages our
thoughts with Christ. This silences the flesh. A
mind plagued with evil thoughts is plain proof that
we have not been taken up with the riches of God's
grace in Christ Jesus.

THE SCRIPTURES.

(2 Tim. 3 : 14-17.)

THE Lord Jesus Himself said (speaking of Moses), "If ye believe not his *writings*, how shall ye believe My *words*?" (John 5 : 46, 47.) His words were the words of God; He does not contrast the authority of what He said with that of the written word, *but the means of communication*. God has been pleased to employ that means as a permanent authority. Peter says, "No prophecy of *Scripture* . . ." (2 Pet. 1 : 20, 21). There have been many prophecies which are not written; they had the authority of God for those persons to whom they were addressed. For the word speaks more than once of prophets—who must therefore have prophesied—without communicating their prophecies to us.

A multitude of things spoken by Jesus Himself are not reproduced in the Scriptures (Jno. 21 : 25); so that it is not only a question of from whom we have heard a truth, but also of the means by which it has been communicated. When it is for the permanent profit of the people, or of the Assembly of God, God caused it to be written in the Scriptures, and it abides for the instruction and the food of His children in all ages. . . .

The Scriptures are the permanent expression of the mind and will of God, furnished as such with His authority. They are the expression of His thoughts. They edify, they are profitable: but this is not all—they are inspired. . . .

They teach, they judge the heart, they correct, they discipline according to righteousness, in order that the man of God may be perfect; that is, thor-

oughly instructed in the will of God, his mind formed after that will and completely furnished for every good work. The power for performing these comes from the actings of the Spirit. Safeguard from error, wisdom unto salvation, flow from the Scriptures; they are capable of supplying them. . . .

Does this perfect and supreme authority of the Scriptures set aside ministry? By no means; it is the foundation of the ministry of the word. One is a minister of the *word*; one proclaims the word—resting on the *written* word—which is authority for all, and the warrant for all that a minister says, and imparting to his words the authority of God over the conscience of those whom he teaches or exhorts. . . . That which the word says silences all opposition in the heart or mind of the believer. It was thus that the Lord answered Satan, and Satan himself was reduced to silence (Luke 4: 1-13). He who does not submit to the words of God thereby shows himself to be a rebel against God. . . . The Old Testament left untold the history of Christ, the mission of the Holy Ghost, the formation of the Assembly: because these facts not being yet accomplished could not be the subject of its historical and doctrinal instructions, and the Assembly was not even the subject of prophecy. But all is now complete, as Paul tells us that he was a minister of the Assembly to complete the word of God (Col. 1: 25). The subjects of revelation were then completed.

God's Word speaks of grace as well as truth. It speaks of God's grace and love, who gave His only begotten Son that sinners like you and me might be with Him, know Him—deeply, intimately, truly

know Him, and enjoy Him forever, and enjoy Him now; that the conscience, perfectly purged, might be in joy in His presence, without a cloud, without a reproach, without a fear. And to be these in His love, in such a way, is perfect joy. The written Word will tell you the truth concerning yourself; but it will tell you the truth of a God of love, while unfolding the wisdom of His counsels. . . .

Let me add to my reader, that by far the best means of assuring himself of the truth and authority of the Word is to read the Word itself.

J. N. D.

THE flesh is never improved. It is as evil, and as ready to do evil, at the end of our Christian life as at the beginning. But if we walk with God, and keep it under the judgment which He has pronounced upon it in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and executed there too—blessed be His name—it has then no power to act.

ALL true Christian experience ends in destroying confidence in the flesh, and making Christ *all* to one's soul.

It is easy to exalt the Church, for it condemns nothing in us; it is quite another thing to exalt Christ, for that condemns everything in us. I am a great person when I think of the Church; I am a poor worm when I think of Christ; yet He loves me. What bliss!

Face to Face.

WHEN His crowning-day revealeth
What to faith had been foretold,
And the Lamb's unveilèd glories
To my raptured gaze unfold,
Face to face, with heart adoring,
"In the midst" I then shall see
Him who took my place in judgment—
Gave Himself in love for me!

Not to see the wondrous beauty
Of that scene supremely fair,
Not to hear its songs melodious
Am I longing to be there;
Not to claim the meed of vict'ry
As a winner in the race,
But to prostrate fall before Him,
And to thank Him—face to face!

Not the robe His love hath found me,
Not the crown I long to see;
Not the mansion, not the glory,
But the One who died for me.
Robe and crown may shine resplendent,
Bright His name my forehead grace,
But my soul shall see my Saviour,
See Him only—face to face!

See that face more marred than any,
And, adoring, see that brow
Once with mocking thorns encircled,
Crowned with radiant glory now;
See those piercèd hands, recording
What He bore for me in grace,
Now outspread in benediction,
As I fall before His face!

Oh, the bliss, the joy surpassing
When upon my raptured ear,

Sweeter than the songs of heaven,
 Falls the voice I long to hear!
 Satisfied! the heart o'erflowing!
 Glorious trophy of His grace,
 In the mighty anthem joining,
 I shall worship—face to face!

W. L. G.

THE GATES OF JERUSALEM.

“His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob” (Ps. 87: 1, 2).

“Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem” (Ps. 122: 2).

Read Neh. 3.

THE wall of a city was for protection—to keep in, and to keep out; as the wall of a sheepfold was to keep in the sheep, and to keep out the enemies of the sheep.

The wall of Jerusalem went farther. Jerusalem was “a city set on a hill, which could not be hid”; it was an object-lesson for the nations, that they might learn how Jehovah governed His house.

He had in sovereign grace put His Name there, His sanctuary was there, and it was this which gave character to the city.

The sanctuary was the inside, the wall was the outside. The sanctuary spoke of what Jehovah was to the people; the wall spoke of what the people were for Jehovah before the world.

This is an important and far-reaching principle, running throughout Scripture.

Abraham was a man of the altar and of the tent: the altar speaking of what God was to him, the tent

showing what he was to the world—a stranger in it: a stranger in the world because at home with God; hence a pilgrim, a tent-dweller, because he was going *to* his home.

The wall of Jerusalem was the practical expression of the prophecy, "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations" (Num. 23: 9).

But what I wish to speak about more particularly is concerning the gates of Jerusalem named in Neh. 3. The gate is what might be called the executive part of the wall. The root from which the word comes means, "to separate," "to discriminate"; the gate of a city being the place where causes were heard and settled. It was at the gate of Bethlehem that Boaz had the cause of Naomi and Ruth the Moabitess legally settled.

There are ten gates named in this chapter, and ten is the number of man's responsibility, the full measure of it, both toward God and toward his fellow, as we may see by the ten commandments. The very idea of the wall is responsibility, the responsibility of those within to those without: so that the number of gates mentioned is in harmony with the fundamental idea of the wall.

There is a peculiarity about Nehemiah which must not be passed over: the people were not exactly *building* the wall, but *repairing* it. They were not setting up anything new, not contracting the walls to limits suited to the feeble strength of the little remnant just returned from Babylon: they were repairing the *old* wall. What they were building might not be of sufficient strength to resist battering-rams, or withstand a long siege, but it would

mark *where the old foundation stood*, and, in general, each man repaired before his own door.

It is of immense moment to see that this city set on a hill is just a working model of the Church of God to-day: the Church, not as the Body of Christ as set forth in the epistle to the Ephesians, but as the house of God set up here on earth, as the 1st epistle to the Corinthians unfolds it to us; set up in the world, but fenced off from it, to be a testimony against it.

The same view-point is seen in 1 Tim. 3: 15—
“The house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

(1) THE SHEEP-GATE

is the first to be repaired, and this seems very fitting: as a fold, it is first of all for sheep, God's sheep: that is fundamental. Isa. 53: 6 would apply here with great force: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way”: as also 1 Peter 2: 25: “For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”

Very appropriately does Eliashib the high priest, the spiritual leader of God's people, arise, with his brethren the priests, and build this gate. Eliashib means, “God will restore,” and suits the connection very well, and we might conclude that in all this we had a good beginning, were it not for the after-history.

There are two omissions, however, which should be noted. In general, each man built before his own door. Eliashib did not; others did it for him, as we see from verses 20 and 21. Again, the locks and the bars of the sheep-gate are not mentioned—

a serious omission, for of what use is a door, to shut out enemies, without a proper fastening?

The word "gate" here seems to designate, not that which closed the opening in the wall, but the opening itself, while "the doors thereof" marked the means used for closing the opening. In each of the other gates which are said to have been repaired "the locks thereof and the bars thereof" are in their places, but here they are significantly omitted.

In chapter 13, where "the book of Moses" is being consulted, and the "mixed multitude" is being weeded out from Israel, we find the reason for this omission of bolts and bars. Eliashib had been tampering with the enemy. Tobiah was an Ammonite, one who was by law excluded from the congregation of the Lord to the tenth generation, even forever (Deut. 23: 3-6); and Tobiah was most prominent and persistent in his enmity toward the whole matter of repairing the wall. When Nehemiah came to Jerusalem, and "Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved [him] exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel" (chap. 2: 10).

When the returned remnant heard of the good hand of God upon Nehemiah, and concluded to build, "Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king? Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, He will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem" (vers. 19, 20).

As the work went on, Sanballat was wroth, and mocked the Jews, and said, "What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned? Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall" (chap. 4: 2, 3).

As the wall was approaching completion, Sanballat and Tobiah, with their associates, "were very wroth, and conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it" (chap. 4: 7, 8).

"When Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates), that Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief" (chap. 6: 1, 2).

Later on, these enemies wrote an open letter, charging Nehemiah with treason, and inviting him to take counsel with them (verses 4 to 9).

Still later, Tobiah and Sanballat hired a false prophet to deceive and entrap this faithful servant of God (vers. 12, 13). What a fearful responsibility attached to these men who set themselves so persistently to oppose this work of God!

Again and again we read, "When they *heard*" of what Nehemiah was doing. What if Eliashib had furnished the channel through which these enemies received their information? It is far from improb-

able, for in chap. 13: 4 we read, "And before this, Eliashib the priest, having the oversight of the chambers of the house of our God, was allied unto Tobiah: and he had prepared for him a great chamber. And I came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God. And it grieved me sore: therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah" (chap. 13: 4-8).

In chap. 13: 28 we learn that one of Eliashib's grandsons had married a daughter of Sanballat the Horonite, and was chased away as having defiled the priesthood.

How awfully solemn is all this!—the spiritual leader of this little remnant, linked by marriage to Sanballat on the one hand, and allied to Tobiah, for whom he had provided a chamber set apart for holy uses in the house of God!

Is it any wonder that Eliashib omitted the locks and bars from the sheep-gate, or that some one else must needs repair before his house? He was not the man to insist upon locks and bars when he had an Ammonite in a select place inside!

Who can tell how much of the hindrance to this work of repair was due to this man's double-mindedness, and lack of decision in the things of God!

The wall would be of no use without gates; the gates would do little good without doors; and these would be quite ineffectual without locks and bars. Inside that wall was what was of God—divine principles governed; outside was what was of the world: to leave one door unbarred was, in principle, to obliterate the wall, and to invite the ruin which had carried them to Babylon.

Can it be that Eliashib built the sheep-gate merely for the sake of maintaining a correct exterior before the people?

Outwardly he was in full sympathy with this work of God, but at heart he was in league with the enemies of the truth. How different the spirit and temper of Nehemiah! "The God of heaven, He will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem" (chap. 2: 20).

Applying this to the assembly of God to-day, we see the immense importance of having things right *at the gate*. Laxity there is sure to lead to confusion. The Lord has committed the keeping of the door to His assembly (Matt. 18: 18), and that only should be received which is consistent with the character of the house. "Receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God" (Rom. 15: 7).

We come now to

(2) THE FISH-GATE.

This the sons of Hassenaah built (chap. 3: 3), "who also laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof." *Discrimination* appears to be the leading thought in this gate. In Deut. 14: 9 and 10 we see that certain fish are called clean, and others unclean. In Matt. 13, in the parable of the net, every kind is gathered into the net, but the good are gathered into vessels, while the bad are rejected. This takes place at the end of the age; but we are to be in the spirit of that even now. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? Know ye not that we

shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" (1 Cor. 6: 2, 3) The present time is the opportunity for practice in these things, for learning to use "strong meat," becoming "those who by reason of *use* have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5: 14).

But fish as a symbol has another application which must not be passed over, and that is, *ministry*. Fish is often used in symbolic language to suggest ministry. (See Matt. 7: 10.) Our Lord fed the multitude partly with fishes (Matt. 14: 19; 15: 36; *cf.* also 17: 27). Even He Himself was so ministered to (Luke 24: 42).

The fish-gate then most beautifully fills its numerical place as the *second* gate, the number two speaking of *difference*, hence of *discrimination*, as also of *ministry*, aid, help; the two thoughts being brought together in the verse just quoted from Heb. 5, vers. 12 to 14, placing those requiring milk, needing to be taught first principles, the unskilful in the word of righteousness, on the one hand; whilst the full grown, feeding upon strong meat, those who by reason of habit are able to distinguish both good and evil, are placed on the other.

What qualities are suggested as called into play by those who would "sit in the gate" here! Skill, patience, vigilance, tenderness in handling—all the qualities of a bishop, in fact. And "the sons of Hassenah built" this gate. Hassenah means, "the thorn bush." Having the article, it is definite, and must refer to "the bush" of Ex. 3: 2-6; *cf.* Acts 7: 30-34. The thorn is the badge of God's curse because of man's sin. But here is a thorn-bush burning but not consumed because occupied by One

who has heard the cry of His people, and has come down to deliver them; and because of what He is, they are not consumed. "I am Jehovah, I change not; *therefore* ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Mal. 3: 6).

"The thorn-bush," then, reminds us of what we were, of what He is (He must consume what *will* consume), and of what we are by His grace—deeply fundamental lessons; and it is eminently fitting that the sons of "the thorn-bush" should repair this gate.

J. B. J.

(To be completed in our next number.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 1.—Is the sin of Ananias and Sapphira, spoken of in Acts 5: 1-11, that which is mentioned in 1 John 5: 16? Also, in Acts 4: 32, "Neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own"; yet, in chapter 5: 4, Peter says to Ananias, "While it remained, was it not thine own?" Why this difference?

ANS.—It is evident that in the sight of God Ananias and Sapphira had committed "a sin unto death." Peter perceives this, and pronounces the sentence, which God executes on the spot. We take it for granted that you understand that this judgment is *governmental*, not eternal; that it refers to the *body*, not the soul. It was no common sin they committed—no mere yielding to some passion of the flesh. A mighty work of the Spirit of God was going on, exalting Christ in the souls of men in such a fashion that believers counted their possessions their own no more, and therefore, instead of accumulating, they distributed; instead of buying more, they sold: the Lord, who was rich, had become poor to make them rich; and His manner was being reproduced in them. It was admirable, and it brought great praise, no doubt, upon such as did this. Ananias and Sapphira coveted this

honor. It is already great sin for a child of God to envy the honor which proceeds from the workings of the grace of God; but when, to obtain it, deceit is resorted to—planned deceit—the judgment of God must fall upon the offender. It was not a mere lie to man to avoid difficulty; it was devising a lie, and agreeing together in it, in the face of God the Holy Spirit, who had but recently come from heaven and taken up His abode in the Church. It was great wickedness.

As to the difference you speak of, it was grace working in them which enabled them to look at their goods as not their own; but actually, as Peter says, each man's property is his own until it is dedicated; that is, it is under his own control; no other person has any right over it. Once dedicated, to hold it back is robbery.

QUES. 2.—What is meant by the ground, or principle, of the one body, and being gathered upon it?

ANS.—Suppose you were among heathen, where many gods are worshiped, and they asked you which one *you* worshiped, would you not reply, "*There is one God only*, and I can therefore worship no other"? So, if any Christian among the many bodies or denominations of Christians asks me, "To what body do you belong?" I reply, "The Scriptures know *but one body* (Eph. 4: 4), the Church, the Body of Christ, which Christ loves, for which He gave Himself, and which the Holy Spirit is forming by the daily addition of newly-converted souls. I, a true Christian, belong to that body; I know no other, and can therefore confess no other; no more than I can confess other than one God, or one Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, or one Holy Spirit. I believe in baptism by immersion; I believe in free grace; I believe in election: but for Christians to assemble together as Baptists, or Methodists, or Calvinists, is one thing; and to assemble together as members of Christ's Body, to which all true Christians belong, is quite another. The former is sectarian, the latter is Christian. The former is man-made, the latter is God-made. The former embraces but a few of God's people, the latter embraces them all. The former makes some doctrine or practice, true or false, the centre of gathering; the latter makes Christ, who is the Head and Saviour of the Church, the Centre. This produces a vast difference both in the character of the worship and the growth of God's people, because the Holy Spirit does not gather God's people on sectarian ground,

nor around any other centre than Christ himself. He must remain true to God's great purpose, however much God's professed people have departed from it.

Any company of Christians thus gathered in confession of their common membership in the Body of Christ will, of course, recognize any other company or companies likewise assembled, and they will practice together all that Scripture enjoins upon the whole Church of God. Individuals presenting themselves to be received, and accrediting themselves as members of the Body of Christ, will be received as such by any one of the companies on behalf of Christ and of the whole Church; or, any one sinning against Christ, and requiring to be put under discipline, will be so dealt with by any one of the companies on behalf of Christ and of the whole Church. The truth that "there is one Body" will govern all their ways and actions; everything will be done in the light of that fact. They cannot be together in one place, but they are together in one Spirit.

This is what is meant by the ground, or principle, of the one Body, and the practice resulting from it.

But God's people are never out of danger in this scene. Satan, their great enemy, is ever watchful, ready to spoil whatever is of God. If the world comes in, and the flesh is not held under judgment, he can corrupt every truth and lead God's people to the abuse of whatever is true. In this truth of the one Body, and its resulting practice, for instance, self-willed men may in some given place do what is wrong—Diotrephes-like, cast out godly men who stand in their way, and then trade upon the obedience which that truth produces, using it now to enforce, not God's will, but their own, and to enslave their brethren, thus corrupting its divine purpose. Some remarks of yours, together with your question, show you have this in mind. In such a case it is Satan usurping the truth; and we are never to yield to him, but to resist him. It is popery—a persecuting power, which to obey is but to surrender a good conscience and make shipwreck of faith. As Rome proclaims herself loudest that *she* is the true Church, so such an abuse as this of the truth of the one Body will proclaim the loudest that it alone is on the ground of that one Body, and that, be their actions righteous or unrighteous, you must go to them to occupy that very ground! Such an abuse of truth turns, alas, many from the truth, and comes fearfully near to "changing the truth of God into a lie." But, whatever the confusion, the word

of God as our guide is plain: "Follow *righteousness*" is the first thing; then "faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Tim. 2: 22).

QUES. 3.—Please give through HELP AND FOOD an exposition of Rom. 8: 13.

ANS.—It is the *test* applied. This is always God's manner. He first establishes thoroughly the perfect freedom of His people. He can allow no bondage to exist in His family. He must have them as free to call Him *Father* as He is free, by the death and resurrection of His Son, to call them *sons*. No genuine fruitfulness or holiness can exist apart from this. The first seven chapters of the epistle have therefore been given for this. By the sacrifice of the cross they have declared all believers righteously justified from all their sins; dead to, that is, separated forever from, the sin that still dwells in them; dead to law, that is, forever free now from *that* principle in obedience or action. All this to make us at home in the light, in the fellowship of the Father and of His Son Jesus Christ.

But if, "when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them," so now he ever seeks to introduce counterfeits—persons who profess all the grace, but avoid its path and responsibilities. The verse you bring before us meets this. It shows the two different roads followed by the two different peoples: The people who "*live* after the flesh," whatever be their profession, are on the road to death—to eternal doom; the people who, not by asceticism, but "*through the Spirit*, do mortify the deeds of the body," are on the road to life everlasting.

And mark, it is not a question of failings which may be found here and there in the child of God, or of some good deeds which may be found in a mere professor; it is a *course of life* which characterizes the one and the other on the two different roads mentioned.

EDITOR'S NOTES.

"I have called you friends."

(John 15 : 15.)

ONCE the grace of God revealed in Christ Jesus is known and enjoyed, who would not be a man in preference to any other of the creatures of God? Who, even while weeping in the deepest contrition for sin, would return to the Eden state of innocence? Who that knows the nearness and ultimate ends into which the grace of redemption has brought us would return to mere creation-blessedness?

But even as a mere creature, God showed His delight in man; for in the cool of the day, walking in the garden, He is heard calling to Adam (Gen. 3 : 8); He has made him such that He has pleasure in intercourse with him. Though now fallen, and therefore upon a new basis, we see all along the line, in Abraham especially, the same pleasure of God in intercourse with man. Abraham's ready response to this causes God to call him His friend—visits him, and unveils His purposes to him: He listens to his petitions, and treats him as a trusted companion. In Prov. 8 : 31 He testifies, "My delights were with the sons of men."

When Jesus is born into the world, the hosts of heaven are heard praising God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest; on earth, peace; *good pleasure in men.*" God's full delight in humanity has come. All along the pathway of Jesus, God shows His delight, and finally He takes that Man up into heaven, in the highest and nearest place to Himself.

During His stay here Jesus surrounded Himself with men. To such as had an ear and a heart for

Him He opened His and the Father's heart. He made them His companions, and loved them even spite of their many failings. He saw them according to the final issues, and bore their present state. He would not call them servants, because servants, as such, are not companions. Angels were servants, but men He would have for companions, and so He poured His Father's mind into them, and thus put them in the place and condition of friends.

Later on the Spirit testifies that we, men whose hearts have been won to Jesus, have been predestinated *to be conformed to Him* (Rom. 8: 29). "We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3: 2). Marvel of marvels! poor sinners worthy of wrath and condemnation are, through Christ, elevated to a place and condition which angels themselves may well wonder at. It is what God, in His sovereign and righteous grace, has set His mind upon, and, spite all Satanic opposition, is now laboring to bring to its issue.

What a blissful eternity stretches out to the eyes of faith! What depths of enjoyment in being thus made the companions of such a Person! Is it a wonder that He is jealous of the grace which has set out for such things, and that He resents the legalism which mars it all; which hinders its glory from shining out, and would exalt afresh that humanity which has received its just sentence in the cross of Christ.

"In the light."

(1 John 1: 7.)

stayed with us.

FROM a brief address recently given on this passage, one expression especially struck us, and

The speaker said, "If 'walking in

the light as He is in the light' were interpreted as walking '*according to*' that light, who among us would dare to say or think that his walk was such? But the truth is that grace has put us in that light—the light of the presence of God. We stand and walk in that light from the moment we are saved, and it is that light which detects everything in us which is inconsistent with it. It makes us judge ourselves. It makes precious to our souls the fact here stated too that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.

May the power of this abide in the soul of both reader and writer!

Law cost God but two tables of stone, and the engraving of ten commands upon them. An *angel* was a being of sufficient elevation to be the messenger of it to man.

Grace cost God the gift of His Son. It cost His Son a path of immeasurable sorrow and humiliation, and a death of unspeakable suffering. No being less than the *Son of God* could have accomplished what was required to bring grace to man. Only He was of sufficient elevation and worth to offer up a sacrifice by which He could lay one hand upon God and the other upon sinful man, and bring them together in a righteous, holy way, *as grace does*.

How few realize, when they repeat the Ten Commandments, that they are repeating their own sentence of death!

CHRISTIANITY is a new creation flowing out of the death, resurrection and ascension into heaven of our

Lord Jesus Christ, and in the descent of the Holy Spirit to the earth. It is apostasy itself therefore to present it as a mere code of moral ethics, however superior to any other it may be claimed to be.

THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM.

THE records of the valor and victories of the Old Testament worthies all point, in some way or other, to the One who was ever in God's thoughts.

The valley of Elah is a witness of this. It was a battle dependent on one man. Israel, the chosen people of God, were ranged on a hill on one side: their perpetual enemies, the Philistines, set the battle in array on the other. Between was the valley where the issues were to be tried. Goliath was the strong man in whom the Philistines trusted. If one man could overcome him, the battle was decided. Could such a one be found? Forty days had the challenge rung forth. The favored people of God were tested, and found wanting. Just at this juncture David's father sent the "beloved," laden with blessings for his brethren. How like the great Antitype! All this points to another battle-field.

"Through fear of death," all were in bondage. The prince of the power of the air had invaded the earth, and held man against all comers. At Calvary's cross the battle was set in array. Could "a man" be found who could conquer the strong man? Thank God, there was one both able and willing. In both cases the victory was achieved by a son sent by a father.

In each instance "He came to His own, and His own received Him not." Both warriors met the enemy single-handed. A mighty victory resulted. Israel was freed forever from Goliath, and had only to reap the spoils of victory. Even so the believer has been freed from Satan by the victory of one blessed Man; alone, forsaken of God, deserted by man, Christ fought and conquered.

"Alone He bare the cross,
 Alone its grief sustained;
 His was the shame and loss,
 And He the victory gained:
 The mighty work was all His own,
 Though we shall share His glorious throne."

We are told certain motives influenced these warriors. Joys were set before them which encouraged them to meet the foe. There were three set before David as incentives to give battle to the "strong man."

The first was, *great riches*.

The second, *the freedom of his father's house*.

The third, *the king's daughter as a bride*.

These three objects were also those of the true David.

Was it not a great joy to the blessed Lord to open out all the wealth of God's nature and being, to make it possible for man to possess unsearchable riches? Man's riches are measured by broad acres, hoards of silver and gold. Not so God's riches. The hidden nugget and the minted gold are all primarily His; He has crown-rights over the soil and all it contains; but He never calls these things His "riches." That which Scripture speaks of as riches are mines in which are hidden moral and spiritual

wealth—"goodness," "grace," "glory," "long-suffering," "forbearance." These are the true riches. To put us in possession of them Christ met and conquered the enemy; to secure them for us He became poor.

Through His poverty we are now rich. Every blessing possessed by Christ in glory is ours. Our needs are supplied from "riches in glory;" our redemption and forgiveness, from "riches of grace."

These mines cannot be exhausted. The eternal ages will witness "kindness" displayed from the treasure-house of the exceeding "riches of grace."

All the wealth of God's nature and being, all that He is in Himself, has been opened up to us.

"And see, the Spirit's power
Has ope'd the heavenly door,
Has brought us to that favored hour
When toil shall all be o'er."

Oh then, to explore these mines and appropriate this wealth, by faith and the Spirit, now!

To free the "Father's house" was another motive which actuated David's Lord.

During those countless ages which preceded the creation of man, a purpose had been formed—a deep, settled purpose, that the "Father's house" should resound with the praises of children, that "many sons" should tread those heavenly courts and enter into its joys and delights.

Hitherto one Son, "an only-begotten," and "well-beloved," had stood in this relationship. The One who stood in this place of peculiar and special affection was now sent of the Father to give effect to His purpose and counsel. To give the "freedom" of

the house to others; to effect this for us, Christ became man. As a man He was saluted Son—"Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee" (Heb. 1:5). He became man in order to give the freedom of the Father's house to "many sons."

In John 8 He not only says that the "truth" shall make the believer free, but, "If the *Son* therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (ver. 36).

We are conducted into that scene of heavenly joy in association with the risen First-born among many brethren. The freedom of His home is ours. Christ has entered, the accepted and beloved Son, and we are taken into favor in the Beloved One *in all His acceptance now*. Soon those courts will be trodden by sons introduced by the mighty Victor, who is bringing many sons to glory. The freedom of the house will be theirs *in fact then*, but may be entered by faith and the Spirit *now*.

Then another attraction was the "king's daughter."

Psalms 45 tells us that "the king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold."

This is the one who captivated the heart of the warrior and cheered Him on to meet the foe—a bride who was within and without suited to Him. The King's daughter, who answers to this now, is the Church—the company of saints God is gathering to-day. "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it," and will soon present it to Himself "all glorious."

There are other saints for whom Christ died, the Abrahams and Davids and the remnant in a future day; but among them all one bright special object

is singled out as the object of the King's desire, as that which will ever be for His own joy. This bride will be all "glorious within." Every thought and feeling will be in accord with His.

Outwardly the "wrought gold" will declare and set forth the *righteousness* in which she will be found; but inwardly she will answer to Him in affection and moral delight in those things which now engage His thoughts and desires. Adorned with the beauty with which He will invest her, she shall be a fit and suited companion for Him when He appears in glory, as well as the joy and delight of His heart.

The marriage of the King's daughter will be the great event of the Father's house. Among the many bursts of joy in the course of the book of Revelation, none is so full as that which accompanies the announcement that the time has arrived for the marriage supper of the Lamb. Scripture is careful to show us that this bride is a suited one. When God formed Eve and gave her to Adam, He made her bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. When God formed the second Eve for the last Adam, she too was "of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones."

Do we enter into it that we are truly and really to-day in the actual moment when all this is being accomplished?

All the wealth of God is at our disposal. The freedom of the house is our position as sons. We are the objects of a love that is unique—a love that the brightest angel never can know—a love that many of the redeemed never will know. Christ's love to the "Church" is a special love. That Church was formed by the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pente-

cost, and will end by the Spirit accompanying her to the bridal feast.

“O hour of richest blessing,
 When brought to Thee so nigh;
 To be Thy joy forever,
 And reign with Thee on high;
 To rest in all the brightness
 And ever there abide;
 To find Thy heart delighting
 In us, Thy ransomed bride.”

H. N.

“Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently
 for Him.”

HAST thou loved ones who are heedless?
 Knowing not thy blessed Lord,
 Seeking from the world their pleasure,
 Caring nothing for His word?
 Doth this on thy spirit weigh?
 Cease not—pray.

Doth the waiting oft seem weary?
 And the subject of thy prayer
 Show no sign or shade of turning?
 Is it hard for thee to bear
 That thy loved in darkness grope?
 Look up; hope.

Hast thou warned, besought, entreated;
 Told of mercy from above?
 Hast thou left no word unspoken,
 Of God's wondrous gift and love?
 Doth it seem already late?
 Only wait.

Let thy love not cease an instant;
 See how God hath loved the lost!
 Gave His Son, His only loved one.
 Think, O think, the awful cost,

And the pains He took to prove
All His love.

Some one prayed, and hoped, and waited,
When thy heart was hard and dark,
Watching for the faintest glimmer
Of the longed-for living spark.
With thy heart's door's lifted latch
Keep thy watch.

Some one pled at morn and evening
For thy heedless, straying soul;
Some one craved the balm of healing,
Which alone could make thee whole:
Nay, it is no weary task
Just to ask.

God is patient, He is waiting:
Wait with Him, and willingly
Let Him carry all thy burdens;
They're too heavy, far, for thee.
Love and watch, and hope and pray,
Every day.

In the glory over yonder
Thou shalt find thy prayers and tears:
Not e'en one has been forgotten,
Through the weary, anxious years.
Soon thou'lt reach that changeless shore,
Trust Him *more*.

Dost thou know the love of Jesus?
Measure it by Calv'ry's cross.
Dost thou know the Father's tender
Heart, that yearneth over us?
Lean thy head upon His breast;
There is rest.

H. McD.

READINGS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

THE epistle to the Romans is, in character, a treatise on the gospel. It is a divinely-authorized unfolding of the nature and character of the gospel.

Chapter 1: 1-17 is a fitting introduction. In it we are assured that the epistle is written by divine authority. Paul, the human author of it, writes as one who has been specially called by God to the apostolic office. He was divinely set apart to the proclamation of the gospel to men—all men. As so called and set apart, it was his divinely-imposed responsibility not only to publicly proclaim the gospel to all nations, but also to unfold to the saints—all believers—the fulness of the blessing it bestows on those who receive it.

Insisting on the divine authority by which he writes, the apostle also declares that the message which God has put in his trust relates to God's Son. The Son of God is its great theme. This leads him to make a statement which is a remarkable unfolding of the unique Person who is the subject of the message committed to him. In this statement reference is first made to His earthly origin. He comes of the family of David. By a true human birth He is a son of David. He is thus in reality, a true man. But the apostle goes on to say that He is a man to be distinguished from all other men. The power of the Spirit of holiness was displayed in Him throughout the life He lived in human flesh. In His human life He came in contact with dead people; but

whenever and wherever this contact occurred there was manifested a power equal to the destruction of death and corruption. Displayed thus as being in His own person the annulment of death and corruption, He was shown to be the Son of God, proved to be God as well as man.

What a *unique* Person! What a *glorious* Person! How transcendently glorious even in the lowest depths of humiliation!

It was by such a Person Paul was called to the apostolic office. He filled the office by the highest possible authority. God's object in putting him in trust with the gospel, in setting him apart to the public proclamation of it among all nations, was to secure faith-obedience. Among those who had thus obeyed the gospel were the believers at Rome. They were very dear to God.

Paul evidently had never been at Rome, had never seen the believers there. They were bright lights, since they were being spoken of everywhere; and this fact filled the apostle's heart with gratitude to God. He solemnly assured them that he was continually praying for them, specially pleading to be granted the privilege of making them a visit. It was his desire to bestow upon them some spiritual blessing, and to have the comfort of enjoying in their midst the mutual exercise of their faith.

It was not from lack of interest in them that he had never visited them. He had often formed the purpose to go to Rome, but had been hindered thus far in carrying it out. He acknowledged, however, that he owed the gospel to all men—to the Barbarian as much as to the Greek, to the unwise as well as to the wise. He was therefore ready, as far as it

depended on himself, to proclaim the gospel at Rome. He was not ashamed of it, for it was God's power to save men. It meant salvation to every one who believed it.

[The believer of the gospel is assured of a full salvation—a salvation to be known and enjoyed as a present salvation. What assures this to the believer is the blessed fact that the gospel contains a full revelation of the righteous character of God. The gospel proclaims God's right, or title, to show grace—that there is no contradiction between righteousness and grace in Him. It is this revelation of the harmony of divine grace and divine righteousness that assures the believer of the gospel that he *is* saved. The revelation is for faith. Faith therefore, i. e., the believer, possesses the revelation. It belongs to him. It is his right to enjoy it. It is his privilege to be in the full comfort of the revelation.

It is the failure of preachers of the gospel to emphasize this blessed revelation of the apostolic gospel that accounts for the doubts and lack of assurance of salvation of large numbers of believers in the present day. May God raise up among His people everywhere faithful proclaimers of the gospel revelation that God, through the cross of Christ, has maintained His right to show grace—full, free grace—to sinners. Under such preaching we shall see healthier converts and brighter saints.

C. CRAIN.

(To be continued.)

DISCIPLINE.

ALL true discipline, whether directly from the hand of the Lord upon the believer, or, under the Lord's authority, through His people, has one special object in view, namely, the correction of the wrong that necessitates the discipline. In every case where the wrong is judged and confessed, grace flows from the Lord immediately; there is forgiveness, and, as a result, restoration of heart to Him. There may be yet in the individual, while enjoying His forgiveness, a bitter sting left upon the heart and mind for long. This will, as the person grows in nearness to God, produce self-abasement and a careful, lowly spirit, while there is the enjoyment of forgiveness and restoration. The Lord, in all His dealings, thus is seen to be perfect in His *holiness* as well as in His *grace*.

This principle of God's dealings with us, whether in holiness or grace, we need to remember and carefully consider. If not, we may fail in maintaining the holiness of His house as a people left here for His honor, or fail in the grace that He extends in restoration. In our limited knowledge of God or understanding of His ways, we are very liable to run from one extreme to the other; at times, under the plea of holiness, fail in the grace urged upon us; and at others, in extending grace, forget the sanctity of God's house and what is due to the Lord because of what He is.

In all cases, even when the extreme act of discipline is incumbent upon an assembly, there is the deepest need of a chastened and broken spirit in each one concerned. Would that such a spirit were

always seen at such times in those who act; then might the same be the sooner expected in the offender.

A great help toward possessing such a spirit is to keep before our heart and mind the object of discipline—the *restoration* of the person. Have we not failed again and again in this—lacking the chastened spirit in the sight of God at such times?—not keeping in view what the discipline is intended to produce? “*And ye have not mourned*” was the apostle’s reproach to the Corinthian saints on a similar occasion, while he wrote to them “with many tears.” Have we not too often sought to get rid of the trouble by getting rid of the troublesome person, and thus get through with the matter? But this is not God’s end, for the person is *a brother*. When this has been the case, what exercises will be needed to return to the place where the true path with God has been missed, that His object may finally be attained! How good to deliver ourselves, at any cost, when we have done wrong to His name by the misuse of what He has ordained for blessing! How refreshing to watch every indication of recovery and restoration of heart! We need to challenge ourselves before the Lord about these things. It is a lamentable fact that in the many cases of putting away, so little effort is put forth for the recovery of the erring; and, accordingly, few are recovered. What voice has the Lord for us in this? Could it be again Ezekiel’s complaint against the shepherds of Israel: “The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away,

neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, My flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them" (Ezek. 34: 4-6.).

If we have lost the sense of the sanctity of God's house, we will do well to take up 1 Cor. 5 again, and go over every part of it with care, that we may recover it. Or, if we have lost the true object of discipline, we will do well to consider afresh, with the same earnest care, 2 Cor. 2: 6-11. In it we shall see the *grace* of the Lord in the apostle, two years after the man was put away, urging not only forgiveness, but also to *comfort* such a one. If we fail in this grace, those yet dear to Christ notwithstanding past failure, are made to suffer by our indifference or hardness. (See Prov. 24: 11, 12.) Our Lord sits upon a throne of *grace*; our dispensation is one of *grace*, and the gospel we announce tells of *grace* flowing out to the ends of the earth. We ourselves are daily the subjects of *grace*—oh, how much! Let us, then, beware lest we fail in that grace to others.

A. E. B.

I ENTREAT you to keep very near to Him, that you may know what there is to be done in His name, that you may be encouraged, and that the light of His countenance may sustain your faith. His support is worth all else.

—J. N. D.

THE GATES OF JERUSALEM.

(Continued from p. 25.)

(3) THE OLD GATE.

What an atmosphere of rest seems to envelop one as we think of the "*old gate*"—the One who said, "I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture"; and He changes not; He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jer. 6: 16).

Jehoiada repairs this gate, his name meaning, "Jehovah knows"; the son of Paseah, whose name means "halting," or "vacillating."

When we first entered, we entered as sinners. He opened His arms and took us in, "knowing" us through and through; He picked us up for blessing, and He is able to accomplish His purpose. He has not wearied, has not been disappointed in us, although we may have been disappointed in ourselves and in one another at our "haltings" and "vacillatings"; but "Jehovah knows," knows the end from the beginning, and He has not changed; so we can repair the "old gate"; but for this we need the assistance of Meshullam, whose name means, "reconciled"; the son of Besodeiah, "in Jah's secret." "Reconciled" and "in Jah's secret"! Surely to attempt to repair the "old gate" without these would be building with bricks—instead of living stones—and untempered mortar. Again, we say,

what an atmosphere of rest surrounds the old gate!

Is the reader of these lines reconciled to God?—

“A sinner reconciled through blood:

This, this indeed is peace.”

“The secret of Jehovah is with them that fear Him.”

(4) This brings us to the

VALLEY GATE.

We have been on the mountain top with Him whom “we have known from the beginning.” Now we must come down into the valley of practical experience in the world. The low place becomes us as we think of what we are naturally, and as we consider what our ways have been since we knew the Lord.

Nehemiah, as he went out by night to view the dilapidated wall, went out “by the gate of the valley,” and returned by the same gate (chap. 2: 13, 15). This is as it should be. As he surveyed the ruin, and remembered that the people had brought it upon themselves by their ungodly ways, the valley gate would naturally be the gate at which he would begin and end his survey.

But Hanun repairs this gate, and his name means, “favored” (i. e., “shown grace”); assisted by “the inhabitants of Zanoah”—“to cast off.”

What serious lessons are for us here!

On the one hand, “by the grace of God I am what I am”; and on the other, we see the cross, as that which alone gives capacity to walk through this valley of death’s shadow; the cross, as the mark of what the world thinks of us, and what the world is to us (Gal. 6: 14).

(5) THE DUNG GATE.

This appears to be lower still than the *valley gate*. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; that He may set him with princes" (Ps. 113: 7, 8). How often we fancy that we have learned our lesson of humility, and are walking softly, when suddenly some trial confronts us and knocks us down. One cannot be knocked down when he is down.

How hardly is this low level reached! perhaps because the "thousand cubits on the wall unto the dung gate" (ver. 13) is so seldom repaired.

The number of the gate is instructive, imparting a *deuteronomic* character to it, i. e., a backward look, in His presence, at our origin and course, and a forward look at the time when He will "set us among His princes."

Only in His presence do we get a proper estimate of ourselves. Job got a true estimate of himself when he said, "But now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself" (Job 42: 5, 6).

Isaiah got a true estimate of himself when he exclaimed, "Mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts" (Isa. 6: 5).

John the same, in Rev. 1: 17: "And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead."

To see ourselves as under the searchlight of God, we should class ourselves with the malefactors crucified with our Lord in Matt. 27: 44. "The thieves also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His teeth"; and again, with one of them, in Luke 23: 40-43: "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? and we indeed justly;

for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this Man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise." The beggar is raised from the dunghill, and set among princes.

The dung gate is the gate by which we entered, any way, however feebly it may be realized by us. May we plod on diligently, with sword and trowel, upon the thousand cubits, until it is reached, remembering that it is here God finds His princes, working under the name Malchiah, "my King is Jah," son of Rechab, "a charioteer." The latter suggests the warrior-spirit, as well as the racer, while "the ruler of part of Beth-haccerem" suggests the rest and joy soon coming; Beth-haccerem meaning, "the house of the vineyard."

(6) THE GATE OF THE FOUNTAIN.

"Fountain," or "spring," suggests *refreshment*, as the number of the gate suggests *victory, mastery*.

This gate is distinguished from the rest by being the only gate said to have been "covered."

In Num. 19: 15 every uncovered vessel which was in a tent where death was was unclean. In 1 Cor. 11: 10 the covering upon the woman's head is the sign of power, because the sign of subjection.

Samson with the sign of his Nazariteship removed was as weak as any other man. Why? "Jehovah had departed from him" (Judges 16: 20). Man, when he reaches the extreme limit of his development as man, has for his number 666, one short in every dimension—worthless therefore—and all be-

cause he did not own subjection to Him who alone has strength.

The fountain gate then is covered. This secures it from contamination by outside influences, and, since it is the *source of supply* for God's sheep, insures their healthy condition, insures victory.

What an immensely important lesson is here for Christians to-day as to what we hear and what we read! Our Lord said—and He said it because He needed to say it—"Take heed *what* ye hear." And He also said, "Take heed *how* ye hear." Oh that in all our reading and in all our hearing the *covering* may be upon the spring, in token of *subjection* to our Lord, testing everything by His holy Word; for how much teaching is abroad to-day beguiling the unwary and leading astray the simple, which would have no power whatever were the "fountain gate" but "covered."

Shallun—"they spoiled them"—is the repairer of this gate; and the meaning of his name is sufficient suggestion for the *covering* of the gate; and he is the son of Colhozeh—"all-seer." We shall find our wisdom in owning subjection to the One who sees the end from the beginning, and who will be eyes for us if we will. He is also "the ruler of part of Mizpah"—"watch-tower." When He is allowed to be eyes for us, we are at once upon an eminence whence every danger can be rightly seen and guarded against.

We must not forget that if this covered gate keeps out certain things, it also brings us into very desirable company, such as "the pool of Siloah by the king's garden, and unto the stairs that go down from the city of David"—things which it is out of

our province to enlarge upon here; but if, as some authorities think, Shallun should be Shallum, "recompense," or "requital," then we see how amply *recompensed* we are for whatever the "covering" may exclude. Compare, as to this, Mark 10: 29, 30.

(7) THE WATER GATE.

This, with the three following gates, is not said here to have been repaired; they are mentioned in other connections.

Water is commonly a symbol of the word of God, as, e. g., "that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (Eph. 5: 26); "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3: 5), comparing this with 1 Peter 1: 23, we see that this also refers to the word of God.

This water gate, then, would not need repairing, since it "liveth and abideth forever." Many prominent theological tinkers appear to think it needs repairing, adapting to twentieth-century advancement, etc.; but what it needs is *dwelling beside*—"over against."

"Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi," after he was bereft of his father, and God blessed him (Gen. 25). Lahai-roi means, "to the living One, seeing me."

Here the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel, "over against the water gate." The Nethinims are "the given ones," reminding us of the "given ones" named in Eph. 4: 7-16. The ascended One has sent down "given ones," "for the perfecting of the *saints*, for the work of the ministry."

Not for the perfecting of a certain class of His people, but "for the perfecting of the *SAINTS*, for

the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come," etc.; hence the need of these "given ones" dwelling in Ophel, i. e., "the elevated place" over "against the water gate," since it is *the truth* they are to hold in love (and "Thy word is truth," John 17: 17), in order to grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, the Christ. Only in this way can the people of God be kept from being "infants, tossed and carried about by every wind of doctrine in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to the systematizing of error" (lit.). These "given ones" also "confronted the sunrising, and the tower that lieth out," or, literally, "and the watch-tower of the going forth." How beautiful and consistent is this!

The "sunrising" suggests the coming of the Lord, while Ophel is "the heavenlies" where Christians are raised up and seated together in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2: 6); and "the watch-tower of the going forth" is just the hope of being caught up to meet Him in the air (1 Thess. 4: 17).

Truly this "water gate" fills its numerical place of perfection and rest; and this is further exemplified as we note the other references to it after the completion of the wall (chap. 8: 1, 3, 16, and 12: 37).

(8) THE HORSE GATE.

References to the horse in Scripture are not often to his credit, but more frequently are in connection with pride and departure from God. The wicked Athaliah was slain at the horse gate (2 Kings 11: 16; 2 Chron. 23: 15). Here it is not said to have been repaired, but is mentioned merely as a limit from above which the priests repaired, "every one over

against his house." In Jer. 31: 40 it is also spoken of as a boundary, "unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the Lord."

But that is to be in the day when on the bells of the horses will be inscribed, "Holiness unto the Lord" (Zech. 14: 20); the day when He will reign whose right it is; and that is doubtless what is suggested by the number of the gate—a new order of things.

(9) THE EAST GATE.

We are not told exactly that this gate was repaired, and we must not go beyond what is written. Perhaps it did not need repairing. It is literally "the gate of the sunrising"; so that the thought of hope is stamped upon it. "But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings" (Mal. 4: 2).

The number 9 appears to have the same thought in it. When Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to him, changed his name, and "gave him the covenant of circumcision," having promised the "Seed" (Gen. 17; Acts 7: 8).

So here we have a covenant which is distinctly a promise ("for this word is of promise," Rom. 9: 9, lit.); and on the strength of it circumcision, which is condemnation of the flesh.

The east gate, then, would seem to stand for "the patience of hope," in the certainty of what is coming. Shemaiah is the keeper, and his name means, "heard of Jehovah"; and he is son of Shechaniah—"the dwelling of Jah." One need not enlarge upon the beautiful fitness of these names with the number of the gate, and its name. Abraham "looked for a

city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." "If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. 8: 25).

(10) THE GATE MIPHKAD.

Miphkad means "mustering," or "appointment," and looks on to the day of accounts.

This gate is not said to have been repaired: it could not well be so said, but Malchiah—"my King is Jah"—repairs "over against" it; and this is as it should be. Those who are recognizing Jesus as Lord will be "gold-beaters," beating out the "things concerning Himself" and this will necessarily put them, in spirit, in the "place of the Nethinim," which, as we have seen, is the heavenlies, and in the company of "the merchants," i. e., those who trade in the precious things named in Eph. 4 and Phil. 4: 8.

The gate Miphkad is number ten, and the number ten is the number of man's responsibility—the full measure of it.

The very idea of the wall is responsibility, as we have seen; and now we have reached the last gate, the gate which emphasizes it, and in view of "that day," with its "well done" to those who have earned it, and with all its incentives to diligence, having in place each of these ten gates, a day which cannot be far off.

That Malchiah repaired "to the going up of the corner" may very likely refer to that sudden and secret rapture which, like the sudden upward dart and rapid flight of the migratory bird, takes him to his home.

J. B. J.

"LIVING" IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

THE words "life," "living" in this epistle everywhere contrast with the ceremonies and dead forms of Judaism.

First: We are ushered into the presence of the living God, from whom we are exhorted not to depart (chap. 3: 12), and whom, with consciences purged from dead works, we serve (9: 14). Into His hands the wicked fall (10: 31). "It is a fearful thing to *fall* into the hands of the living God." Let sinners beware. But the men of faith "*come* to God, believing that He *is*" the living One (11: 6), valuing the reward at the end. Comp. ver. 26.

Second: To maintain us before His Majesty, we have a "great High Priest" at His right hand, even "Jesus the Son of God," "who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an *endless life*." "He *ever liveth* to make intercession for us" (7: 16, 25). With His glories and heavenly ministry the epistle is filled (8: 1, 2).

Third: We enter into the sanctuary "by a new and *living way*" (10: 20).

Fourth: "The word of God is *living* and powerful," marking out our pilgrim course, and searching our inmost heart, laying bare all its secrets. It is like "the eyes of Him with whom we have to do," from whom nothing can be hid (4: 12, 13). Comp. Ps. 139.

Fifth: The discipline of our Father's hand invigorates the whole man, exercising the conscience and profiting the soul, "that we may be partakers of His holiness"—strengthening hands and feeble knees. "Shall we not," then, "be in subjection unto the Fa-

ther of *spirits*, and *live*?" (12: 9.) Comp. 2 Cor. 4: 16. "Now the just shall *live* by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him" (10: 38). Of this life of faith, lived in the power and joy of communion with the living God, we have "a great cloud of witnesses" in chapter 11. Let us therefore "make straight paths for our feet," that the lame be not turned aside. "Let us (deliberately) lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us *run* with patience the race that is set before us," with our eyes upon Jesus at the right hand of God (12: 1, 2). Yea, let us "*live* no longer unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us, and rose again" (2 Cor. 5: 15).

C. E. B.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 4.—Will you please, through HELP AND FOOD, give the meaning of Acts 19: 6? We find in Acts 2: 1-4 the Holy Spirit given to the Jews, and in Acts 10: 45-48 poured out on the Gentiles. Also, in Eph. 1: 13, that a soul, upon believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, is sealed with the Spirit. Why, then, this delay in Acts 19: 6?

ANS.—Because the Holy Spirit is not given in connection with John's baptism, which was only unto repentance. John did not preach salvation through an accomplished work by Christ; he preached *repentance*. He said so himself: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (Matt. 3: 11). Repentance is but a preparatory work to let Christ in; and, important and of absolute necessity as it is, it is not what the Holy Spirit dwells with. It is *Christ* He has come to glorify, and it is *faith in Christ* which He seals and dwells with.

But there is evidently more than this involved in the case of Acts 19:6; for even after they have received Christian baptism they do not receive the Holy Spirit until Paul laid hands on them. Is it not for a reason similar to that seen in chap. 8:14-17? "Salvation is of the Jews," the Lord had said to a Samaritan, for the Samaritans had left the worship of God at Jerusalem to follow after golden calves. They must be made to feel therefore the shame of their departure. Though they had received the word of God and Christian baptism, men from Jerusalem must come and pray for them, and lay hands on them, and then they receive the Holy Ghost.

So here now at Ephesus: God is disowning Jerusalem. His true testimony is not there now; for they would keep alive a Judaism He has cast off. It is from there indeed that disturbers and corrupters of Christianity issue. The true testimony is with Paul, and these Jewish believers are made to know it by their receiving the Spirit through the laying on of his hands.

QUES. 5.—Would you please say in **HELP AND FOOD** if the following paragraph, which I recently read, teaches the truth? "It is only in the 'old man' that the devil finds anything upon which he can carry out his work; and as we reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God, his temptations to sin find no place in us. As we hourly and momentarily so live unto God, we shall know He is able to save and to keep His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21), and others shall know it too."

ANS.—We do not believe that one truly taught of God would thus mix the devil with indwelling sin. Scripture does not so. Romans, chapters 5 and 6, treats very fully of indwelling sin, and of the manner of hindering its activity; there is not one word there about the devil. We hear much of him in Ephesians—an altogether different sphere, and the one where his activities are now displayed.

The use of Matt. 1:21 in this connection would indicate the writer knows little as to redemption, and is more taken up with his life before men than with his relations with God.

This is a time when men are more ready to speak than to hear, and much is said and printed which, if not positively evil, only befogs God's people.

EDITOR'S NOTES.

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God” (2 John 9).

It is not sound doctrine which makes us Christians, any more than good works makes us Christians; but as the good works which God has ordained for His people to walk in prove us to be true Christians, so does sound doctrine. Departing, therefore, from the doctrines which form the foundations of Christianity proves us to be only counterfeit Christians—not real, not born anew, not washed in the blood of the Lamb. Even in those who are real Christians, and who therefore could never surrender “the doctrine of Christ,” whatever false doctrine they may intelligently hold in matters not fundamental, only proves there is self-will—unjudged pride. The doctrine of our heart tells plainly and unmistakably our state. A man after God’s own heart gets his doctrine from God’s own word; he is subject to it from end to end. He forces no part to introduce something of his own.

The very brief but sweet epistle in which our text is found warns a Christian lady against those who “transgress,” that is, who are “progressive,” as they call it now. They “*abide*” not in the doctrine of Christ; they invent something of their own, as though what God revealed at the beginning had grown out of date and were no longer true; or they wrest the Scriptures so as to make them say what they want them to say.

At no time perhaps since Christ came has this state of things been as prevalent as now. What need, then, for watchfulness among the people of God! What need to live by every word which pro-

ceedeth from the mouth of God, and by it and prayer keep in close touch with God Himself! The men who depart most from the word of God plead most for "love." It is deception. "This is love," says the apostle of love, "*that we walk after His commandments. This is the commandment, that, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it*" (ver. 6).

"Confess your faults one to another."
(James 5 : 16.)

There is perhaps nothing that contributes more to the general welfare of God's people than confessing our faults one to another when in anything we have wronged one another. It establishes Christian confidence, because we see the work of conscience. Even among men generally, what produces confidence is conscience; when conscience cannot be trusted, confidence departs.

Among those who love our Lord Jesus Christ, and know the truth, there is the greatest danger of a subtle form of self-righteousness which stands in the way of the confession of sins: we know that if we sin, it is because there is something wrong in our spiritual condition; we have not walked in communion with God; and to have all this suggested by confessing our sins is too much for our pride. Therefore we do violence to our conscience; we hide our sins; we even find some self-satisfying excuse for them; a crust gets over our souls, and our spiritual senses are blunted.

The Lord give us grace not to sin, but, if we have sinned, to have the needed humbleness of mind to make confession to whomsoever it is due.

"The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Luke 16: 8).

In Matt. 19: 29 the Lord encourages the hearts of His own by telling them that "every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." There is need of encouragement in this, for on the way they may find themselves suffering from having forsaken some of these things for Christ's sake. The Lord knows this, and He would cheer them through the difficulties.

In our text, however, He would exercise their consciences by shaming them with the greater wisdom of "the children of this world." These have their all on earth, and they know how to invest so as to secure the earth and all the good things it has to give. But of His own Christ said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world"; this is a *fact*; it depends not on their practice; *by His calling* they belong to heaven, and no more to the world; but as He looks at their practice, with sadness of heart He has to say, "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light," for they of this world know how to sow abundantly for the earth, that they may reap of the earth abundantly; but the children of light sow sparingly for heaven; and they, of course, will also reap sparingly.

Oh what loss for the people of God, whose only opportunity to sow for an eternal harvest is *now!*

ALL THINGS.

“All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come.”

“ALL things are yours”—“ye are Christ’s”—“Christ is God’s” (1 Cor. 3: 21-23). Study the inventory of your possessions! The *servants of Christ* are given you of God to be your help and comfort. Cherish them well; they are Christ’s bequest to the Church, given for the edification of His body, for the work of the gospel; they are the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Though given to you, they are responsible to their Lord and Master, to whom they must give an account of their stewardship.

Pray for them, care for them, view them as the love-gift of Christ to you; help them with your carnal things to minister spiritual things (1 Cor. 9: 11).

The *world* is yours. Every part of the globe is your possession, for it is the material world which is here meant, the “kosmos,” “the beautifully arranged habitable earth”—not the debased moral system of which John bids us beware, with its lusts of the eye, the flesh, and the mind; it is that world which God pronounced good at first, and which, in virtue of Christ’s death, shall yet be purified and reconciled; for “*things* on the earth, and *things* in the heavens” shall witness to the triumph of the Lamb (Col. 1: 20).

The inheritance now defiled by sin shall declare, in the time of restitution of all things, during the glorious millennial age, how the Creator and Heir

has claimed the right of redemption, and wrested the prey from the mighty.

Some tried, suffering saint may say, "If the world is really mine, how is it that I not only do not possess a foot in it, but am often bare of the very necessaries of life?"

Before answering that question, let us inquire in what way is the world yours? It is because "ye are Christ's." He is the true and rightful Heir; all things are destined for Him. The title-deeds are His. The Father has expressed His love to the Son by putting all things into His hand (John 3: 35). The hand pierced on Calvary not only holds the sheep He purchased, but the possessions they are to enjoy. *All things* in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, were not only created by Him, but intended for Him. He came once to claim His rights, but the world—the moral world—rejected Him. He has accepted their rejection (for the time being), and lingers in long-suffering grace ere He subdues by power what He has already purchased by blood.

Our Saviour, our Lord, is kept out of His own earth. He had no place to lay His head when here, He has not a *foot in possession to-day*. He is denied His title as "purchaser" of the inheritance, just as He was refused when seeking His rights as Son of Man; but He will claim His property. The Son of Man shall yet have dominion over land and sea; the terrestrial and the celestial are His; it is not merely this measurable globe which belongs to Him, but the entire universe, the unseen and seen worlds which deck the starry heavens—all are His; for "He is God's." He is not merely the heir of this world, but the *heir of God*; and how vast are God's posses-

sions! It is as joint heirs with Christ we are to share the glorious inheritance which fadeth not away.

Tell me, would you care to have the world without Christ? Would you like to possess it in its polluted state? It is purchased, but not redeemed; bought, not reconciled; pledged, but not possessed. The inheritance must be purified, all things which offend and them which do iniquity purged out, ere its rightful Lord shall take to Himself His glorious power, and reign.

Meanwhile the Christian may literally have *nothing*, while *possessing all things*—the world be his, while poor and penniless. His is a joint-heirship; he cannot occupy except in conjunction with the true and rightful Heir; hence the anomaly—an heir to untold wealth lacking the very necessaries of life! Why? Because the world has rejected the rightful Heir—Christ has been cast out of His own world. What true heart, knowing Christ's rejection by the "moral world," will not identify himself with Him in that rejection? The natural world is truly ours because we are Christ's, and it is *with Him* that God has freely given us "all things"; and until He puts His foot on land and sea, and claims His rights, we contentedly share His rejection. But not only is the world ours, but—

Life is ours. In the midst of a scene of moral and physical death we have life—divine life as a present possession as well as a future hope!

Death is ours. The king of terrors, with his sting gone, his power broken, is no longer a dreaded foe, but a kind friend, to conduct us where sin and sorrow, pain and tears, are forever wiped away. Death, to a Christian, is like the opening of the door to a

caged lark—the means by which his wings are free to soar into his native air. It is the captive freed; the exile's way to his own land; the banished restored to the family circle.

Yes, death is indeed ours, for it will take us to home and happiness, to joys unceasing, pleasures unending—to the abode of the Redeemer and the redeemed, the glorious courts, the paradise of God, with its living fountains, its tree of life with its ever-new fruits.

It will conduct us to the Father's house, to that home where the First-born has gone and prepared a place for the many sons; where, together with Him, and together with them, we shall spend a blissful and endless eternity.

Things now existing and things not yet apparent all belong to us. Who shall compute our wealth? If it is a profitless speculation, entailing present misery and eternal loss, to gain the whole world and lose our own souls, what a profitable thing it is to turn to Jesus, and get not only present happiness—even if with persecutions—but untold wealth in an eternal future! The millionaires are robbed of their wealth by death, the Christian is introduced to his by death; he came into this world bare of everything, he goes out of it possessor of everything. Who would not be a Christian?

But if we are not yet in possession of our wealth, we have the assurance that the unseen hand of God controls and orders every step of our pathway, and turns the most untoward events into ministry of blessing.

“All things work together for good to them that love God” (Rom. 8 : 28)—the dark as well as the

bright, the sorrowful as well as the joyous. The house of mourning is thus made better than the house of feasting; the most untoward events become the occasion of a fresh discovery of God's goodness; even our follies are overruled for good, and our very distresses draw out God's resources, for with God *all things are possible*. Yes, our God is the God of impossibilities: no matter is too hard, no difficulty is too great, for Him. It is when matters are, humanly, hopeless, God can manifestly declare Himself. In an Indian village a converted native stood alone for Christ. One Lord's day morning his heathen neighbors warned him the locusts were coming, and told him to bring out a long stick, in order to beat them off the patches of corn and stop their devastations. He replied, "It is the Lord's day; I cannot come." "Then you must starve," they answered, "for *we* will not look after your corn."

He quietly shut the door and spent the day in prayer to God. Early Monday morning he sallied forth. The locusts had swept every green thing off the earth; the verdant fields were no more; every patch was bare and desolate, *except that of the man who had looked to God*.

My informant was thirty miles away when the news reached her of God's intervention. She said, "It seemed such an impossibility, that I would not believe it; so I traversed the distance, saw the man, saw the patch of corn, and all around desolation; so I can vouch for the accuracy of the statement."

What a witness for God this man was! The heathen thus had demonstrated the reality of the true God, and it did indeed work for good.

Yes, with God all things are possible, and all things work together for good, although it may not be manifest how this is at all times, and especially when plans are frustrated, hopes disappointed, health gone, wealth flown, and all is dark and sorrowful; and when painful days and weary, sleepless nights follow each other in constant succession, then faith's anchor must be made fast, and we must cling to the assurance that even these things have hidden blessings for us. God is good, always good, ever working for the saints He loves, and the hand which chastens is controlled by the affection of the heart and the wisdom of the mind.

Let us imitate a godly man we know, whose wife was unconverted, and made his life bitter. "Ah," said he, "at such times there is only one chair in the house I can rest in, and I always go there for refuge." "What is that?" "Rom. 8:28—'All things work together for good to them that love God.'"

Shall we, tried fellow-believer, seek to rest there? If the "all things" we have in title are not ours in possession, we can at least be assured of this—that all is being ordered and controlled for our real good, and when the way is ended we shall say, "He led us by a right way to our city of habitation."

H. N.

READINGS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

(Chapter 1 : 18—3 : 20—continued from page 41.)

THE cross of Christ is the full revelation of what the wrath of God is. No mere governmental, earthly and temporal judgments, however severe and terrible, could be an adequate expression of God's absolute and eternal wrath. It was not until the cross, that men had a full revelation of God's estimate of sin. There, infinite and divine wrath was fully told out. God showed all that it is as He poured it out on the holy head of His beloved Son.

What a spectacle that scene was for both angels and men! How impressive! How solemn! God revealing to all His intelligent creatures the due, the exact due, of sin!

If God has made manifest in the cross of Christ the exact measure of what sin must receive at His hand, it is necessary that men should learn that it is impossible for them to come into the court of God and clear themselves of the charge of guilt that in righteousness deserves such wrath as the cross is a revelation of. Men need to be convicted of the absolute impossibility of giving a justifiable reason for their sins, that they are absolutely without excuse, before they will appreciate the grace that the gospel proclaims. From verse 19 on, the apostle takes up the various pleas that men make why they should be exempted from the judgment of God against sin, and shows how unavailing these pleas are. He demonstrates the impossibility of any one establishing a

valid excuse for sin. He shows that no one can clear himself of being justly charged with guilt.

First, If it is claimed that there are men who do not even know that there is a divine Being, he shows the claim cannot be allowed. Creation, both as a whole and in detail, is incessantly declaring there is a Creator, a God over all. It is a demonstration of both the eternal power and divinity of the Maker of all things. The responsibility and accountability of the intelligent finite creature is involved in this testimony of creation. No one, then, can excuse himself for violating the nature and character of his relation to the Creator of a creation of which he knows himself to be a part. As rational beings, all men owe subjection to their Creator, and sin in every form is in violation of this subjection, but no valid excuse can be made. No plea for violating creation's witness will stand. It is inexcusable guilt (vers. 19, 20).

Second, It is sometimes said there are hosts of men whom God has abandoned; that He has left to indulge themselves in their lusts; are they then to be blamed for sinking into low and degrading vices? The excuse will not avail. It is true that God, in governmental dealings, because men have turned away from Him and have chosen to indulge their lusts, has given them over to the vices they love. But notwithstanding this, there is in them innately (such is the constitution of their being) a sense of the justice of God in sentencing them to death. They know they deserve to die. They know the sentence by which they have been condemned to die is absolutely just. This is true of the lowest, of the most degraded and abandoned. None, then, can excuse

themselves, or their sins, in the court of God on the ground of His having given them over to judicial blindness. His governmental ways will not be a protecting shield against the charge of guilt (ver. 3²).

Third, There are those who say, "But we are not so low and degraded as the great mass of the poor, ignorant, blind heathen. We know better; we condemn their vulgarities and vices. Are we to be judged along with them?" Especially in so-called Christian lands, where the light of the truth of God shines more or less brightly, is there a large class of people who are thus making their superior light and knowledge a reason why they ought to be exempted from eternal judgment. But in the day when a just God will judge, their plea will not stand. It will be proof rather of despising the riches of God's goodness, forbearance and long-suffering, and of refusing to repent. It will be evidence of a hardened, impenitent heart.

God is just. He will judge justly in the day of judgment. Righteousness will be the principle on which He will judge. If any one can produce in the court of the judgment-day a record that will prove that he has been a seeker of glory, honor and incorruptibility, his record will be approved. But who will be able to produce such a record? But if righteousness requires the approval of the record (supposing it possible for such a record to be produced), it would necessarily require the disapproval of a record that will be proof of disobedience and sin. Will there be any whose record will not be that?

If, then, righteousness is the principle on which the judgment will be carried out, it will be in vain

for any to hope for exemption from judgment on the ground of having better light and knowledge than the poor, ignorant heathen. God will not respect persons when He judges the deeds and thoughts of men. Those who have sinned without having special advantages and privileges will receive the due reward of their sins. The guilt of those who have sinned under greater light and knowledge will be all the greater. Righteousness will demand a judgment commensurate with the guilt. Light and knowledge will not be accepted as an excuse for sin.

If chapter 2: 1-16 thus clearly insists on the inexcusable culpability of those who boast of light and knowledge above their more unfortunate fellow-men, sunken in vice, we are now to learn how the case of the Jew stands. By the will and authority of God, he occupies a specially exalted position among men. He had received a divine commission, had been called to be Jehovah's witness and the exponent of His will. Set thus in the place of a light, guide and teacher to all men by divine authority, his responsibility was peculiarly solemn. How has he met it? Why, instead of being a bright and shining light for God, a true and faithful witness that Jehovah was the one only and true God, by his idolatrous and incessant disobedience he has become the occasion and instrumentality of God's being blasphemed among the Gentiles. He has incurred very great guilt.

A Jew might answer, while admitting all this, that circumcision protected him from judgment by God. The apostle exposes the utter insecurity of such a retreat. No Jew would be willing to have an uncircumcised man who kept the righteousness of the law

counted as a circumcised man. He, then, must submit to being counted as an uncircumcised man if he breaks the law. It is not the formal ordinance of circumcision that makes a man a really circumcised man, for circumcision to be real must be of the heart. No Jew has the right to count himself to be really a Jew unless he is one inwardly (vers. 17-29).

If a Jew objects that this makes formal circumcision useless, and that there is no good in being outwardly a Jew, the apostle answers that many advantages and privileges belong to those who have been outwardly circumcised, the principal one being the guardianship of the "oracles of God." Here, alas, the Jew had signally failed.

He might still argue, admitting the failure, that having put them in trust with the faith, God could not possibly nullify it. If He should finally judge them, He would falsify His character. To maintain His righteousness with those among whom He had deposited His oracles, He must exempt them from judgment. The argument means that God cannot vindicate His righteousness in the day of judgment, if He takes account of the sins of a Jew.

To silence this the apostle appeals to Ps. 51: 4. Just as He took account of the sins of David, and was justified in doing so by David himself, so in the day of judgment the right of God to take account of sins will be fully justified. He will overcome every one who thinks to call it in question. It will be better to make every man a liar rather than challenge God's right to judge sin.

If refuge be taken under the plea that the unrighteousness of the Jew will commend the righteousness of God, the answer is, "That destroys God's right

to judge at all. Every Jew is anticipating the judgment of God upon the world; but on this principle it never could be."

Besides this, it implies that the truth of God is dependent, for example, on my lie to abound to the glory of God; but this means that it is my right to sin—that it is a justifiable thing to say, "Let us do evil that good may come." But, the apostle says, The judgment of such is just.

Thus every argument is met, and the Jew is left without a single reason why he should be exempted from judgment in the day when God will call men to an account about their sins. He is in no better case than the Gentile. All Jews and all Gentiles are under sin. All are chargeable with guilt.

Thus far the apostle, saving a single exception, has been reasoning without appealing to the Scriptures. Every argument has been forceful, and there is no escape from the conclusion that not a single man can offer a valid excuse for his sins in the court of God. But before he drops the subject he adds an appeal to the Scriptures to show that they confirm his reasoning. Their testimony is that every mouth is stopped, that the whole world is guilty; and this is just what he has been proving.

He concludes now by insisting on the absolute impossibility of a man's justifying himself before God by deeds of law. The law convicts of sin. It does not clear the guilty, but affirms the guilt. It must be useless, then, to seek justification before God by it.

C. CRAIN.

(To be continued.)

LOVE GROWN COLD.

IN the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew we have a remarkable prophecy by our Lord of "the signs of His coming and the end of the age." There is in verse 12 a sad, prophetic word to which each of us will do well to take heed: "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."

Before the iniquity, came the wars and rumors of wars; the famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes; the Lord's people being killed and hated of all nations for His name's sake. These things but served to strengthen them and make their testimony shine the brighter. God's people cannot surrender Christ; persecution therefore but makes their faith shine the more, while it weeds out the false. But in verse 11 false prophets have arisen, and now quickly follows the abounding iniquity which causes the love of many to grow cold.

We know that this prophecy of our Lord applies to the Jewish people who are in Judea just before He returns in glory on the clouds of heaven. But have we not a similar thing in the history of the Church? The persecutions she passed through but brightened her testimony. Now a host of false prophets have come: Unitarianism, Annihilationism, Second Probation, Millennial Dawn-ism, "Christian Science," Spiritism, Seventh Day Adventism, etc., etc., deceiving multitudes, befogging them, turning the hearts from Christ, in whose communion alone love is kept fresh and warm.

What a torrent of sin, iniquity, and crime, may not be traceable to the various doctrines of non-eternal punishment of these false prophets! What loose living, what lawlessness, may not have grown out of

the work of the "Higher Critics"! How much easier it is to sin when the "divinity" men tell their fellows that the Bible cannot be trusted as the voice of God to man! Never, we believe, has there been a time of such Satanic energy to gather up all the forces of evil, that everything that is of God may be blotted out from the face of the earth. Thank God, His people have the Rock of Ages on which to stand, and "On this Rock," says the Son of God, "I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Happy and secure is he who hides in Christ Jesus; the raging tides of evil may run high, but cannot overcome him.

The love of many has waxed cold because they have not made Christ their refuge. Weary of the strife, they have drifted with the tide; they have ceased to enjoy eternal things, and so they have turned to the earthly and worldly ones. What an awful kind of shipwreck is the shipwreck of faith! Child of God, arise, arise from among the dead, that Christ may give thee light! If love has grown cold, come to the fire; draw near to Him whose love never grows cold, and can make yours warm again.

Thank God, not one whom Christ has saved can ever be lost. Not one washed in His precious blood shall ever be plucked from His hand. Let us draw near therefore, and drink afresh into His love, and we shall find that, whatever be the abundance of iniquity we are called to pass through, we shall be not only untouched by it, but able to joy in God throughout the journey, and bear fruit to His praise. They who are with God are on the winning side. All they need is to exercise faith in all He has said, and patiently wait for the end.

THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD.

(Matthew 20.)

IN considering this parable, we do well to remember the remark, or question, of Peter that led up to it. The Lord had been speaking of the impossibility of a rich man entering the kingdom of God with his riches, and Peter says, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?" In answering him, the Lord shows, on the one hand, the portion of those who leave aught to follow Him; and, on the other, by the parable before us, that God's ways are not as man's, nor His thoughts as our thoughts.

The wrong thoughts entertained by the disciples, no doubt, gave rise to the parable. It also, of course, teaches us, who are prone to make the same mistake. We must bear in mind that the disciples, though in company with the Lord, were nevertheless laboring under many mistaken ideas, such as had no doubt been taught them from infancy—ideas which were peculiar to that nation, but which illustrate the universal mistakes of men in their thoughts of God and His ways; hence their surprise when the Lord assured them of the difficulty of the rich in finding entrance to the kingdom. "Who then can be saved?" shows that they regarded the rich as much more likely to enter the kingdom than the poor. We need not be surprised at this, for in the kingdoms of this world it is the men of wealth who get the favors and the good places; and when the traditions of the elders have set aside and made of none effect the word of God, even God's people have

wrong thoughts. May not the same thing be said of the Church's traditions to-day? What truth of Christianity has not the "woman" of the parable of Matt. 13 leavened?

The Lord therefore, in the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, sets forth God's own way of service and reward—how it would obtain in His kingdom. The general features of the parable show, first of all, that God has a right to do with His own things as it pleases Him—a fact which seems simple enough in itself, or as applied to ourselves, but denied to God by man more than any other right; though, as far as man is concerned, if he finds a place in that kingdom at all, he owes it to that grace which he would hinder from having its sway. The objection raised by those who wrought twelve hours against their fellow-laborers amounts to the same thing as that raised by the "elder son"; but if they got what they had agreed upon for their labor, what business was it of theirs what their master did with his own? Had they been dealt with unrighteously, they had had just cause for complaint; otherwise they were interfering with the rights of their master, and deserved the rebuke given them.

Applying the lesson of the parable, it serves to illustrate the difference between law and grace; indeed, this is the lesson which stands out upon the face of it. Being a parable of the kingdom, there is the thought of service as well as of responsibility involved in it; but even these are shown to be controlled by that principle which God loves, and under which alone there can be blessing for man anywhere or in any age—that of *grace*. The Lord was not setting forth the gospel exactly—though the

truth presented here has its bearing in that direction; for if we think of the gospel, it is impossible to concede that the blessing of it could be had in the way spoken of here; for evidently those who worked but the hour, *did* work, and the gospel says, "To him that worketh not, but believeth, . . . his faith" is blessed.

Nevertheless, even in our service for the Lord, were it not that the Master whom we serve is the God of all grace, how could we bear the thought of our work passing underneath His eyes, which are as "a flame of fire"? On the other hand, knowing His grace will not lessen the tone of our service, but, on the contrary, if properly understood and appreciated, will exalt it. The apostle who could say, comparing his work with those whom he honors as being greater than himself, "I labored more abundantly than they all," is careful to add, "yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me": while the "wicked and slothful servant" who hid his talent in the earth, and wrought nothing at all for his lord, was the one who said to his master, "I knew thee, that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine."

All this goes to show us that there can be no real, no genuine service rendered to the Lord Jesus Christ on the part of any who are ignorant of His grace. That, and that alone, can inspire us; and what comes from the sense of this is alone of any value to Him; to attempt to serve One who is full of love and mercy in the spirit of legality cannot have His approval, but rather, must meet His frown.

If, then, we suppose that those who entered the vineyard early represent those who sought a place of honor in the kingdom on account of their supposed faithfulness, and those who came in later in the day to be those who looked for no reward except what the Lord's grace was to bestow upon them (and it seems that this is really the thought of the parable), we then have a plain view of its teaching. May the Lord grant to us, each one, to serve Him in that spirit of grace, counting on its all-sufficiency to sustain us in it, to the praise of that One whose grace it is. "Therefore we receiving a kingdom (OF GRACE) that cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire."

W. H.

UNERRING GUIDANCE.

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle lest they come near unto thee" (vers. 8, 9).

NOW we are often like the horse, or the mule, every one of us; and this, because our souls have not been plowed up. When there is anything in which the *will* of man is at work, the Lord deals with us as with the horse or the mule, holding us in. When every part of the heart is in contact with Himself, He guides us with His "eye." "The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy whole body also is full of dark-

ness. Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness. If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light" (Luke 9: 34-36). When there is anything wherein the eye is not single, so long as this is the case there is not free intercourse in heart and affections with God; and the consequence is, our *will* not being subdued, we are not led simply of God. When the heart is in a right state, the whole body is "full of light," and there is the quick perception of the will of God. He just teaches us by His "eye" all He wishes, and produces in us "quickness of understanding in the fear of Jehovah," hearts without any objects save the will and glory of God. And that is just what Christ was: "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is in My heart" (Ps. 40: 7, 8; Heb. 10: 7). Where there is this, it may be bitter and painful as to the circumstances of the path, but there is in it the joy of obedience as obedience. There is always joy, and the consequence—God guiding us by His eye.

* *

THE Christian who has put aside his Christianity because he is in worldly company, is like a man who has put off his shoes because he is walking among thorns.

IMPERIALISM AND SOCIALISM.

THERE are two great perils confronting men in every land, but especially in the lands which are called Christian, for they are greatly aggravated by a corrupt Christianity. Both will rise to a head before the end, each in its turn, and the real character of each will be manifested before they are put down forever. In the meantime each is growing, each is an enemy of Christ, though they are also deadly enemies the one to the other.

The first is Imperialism, which wears a grand majestic air. It is robed in purple, great and grand are its schemes, and brilliant its promises of honor and glory for its votaries. In its hand are all the rewards which this world has to give. It is allied with religion; it would not demean itself by throwing that off. The priests of religion are in its high places. Its name is Babylon—imperial Babylon, with all its glories; religious Babylon, with all its religious honours and reputation; commercial Babylon, with all its luxuries, its arts, and its sciences. All that this world can produce is in her hand. Grandeur and greatness are hers. Well may the men of this world be proud of her. She is like a lion in her strength.

The other peril is like a spectre stalking through the land. If Imperialism is like the lion, Socialism is like the serpent, with its venom, its ominous hiss, its menacing aspect. Imperialism would lift up a class to its highest possible greatness; all the glories of this world shall shine for them. Socialism would drag all down: and in her desire to bring down the great and produce equality in all men, would involve all in one common ruin, and equality would be obtained by oneness of degradation. Socialism is allied with irreligion and infidelity; it sets its face alike against all authority and all religion. Not but that Socialism, too, makes many promises and has great schemes; yet, while Imperialism has its baubles, its

delights for the flesh and the eye, and its pride of life, Socialism has only its dreams, the awaking from which must be to horror. Still, be it the one or be it the other, both must utterly perish that the kingdom of the Son of Man may be established and the knowledge of the glory of the Lord may cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

To speak after the manner of men, the power of Christ lay in this—He was intensely dependent upon God, His meat was to do His will; He burnt Himself out for God and for man, self-forgetful, self-emptied, self-abased. Yes, for *God* and for *man*. There cannot be the one without the other. Are there not the two great commandments, Godward and manward? Was not the law within His heart? By the olive they honoured *God* and *man*; the vine by its wine cheered *God* and *man*. He who serves Christ in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost is acceptable to *God* and approved of *man*. The two go together. Woe be to us if we divorce the one from the other. He who is true to God, alone does true good to men; and he who does true good to men is the only one who is true to God.

How did Christ meet Imperialism?

He received not honor from men. He refused to work miracles for His own needs, saying, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." He refused to pander to the prince of this world, saying, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." He refused display, saying, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." He would not be made king till the proper time. He loved the low place. He emptied Himself. He would take nothing save as the Father's gift. He interfered not with Cæsar; on the contrary, He said, "Render unto Cæsar the things that belong to Cæsar;" but He wanted none of these things. He would not call down fire from heaven. He would not do signs to satis-

fy curiosity. He would not even defend Himself. What power had Imperialism to touch Him? None whatever!

How did Christ meet Socialism?

He gave His all. He was the last of all and the servant of all. Who so rich as He? And He lavished it all on others. Who so poor as He? He had to ask to be shown a penny when He needed to see it. He had nowhere to lay His head. He did not lay up treasure on earth. He was anointed to preach glad tidings to the poor, to set the captive free, to break every yoke. He was true to God first, and He spent Himself for man. He sought not His own things. He lost; He suffered; sleep was forfeited; there was not time to eat in peace, for He was the slave of all who needed Him. Never was He too wearied to do the will of God or to serve man. What power had Socialism upon such a one? None. Socialism has no power against those who follow in His steps.

How are we to meet Imperialism and Socialism?

There is no other way than the way of Christ. These cannot be met by Acts of Parliament, by authority, by words of command; nothing but the life of Christ in His people has any effect. But, it may be asked, will not these things come to pass whether we act in one way or in its opposite? Surely these two evils will come to pass, but why? Because of the pride and selfishness of us Christians. A dispensation ends when God's people have no longer any faith to utilize the power God puts at their disposal. Thus is the Christian dispensation drawing to its close. Many, with much light, feed themselves and feed not the flock; the servants oftentimes eat and drink and beat their-fellow servants, and thank God they are not as other men are. Can God use such?

The end will surely come, and that swiftly; but if we are truly following Christ in these ways the blessing will not fail us. We shall be blest and made a blessing; but

if not, our light and our knowledge will do us no good, yea, rather will enhance our condemnation.

God grant we may truly follow Christ in refusing honor from men, while spending and being spent for men according to the will of God; and it may be that God may grant us a little reviving in this day of great weakness—for His name's sake. Amen.

Selected.

MORNING THOUGHTS.

Compare Isaiah 50: 4.

I am like the wearing-out string of a wondrous violin—the Master uses great care in daily tuning it, lest it break and no music come from it *here*: but *then*—when He comes to take it for heavenly choirs and it becomes like HIM—then, the Master, and the violin, and the music—*and the string!* oh grace unutterable!—forever with the Lord!

* * *

To be servant to such a Master!—and the service shall be eternal, like His own service. “And His servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His face and His name shall be in their foreheads . . . and they shall reign forever” (Rev. 20: 3-5).

Wonderful Master! Happy servants! Blessed, joyous, eternal service! A. V.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 6.—Will you please explain a few questions I will ask? I have tried to be a Christian now for seven weeks, and yet sin has dominion over me. I have earnestly asked God to give me power over all sin, but I have no answer, and I cannot tell where my mistake is. To be converted, I understand a man has to confess

to God that he has sinned, and then he would have the new life, if he were anxious for it, and would be able to put away the old ways. Or, would one have to make right-all, or any, of his past wrongs to his fellow-men before God would give him power over sin?

Can a man lose eternal life while he lives here on earth, and how, please? I want to know how I stand.

I believe the Bible says, to sin against the Holy Ghost is eternal death, but I know not what that sin is.

When a man is converted, will there be any change whereby he may know it?

Sir, I intend to ask no vain questions. I am only anxious to leave off all sin, and live as God would have me live.

ANS.—There are very few sincere souls who, in the course of their Christian experience, have not asked the questions you now do.

First of all, "power over sin" is not the primary part of Christianity. There is something of vast importance before that. The epistle to the Romans, which is the great exposition of Christianity in the Scriptures, does not touch the question of power over sin until the 6th chapter. Has your soul, then, firmly grasped, first of all, the great fundamental truth of the first five chapters? If not, your occupation with power over sin is but of little use, save, perhaps, in teaching you more deeply your need of a Saviour, by the greater sense of your sinful state.

If you ask what is that great fundamental truth of the first five chapters, let us ask you to read carefully and prayerfully the third chapter. It brings man, whoever he be, before the bar of God, where no less than fourteen charges are there brought against him—against *you*. If he pleads guilty, God's way of clearing him is told from verse 19 to the end of the chapter. It is a *righteous* way, for Christ on the cross bore all that sin deserved at the hand of God. It is a *gracious* way, for it is wonderful grace for such sinners as we are, to find our sins all gone from the moment we believe on Jesus. It is a *loving* way too, for what marvelous love is seen in God thus giving His beloved Son to provide salvation for us at such great cost. Again, it is a *holy* way, for God, through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus, can open His holy arms wide to the vilest of sinners who comes to Him confessing his sins, and freely receive him at once, without violating in the least His holiness.

See Luke 15 : 11-24. In this way too the repenting thief was taken from his cross to Paradise without delay. See Luke 23 : 39-43.

Your letter would indicate that you consider *power over sin* to be the way of salvation. The cases I have just put before you in Scripture say not a word about that. Power over sin is not the way of salvation ; it is the *fruit* of it. Salvation comes by what Christ *has done* for us on the cross.

Once we have believed what Christ has done for us, we know our *relationship* with God. We know we are His children. We know He loves us, and that nothing can ever separate us from His love. It is this which brings power over sin, and a desire for a holy and fruitful life. The Holy Spirit is given to us for this, and He dwells in every believer.

One thing, however, is to be kept in mind: The old, sinful nature is still in us ; it is never changed ; it is as prone to lead us into evil at the end of our Christian life as at the beginning. The way of power against it is told in chapter 6 of the Romans, especially in verses 6-14: not only did God lay our sins on Christ at the cross, but He crucified "our old man" there too. Our old man is ourself *as born of Adam*. If God crucified our old man there, let us account him so, and obey his desires and lusts no more.

In 1 John 1 : 8-10 you will get a good idea of what "conversion" is. There is not a word said there about making good the wrongs we have done, right and good as that is, as far as we can. You must not encumber the grace of God, and thus cloud it. Many do that, until they turn grace into law, and thus hinder the blessing of souls, and the fruitfulness which follows.

As to losing eternal life, read John 10 : 27-29. No words of man can be added to make it plain. It is Christ Himself who says it. Woe to Him who contradicts Christ, or any part whatsoever of Scripture, for "Scripture *cannot* be broken."

A careful reading of Matt. 12 : 22-32 will tell you what the sin against the Holy Ghost is : The Lord has cast out a devil, and thus shown He works by the power of the Holy Spirit. But His enemies are determined to disown Him, and they violate all conscience by ascribing the power to the devil.

But I close with the prayer that you may learn the *grace* of God which has come by Jesus Christ ; which occupies us with Christ, not ourselves ; with what Christ has done for us, not with what we are doing, or can do, or can be.

EDITOR'S NOTES.

The Jews.

How near must be the end of our own dispensation (that of the *Church*) and the ushering in of the new (that of *Israel*) the following, which appeared recently in the *New York Times*, speaks loudly:

“Letters from Jerusalem say that the proclamation of the Constitution in Turkey has thrown open the doors of Palestine to the incoming of Jews from all parts of the world. In Jerusalem alone four-fifths of the population of 100,000 now belong to the Jewish faith; while at Jaffa, Tiberias, Safed, and Haifa, Jews are reckoned by tens of thousands.

“Almost the whole extensive plain of Esdraelon has been bought up by them. Their prosperous colonies spread from Dan to Beersheba, and even further south to the outskirts of Egypt. Thousands are escaping from Persia to find shelter and protection in the Holy Land; while every ship from Odessa carries hundreds of them.

“The valley of the Jordan, once the property of the ex-Sultan Abdul Hamid, is being eagerly sought after by Jewish capitalists and syndicates of Zionists, whose agents, distributed all over the land, are buying up rich properties of Mohammedan offenders whose incomes since the revolution are considerably lessened.

“The Holy City is essentially a Jewish town. Banking, as well as trade and commerce, is monopolized by Jews. The government has found it necessary to organize a company of Jewish *gendarmes*. Hundreds of thousands of pounds are sent annually from Europe and America to enable the colonists to

build homes, hospitals, schools, and invalid homes. Over one hundred Jewish schools already exist in Jerusalem alone, and synagogues are going up everywhere.

“The value of land has risen fourfold. The ignorant and poverty-stricken fellaheen are being ousted from their homes and villages by the sharp European Jewish settler, whose modern agricultural implements and methods have made the land produce harvests never before dreamed of by the natives. The Anglo-Palestine Company, a Zionist banking and commercial enterprise, is pushing the cause of Israel with great determination.

“The racial exclusiveness of the Jews and their clannish proclivities are arousing the opposition of the Ottomans, and the Turkish constitutional régime has in this question one of the greatest problems that a new and patriotic government ever faced.”

How plainly the prophecy of Ezek. 37 is being fulfilled in this! “There was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone” (ver. 7). Who can tell how soon God may now say, “Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live,” and Israel be a *nation* once more among the nations of the earth?

We are living in interesting times—blessed though solemn to the children of God, but dark and dismal to the enemies of Christ.

The “Scientists.” All know what a great place science has acquired in our day. On the one hand, the love of money has be-

come so great and so general, that any true scientific discovery in the industrial world which promises riches is fairly worshiped. On the other hand, the breach between man and God has so rapidly widened of late years in Christendom, that any supposed discovery in the other sciences which would seem to be in opposition to the word of God has been hailed with delight by multitudes. This has set up as demigods a class of men who call themselves *Scientists*, whose field is chiefly *geology* and *biology*. They profess to make discoveries which annul this or that part of the Scriptures. They have therefore become wiser than the Scriptures, and they are going to set up a new foundation, through their discoveries, better than the foundation God has already laid, upon which they will erect a better religion than God has erected. Here is a college of new apostles, who by the discovery of strange skeletons and fossils can prove their essentially important doctrine of evolution to be right, and thus overthrow the Scripture record of the creation of man and of his downfall.

Kind reader, peruse the following; then judge for yourself if these new apostles are more trustworthy than the old ones:

“Prof. Ernst Haeckel, of the University of Jena, announced his retirement from public life in February of last year. To us the principal interest surrounding the man is the fact that he was the most prominent exponent of the Darwinian theories in Germany. He belonged to an association of Monists, whose chief objects are to prove that man has evolved gradually—developed step by step from lower animals; to refute the Bible; and to do away with the belief in the immortality of the individual

soul, and in a personal anthropomorphic God as Creator.

“Shortly before his retirement there was a startling exposure made of some of the methods by which he tried to bolster up science against Christianity. Over his own signature he was compelled by other scientists to admit the existence of deliberate forgeries in his scientific writings. He had taken drawings of other biologists and altered them, taking away fifteen or sixteen vertebræ from one monkey embryo and changing the name. He also altered a human embryo so as to contain eleven vertebræ not occurring in the original—thus, if possible, to bridge the chasm of the never-to-be-found ‘missing link,’ and to bring monkeykind and mankind together and disprove the word of God.

“We have before us an extract from his own confession that appeared in January in the *Münchener Allgemeine Zeitung*, in which he says: ‘To put an end to this unsavory dispute, I begin at once with the contrite confession, that a small per cent. (six or eight per cent.) of my embryo-diagrams are really forgeries . . . those, namely, for which the observed material is so incomplete or insufficient as to compel us . . . to fill in and reconstruct the missing links by hypothesis and comparative synthesis . . . I should feel utterly condemned and annihilated by the admission, were it not that hundreds of the best observers and most reputable biologists lie under the same charge. The great majority of all morphological, anatomical, histological and embryological diagrams . . . are not true to nature, but are more or less doctored, schematized, and reconstructed.’

“There has been much excitement in German scientific circles over Haeckel's downfall, and his repudiation is now unanimous and complete.”

“*So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish: whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web*” (Job 8: 13, 14).

“MERCY and truth go before Thy face” (Ps. 89: 14). Blessed truth for the repentant sinner! Before His face can be seen *here* in loving favor and tender mercy, His heralds must first be met and known—“Mercy and Truth”—they that MET TOGETHER at the cross (Ps. 85: 10). Not Mercy alone: that would be license; not Truth alone: that would mean despair. But Mercy and Truth: they spell together *joy*—joy eternal.

Anchored.

“Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil” (Heb. 6: 19).

HEREIN is rest: my anchor's cast
 “Within the veil,” both sure and fast;
 For what although a haven lay
 To lure me o'er the transient way,
 If, while upon its billows tossed,
 The hope of landing might be lost?
 But hope is resting by that shore
 Where Christ for me has gone before:
 And now no waves that round me roll
 Can move the anchor of my soul.
 How sweet to know they all must cease,
 And I shall reach th' abode of peace!

J. M. G.

READINGS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

(Continued from page 71.)

WE have seen that all men, without exception, are chargeable with sin. Not one has any valid excuse. No one can put in a plea that his case must be treated as an exception. Though varying in degrees of guilt, there is not so much as one who is not guilty. All being guilty, all are under the necessity of having to stand before the throne of God's judgment to receive the due, the righteous due, of the deeds done in the body.

In chapter 3: 21-31 we learn of a provision of God for a release from this necessity. There is a way in which a guilty sinner, deserving everlasting judgment, can be righteously delivered from it. This must engage our attention now.

Let us consider, first, What is needful for a holy and righteous God to righteously set a sinner free from the necessity of receiving the righteous due of his sins? Is it possible for God to forgive sins without conserving His holiness? Surely not. Can He cancel the charges of guilt against a sinner at the expense of His righteousness? Certainly He cannot. It is as impossible for Him to violate His holiness, or ignore His righteousness, as it is for Him to lie. If, then, He forgives sins, if He cancels the charges of guilt, if He shows even the least mercy, if He exercises grace at all in dealing with sinners, it must be in such a way that the questions, Where is His holiness? and, Where is His righteousness? are fully answered. He must have what He can point

to as being full vindication. Grace, with Him, must be in every way above question.

The matter may be put very simply. Is God righteous in setting a sinner free from the claim of everlasting judgment? What is God's answer to this question? *Christ in heaven*, "*whom God has set forth a mercy-seat.*" The apostle is alluding to the blood-sprinkled mercy-seat of Lev. 16. Suppose one asking an Israelite, How can God dwell among you? How can He vindicate His holiness and yet dwell in the midst of such a people as you? the answer was, *The blood-sprinkled mercy-seat.* So, now, to the question, Can God be righteous in canceling sins and reckoning a sinner righteous? the answer is, *Christ in heaven as a lamb that has been slain* is the fullest vindication of His righteousness in doing so. He is there as the One who gave Himself for sins. He is there as the One who paid the full price for the righteous title to redeem. He is there as the One who by offering Himself as a sacrifice unto God has conserved His holiness and maintained His righteousness. The sacrifice by which this was accomplished was the ransom-price which had to be paid that God might be righteous in delivering a sinner from the necessity of receiving the due of his sins. Christ, then, by becoming a substitute for sinners, and making a propitiatory sacrifice, has procured for God the righteous title to save sinners; has put into His hand, so to speak, the title to redeem; has made it consistent for Him to set sinners free from the claim of eternal judgment.

Thus far I have spoken of the righteous title. We will now consider God's exercise of it. In the

scripture before us we learn something about it. In times before the cross, we are told that God used it anticipatively. In forbearance He passed over sins in anticipation of the atoning sacrifice He had fore-ordained. He gratuitously pretermitted sins. The Old Testament believers were released from the necessity of having to stand before the judgment-bar of God to be judged for their sins. It was grace in God, but grace in forbearance in anticipation of a sacrifice that would be a complete vindication of the grace.

It was not from any merit in themselves that the Old Testament believers were released from the eternal due of their sins. They were children of wrath as truly as ourselves, but they will not come into judgment any more than we, because it was a righteous thing for God to act in grace in view of a substitutionary propitiation that would be an unanswerable defence of it.

Now Christ in heaven as the Lamb that was slain is the declaration that this grace of God in Old Testament times was both holy and just. His presence there as the One who died for sins proclaims the righteousness of God in His pretermission of sins—that the Old Testament saints were righteously released from the wrath of God which their sins deserve. Their salvation and eternal blessing thus stand on an immovable foundation.

But that which proclaims how just God was in the grace He exercised in Old Testament times proclaims also how just He is in New Testament days. He is now exercising His righteous title to justify, to cancel sins, to release from the charge of guilt. It is, as we have seen, through Christ's shedding

His blood that this righteous title to remit sins exists. In delivering from them; in setting free from their due; in not keeping them in the account of charges, but canceling them, He is justly exercising that title which the sacrificial death of Christ gives Him. Christ gone into heaven, in the efficacy of a death which His resurrection declares, is a perpetual witness that God is just. He is also the witness that God is the justifier of those who believe. He is perpetually proclaiming that God is freely using His righteous title to justify those who seek shelter from judgment under the sacrificial death of Christ.

Through the redemption—the releasing—that is in Christ Jesus, there is a gratuitous justification for sinners; a justification freely bestowed in a grace that is vindicated against any charge of unholiness or unrighteousness.

Another point to be considered is, On what principle does God use His righteous title to act in grace? The answer is, *Faith*. Faith is the one only condition of partaking of the blessing God has a just title to give. It was believers, in Old Testament times, as we have seen, whose sins God pretermitted. It is believers that He justifies now. Faith is thus shown to be the principle on which God exercises His title to act in grace. He has a good right to be gracious, to act in grace, and all are free to profit by it, on the condition of faith.

Now this is the glorious revelation which the gospel of God declares. In it the righteousness of God is revealed. It proclaims God's righteous title to deliver from judgment those who deserve to be judged forever. It is saying to sinners (and all have sinned), God is the One who justifies. He is the

justifier. He justifies freely. He justifies on the principle of faith. Here is a righteousness which is for all; and all who believe are securely sheltered by it. What a grand message to be proclaimed to men everywhere!

But if God is the justifier, and justifies on the principle of faith, there can be no boasting. The principle of faith excludes it absolutely. No one can claim a better right to be justified than another. The privilege of faith cannot be offered to any without offering it to all. If a sinner of one class or condition of men can have the opportunity to believe, and thus be justified, then a sinner of any class or condition of men can have the same opportunity. Justification is simply on the principle of faith. Works in no wise enter into it. Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has anything to do with it. If God can justify a Jew on the principle of faith, He can justify a Gentile in the same way. There is no difference. It is gratuitous in *any* case. No one has a claim upon God for His grace.

A Jew might think this nullifies law, but it is not so. On the contrary, it confirms the law. The law convicts all of sin; it brings all in guilty before God. It does not cancel sins. It does not dismiss the charges against the sinner. It affirms his guilt, and testifies to his need of grace—the free, sovereign grace of God. The grace that meets this need establishes the law which affirms the need.

God, then, can righteously cancel the charges of sins against sinners. This is founded on the sacrificial death of Christ. Christ's exaltation in heaven is the proclamation of it, and that God is exercising it on the principle of faith. Thus, believers in Jesus,

who was here in this world as sent of God to make propitiation, are released from receiving the due of their sins, and stand before the face of God judicially cleansed from every charge of guilt. They have been justified gratuitously through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; no merit in them or their works entering into the justification they have received from Him who has the righteous title to bestow it.

C. CRAIN.

(To be continued.)

MORNING THOUGHTS.

“How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. . . . Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will be still praising Thee” (Ps. 84: 1, 2, 4). Thus sang the sweet singer, who, though king of Israel, never entered into the holiest of all—into the very presence of God Himself (Heb. 9: 7, 11), the blessed and holy privilege of the least of God’s saints now. And yet, how the joy of His courts filled to the uttermost the innermost being of David, the beloved! That his soul cried out, yea, even fainted, for the *courts* of the Lord was because his *heart* and his flesh cried out for the living God. And so shall it be with us here now, when *our hearts* and *our flesh* cry out for HIM. No more then the forsaking of the assembly of the saints, as the manner of some is; no more then the deserted and neglected prayer-meeting. The Lord fill our hearts with the joy of His own presence. Amen.

A. V.

EXPOSITION OF THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

BY H. A. IRONSIDE.

PREFATORY NOTE.—The version used throughout in this exposition is that of J. N. Darby, and is used in preference to the commonly received translations, both the Authorized and the Revised, because of its close adherence in several places to the actual wording of the original, though, in a few instances, this makes somewhat awkward English.

The exposition itself is by no means exhaustive; but it is hoped it may be suggestive and helpful, especially to such as are bewildered and endangered by the evils of our day, so plainly depicted by Jude in the apostolic period.

It should be cause for thankfulness that, so far as error or heterodoxy is concerned, "there is nothing new under the sun." Every form of evil teaching now current was exposed by inspired writers in apostolic days. Therefore the need to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered—refusing all innovations as of man or of Satan.

CHAPTER I.

THE SALUTATION.

"Jude, bondman of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to the called ones, beloved in God [the] Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: mercy to you, and peace and love be multiplied" (vers. 1, 2),

THERE seems no good reason to doubt, and every reason to believe, that the writer of this solemn yet comforting letter is the "Judas the brother of James" mentioned in the list of the apostles as given twice by Luke (Luke 6: 16; Acts

1: 13), but who is called by Matthew "Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus" (Matt. 10: 3), and by Mark simply Thaddeus (Mark 3: 18). John distinguishes him in a special way by speaking of him as "Judas, not Iscariot" (John 14: 22). It is evident, from the way Paul writes of this James, the son of Alpheus, that he was a very near relation, according to the flesh, to our Saviour, the Lord Jesus. After mentioning his first interview with Peter, he says: "But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother" (Gal. 1: 19). James the Great, the son of Zebedee, had met a martyr's death earlier than the visit here referred to; consequently it becomes plain that James the Less is meant. The term "the Lord's brother" does not necessarily mean all that it might had the epistle been written in our language; but it at least implies very close relationship. Lot is called Abram's brother, when actually he was his nephew. Yet even so, had Jude been desirous of making a fair show in the flesh, he who was so closely related to the Lord as man would not have written of himself as he does here, "Jude, *bondman* of Jesus Christ." He had known Christ after the flesh, had been linked up with Him by ties of kindred common to few; but he knows Him so no more. Gladly he owns Him as God's anointed, his Lord and Master. Another, writing of him, might, out of courtesy, have used the same term as that applied by Paul to his brother; but writing of himself, he is simply the slave of Jesus Christ. James speaks of himself in the same way—"a bondman of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (James 1: 1).

What a withering rebuke are these two lovely

examples of devotion to Christ to those who thoughtlessly speak or write of "our brother Jesus," or use similar terms, all calculated to detract from the glory of Him who, once a lowly man in this scene of His humiliation, is now, as man, by God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, made, in resurrection, both Lord and Christ. His own words to His disciples, after performing the lowly work of washing their feet, were, "Ye call Me Master and Lord: and *ye say well*; for so I am"! (John 13: 13.) How abhorrent is the pride that leads some to-day to call themselves "Christadelphians" (Christ's brothers), as though He were—what indeed they believe—but a creature like themselves!

True it is that in infinite grace having been, as the Captain of our salvation, made perfect through suffering (now crowned with glory and honor), "He is not ashamed to call [us] brethren, saying, I will declare Thy name unto My brethren" (Heb. 2: 11, 12). But this is a very different thing from calling Him Brother, or speaking of ourselves as His brothers. If any object to this, let them search the Scriptures, both those portions which portray His walk on earth and those parts which present Him in resurrection, and see if any ever so spoke of or to Him. James and Jude, who might be thought to have a good right so to do, scrupulously avoid such familiarity, and own themselves His bondmen, or slaves. And this is made all the more prominent in Jude's letter, as he immediately adds, for purposes of identification, "brother of James."

He addresses himself to "the called ones" of God. It is a common title of those whom grace has saved. The Lord's words to His disciples while on earth

were: "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you" (John 15: 16); and some accounted it a hard saying when He declared, "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me, except it were given unto him of My Father" (John 6: 65). All such are called by His grace, as was Paul (Gal. 1: 15), and thus attracted to Christ from a world that lieth in the wicked one. Unspeakably great is the favor thus conferred. For who is it He calls? Those who have some goodness to plead? some merit to commend? No; but those who know themselves utterly vile and corrupt, and own their lost estate. All such are "called unto the fellowship of His Son." "And whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified" (1 Cor. 1: 9; Rom. 8: 30). There can be no failure here. He who called has justified, and will have every called one in the glory for eternity.

Such are "beloved of God the Father." The A. V. reads, "sanctified," but editors generally favor the other word. Both are true; but it is to our place in the affections of the Father that we are here directed. Would we know the measure of that love? Our Lord has Himself declared it, for He said, when addressing His Father on that last night ere He was crucified, "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and *hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me*" (John 17: 22, 23). Nothing less than this is the measure of the Father's love to every child of grace. There are no degrees in His affections for them. The feeblest and the

strongest are alike "beloved of God the Father" as truly as His Son is the Beloved of His heart.

From this flows our preservation—"Preserved in Jesus Christ." Whatever may be the difficulties of the way, however great the trial of our faith, in this love of God we are preserved by the One who has saved us. He it is who, "having loved His own which are in the world, loves them to the end." Were it not for His preserving grace, not one saint would persevere; but "He is able to save evermore all who come unto God by Him, seeing that He ever liveth to make intercession for them." Here is no ground for self-confidence, or fleshly elation; but such grace calls for reverent and adoring gratitude, and a walk that corresponds to the loving-kindness thus lavished on creatures so unworthy.

Jude uses a different greeting from that of the other apostles. It is not "grace and peace," nor yet "grace, mercy, and peace," which he invokes upon the saints; but "mercy to you, and peace and love be multiplied." They were already in the enjoyment of these precious things; he would have them abundantly increased, and thus their souls filled with holy joy.

Mercy each saint will need all along the way, while passing through a world like this. It necessarily implies failure on the part of its object.

Peace is his portion while abiding in Christ, who has said, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14: 27). In the enjoyment of that peace the soul can pass quietly on its way amid all the strife of tongues and the confusion of the evil

day, resting in Him who is over all, and who "sit-teth o'er the water-floods."

Love is the outflow of the new life. God is love, and the divine nature in the believer, which is from God, cannot but produce love; though this is very different from mere sentimentality, as the epistle goes on to show. "Love in the truth" is that which is according to God.

Abundant is the provision for each tried saint who has to meet our soul's enemy in a world of iniquity and corruption. If mercy, peace and love are ever lacking, it bespeaks, not a stinted supply of grace, but a failure to enter into what is freely bestowed upon all who receive with thanksgiving what our God so delights to give. He never casts a trusting, honest soul upon its own resources, but has pledged Himself to meet every need according to His riches in glory, through Christ Jesus. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4: 16). Never will that time of need be over until we reach that scene where strife and warfare are past forever.

(To be continued.)

THERE are mysteries of grace and love in every page of the Bible, and it is a thriving soul that finds the book of God growing more and more precious.

A careless reader of the Bible never made a close walker with God. The Bible is always a new book to those best acquainted with it. The great cause of our neglecting the Scriptures is not want of *time*, but want of *heart*.

A GLIMPSE IN THE PSALMS.

WHAT we find written in the Psalms is primarily connected with the Jews, or the Lord Jesus Himself, and particularly as Messiah. They have a special reference to the godly remnant in the latter day. Many of their expressions wholly belong to the Jews, and cannot be used by the Church: hence the true solution of those passages which have been such a terrible stumbling to Christians not seeing it. The saints of the present dispensation cannot rightly be looking for the destruction of their enemies as a way of escape from their sorrows. But in the time of trouble such as never has been, that is to come, it will be quite proper for the suffering Jews to look for judgments as a way of deliverance. They are God's promises, and what *their* hope rests upon. But the Church looks to be caught up and escape from sorrow by being with the Lord in the heavens, while it is quite true that she has His sympathy in her sorrow down here. But what the Psalms are chiefly occupied with is the suffering of the soul, the sorrows of the godly Jews and remnant, and God coming in judgment, as their deliverer, by the execution of vengeance on all their foes. Christ is viewed there as associated with Israel, and enters into all the sufferings of the holy remnant.

Then there are certain psalms which belong personally to Himself. They show out the character of the Spirit of Christ, as the Gospels show His walk and work. The Gospels display the One in whom was no selfishness. They tell out the heart that was ready for everybody. No matter how deep His own sorrow, He always cared for others. He could warn

Peter in Gethsemane, and comfort the dying thief on the cross. His heart was above circumstances, never acting under them, but ever according to God in them. We see that He was always sensible to them, and we often get in the Psalms expressions of what His heart felt in them: "I am poured out like water"; "My bones are out of joint"; "My heart is like wax." He was the tried Man; and as such we are called to follow Him. We should forget self, and the things belonging to self, in showing love to others. The true effect of being near Christ is that we are put into fellowship with Himself about others, instead of being under our own circumstances. How can we be turning our heart to the joys of one and the sorrows of another unless we are living close to Christ, and getting the heart filled with Him instead of self? What we find all through the life of Christ, as shown out in the Gospels, is the total absence of selfishness—never acting for self in any way whatever. He could rejoice with those who had joy, and grieve with those in sorrow. He could cheer, warn, or rebuke, as need arose. Whatever love dictated, that He did.

In psalm 22 we see Christ *alone*, suffering under God, enduring the wrath due to sin, but continuing the righteous Man, crying unto God, and justifying Him, even when forsaken by Him; or, if we look at Him as in psalm 69, suffering rather from men, God is still His refuge. His heart goes through all the sorrow sin could bring on One who takes the sinner's place. He passed through the *deepest* exercises heart could endure, but He brings all to God. We find the greatest difficulty often in bringing our sorrow to God. "How can I do so," the soul of

some may be saying, "as my sorrow is the fruit of my sin? How can I take it to God? If it was suffering for *righteousness*' sake, then I would; but I am suffering for my *sin*; and can I, in the integrity of my heart toward God, take my sorrows to Him, knowing I deserve them?" Yes, CHRIST has been to God about them. This, then, is the ground on which I can go. There has been perfect atonement for all my sins; Christ has been judged for them. There can therefore be no condemnation for me. So I go to Him on the ground of atonement, and God can afford to meet me in all my sorrow, because Christ's work has been so perfectly done. In the main, all sorrow is from sin, and all help is grounded upon the atonement. There would be no possibility of my trusting in God, had not all His just dealings with sin been put upon Christ.

God could not be indifferent about sin. Peter knew that when he said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." The holy character of God has been fully exercised in putting away sin. He has dealt with Christ about it, according to all that He is. I may have to taste the bitterness of its fruits; God may make me to feel the effects of my sin *because* He is not going to judge me for it. "As sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ." I get my conscience *perfectly* purged through the blood of Christ, shed in perfect love. My heart is free: I can go to God about my sin because He has dealt with Christ on the cross about it. I can go to Him in all my sorrow on account of it. I can confess my sin; yea, more, I can say, "*Search* me, O, God, and try me, . . . and see if there be

any wicked way in me," etc. Through grace I am before God, as Christ is, and the ground of it all is the atonement.

We find divine utterance in the Psalms for all our sorrows; and it is blessed to look at them in this way. Christ entered into the full effects of sin as none other can—in a way we never shall; and when He had been at the "horns of the unicorn"—the very transit of death, as it were—and had settled every question with God about sin, He could then say, "I will declare Thy name unto My brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee." We shall never lose Him as our companion. What a comfort! We shall follow Him to the glory. We are going to be with Him. His presence will be our delight. What a place the saints are brought to in Christ—all sorrow past!

We get in psalm 16 expressions of the Lord's own proper joy—the joy of Him whom God called His Fellow. Peter, on the mount of transfiguration, would have put Him on a level with Moses and Elias: but God said, "No: He is My Fellow, not man's." When the young man in the Gospel went to Him, saying, "Good Master"—coming to Him *as man*—He said, "Why call Me good? there is *none* good but God." Goodness was not to be looked for in man, not even in Him if He had been only man. The saints are Christ's constant delight; and the poor sinner who puts his trust in God has the Lord Jesus for his comforter; and He, having been tempted, knows how to help as none other can.

In the days of John the Baptist all who repented came to the waters of baptism; Jesus did the same. He could not repent, since He had no sins; but He

would not be separated from them, and said, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness": I will take My place with you—with the saints in the earth; I will bear the sins you confess.

What abundant consolation faith gives the man who hangs on God! Christ, when down here, could say, "I set Jehovah always before Me"; and should not we? In the details of life do we not constantly need Him? How continually we get moved by circumstances! He alone can stay us. He once took the dependent place. He was raised by the *power* of the Spirit, through God the Father. He could have raised Himself; *death* had *no* power over Him. But one delights in dependence when conscious of being loved. He was the Father's delight. The Father's heart was bound up in the Son. He would choose dependence on His Father therefore rather than do for Himself.

That we are loved by Christ is needless to mention here. How then are we acting toward Him now? Do we take all our concerns to Him? Do we make Him the uppermost thought in all our need, in every exercise of soul, and also in our seasons of joy? This is the way to learn Him, and to know the love that is in His heart.

There is no condition but what we may in it have Him for our companion. He has gone into the fullest depths of our sorrow. "Deep crieth unto deep," He could say. There is not a place faith cannot find Christ in. "Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things." Are we going on in the world with Him?

Are our joys such as we can share along with Him? Are we walking with Him in our everyday life? The heart that is cast upon Christ finds constant comfort. The heart that keeps close to Christ gets nothing apart from Him. The time will come when all our sorrow will be over, but our Friend will remain. He is our tried and true Friend. He has entered into the deepest woes of our heart, and will make us the sharers of His joy forever. Our blessing, our safety, our hope, is all grounded on the atonement. Is there a soul reading this who cannot rejoice in Christ, who knows Him not as his portion? Is there one who is saying, "My sin is too great to be pardoned?" To feel about your sin is right; but to be in despair about it is quite wrong. You are virtually saying, "My sin is greater than the *grace of God.*" You will not dare to say so if you are looking at Christ. Is Christ come short? Is grace beneath your need, or above it? Christ is the portion of every poor soul who believes on Him. The atoning work is done. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin. * *

PEACE AND CONFIDENCE.

"**G**REAT peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them," said king David, in the 119th psalm; or, as it is also translated, "nothing stumbleth them."

And this is truly the effect of knowing and loving the word of God; for it ever leads us to confide in Him of whom it testifies. They who trust Him, and hear Him, speak as He does in His word. They know that whatever may come into their life can but prove that "*all* things work together for good

to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

With what peace and confidence Abraham obeys God when put to the greatest test under which a man may probably be tried. How calmly he speaks and answers! He knew that every word from the mouth of God must end in blessing.

Moses' parents quietly commit him to God's care, and watch for the issue. Hannah confidently brings her son to the service of the Lord; and David walks without fear to meet the Philistine giant. Mary of Nazareth also replies in perfect calmness, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

But all this requires a will surrendered to God. Until then we but quarrel with the word of God whenever it says aught that meets the unbrokenness of our will. A marvelous change had taken place in an acquaintance of mine. He was one accustomed to command; to force his own way through all obstacles; to get for himself what he set out for; and to ask favor of none. But he was brought to the Saviour; and although it had made a great change in his life, he still was an independent man, living but little out of the word of God. Later on a serious illness developed, which ended in total blindness. Here indeed was discipline! No longer able to help himself; totally dependent upon others for everything; nothing to look forward to now to the end but to be a burden and a care to those who loved him. But it was the way of God's grace to manifest itself afresh in the life of that dear man. A great change again took place, producing great peace and quiet confidence in God.

One day he said, "What a blessed psalm is that 23^d! I always loved it; but since God has placed me where I am, it has become my food. 'The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh ME to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth ME beside the still waters. He restoreth MY soul.'" And so he went through these precious verses, making them his own personal property, displaying thus his peace and confidence in God. He lived out of every word of God, and the proud, independent heart had found its rest and peace in God Himself: he was satisfied with the way of the will of God. Blessed rest!

Isaiah says, in the same strain, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is the Rock of ages."

F.

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.

IN this book we learn of man's pathway on earth, of his sojourn on it, and his life, with all its varied exercises and bitter experiences. The eye sees, the ear hears, the heart tries to find satisfaction; but it cannot: all the searching after happiness on earth without the true knowledge of Christ and of the redemption which is by His blood is vain. It cannot be found *under the sun*. The knowledge acquired in such a search only increases sorrow (chap. 1: 18).

Ecclesiastes' world—the place of man's birth, life, death—is like Joseph's empty sepulchre: Christ, the only source of true happiness, "is not here." He is in heaven; and that is a sphere into which this book does not see, cannot enter; for it is *above the sun*, and the range of the book rises not above the sun.

Its last chapter gives us the end of life *under* the sun, after a dark and dismal day, with many bitter sorrows and disappointments. The end is reached, death and burial are recorded, "and the mourners go about the streets"; but all beyond is left under a pall of darkness. There is no light for the future, and no communications regarding that bright glory where Christ is all, and in all.

What a gloomy world from such a standpoint! And all this is the record given, under God's ordering, by a *philosopher*, a *poet*, a *preacher*, and a *king*. One may be all this, and yet have no light. Sin has made the world what it now is. Yet one day, not far distant, there will be a great change. When the Lord returns, the world will be a true home for man,—for *Israel*, and for the *nations* then upon the earth. His presence in glory will demand that every knee bow to Him, and the knowledge of Him shall be spread out and cover the whole earth as the waters do the bed of the sea. This knowledge will be in contrast to that described in Ecclesiastes. There will be in it no increase of sorrow, but of joy and peace.

A. E. B.



ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 7.—Did the apostles, in writing the New Testament, understand all they wrote; or did the Holy Spirit, in inspiring them, lead them to write beyond their understanding?

ANS.—Had you asked this concerning the Old Testament writers, we would have said, "No; the writers had not the full understanding of all they wrote, and this on the ground of 1 Peter 1: 10-12." Concerning the New Testament writers, however, it is different, as 1 Cor. 2: 10-16 shows. Christ had come, unlocking

by the Cross all the great purposes of God. In consequence, the Holy Spirit had come and taken up His abode in the saints to give them the full intelligence of these purposes. It seems evident that, in unfolding them, the writers themselves understood fully all they wrote. Nevertheless, the perfection of what the Spirit gave by their means is a matter that neither they nor we have fathomed. Many things too in the simple narrative of the Gospels, the Acts, in Rev. 1-3, etc., etc., have such marvelous connections and dispensational application that it is hardly possible that the instrument used in writing could possibly have apprehended.

QUES. 8.—What is meant in Rev. 3: 5 by “I will not blot out his name out of the book of life”? Can any one’s name be blotted out of that?

ANS.—It seems so plainly from chapter 22: 19. It cannot be, however, “the *Lamb’s* book of life” (chap. 21: 27); for this one is surely kept with inerrant precision. There is no doubt the “book of life,” here, is the record of our confession of faith in Christ, and of discipleship, in which, by our profession, we have as it were written our own name.

QUES. 9.—Is Rev. 3: 19, 20 a purely individual communion? and is the assembly, or collective testimony, disowned?

ANS.—This is plainly individual communion here, as indeed all true communion must ever be. It is also plain that God is here about to spew out of His mouth that which calls itself the Church; but it must not be forgotten that Philadelphia goes on to the end, as well as Thyatira and Sardis; and that such in Laodicea as sup with Him, and He with them, are not Laodicean in character, but Philadelphian. Nor is God less pleased with their collective testimony than in brighter times. The admonition, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,” is the more urgent “as we see the day approaching.” We need not surely, in so doing, call ourselves Philadelphia, nor pretend to *anything*, but the Lord will prove His pleasure in us.

QUES. 10.—What do the two sons and the servants of Luke 15: 11-32 represent?

ANS.—First of all, in the pictures such as this given in Scripture there is one special lesson intended to be taught. If we want to

make every detail teach, instead of gathering the great central lesson, we shall miss the object the Spirit has in view.

The two sons represent the two classes mentioned in verses 1 and 2; the younger one is the publicans and sinners; the elder, the Pharisees and scribes. The servants (not *hired* servants, as the Prodigal calls them) would naturally make us think of the angels.

QUES. 11.—Scripture says, "Woman praying, or prophesying, with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head." (1) Does this mean her husband only, or her brethren also? (2) Does it mean audibly, or in private prayer also, as its being on account of the angels seems to indicate? (3) Does the covering mean the hair itself? (4) Does this apply to house-to-house meetings as well?

ANS.—(1) "The head of the woman is the man." So, in praying or prophesying with uncovered head, she dishonors man in general, not merely her husband. (2) It means anywhere *when in the attitude of prayer*. Wherever the man should uncover his head, the woman should cover hers. (3) No; the hair is only the sign that she should be covered—put on a covering; as the short hair on man is a sign that he should be uncovered—put off his covering. (4) Yes; however informal the covering may be, it is God's order in all places where we have to do with His holy things.

QUES. 12.—Would it be wrong for a Christian to marry a woman who is good and gentle, with uplifting ideals and high aspirations, a professing Christian, yet evidently a stranger to Christ?

ANS.—Children of God may be very ignorant of truth which, when presented to them in love, they will receive with gladness. If, however, one is truly a stranger to Christ, giving no sign of a real conversion, it matters not how lovely his natural disposition may be: the plain language of Scripture to the Christian is, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: . . . for what communion hath light with darkness? . . . or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" (2 Cor. 6: 14, 15.) If the children of God violate the word of God in any part, they may rest assured of reaping bitter fruit.

Is it not already a mark of a bad spiritual state for a Christian to form an attachment at all with one who is not a Christian?

EDITOR'S NOTES.

Differences.

It is needful, for the right understanding of the word of God, to be careful about the meaning of the different words used. For instance, the word *disciples* of Christ cannot be interchanged with the word *children* of God without making confusion. As *learners*, we are disciples. As *born* of God, we are children. As being brought into the liberty of Christianity, we are *sons*, not *servants*, as in the dispensation of law.

As indwelt by the Spirit, we are members of the Church—the body of Christ.

All these names may apply to the same person, but they are quite distinct from each other.

“Even Christ pleased not Himself.”
(Rom. 15 : 3.)

What a life! So confident was our Lord of the ultimate good end of all the will of God, that, at whatever cost to Himself, He would seek and pursue that will only. All that opposed that will, opposed Him; all that resisted it, resisted Him, and caused Him suffering. Even His most advanced disciples caused Him suffering in that way often. A Peter could not bear the thought of His going into death: he would have the glory of the kingdom, without the righteousness of the Cross. A John would vindicate the Master by destroying men's lives, thus spoiling the day of grace by making it a day of judgment. What great and high moral elevation is this, that He could say, “The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell upon Me”!

Fellow-Christian, do we so know God, so know and enjoy what He has in Christ displayed Himself to be, that, to please Him, and not ourselves, is henceforth the purpose and the care of life? This will associate us thoroughly with Christ. It will necessitate our suffering with Him. It will require our taking up the cross daily—the denial of our own likes or dislikes, that we may truly take up with His likes and dislikes.

Is it not worth while? "If we suffer, *we shall also reign with Him.*" We suffer but for a day, we reign for ever and ever. Who else rewards like that? But all largely hangs on how deeply we drink into His grace—how we read the unfathomable evil of our hearts, and the unfathomable love and grace of His heart.

Law and Grace. The Law was "written and engraven in *stones*," thus telling its true character. Stones have no heart, no compassion, no mercy. So Law is mere Justice—an awful thing, when alone.

Grace was not given on stones. "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." *There* we find heart, compassion and mercy to overflowing. It cost Him no less than the fearful death of the cross. It could enable Him to endure anything, so that we might be saved and God's character manifested.

Law justly claimed righteousness from man. Grace brings righteousness to man. Law justly condemns to death the offender. Grace gives eternal life to the believer. Law shall stand in all its greatness and dignity forever among its slain.

Grace has already put a song in the innumerable hosts of its redeemed, who will fill heaven and earth to all eternity. What frightful pride must there be in the heart of man which hides from him the riches of the grace which Christ has brought into the world!

The Patience of Hope.

H, 'tis all brightness yonder, no clouds nor dim,
But joy, and peace, and gladness, and rest
from sin!

Oh, 'tis all glory yonder, for Christ is there,
In blest effulgence shining beyond compare!

And there's no sorrow yonder, nor grief, nor pain;
They live to serve and worship the Lamb once slain.
And there's no morrow yonder, 'tis one To-day;
There shines with fadeless splendor the sun's bright
ray.

For Christ's the sun and sunshine of that bright
place.

There we shall learn His glory, as here His grace:
And now we wait with patience His blessed will.
The stormy wind and tempest His word fulfil;

They're servants of His pleasure—He bids them
come;

Then by a word they're silenced, and all is calm;
And we shall reach in safety, the moment bright,
When we shall see His beauty in radiant light.

And if, meanwhile, He calls us to face the storm,
His Shepherd-care surrounds us, and His strong
arm

Shall guide us through in safety the long, dark
night,

Till earth-born clouds shall vanish in morning light.

READINGS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

(Continued from page 95.)

Chapter 4 : 1-12.

IN chapter 1: 2, speaking of the gospel in the form in which it was authoritatively proclaimed, the apostle says that the prophets who uttered the Old Testament revelations distinctly promised it. Either in type, illustration, or formal prophetic statement, the Old Testament Scriptures anticipate the grand proclamation of the gospel of God. They are rich in foreshadows of it. It is true, clouds and mists surrounded these foreshadows; still, where there was faith, the clouds and mists were more or less penetrated. Faith learned more or less distinctly to anticipate what God was anticipating. As in the blaze of the full light that now shines, we can look back upon the Old Testament saints in the dimmer and partial light that was shining upon them, we can easily see how precious their foreshadows of our light must have been to them. There is, then, a unity between the gospel as partially told out then, and as fully declared now. The Old Testament promises and foreshadows are a divine seal on the New Testament unfolding of the grace that is in the heart of God.

In chapter 3: 21, in mentioning the righteousness of God that is now fully revealed in the gospel message of New Testament days, the apostle speaks of it as "witnessed to by the Law and the Prophets." Both the Law and the Prophets strongly emphasize the need of man. They insist on the hopelessness

of his case except as God, in the sovereignty of His grace, takes him up. In doing this, they foreshadow the ground on which this sovereign grace is, in righteousness. The Law, by its typical system of sacrifices, clearly pointed out the way in which the need of sinful men is met. It declared that God's way of delivering men from the due of their sins is by a substitutionary sacrifice; that only by such a sacrifice could God righteously release men from their guilt. In this testimony the Prophets abundantly joined. They urge again and again the complete ruin of man, and point out God's way of meeting that ruin. The doctrine of the Prophets is that by the provision of an acceptable sacrifice for sins sinners can righteously be set free from the due of their sins. The Law and the Prophets thus, in their partial unfolding of the righteousness of God, and in their anticipations of its complete unfolding as it is now since the Cross, are Old Testament witnesses that God is just in His grace, and of *how* He is just.

Now, in chapter 4: 1-12, having proclaimed the doctrine of justification by faith, a justification by God, entirely gratuitous on His part, yet strictly in righteousness, the apostle proceeds to give illustrations of how the Old Testament Scriptures confirm this doctrine as being of God. We shall see that for the apostle the Old Testament Scriptures unmistakably and unequivocally teach the doctrine of justification by faith.

In showing how they did so, he chooses, first, a practical example illustrative of the doctrine. Then he cites a case of the prophetic proclamation of the doctrine. Finally, he appeals to the original institution of the rite of circumcision—the rite signifying

that the principle of relationship with God is *faith*, not works of flesh.

All this needs careful examination. Turning now to the practical example of justification by faith, it is interesting to notice that it is what we may call the typical case, i. e., it is the case to which every other case must conform. It is the case of the one who is explicitly called "the father of all them that believe." Abraham's justification, then, is the pattern of the justification of the children of Abraham. The principle on which he was justified is the principle on which *all* believers are justified.

How, then, was Abraham justified? Did God justify his flesh? Did God account him righteous by works of flesh? Can Abraham boast before God of being better in the flesh than others? In nowise. This is made perfectly clear by the scripture which reads, "Abraham believed God, and *it* was counted unto him for righteousness." Abraham, as in the flesh, was a sinful man, was a guilty man. He had a record of sins. But God pretermitted his sins in anticipation of the cross of Christ; canceled the record, all the charges in it; released him from the necessity of standing at the great white throne to be judged for his sins—delivered him definitely and finally from the eternal due of his sins. He formally, definitely and finally declared him to be a righteous man. He judicially pronounced him to be no longer in his sins. By a judicial decision he made him a righteous man. But it was explicitly on the principle of faith that he did this. The scripture quoted by the apostle from Gen. 15: 6 makes this perfectly plain. "The father of all them that believe" was justified by faith—not by works.

Having now shown how Scripture affirms the justification by faith of the pattern-man of faith, the apostle proceeds to draw a conclusion. He applies the lesson which the practical example teaches. He says, "Now to him" (not Abraham alone, but him) "that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him" (not Abraham alone again, but him) "that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Abraham's children—believers—those who believe on Him who justifies the ungodly, are thus declared by the apostle to be justified by faith, in conformity to the typical case. Abraham's case, then, is an illustrative case. As such, it is confirmatory of the doctrine the apostle is insisting on, that justification is by faith (vers. 1-5).

Now we have a citation illustrative of the way in which the doctrine of justification by faith is prophetically announced in the Old Testament Scriptures. David, under the inspiration of the Spirit, proclaimed the doctrine. The citation is from psalm 32, where David writes of the blessedness of the man whom God justifies by faith. It is evident that David is describing his own case. He had sinned, and was in great distress of mind until he took his place before God in frank, unreserved confession of it. Then God gratuitously, yet righteously, as anticipating the cross of Christ, forgave him his iniquity. As forgiven, as released from the deserved due of his sins, he could write experimentally of "the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." While speaking experimentally, he yet speaks in a way to embrace others besides himself. The blessedness of which

he writes is not his alone, but that of the man, whoever he may be, "to whom God imputeth righteousness without works." We have here a plain case of Old Testament Scripture affirming justification by faith. It is clearly an Old Testament doctrine, as well as the doctrine of the New (vers. 6-8).

We have in verses 9-12 yet another appeal to Old Testament teaching. It is the bearing of the lesson of the original institution of circumcision, which the apostle presents here. He is evidently thinking of an objection that would naturally occur to the mind of a Jew. Forced, perhaps, by the unanswerable argument of the apostle to admit that the doctrine of justification by faith is certainly taught in the Scriptures he owned to be of God, he would say, "Yes, but they limit its application to those outwardly circumcised."

The apostle's answer is absolutely conclusive. He says, "Upon whom does the blessedness of the man that God reckons righteous without works come? Only upon the circumcised? or does it come upon the circumcised also?" The case of Abraham is the decisive answer. He was reckoned to be righteous *before* he was circumcised—a clear proof that circumcision has absolutely nothing to do with being reckoned righteous.

But the apostle goes further, and appeals to the lesson of Abraham's circumcision as an incontestable testimony to the doctrine of justification by faith without regard to circumcision at all. First, he speaks of Abraham receiving circumcision *as a sign*. Gen. 17 instructs us fully as to this. God, there, establishes a covenant with Abraham. It is a covenant of grace. It is a perpetual covenant, an eter-

nal covenant. It is a covenant under which Abraham is in eternal relationship with God on the principle of faith alone. It is a covenant with which both temporal and eternal blessings are connected, in which both earthly and heavenly blessings are involved. Now, in establishing this covenant, God gives circumcision to Abraham to be the sign of it.

But what does the sign signify? Plainly, it is a symbolic witness that faith, not flesh, is the principle of relationship with God. God says, in giving Abraham circumcision, "You must bear about in your body the sign that your flesh is profitless. You must have in yourself the sign that the sentence of judgment is upon the flesh. You must submit to receiving a mark which means that *faith* is the principle on which you are in relationship with Me."

But if circumcision is the sign of a covenant of grace—of relationship with God on the principle of faith, it is a *seal* on the righteousness of faith—a righteousness already Abraham's before he was circumcised.

But further: This sign and seal was given to Abraham as already possessing the righteousness of faith, to make him the father of all them that believe—the pattern-man of faith. Abraham is the pattern and example of believers—*all* believers, whoever they are, and wherever they are found. But if he is the pattern and example of "all that believe," then, just as righteousness was reckoned to him by faith, so it is to them also.

We see thus how the apostle shows that the giving of circumcision to Abraham teaches the lesson of justification by faith without works.

But we are not yet done with the apostle's argument on this point. When Abraham received the sign and seal of circumcision, he was not only made the father of all them that believe—the pattern and example of all those who are in relationship with God on the principle of faith, and of righteousness being reckoned to them by faith—but he was also made the father of the real circumcision—the pattern and example of circumcision that is not simply outward in the flesh, but is inward, of the heart. All those who have real circumcision—the circumcision of the heart—have the faith which Abraham had before he was outwardly circumcised; i. e., they have the faith that God reckons as righteousness.

So, then, once more we see how the apostle makes the circumcision of Abraham confirm the doctrine of justification by faith apart from works.

How irresistible his argument is! how impossible to escape the conclusion that the Old Testament, more or less distinctly and plainly, teaches the New Testament doctrine of the imputation of righteousness to all them that believe. How clearly it is shown that the Old Testament, as well as the New, insists that this imputation of righteousness is on the principle of faith alone—that works of flesh have nothing whatever to do with it.

God ever is the justifier. He ever justifies on the principle of faith. The justified are in an eternal relationship with God—a relationship, the principle of which is faith. They are free, forever free, from the claim of judgment. They are, before the face of God, eternally cleared from the necessity of receiving the due of their sins.

C. CRAIN.

(To be continued.)

“AFTER ALL THIS!”

THE untrustworthiness of the human heart, even in the most devoted of saints, and the need of constant, prayerful watchfulness are alike strongly emphasized in the three words used as a title to this paper, in connection with the Scripture history of the godly Josiah, king of Judah.

In a day of cold-heartedness and apostasy, he shines out brightly as the man who honored and trembled at the word of the Lord. (See 2 Chron. 34 and 35.) An Old Testament Timothy, he sought the ways of God from his childhood.

Crowned at eight, his tender heart opened to the only One who could direct his steps aright, and keep him from stumbling. For thirty years he turned neither to the right hand nor the left, but steadfastly held on his way; putting God's glory first, and seeking to bring the people back to that which he found written in the Book.

Hence the record of those thirty years makes most precious reading—full of cheer and encouragement to every one, who in an evil day, departs from iniquity. The transparent piety and genuine devotedness of his life are a much needed example to us, emphasizing the blessing resulting from obedience to the written Word.

But in verse 20 of chapter 35 there comes a solemn break in the happy account, fraught with serious warning to all. “*After all this*”—after thirty years of growth in grace and knowledge of the Divine ways—after thirty years' experience of the preciousness of waiting upon God and getting His Word ere beginning to act—“after all this” we find this

godly, devoted man running unseemingly, interfering in a matter that in no wise concerned him, acting apart from divine guidance, and insisting on taking his own way, in the face of Pharaoh-Necho's earnest remonstrance. As a result Josiah receives his death-wound in a battle in which he should never have been engaged, and is borne from Megiddo to Jerusalem where he died, leaving the sheep committed to his care to bitterly lament the loss of so helpful a shepherd.

Thirty years of walking with God had not improved the natural heart of Josiah one iota. Like that of every other—save the Man Christ Jesus—it was not to be trusted—and could only deceive if relied upon. Let us remember the lesson.

There will never be a moment till we see our Lord's face, that we do not need to be on our guard against the encroachments of the flesh—never an instant when we may trust our own judgment—never a time when we can safely dispense with the guidance of the Word and Spirit of God.

Let us then watch and be sober that at the last there may not be a breakdown dishonoring to God and ruinous to our testimony, when, though there may have been much that was for Himself in our lives, a sorrowful "after all this" would close our path of discipleship.

H. A. I.

Christ is All.

THE *service* of Christ is the *business* of my life.

The *will* of Christ is the *law* of my life.

The *presence* of Christ is the *joy* of my life.

The *glory* of Christ is the *crown* of my life.

To be *in* Christ is the secret of our life.

To be *for* Christ is the meaning of our activity.

To be *with* Christ is the hope of our glory.

COUNSEL TO A YOUNG BROTHER AS TO SERVICE.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—

Your letter has come to hand, in which you ask counsel as to your path in service for the Lord.

I was indeed glad to get it and read its contents. The spirit which it breathes has refreshed me much, and you have been upon my heart not a little. The counsel you ask has exercised me a good deal during the last few years. I will therefore write you the more freely, especially as I believe it concerns not only yourself, but others also in our country.

First, let me say how pleased I am to learn of the time which you are devoting to the systematic study of the precious word of God during your leisure hours. My prayer is that your love for the Holy Scriptures may continue and deepen, and never wane. It opens a vast field to our view, inviting us to enter in.

Next to this is *prayer*. Do not neglect this; "*continue* in prayer," were the words of an apostle. Do not trust head knowledge in any service for the Lord Jesus. This is where many have failed and some have made complete shipwreck. Prayer is an essential; it keeps the soul in happy touch with the Lord, and helps us to use the knowledge we have of truth to the glory of God and to the blessing of men. There is no danger in knowledge if we associate with it always a prayerful spirit, both in the study of God's word and in communicating it to others (Ps. 119).

But I come to your questions. Your exercise has been whether you ought to continue in your present

calling, or go forth in His service wholly—perhaps in a foreign mission field.

The field is large, and the laborers are comparatively few; and of late years I have prayed more than ever that the Lord would raise up more laborers, both for our own country, so immense—from the Atlantic to the Pacific—and for the foreign fields. With all this desire upon my heart, and also with a fair knowledge of the great need everywhere, I am yet going to counsel you to continue still in your business calling. I will give you my reasons for so advising you. You are scarcely out of your teens, and not yet half through the business apprenticeship into which you have entered. I have observed a growingly restless spirit among the young of late years. I fear it has a root in the lack of wisdom which urges them to go into mission work. It has dissatisfied them with the duties of life, and gospel work may thus be turned to with very little sense of the responsibilities incurred. One may be quite exemplary and devoted, yet not be, in the judgment of brethren, fitted for such a service.

How we need sober care! for the Lord's work is sacred work. It is also most serious to give up a secular calling unless there is a distinct gift, and a distinct call. When the gift is there, and the *proper time* has come to go forth at His call, then the Lord will sustain and care for His servant in that very blessed service; but until then, to abide in the business calling where we are, is the only place of true service. At first, the Levites were called to service at *thirty*; later on, when many were needed, at *twenty-five*. Our Lord Himself was thirty years of age when He began His ministry. Much harm

may be done to the holy things of God by want of maturity.

Many serious, God-fearing men, now long in the work, regret the feebleness and imperfection of their first service.

My advice therefore is that you finish your apprenticeship. You will then be more mature. Do not neglect your employer's interests, as if the Lord's work made them of little consequence. Asking for many privileges, in view of gospel work, is also detrimental to it. He that does not serve an earthly master faithfully cannot serve well our Lord Jesus Christ. Do all young Christians in the various employments of life regard their service as done to the Lord Jesus? This is most important; it prevents much restlessness. Let none think that preaching the gospel is the only sphere of service for the Lord. Who can tell the fruit that may be borne for Christ by continuing faithful in any employment? A faithful man is free, and has no fear to bear testimony anywhere. What golden opportunities are his! Though daily at business, he may be as fruitful as any, using his spare time in the interests of Christ.

With joy I remember the way of the young men who began years ago, many of whom the Lord has been pleased to use much. They took hold well in the local gathering where they were associated. No service for Christ was thought beneath them. Of whatever kind, it was a joy and a privilege. To open the doors, to look after the people, to distribute tracts, invitations, etc., all was counted happy service for the Lord. Faithful in little then, they have been faithful in much since; yet all this has not interfered with their secular employment. In-

deed, some of these have been more blessed in their service than others who left their employment to give all their time to the gospel.

How very important are the *prayer-meeting* and the *Bible reading* for the development of such gifts as the Lord may be forming for future service! the one for the cultivation of piety, the other for furnishing with knowledge. To surrender them is to yield to the enemy of Christ.

Any distinct gift existing in a faithful assembly, will by these means gradually become apparent to all, and in going forth into a more public path there will be the hearty fellowship of those who have the Lord's work at heart, and who are of riper experience. Timothy is an example of this. He had the fullest fellowship of the apostle and of the elders. The laying on of hands means that (1 Tim. 4: 14; 2 Tim. 1: 6). In the fields, near or far, where the Lord might now guide, there was comfort of heart amid the trials in knowing that he had the full fellowship of the apostle and of the elder brethren at home. Each gathering then should be a kind of little seminary for the nurture and development of gifts for the Lord's service.

Thus you see, dear brother, that you may be following "honest trades" (Tit. 3: 14, marg.), yet truly serve the Lord; also, that the local gathering is a good place in which to begin service, to grow, to develop, and to commend yourself for any larger service. Indeed, no service later on can ever be really dissociated from such; for it is the place to direct souls to, on earth. There is only one place of gathering higher than this, and that is to Christ at His coming, in the bright, eternal glory where He has gone.

The first is His place for His own now, the next is His place for them forever. May the eyes of all of us, both old and young, be opened more to appreciate such a place of privilege. Value it, dear brother. Labor to maintain it. Seek not to be independent, but to be acceptable to the Lord and to your brethren. In so doing you will be following the word and the example of the apostle (Deut. 33: 24; Rom. 15: 31).

The course in theology, ordination for the ministry, etc., is the degradation and corruption of God's way of forming the ministry; but let us not fall into the opposite sin of ignoring God's way. If many of God's people have fallen into an empty officialism, let us not neglect the communion of saints, the approval of elders, the commending of ourselves to all that are spiritual. One has been repeatedly pained at seeing such a course ignored. See Acts 13: 1-4.

A moral break-down will often follow if God's way and time have not been observed. The public path is full of blessing if God really calls to it; but if not, how full of dangers!

Faith, too—*special faith in God*—is a requisite for this public path. One deplures to see men launch forth who have not faith in God to supply their need—who are choosing, perhaps, another form of labor for a living. It lowers the true moral and spiritual dignity that God associates with those who serve His beloved Son.

You will easily see that to discourage service is far from my thoughts. What I press is what will keep its integrity, and what is becoming in those who aspire to it—what will make them worthy servants of Christ. He can well do without us. We

need therefore to be in no hurry. We can afford to wait till they who know and love Him best can lay their hands upon us in hearty fellowship, having been witnesses of our fruitfulness at home.

Now, a word about the foreign mission field, and I close. I think we have seen lack of wisdom in *urging* to it. Urging is, I am persuaded, not our business. The Lord Jesus Himself is at the head of His work—not we. He knows His men, and fits them—not we. We cannot have faith for them. We cannot carry them through the trials of the path; He alone can. The mission field has needs. I believe however that it needs, not inexperienced youth, but tried and proved men who have been blest in the home fields. Questions will arise in those fields of beginning which require true knowledge of the word of God, wisdom and tact, to lay good foundations.

In the early Church, those who entered those new fields were strong and experienced men, such as Barnabas and Paul; later on, with them, Silas, Luke, Timothy, and Titus—all men who could turn a strong front to the enemy in every new place which they entered. Fruit followed them everywhere. Gatherings left behind were the definite proof and seal of God's approval.*

We rejoice in the increased interest of late years in foreign mission work. We thank God for it. Only we need wisdom, that those who are encouraged to enter into it be men spiritually and physically

* If one has a trade, properly learnt, how useful at times it may be! as Paul and his companions for a time turned to making tents (Acts 18: 1-3); for this was their trade.

fitted for it. How good to see some already there who are thus fitted, we believe! May the Lord add to their number. May the Lord also guide *you*, dear brother, in keeping with these precious and sober things, that you may have joy at His appearing.

Yours sincerely in Him,

A. E. B.

Lead Thou Me.

LORD, if e'er I need Thee,
It is just now.

I pray let no man lead me,
But only Thou.

Thou only, Lord, through Thy blest Word,
Canst lead aright by faith, not sight.

My path I would not choose, Lord—
Choose Thou for me.

There is too much to lose, Lord;
Ah, hold Thou me.

No strength have I, I must rely
On Thine alone, Thy will I own.

Thy Word's a lamp unfailing
Unto my feet:

To light my path, revealing
All things unmeet.

Oh, may it shine with light divine,
That I may see each step with Thee.

I cannot walk alone, Lord;
I am afraid.

Thy guidance is my own, Lord,
My timely aid.

Let peace control my inmost soul;
Reveal Thy will while I lie still.

Thy flock, O Lord, how scattered,
How sadly torn!

Yea, wounded, world-bespattered,
And laughed to scorn.

O Shepherd, lead my feet, and feed
In pastures green, by pools serene.

O Lord, I feel my weakness—
Be mine Thy power,
Thy lowliness, Thy meekness,
In trial's hour.

On Thee I'm cast, and know, at last,
Thy way shall be revealed to me.

Then I would have no will, Lord,
But only Thine.

Thy joy I would fulfill, Lord—
Thy joy divine.

And Thy strong arm shall shield from harm,
The while I rest upon Thy breast.

Thy cross hath separated
This world and me:

It was anticipated
For me, by Thee.

Then let it be the sign for me
Thou'lt be my guide o'er desert wide.

I put my hand in Thine, Lord;
O, lead me still.

Thou'st made the promise mine, Lord—
Thou wilt fulfill.

I pray Thee use as Thou shalt choose:
Give in Thy grace my rightful place.

H. McD.

EXPOSITION OF THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

“THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL. DELIVERED.”

(Continued from page 101.)

“Beloved, using all diligence to write to you of our common salvation, I have been obliged to write you, exhorting [you] to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints” (ver. 3).

BORNE along by the Spirit, Jude sat down to write. His own heart was filled with the joy of God's salvation; and as he put pen to parchment, he would have been glad to write of this salvation common to every saint. But verbal inspiration, however derided by unbelieving men, is ever affirmed in Scripture. So here the apostle is not left to himself as to the form or subject of his letter. The same Holy Spirit who caused him to give all diligence to write, directed his mind as to the theme he must dwell upon. Not the common salvation, precious as that was, was to be his line. A note of warning and *exhortation* it was, that the Lord would have him give. Therefore he writes to urge earnest contending for the faith already delivered, and that once for all. For the force of the word “once” is such as to debar all thought of repetition.

The faith here is not faith by which we lay hold of the salvation of God. It is the truth as to that salvation, with all that accompanies it. This abiding faith has been given never to be added to. No new revelations will be vouchsafed to complete the truth given by divine inspiration through the apostles of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Jude, as John, turns the saints back to “that which was from the beginning.”

Evolution in theology there may be, for theology is simply the reasoning of man's mind as to the things of God. But evolution in regard to the truth, the faith once for all delivered, there is none. God has given His last word on the subject. For this we are called to contend.

It will be seen at once how this simple expression shuts out all the pretentious claims of new prophets, seers, and revelators. Impious are the claims of latter-day enthusiasts who make bold to declare themselves sent of God to add unto His words. Be the signs and wonders that accompany such pretensions as remarkable as those of the Antichrist yet to come, the simple-hearted believer turns away from them all, and exclaims with holy confidence, "The faith has been once for all made known. Neither assumption nor miracle shall induce me to accept any additions to it."

It was for lack of this that in the last century so many thousands of the unwary were attracted and ensnared by the specious claims of Mormonism, which even yet, though in its decadence, numbers its converts by hundreds yearly. Angelic agencies and mystic plates, if all said about them were true instead of palpably false, still would authenticate nothing. The faith once delivered needs neither angelic nor human additions. It is perfect and complete, and the man of God will refuse all other and newer revelations.

To the apostle Paul it was given to complete the word of God. He was the chosen servant to whom the mysteries hidden from past ages were made known (Col. 1: 24-26). Having thus completed the outline of divine teaching, he can write, "Though

we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1: 8).

Jude adds no new doctrine to what had already been set forth, but exhorts those who had received so sacred a deposit to contend earnestly for it; even as John, in the Revelation, sets forth no additional line of teaching, but shows what the outcome is to be in regard to the conflict between truth and error, carried on so long.

It will be seen at once how fitting it is, therefore, that Jude's letter should be so placed in our Bibles as to form a preface to the book of Revelation; for such indeed it is. He gives a graphic and warning picture of the evils (already springing up among the saints in those early days), which in Revelation are portrayed in all their hideous development.

That the second letter of Peter bears a close resemblance in many particulars to that of Jude is apparent to all careful readers: so much so, that some who never look below the surface have surmised that one might be but an imperfect copy of the other. To the spiritually-minded there are, however, marked differences despite the striking similarity. Peter warns of false teachers, corrupting those who are not established in the truth. It is false doctrine, damnable heresies, which, if not refused, will bring upon the recipients of them swift destruction. Jude, on the other hand, has especially before him the ungodliness that results from the giving up of the truth. The grace of God turned into lasciviousness is that which he warns against.

Men may belittle sound doctrine, and ridicule the antiquated notion that a system of belief is of any

importance in regard to a man's behavior. But Scripture shows plainly that there cannot be proper behavior apart from soundness in the faith. The couplet,

“For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
He cau't be wrong whose life is in the right;”

expresses what is in the minds of many. But the life will never be in the right unless the truth of God is accepted and bears sway in the inward parts. Therefore the need, in a day of abounding vagaries like the present, to heed such an exhortation as Jude here is inspired of the Holy Spirit to give.

The word is addressed, not to leaders alone, but to all the called in Jesus Christ. Each one is responsible, in a time of departure from the truth, to contend earnestly for all that God has revealed. Were the mass of Christians thus guarding the treasure committed to the whole Church, evil workers and false teachers would be unable to obtain foothold; but it is because of the indifference of those who are content to be called the laity, that ungodly men are able to entrench themselves so strongly in that which bears the name of the Church.

To the saints as a whole the faith was delivered. To such the exhortation is addressed to contend earnestly for it! The believer is thus viewed in his soldier character. He is called upon to fight for what is in God's sight of such prime importance. As a Shammah, defending a patch of lentiles, the food of the people of God (2 Sam. 23: 11, 12), so the Christian should boldly take his stand for the truth, and defend it against all enemies.

It is well to remember that it is one thing to con-

tend—quite another, to be contentious. “The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will” (2 Tim. 2: 24-26). These verses indicate the spirit that is to characterize the one who would contend for the truth.

Firmly, yet with tender compassion for those being led astray, he is to stand for all that God has revealed. When a bad, carnal spirit takes possession of one, he is powerless to help or bless others. And it should ever be remembered that in contending for the faith, the soul of the sinner has to be thought of likewise. It is not enough to uphold the doctrines of Christ. The behavior must commend the truth which the lips proclaim. The phrase in Eph. 4: 15, translated “speaking the truth in love,” has been literally rendered “*truthing* in love.” We do not have the participle form of the word in English, as in Greek; consequently it is awkward to so express it; but it gives the exact meaning. It is far more than speaking the truth that is in question. It is the truth lived out in all our ways. Unless this be characteristic of the one who contends for the faith of God’s elect, the utterances of his lips will be but vain.

(To be continued.)

MORNING THOUGHTS.

As to HIM, *then*: "All Thy garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia out of the ivory palaces *whereby* they have made Thee glad" (Psa. 45 : 8).

As to us, even *here*: "My Beloved put in His hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for Him. I rose to open to my Beloved and *my* hands dropped with myrrh and *my* fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, *upon the handle of the lock*" (Song of Songs, which is Solomon's, 5 : 5, 6).

Blessed and beloved Saviour! "Because of the savor of Thy good ointments, Thy name is as ointment poured forth; *therefore* do the virgins love Thee" (Songs of Songs, 1 : 3). "Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is *poured* into Thy lips; *therefore* God has blessed Thee forever" (Psa. 45 : 2). "His mouth is most sweet and He is altogether lovely." And—oh, unfathomable grace!—we, the ransomed of His blood, can say, "This is *my* Beloved and this is *my* Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem" (Song 5 : 16).
A. V.

AN EXTRACT.

My practice had been, at least for ten years, to give myself to prayer, after dressing in the morning. I often spent a quarter of an hour, or half an hour, on my knees, before being conscious of having derived comfort, encouragement, humbling of soul, etc.; and often, after having suffered much from wandering of mind, I only then began really to pray.

Now I see that the most important thing was to give myself to the reading of the word of God, and to meditation on it, that thus my heart might be

comforted, encouraged, warned, reproved, instructed; and that, whilst meditating on the word of God, my heart might be brought into communion with the Lord.

I began, therefore, to read and meditate on the word of God, searching as it were into every verse, to get blessing out of it; not for the sake of the public ministry of the Word, not for the sake of preaching on what I had meditated upon, but for the sake of obtaining food for my own soul. The result I have found to be almost invariably this, that my soul has been led to confession, or to thanksgiving, or to intercession, or to supplication; so that, though I did not, as it were, give myself to prayer, but to meditation, yet it turned almost immediately more or less into prayer.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 13.—Kindly give what is the meaning of 1 Peter 4 : 6.

ANS.—If you have the 1908 volume of *HELP AND FOOD*, turn to page 224, where the same question is answered.

QUES. 14.—It is the custom in our meeting here, and, as I have reason to believe, also elsewhere, to ask the sisters to retire, along with those not in fellowship, when any business is to be transacted, or any inquiry into a case for discipline is to take place. I would like to know if you consider such a course to be right, and in accordance with Scripture. Speaking generally, I am inclined to think it is not—for this reason, that sisters are responsible as well as brothers to be exercised regarding what concerns the fellowship of all, and should therefore know the facts of any matter as well as the brothers; else how can they judge aright? I should be pleased to have your mind on the subject.

ANS.—Extremes are never of God. We all know that Scripture everywhere puts the rule and government in the hand of man, not the woman. Extremists would therefore exclude the woman from

everything which has to do with government in the house of God, as if she had not a conscience as well as the man. Others, knowing that the conscience of sisters is to be considered and respected as well as that of brothers, would thrust them into all matters of government as well as brothers. The fact is that rule and government properly belong to the elders among God's people. The less public any matter of difficulty can be made, the better it is; for there are, alas, generally some who are more ready to make evil a matter of talk than a matter of mourning and prayer. This often but makes things worse and more complicated. Investigation therefore should not be by the many, but by those who feel the weight of responsibility in the affairs of the Lord. What sad details must sometimes be listened to, which would be irrelevant before women, and even *young* men. When, however, things have reached a point where the *consciences of all* must now be concerned, then *all* should be there; for in any case of sin, *it is the sin of all the assembly*, calling upon *every one* to judge the wrong in humiliation.

QUES. 15.—Would you kindly explain Heb. 2:6-9? Do the words here quoted from the 8th psalm, "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" apply to the Son of God, or to man as His creature?

ANS.—They apply to man as His creature in contrast with angels as His creatures too. He looks forward to the coming age, when God's purpose to put all things under *man* (not angels, though by creation they be a higher creature than man) shall be fulfilled. A foreshadowing of that age is seen in the place God gives to man in Gen. 1:26-28; but it is only a foreshadowing. The real fulfilment of it is seen only in Jesus, who became *Man* to that end; who suffered death, and took a place lower than the angels, that He might bring others with Him into all that coming glory. The sum of it all is that man, a lower creature than the angels, is predestinated of God to occupy a place highest of all, above angels and all other creatures. And that is accomplished by the Son of God—the creator of man—Himself, in amazing grace, stooping down to become a *Man*, to suffer, to die, that all who are linked with Him by faith might occupy that wonderful place—a place unspeakably greater than man had in his unfallen state.

EDITOR'S NOTES.

Elihu.

(Job 32—37.)

None perhaps, in Old Testament times, is a brighter witness of the light than Elihu.

Nor could night be much darker than the scene in which he shined. Job had ended his words. They were the words of a man who in his doings was truly a righteous man, but so enamored with and proud of his righteousness that he could understand nothing of God's present dealings with him. So rooted was he in self-satisfaction, so blind as to any other righteousness than man's, that when trouble came he could accuse God of dealing arbitrarily and unjustly with him, and complain that it profited a man nothing to delight himself with God. If one of the two was wrong, he or God, it must be God. What deep darkness indeed! and yet in a man whose life had been most excellent.

His three friends knew no better. If one is afflicted, they said, it must be because he has done wicked things. So Job must have lived a wicked life, and all his pretended fear of God be but hypocrisy. Therefore when he justifies himself and accuses God, they have nothing to answer. They are as much in the dark as he.

Elihu stands in the midst of all this deep darkness a loyal witness of Him who is the Light of the world—the Light that “shineth in darkness.” Being a *young* man, he had respected his elders in years, and had let them have all their say. There is a wisdom which years teach, and which youth does well to listen to and respect; but there is also that which years do not teach; it is *revealed* wisdom; it is

Christ, and Him crucified. In Him, and by His sin-atonement alone, does God delight in and exalt man. Apart from this, man in his best estate is but a sinful, guilty creature, going on to endless shame and judgment. In Christ alone is there for man blessing and peace and glory. In Him alone is God's good pleasure in man displayed.

Elihu, the man of *faith*, lets all this light shine on these benighted men, who know but their own righteousness and merit. He explains why such distress as Job's can come upon such a good man as Job: To break up his will and his pride; make him say in truth, "I abhor myself," and then find his rest and cause of glorying in the ransom which God has provided in Christ for him. Thus while God now justifies Job, Job ceases to justify himself, and justifies God in all His doings; and his friends are humbled too.

How unspeakably blessed to be thus, in any measure, as Elihu, God's witnesses for the Light in a scene of darkness! Nor is it in heathenism alone that light is needed. What is Christendom now, in its most respected form in the world, but a Job and his three friends! What multitudes in it, from end to end, know nothing, have nothing, but their own righteousness! They think themselves well clothed, and yet God sees them but in filthy rags. How unspeakably blessed, then, to be able to shed light on all this, to lead the troubled ones out of their troubles into the haven of rest, and to the place of blessing and fruitfulness! Let each man who has learned that it is "Christ Jesus who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," so rejoice in

that Light that he too may be an Elihu, wherever he may be.

The Man of God at
Bethel.

(1 Kings 13.)

He is not named. It leaves us more free to put ourselves in his place, and thus the better learn the lesson intended in

the recital.

In the face of the *enemy* he is faithful in everything. He denounces the false altar, at his own peril; pronounces judgment against it; maintains a lovely spirit of grace in praying for the recovery of the hand which a moment before was ready to smite him; he refuses the wicked king's proffered reward, and, whatever his need, obeys his orders well and refuses all refreshment in that place.

But alas, this devoted man is off his guard before a *brother*; and it is a brother who deceives him. He should have known it was the voice of a false prophet since it agreed not with the voice of Him who had sent him. For some hidden cause he is led to disobey the word of God, and thus become a prey to the lion. What a lesson this is for us all in a day so full of similar circumstances! How liable we are, after suffering much, perhaps, for truth's sake, to go for refreshment where the word of God has forbidden—even among His own! Obedience to God is the highest calling and work of man.

"Follow holiness . . .
without which no
man shall see the
Lord."

We all know that holiness does not produce salvation; but do we lay solemnly to heart that without it no man shall see the

Lord? If our lives then are not holy, let us not de-

ceive ourselves. Let us awake out of our deadly sleep, and turn to Him who both saves and sanctifies. Nor let us think we are holy while yet, perhaps, we find some plausible excuse for the evil of our nature. No, no! Holiness excuses not sin in myself. It condemns and hates it, to its finest roots and fibres. It says not, "I was born with it, and therefore I cannot help it." It says, "Yes, I was born with it, but I abhor it, I mourn over it, I refuse it, I obey it not, I am on God's side against it." This is holiness, and the true character of those who are delivered from the wrath to come by the Lord Jesus Christ.

READINGS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

(Continued from page 122.)

Chapter 4 : 13-25.

THE character of the faith that God reckons for righteousness is the apostle's theme in these verses. The way he treats his subject is very instructive. His argument is unanswerable. There is no escape from the conclusion he arrives at. We will follow his argument closely.

There can be no denying that God promised the possession of the world both to Abraham and to his seed. When God said to him in Gen. 12, "And thou shalt be a blessing: . . . and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," Abraham's possession of the earth was implied—not merely Canaan, but all the earth. It was also implied in the promise of an heir in Gen. 15: for it is evident that it is through this heir, which is Christ (as the apostle tells us in Gal. 3: 16), that Abraham is to inherit all

that was involved in the promise, whether earthly things or heavenly things. Again, possession of the earth was involved in the promise that Abraham should be the father of many nations (Gen. 17). Possession of the earth is also implied in Gen. 22, where the Lord says, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." There are other passages in which possession of the earth by Abraham and his seed is involved; but we need not quote more. Sufficient has been cited to put the matter beyond dispute.

But this promise of possessing the earth by either Abraham or his seed was in nowise on the principle of works of flesh. It was on the principle of faith. It was through the righteousness of faith. It was not through the law.

Now to this a Jew would object, "God *did* give the law afterward; and having given the law, the promise would be limited to the people to whom the law was given." The apostle's answer to this is, "If they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect." But the promise is gratuitous, and absolutely unconditional. The law afterward given could not set aside an unconditional promise, could not disinherit those to whom the promise had been gratuitously given. Abraham's spiritual seed—those who were of faith—under the law were heirs to his inheritance. It was not law that made them heirs. They were heirs by faith, not by works of law. Being put under law, they were in bondage. They were being treated as servants; still they were heirs, because they were of faith. See Gal. 4: 1-3. This the law could not set aside.

Further, those who were not of faith, but of law merely, were not heirs. They were cut off as being children of flesh merely. Such could not be heirs with Abraham. Circumcision as given to Abraham plainly shows that. All males born in Abraham's house, or purchased with money, had to receive the marks of the profitlessness of the flesh, as showing that they were not heirs with Abraham by works of flesh, but by faith merely. The children of flesh were rejected as heirs; they were cut off. The law afterward given could not nullify this. Hence, even under the law, the real seed of Abraham were the children of faith, not the children of the flesh.

Now one more point. The law, instead of producing children of Abraham, genuine heirs of his promise, operated to produce wrath. It turned sins into transgressions, and by these transgressions showed the mind of the flesh to be essentially enmity to God. Showing how intrinsically the mind of the flesh is insubjection to the will and authority of God, it manifested the absolute impossibility of its becoming subject. In this way the law shows how necessarily the man of flesh is a subject of wrath—the wrath of God. This was the law's great lesson: a lesson even the children of faith needed to learn. But they did not become children of faith by the law. It was not by the law they became heirs to the promises to Abraham.

Having now shown how law works, the apostle proceeds to insist that in making promise to Abraham, or his heirs, God did not do so in connection with law, but with faith; so that it might be by grace. In making promise, God was acting gratuitously. It was an unconditional promise to faith.

Now God's purpose in giving the promise on the principle of faith was that it might be sure *to all* the seed. The seed here, of course, is Abraham's spiritual seed, those who are of faith; the seed according to the flesh, as we have seen, being cut off.

Carefully considering the Scripture account of Abraham, it will be seen that his spiritual seed is divided into three groups: one group of seed for heaven; another group, for the land of Canaan; and a third group, for the rest of the world—the nations of the earth to be blessed in him.

Now the promise in regard to inheriting the world is sure to these three groups of Abraham's seed, for even the seed for heaven will inherit the earth through the two earthly groups. The seed for the land of Canaan will not only possess Canaan, but, through the Gentiles blessed under them, they will possess and enjoy all the earth. So, likewise, the heavenly seed, through the earthly seed, will inherit the earth, for "the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor unto" the heavenly city.

All Abraham's seed—his spiritual seed—are, then, sure of inheriting the earth. But, that they might be sure of it, in promising it God did it in connection with faith, not works of flesh.

Abraham, then, "is the father of us *all*." He is the father of the heirs given to him during the dispensation of law. He is the father of the heirs God is giving him now. Gal. 3: 29 tells us that if we are Christ's, we are Abraham's seed. As being Abraham's seed, we are "heirs according to promise." So Abraham is *our* father. He is "the father of us *all* before" the God "whom he believed."

This brings us to the character of his faith. He

believed in God as the quickener of the dead, and as the One who calls "things that are not, as though they were."

The Holy Spirit's account of Abraham shows this very clearly. We have seen how God reckoned faith to him as righteousness in Gen. 15. We will now see that the faith that laid hold upon God as able to fulfil His promise to give an heir, laid hold upon Him as being the quickener of the dead. The land of Canaan, which God had told Abraham he should possess, was in the possession of the Canaanites. God shows him that He is going to redeem the land through a sacrifice. Then He tells him that though he will live to a good old age, yet he will die and be buried. Abraham now knows that he will not inherit that land as a man in the flesh—that it is in resurrection that the promise of possessing it will be fulfilled to him. He is taught that he and his seed will pass through the furnace of trial; but however severe the trial, the word of promise is to be the support of faith. He sees that the promise cannot fail, since He who has promised is the quickener of the dead. Believing God to be the God of resurrection, he dwelt as a stranger in the land of promise. He sojourned in the promised land in the hope of possessing it. He believed the God of resurrection would carry out His promise.

That his faith had this character is seen also in another way. In Gen. 17 God told Abraham that he should have a son of Sarah. Now nature told him it was an impossibility; yet he did not stagger at it through unbelief. He believed in hope—the hope of a son through Sarah, when nature said there was no hope of it. He was strong in faith. The

deadness of his own body and of Sarah's womb was no difficulty to him, since, to him, the God who had promised was the God of resurrection. As such, He was able to quicken the dead.

The same thing is shown in Gen. 22, where he receives Isaac "in figure from the dead." God gives him another testimony that He is the God of resurrection. The apostle, however, does not refer to this in our chapter. What he does refer to is illustrative, to show what was characteristic of Abraham's faith.

What characterizes faith in Abraham, then, is his laying hold upon God as the quickener of the dead. Believing in Him as the God of resurrection, he believed He was able to perform what He promised. The character of God was the guarantee of His word.

Now this being the character of Abraham's faith, God reckons it to him as righteousness. Having the faith that lays hold on God as the God of resurrection, God imputes righteousness to him; judicially declares him not only to be no longer in sins, but in righteousness—sets him before His face in righteousness. Righteousness being thus imputed, he is never to be charged with his sins. God never will charge them to him; nor will He listen to any one who would presume to do it. Abraham is henceforth before the face of God in unchangeable righteousness. God has judicially established him in eternal righteousness.

A difficulty may here suggest itself to some. The incidents in Abraham's life which have been referred to as showing how he believed in God as the quickener of the dead, all occurred after God reckoned

his faith as righteousness. How, then, is it shown that Abraham had this character of faith at the time when he was reckoned righteous by God? The answer is simple. At the time when God promised him an heir Abraham was childless. The fact had exercised his mind, as his expression in Gen. 15: 2, "seeing I go childless," shows. Chap. 11: 30 calls our attention to the fact that long before this even, Sarah was barren. Now in spite of every evidence of nature to the impossibility of his ever having an heir, he believed the promise of God that he should have one. We thus see that already the faith that lays hold upon God as the quickener of the dead was germinally in him. In the incidents afterward this germinal faith was developed and displayed. But however more manifest it was in these later circumstances, it was really present in his soul at the very time when the promise of an heir was made, and when his faith was reckoned as righteousness.

Our apostle now tells us that the record of God's imputing faith to Abraham for righteousness was not written for him merely: it *was* written for him surely, but it was written for his seed as well—for "all them that believe"—for those that have his faith. Hence the apostle goes on to say, "but for *us* also."

The record of God's reckoning faith for righteousness to Abraham, then, is testimony, divine testimony, that faith in us is also reckoned for righteousness. This is because faith in us has the same character that it had in Abraham. It is the faith that lays hold of God as being the God of resurrection.

But while faith in us has the same character as

the faith of Abraham, which was also the faith of all the real children of Abraham before the cross, we must remind ourselves that God had not then displayed Himself so fully as the God of resurrection as He is displayed in that character since the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

Death is the penalty of sin. Jesus has been delivered as a Substitute to that penalty. He died under the penalty of our offenses; but God has raised Him from the dead. In doing so He has fully revealed Himself as the quickener of the dead, as the God of resurrection. It is as in the light of this fuller revelation that we believe in God. But whatever the difference in this way between the past dispensations and the present, notwithstanding the fuller revelation of the present as compared with the revelations of the past, faith has the same character. It is faith in God as the God of resurrection.

Now by raising Jesus from the dead—Jesus the Substitute delivered to death which is the penalty of our offences—God has proclaimed a sentence of justification. The resurrection of Jesus is in this sense a judicial act of God, declarative of His acceptance of the sacrifice of the cross, and that the justification of the believer goes with that acceptance.

The doctrine of justification by faith is thus fully established. The believer in the God of the gospel is gratuitously justified. His sins are canceled, and he is set before the face of God in righteousness; declared to be righteous, to have a righteous character, a character that cannot be assailed. Blessed indeed is that man, the man "to whom the Lord will impute no sin."

C. CRAIN.

(To be continued.)

EXPOSITION OF THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

(Continued from page 137.)

CLANDESTINE WORKERS.

“For certain men have got in unnoticed, they who of old were marked out beforehand to this sentence; ungodly [persons], turning the grace of our God into dissoluteness, and denying our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ” (ver. 4).

FROM the days of Simon Magus to the present it has ever been the object of Satan to secretly introduce evil workers into the assemblies of the saints of God, that thus the simple and the unwary may be deceived and led astray. Nor have men been wanting in all ages who would stoop to so nefarious a business.

The truth of God, if not submitted to, has a hardening effect upon the one who is familiar with it. To trifle with what God has revealed is an affront to Himself, which must have dire consequences. Such would seem to be the state of the men against whom Jude here warns the people of God. They are men who have a mental acquaintance with the truth but whose ways are not in accordance with that which they profess to hold. Clandestinely they have slipped into the assemblies of the saints; but they are not unknown to God, though they have managed to deceive His people. Before, of old, they were marked out to this judgment. Ordained is too strong a word here, and fails to give the true thought. Far be it from the Holy One to ordain any man to acts of impiety and ways of deceit! But He had of old marked them out, declaring by His servants that such men should arise, giving their characteristics clearly, so that they might readily be recognized. Their end was judgment. This too He had pointed out.

They are described as ungodly men. This term "ungodly" is used five times in the epistle; the other four instances occurring in the quotation from Enoch. It means refusing subjection to God, acting independently of, and in opposition to, God. For the ungodly Christ died—all men in their sins are so called. But here we have those who are professedly delivered from their sins, but who actually are still in them, and secretly turning others into their own iniquitous ways.

The grace of God has never reached their souls or controlled their consciences. They make that very grace an occasion for lasciviousness of speech and life. Such evil-workers have abounded in all periods since the gospel was made known. But, be it noted, the remedy is never, in Scripture, legality; but a bowing to the truth of man's need of that very grace he has been misusing. The sinner who judges himself before God and finds his need met in that wondrous provision of grace will not, if walking with Him, be found turning such unmerited favor into dissoluteness. It is the unrepentant professor, who has never seen himself in the light of God's holiness, who is here referred to.

Some may ask, In what way do men turn the grace of God into lasciviousness? The answer undoubtedly is by going on in their own ways, gratifying the lusts of the flesh, while professing to believe in the grace that does not impute sin to the justified soul. This is what has been well-named Antinomianism. Often those have been charged with holding it who with all their hearts abhor it; and who, subdued by grace, gladly seek to render

willing service to Him whose loving kindness has saved them without merit of their own. Such are the very opposite to those here presented, who know not in reality the grace of which they prate.

These deny our only Master (A. V. reads Lord God) and our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not to be supposed that they definitely deny Him at all times with their lips. Often they are found professing to know Him, but denying Him by their works.

One needs not to look far to find men of this stamp. Christendom to-day abounds with them. In the seats of honor, and also among the so-called laity, they "feed themselves without fear," professing allegiance to Christ while ignoring His word and even treating with contempt and assumed superiority the Sacred Writings. Nothing is too holy for their profane reasonings to set aside. "From such turn away."

To no time in the past history of the Church have Jude's words applied with greater force than in the present latitudinarian age. With Romish emissaries making strenuous efforts to allure the unwary by presenting a softened, subdued Catholicism to non-Catholics, that emphasizes largely whatever is really Scriptural or ethically and esthetically lovely in the teachings of the Papacy, while carefully covering the grosser and more disgusting dogmas and practices of that apostate church;* with the boldest

* It will be noticed that the Paulists, an order of missionary priests devoted to the perversion of Protestants, always put to the fore such fundamental doctrines as the Trinity, the deity of Christ, etc., but rarely touch upon the more offensive teachings of the corrupt church that for so long drugged the nations with the wine of her fornication. Thus the simple are enticed and walk into Babylon's gates like sheep going to the slaughter.

infidelity and skepticism being proclaimed from thousands of Protestant pulpits; while minor sects of all shades of heterodoxy are everywhere busy spreading their pernicious and soul-destroying errors, the man of God needs to be alert and vigilant, devotedly standing for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

A mock charity would say that it makes little difference what a man believes if he live well and be sincere. The soul, subject to Scripture, knows that the gospel alone is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," and he remembers that the Holy Spirit has pronounced solemn curses against any, even an angel from heaven, who brings a different gospel, which is not another.

The fact is that well-living, according to the Divine standard of holiness and uprightness, is a delusion and an impossibility, apart from the sanctifying power of the truth of God. Hence it will be found that where false teaching prevails, ungodliness abounds, as witness the wretchedly low standard of Christian living maintained by Romanists; the worldiness of professors of the latitudinarian type, the over-weening pride, coupled with an exceedingly poor imitation of godliness, that characterizes those professing a "second blessing" of absolute holiness—all alike evidence the baneful effects of teaching contrary to the faith of God's elect.

Indifference to evil teaching, and genuine love for Christ and His truth cannot co-exist in the same breast. Neutrality in such a case is a crime against the Lord who has redeemed us to Himself.

OUR BURDEN-BEARER.

“**B**LESSED be the Lord, who daily beareth our burden” (Ps. 68: 19, R. V.). The Authorized Version renders this verse, “Who daily loadeth us with benefits.” Both are true; and as we apprehend the former, we are made to acknowledge the latter. But there is a special sweetness and tenderness in the words, “who daily beareth our burden.” We have trusted the Lord as our Sin-Bearer, “who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree” (1 Peter 2: 24). We have proved His risen power in lifting the burden of guilt from our heavy-laden souls; but do we realize that He wants us to trust Him as simply and prove Him as fully to be our *Burden-Bearer*?

“Who daily beareth our burdens.” This is a ministry of love which is constantly going on, and is therefore open to our continual enjoyment. The Lord does not tarry until our burden becomes so heavy that we fall beneath its weight; He feels all the little weights of worry as they accumulate upon our minds. The difficulties and anxieties which are interlaced with each day’s routine make up the burden of the day; and it is this that Jesus bears. Would it not sweeten life if we were more mindful of this? He not only knows, but feels, how unfit we are to carry the cares of this life, for He is “touched with the *feeling* of our infirmities” (Heb. 4: 15). Therefore, in the power of divine compassion which not only sympathizes but succors, He stoops to take the weight of all our interests upon His shoulders.

He daily beareth our burden, and yet He bids us

cast our burden upon Him. Why? Because we are no better of having a Burden-bearer walking by our side if we hug a bundle of worry to our breasts. The Lord Jesus bids us keep rolling life's burden upon Him, so that we may walk as those who are "free indeed." "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee" (Ps. 55: 22). Here is a divine precept linked to an exceeding great and precious promise. We must be careful, however, not to set aside such precepts and promises as applying only to circumstances of dire distress. How much we shall lose if we shelve in our memories such a promise as this, only to make use of it in cases of emergency! Our great Burden-Bearer would have us roll upon Him all the *little things* that perplex or ruffle us, and mar our enjoyment of His peace. What a privilege it is to welcome our Lord Jesus into all the lights and shadows of our everyday life! If we avail ourselves of this privilege, we shall become blessedly conscious of the fact that He "daily beareth our burden." Our eyes will be opened to see many tokens of His loving-kindness which we would not otherwise have noticed, and the thorny paths of life will blossom with answers to prayer. Shall we not allow Him to lead us into this joy? A life of prayer is a life of praise; for prayer and praise are twin sisters, and both are ours through the precious name of Jesus. "Whatsoever ye shall ask *in My name*, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14: 13). "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks *to His name*" (Heb. 13: 15).

CHRIST IN HIS RELATION TO HIS ASSEMBLY.

(Matt. 16 : 13-28.)

IT has often been ministered to us by those who have passed out of the present sphere, and of the activities in the body of Christ, that the four Gospels present to us a fourfold aspect of our Lord Jesus Christ—of His personal and official glories in connection with the redemptive ways of God; which ways embrace the Assembly, Israel, and the redeemed nations. These three circles of blessing will be found in Ps. 22, as the result of the sufferings and death of Christ. From verse 1 to 22 we read His sufferings; then, 22 to end, the glories that follow: First, "My brethren . . . the congregation," or assembly (comp. Heb. 2); second, "The seed of Jacob and Israel"; third, "All the kindred of the nations." It is very establishing to thus see the full extent of the redemptive ways of God in Christ. It begins really with the assembly, and then takes in all the seed of Israel, past and future, and, finally, "all the ends of the world," i. e., the redeemed nations. It might be profitable and edifying to us to notice that Ps. 72 is a glorious description of the final result. Nearly every verse tells of His supreme glory; its crowning feature being, "*His name shall endure forever. His name shall be continued as long as the sun,*" etc. Well may now the Psalmist say, "The *prayers* of David the son of Jesse are ended"; for when the whole earth is filled with His glory, and His name is exalted above all, there will be nothing else to ask for. This not yet having come to pass, we still pray, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Our desire in this paper is to touch a little upon His glory in relation to the Assembly; and, as lead-

ing up to this, we would just refer to each Gospel. Looking for a moment, then, at John's Gospel, we find He is presented manifestly as the Son, the vessel of glory, the true ark of glory. This is clearly declared thus: "And we beheld His glory, the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." All the glory of the grace of the Father is expressed in Him, the Son. He alone could express it. It was in contrast to the glory of the law, which was given by Moses—a glory which is now done away, by reason of the surpassing glory.

Mark presents Christ to us as the Prophet-Servant—the vessel of gracious, unwearying and loving service from God to man. Sick ones alone value a physician's faithful service. So we who know the true character of Christ's service may well accord with this eulogy recorded by Mark alone, "He hath done all things well" (chap. 7: 37). In every detail of service we may trace in Him the true meal-offering, the unleavened fine flour with sweet frankincense, mingled and anointed with oil.

Luke presents Christ as the vessel of grace—the Seed of the woman, the Son of Man, bringing all the grace of God to man. While the law may still remain, nevertheless in the person of Christ we pass from law to grace. The law, represented by the priest and the Levite, passes by on the other side; it cannot reach down to our need as ruined and lost; but Christ, the good Samaritan, can and does come right down to where we are in our deepest need and ruin, and pours upon us all the grace of God, until He comes again to end the story of grace with glory. See Luke 10.

In Matthew He is presented to us as the Son of

David, the son of Abraham, the vessel of the sure mercies of David, as also the depository of all the promises of God. As son of David, He is minister of the circumcision to confirm the promises made to the fathers: as son of Abraham, all the nations of the earth are to be blessed in Him. Therefore this is the key to all that is recorded in Matthew's Gospel—the setting aside for the time being of Israel (chap. 12); the coming in of the kingdom in mystery (chap. 13); the building of the Assembly (chap. 16); the kingdom in glory (chap. 17). These truths thus linked together are found only in Matthew's Gospel, because it is the dispensational Gospel. As in Luke we have a change from law to grace, so in Matthew we have foretold a change from Israel to the Assembly, and from the expected kingdom in glory to the kingdom in mystery; and this change in the ways of God took place historically on the day of Pentecost.

With a view of this fourfold glory of Christ, we might well sing:

“How wondrous the glories that meet
 In Jesus, and from His face shine!
 His love is eternal and sweet,
 'Tis human, 'tis also divine.”

This brings us, then, to the truth of the formation and building of the Assembly, declared by Christ in Matt. 16: 13-28. It was then future, for it was not yet begun. The Son of Man must die and rise again first. Israel, as the fig tree, must also wither first, and, as the mountain, must be cast into the sea of nations (chap. 21: 17-21).

In Matt. 16: 13 to end, Christ gives us a brief but complete outline of God's ways from His rejection by Israel to the day of His manifested glory. The

very events surrounding the Lord and His disciples at this moment of His life and ministry on earth become the occasion to shadow forth what was about to take place as the result of His rejection and death. An undeniable proof had been given of His Messiahship in His birth; the place of His birth; His flight into Egypt, and His call out of it, according to Micah, Isaiah, and Hosea. Then, too, He had labored and ministered among them as the true Shepherd of Israel (chap. 9: 36). After all this, they seek a sign. Could unbelief and rejection be greater? The sign given them, therefore, is the sign which testified against the unfaithfulness of Jonah. The Lord here breaks all His links with them. He *left them*, and departed, after pronouncing them a wicked and adulterous generation. According to Zech. 11: 10, 11, He breaks with them, and the poor of the flock—the disciples—wait upon Him, whom He instructs in the word of the Lord.

Up to this time Israel had been the witness for God on the earth, and also the depository of the truth that had thus far been committed to man. They were to be that no longer. The veil would remain upon them (2 Cor. 3: 16) until the counsel of God regarding Christ and the assembly would be consummated. During the long night of their excision Christ would build His Assembly—a new thing; and she would be the vessel of light and grace, and the depository of the truth, of *all* the truth—truth about to be revealed by the Holy Ghost after the death and resurrection of Christ—things *new* and old (Matt. 13). From Paul we learn, also, the Assembly would be the pillar and support of the truth.

We must ever realize that whatever the failure

and ruin of the outward professing Church be, as detailed in Rev. 2 and 3, it in nowise affects the truth of the Assembly as formed by Christ, and as taught us in the passage under consideration.

We have already remarked that the Lord gives us here a brief outline of God's ways. It is clear, plain, and simple. 1. The Father reveals to Peter the dignity and glory of Christ as the Son of the living God (16: 17). 2. The Son builds the assembly upon His own person—the Rock-foundation: "Upon this rock I will build My Church." 3. He is also the administrator of the kingdom in the form that it takes during His absence; and this administration of heavenly-kingdom government among His own He commits to the Assembly, of which Peter, in this passage, is made the representative.

The principles of the administration are fully given by Christ, the administrator, in chap. 18 to end. First, the brother who offends, or trespasses against his brother, should listen to his brethren, and in the spirit of grace make the offence right. Lev. 6: 1-7 helps us here, showing that restoration should be made, even adding a fifth part more. Then, on the other hand, as to forgiving a brother who owns his wrong, the forgiveness should be unlimited.

What heavenly principles these are! How much we all need to drink them in, and also be subject to them!

We return to Matt. 16:

The Lord fully accepts His rejection by Israel as the Christ. He charges His disciples to say no more that He was the Christ. He at once intimates the change of dispensation, and foretells His death and

resurrection on the ground of His redemption work, both as regards the Assembly, Israel, the redeemed nations, and everything which will participate in the coming glory. After this He shows the path of suffering and rejection which must be the path for His own. It must be like His, one of self-denial, self-surrender, and the acceptance of death to everything here. Then He completes the view of God's ways with the revelation of His second coming in glory (ver. 27). This glory, the glory of the coming of the Son of Man in His kingdom, is then foreshadowed in its heavenly and earthly features in the vision upon the mount in chap. 17.

In that glory Christ and the Assembly are linked together. "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them" (John 17). Before that day of glory the Assembly will be caught up to meet Him in the air.

But let us consider the peculiar formation and building of the Assembly.

Peter, in answer to the question, "Whom say ye that I am?" confesses His glory as Son of the living God. Now flesh and blood—what is of man—had not revealed this to Peter: the Father had revealed it to him. Such divine communications are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed to babes. But the moment has now arrived for another revelation. It is this: "I say also unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Assembly." Himself, as the *Son* of the living God, was to be the rock-foundation of the new gathering together—the Assembly; and Peter was a stone, of the same nature as the rock. Peter, as a true minister and under-shepherd, ministers the same to us in his epistle: "To

whom coming as unto a living stone (Christ) . . . ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood" (1 Peter 2: 4, 5).

From this we see the Assembly has in a spiritual way what Israel had in a natural way. Christ is the builder—none else. Just as Solomon built the temple, without the sound of axe or hammer, so Christ builds His Assembly, the temple of God: "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord" (Eph. 2: 21). The Lord adds, that against this the powers of hell and darkness shall never prevail. And this temple which Christ builds must contain the true Urim and Thummim—the mind and revelation of God.

Here then we have the light of the dignity and glory of His person as the Son of the living God—as Builder of the Assembly, and as Rock upon which He builds it; also, the building or temple, the spiritual structure, in which the light, or oracle, or Urim and Thummim—the light of the full revelation of God in Christ—is to be maintained, and this in the face of all the opposition of the gates of hell.

The first man is a ruin; Israel is a ruin; the professing Church is a ruin; but here is something which ruin cannot touch. And in the face of all the ruin and failure of the professing Church, from leaving first love as seen in Ephesus, to complete indifference and lukewarmness as seen in Laodicea (Rev. 2; 3), what Christ builds (His people as living stones upon Himself the living stone) has always been, and always will be, shielded and preserved by Him from the gates of hell. What Christ builds must be exceedingly precious to Him, and likewise should be precious to us. Is it not found practically, in meas-

ure at least, where He Himself is owned as centre and supreme?—where He is the object and theme of praise and subject of ministry and the subject of gospel testimony? If in any feeble way the Lord has been pleased to enlighten us as to the truth of His present calling out and building of His Assembly—of His relationships and ministry to her—should we not yearn and desire to be found, even if only two or three—the number given by Himself—where He Himself is owned and preeminent in all things? We should. We believe the Spirit of God has recorded and given us a model, or pattern, of this for the whole period of the Assembly's gathering to Him in the place of His rejection. This is in John 20: 19, 20.

A company are gathered on the first day—the resurrection day of our Lord. The risen Saviour came and stood in their midst. He showed them His hands and His side, the tokens and marks of His atoning death on their behalf, and announced, “Peace unto you.

Gathered on resurrection ground; on the resurrection day; the Lord Jesus in the midst of them; peace and joy filling their hearts; the Holy Spirit breathed upon them: what a divine equipment! And this is a model for the present period—a full period of seven days. By and by, on the eighth day, the Assembly having been caught up, Israel will be restored as witnessed in Thomas, who on the eighth day owns Christ as his Lord and God. It is among the saints who are gathered to Him according to this heavenly pattern, that we shall be led on to apprehend more and more the glory of His person as Son of the living God and builder of His own Assembly. And,

further, we shall enjoy His presence as leader of their praises to the Father. "In the midst of the Assembly will I sing praises unto Thee" (See Heb. 2.) Moreover, we shall learn of Him in the divine affections and love of His heart toward the Asssmbly as her *cherisher* and *nourisher* (Eph. 5: 22-32). And He will graciously continue to minister thus to her until He presents her to Himself, with exceeding joy, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. For He shall see the travail of His soul, and be satisfied. We too shall then be satisfied, when we see His face, and awake in His likeness (Is. 53 and Ps. 17: 15).

"Oh day of wondrous promise!
The Bridegroom and the Bride
Are seen in glory ever—
Forever satisfied."

D. C. T.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 16.—Will you please tell us what is meant in 1 John 5: 16, 17 by the sin not unto death which we are to pray for, and the sin unto death of which the Spirit writes, "I do not say that he shall pray for it"?

Some of us are not absolutely clear on this matter, and would like to know what you can tell us on this subject.

ANS.—It is the *government* of God among His redeemed people. The doctrine of it is seen in 1 Cor. 11: 29-32. The grace of God was being taken advantage of among the Corinthians, as we see in chap. 5 of the same epistle. This is hateful to God. But He never *imputes* iniquity to His people; so He *chastens* them, even unto removing them from the earth by death. We have a striking illustration of this given in detail in Acts 5: 3-5—Ananias and Sapphira.

"All unrighteousness is sin"; and when we see a brother in un-

righteousness, we may well pray for him; for who knows the end of it? All sin, in the end, leads to the judgment of God. But there is sin of such great guilt, or of such public dishonor to God, that power for the prayer of faith on behalf of such an offender will not be given. The summary judgment of God in such a case is the only adequate means of meeting the sin.

QUES. 17.—Does “in hope of eternal life” (Titus 1) refer to a hope of which the promise of God before age-times was the basis and inspiration in Old Testament times, now manifested and realized in the gospel; or does it refer to the hope of glory in another scene, with which the present possession of eternal life is linked? In other words, does the word “hope” in this passage carry us backward or forward?

ANS.—We believe it covers the whole ground, both backward and forward. The first creation ruined, God announces another which begins with the New Birth and ends in eternal glory. “In hope of eternal life” stands thus in broad contrast with the ruin of the present life, and the attending consequences.

QUES. 18.—Is it according to Scripture to have family worship—that is, to assemble the family every day for reading of the Scriptures and prayer? And if the husband (a believer) takes no part, is the wife free to do it?

ANS.—Not only is it according to Scripture to have family worship, but it is most contrary to all Scripture not to have it. Even in Old Testament times they were commanded, “Therefore shall ye lay up these My words in your heart and in your soul. . . . And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up” (Deut. 11: 18, 19).

In the New Testament, “And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6: 4). Timothy “from a child” knew the Holy Scriptures. How? By his godly mother and grandmother. Indeed, there is no place where the Scriptures can ever be learned like in the home circle, and where piety can ever be so well cultivated. The Sunday-school, the meetings of God’s people, are a great help and blessing, but they are only at stated times: the home is always—from morning till night.

The family is a divine institution, and *there* is the seed-time for every good thing, the beginnings which have no endings, for good or ill. There is none in all the earth with as much responsibility toward my children as myself, and none who can exert so deep and lasting an influence.

Did parents realize this sufficiently, they could not allow the cares of earth to dismiss the, at least, one daily family worship.

If the father does not lead it, the mother is most surely free to do it, and God will bless her and her children in it.

QUES. 19.—Should children of Christian parents be taught from infancy that God is their Heavenly Father, and to pray to Him as such?

ANS.—It would be a grave error to teach them that God is their Father apart from the truth that they are sinners needing salvation, and that repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ is the only way to become children of God. Faith in us can count upon God's promise (Acts 16:31); but conscience must be exercised in them, or it will be but a superficial thing.

Our children being "holy" (1 Cor. 7:14), we can associate them with us in all our home worship and Christian exercises; but they are sinners by nature as others, and must be faithfully taught the way of salvation. In their prayers they will, of course, address God as their Father; for it is the character in which He has revealed Himself in the New Testament; but that is a different thing from *teaching* them that God is their Father. This is to be left to themselves, and to come in a natural way.

QUES. 20.—We are told in Scripture, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." There are none near me who assemble *in the name of the Lord Jesus alone, and as members of His body only*: they are all denominational assemblies. What am I to do?

ANS.—To forsake the assembling of ourselves with God's people where they assemble according to God, indicates a bad state of soul. To refuse to identify ourselves with assemblies which are not according to God, is faithfulness. If we walk with God in secret, in our loneliness, He will not only bless us, but also make us a blessing in the end.

EDITOR'S NOTES.

“Strangers and pilgrims.”

(Heb. 11: 13.)

This wonderful chapter brings before us the long line of God's hosts who, one and all, have illustrated what faith is, and have thus delighted the heart of God in that they have trusted Him when they had nothing but His word to rest on: “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” It was what they saw *afar off* which captivated them, made them let go “the things which are seen,” made them now *strangers* among those things which absorb others, and *pilgrims* through a world in which the rest of men labor to establish themselves.

Though put last, as climax and *perfect* example (chap. 12: 2), our Lord Jesus Christ heads that great line. He is the *Beginner*, or *Head*, of the whole line, and He has finished the course of faith, and reached its end. He was therefore, *par excellence*, the “Stranger and Pilgrim” here. He saw vividly those glorious things “afar off,” for He lived in them. He never doubted their being made good in the due time of God's wisdom; He embraced them; “*for the joy that was set before Him*, He endured the cross, despising the shame.” Oh, how unspeakably blessed to be in the ranks of that vast procession, headed by the Lord Jesus, wending its way through an unbelieving, mocking, sometimes angry world.

“A fugitive and a vagabond in the earth.”

(Gen. 4:14.)

In contrast with what we have just been viewing stands that disturbed world. Is it a wonder that such a procession pass-

ing through it should disturb it? It declares by its trend that indeed the world is “a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth.” A fugitive, running away from God, and therefore in the opposite direction from us who are going on to meet God with holy joy: a vagabond, living in unrestrained self-will, all accountability to God thrown off, while we insist that God is absolute sovereign; that every man owes Him absolute obedience; that we condemn in our own selves every disobedience to Him.

O brethren, should we not shun with jealous care everything which would lessen the contrast between the two? They cling to this scene of death: do we? They seek pleasure in it: do we? They lay up treasure in it: do we? They make themselves a name in it: do we?

May the Lord Jesus so satisfy our hearts that the great burden of our lives may be to be found in the footsteps His feet have made for us here as the great leader and finisher of faith.

Is it so?

One of our correspondents writes, “The Lord was never called merely ‘Jesus’ by any but His enemies. His own called Him ‘Master, and *Lord*’; and ‘Ye say well; for so I am.’ When *He* gives His own name (blessed Lord), it is,

“‘I am *Jesus*, whom thou persecutest.’

“‘I, *Jesus*, have sent Mine angel.’

‘As for us:

“ ‘Who art Thou, *Lord*?’ ”

“ ‘*Lord*, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?’ ”

“ ‘John said, It is the *Lord*.’ ”

“ ‘*Lord*, is it I?’ etc., etc.”

We give this to the circle of our readers for their examination and search. Our space, month by month, seems to grow more limited; so we beg that if replies are sent for publication, they be as concise as possible. As the Darby translation is generally conceded to be of closest adherence to the text, it may be used in citing passages for proof or disproof of the brother's statement. Technical terms are not our object, but what is suitable in our hearts and on our lips toward our adorable Lord—so great, yet so lowly; so lowly, yet so great.

“ I CANNOT see what some people so much find in the Scriptures,” remarked a young man recently to an acquaintance: “to me they are all foolishness.”

“ I believe them from end to end,” replied the other. “ They have been, and daily are, a rich blessing to me: it is God who speaks to me in them.”

“ How do you know,” retorted the first, “ that they are the word of God ? ”

“ By yourself now,” said the other. “ They say that ‘ the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him ’; and, by your own confession, that is what they are to you.”

Thus do men, and all things about us, bear constant witness to the truth of Scripture, and that in spite of themselves.

A BRIEF MEMORIAL.

MR. GEORGE MITCHELL, of Detroit, Mich., a brother in Christ much beloved, departed to be with Christ on March 26th, 1910, at his home, after an illness more or less acute for several years. His remains were placed in the Woodlawn Cemetery March 28th, where many friends and relatives assembled for the last service that man could render him.

Our brother was not only well known and loved by a large circle of the Lord's people at Detroit, where he had resided for more than a quarter of a century, but also at many places in both the United States and Canada.

He was brought to Christ in early life, at the age of 20, and for thirty-five years bore faithful testimony for his Lord. He passed away full of joy and peace, at the age of 55 years.

His health had failed him for about four years; but through most of this time both he and his family, who clung devotedly to him, hoped for his recovery. During the last year suffering increased from various complications, and the burden was heavy upon him at times. Under the trial, amid the many exercises of heart and mind, he developed much in his spiritual life, grew tender in his feelings, very prayerful in his spirit, and he yearned more for communion of heart with his Lord from day to day. Fellowship and intercourse with his brethren concerning the word and work of the Lord he prized greatly also.

It could be easily discerned by those near to him, or with whom he corresponded (which he freely did

till near his end), that his spirit, like the golden grain, was ripening fast for the harvest. Thus was our Lord training His dear servant for the change from earth to heaven, from a body in which he groaned to the brightness of His presence in paradise, where no more pain is known, and the inhabitant shall not say, "I am sick" (Isa. 33: 24).

During the last few weeks of his life things present faded away, and before his spiritual vision arose vividly the brightness of the scene he was nearing, into which the precious blood of Christ his Saviour had given him fullest title to enter; so that to be by his side and converse with him was a special joy and privilege to those who loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. How marked in him the fulfilment of the Holy Spirit's mission, "He shall glorify Me (Christ): for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you" (John 16:14).

A passage of Scripture was repeatedly upon his lips for several days, "Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1: 23). Then, still nearer the end, as if another step had been made, another passage took the place: "We are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5: 8). He had been disciplined, educated, weaned, so that his soul was thoroughly at home with the Lord; and as one face to face with Him, he would, when suffering perhaps more than usual, say, "Lord, release me, and take me to Thyself."

As yet his beloved wife had not expressed her willingness to give him up. This seemed to weigh upon him. The time came, however, when she told him that now she was resigned and willing for him

to be freed: the Lord loved him most, and had the first claim. This relieved his mind, and the happy smile that passed over his face brightened all the sorrowing circle about him. There was not a cloud now over his departure, and all felt it was near at hand.

The day before it came, the members of the family who were in the house came to his side to get a parting word. He had an affectionate word for each one, suited to his age and condition—a precious testimony, which they will long remember. To the youngest he said, “M— dear, are you going to meet me in heaven?” To which she replied, “Yes, father dear, it is my purpose.” He then added, “Remember, it is only by the blood of Christ we are entitled to go in—nothing but the blood of Christ.”

Then, with marks of deep pleasure and satisfaction, as he thought of *three* already in heaven and *five* on earth, he turned to his wife with a beaming face and said, “We shall all meet with the Lord in heaven.” Surely a rich reward for our beloved brother for his devotedness and faithfulness in the home circle.

After this he spoke with feeling and concern about his four brothers, being extremely anxious for each of them that they might each one give clear evidence of knowing the Lord Jesus by bearing testimony for Him.

The last day he suffered much at times. Eventually there came one spell of intense pain. All his were there by his side: together they knelt, and prayer was offered that the Lord would save him from further suffering, and, if His will, release him soon. Their prayer was answered: he was relieved from

further pain, and for about three hours he rested peacefully, a smile again and again on his countenance, in answer to any word spoken to him, or inquiry made. A quiet slumber followed for half an hour, when, without a struggle, he passed into the presence of the Lord, out of our sight until that bright moment when the Lord shall call His dead ones out of their graves, change His living ones, and take them all together into that bright eternal glory where there shall be no more pain, nor sorrow, nor death.

At the funeral the Word was ministered by A. E. B., from 1 Cor. 15: 22-28 and 1 Thess. 4: 13-18, at the house: at the grave, by F. J. E., from Isa. 57: 1, 2. It was a quiet, lovely afternoon, and all felt as if nature herself responded to the peace and rest of our departed brother's spirit.

He will be missed in his home, the community, and deeply in the assembly of God's people, with which he had been associated almost from its beginning. He had contributed to its growth and development from its infancy, and had with others, watched over it with a true fatherly care and shepherd heart.

Our brother loved the Lord's people, whoever they were, regardless of what might be their church position or connection. He loved the whole Church of God, and took a keen interest in all that concerns the spiritual welfare of those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

He also loved the gospel, and ever expressed his hearty fellowship with those who preached it. His heart and home were open to those who sought to spread it; and the more faithfully and sweetly he heard it preached, the more did his heart rejoice in

hearing it. We believe we are justified in applying to our departed brother the words of Prov. 10: 7, "The memory of the just is blessed." May the comforts and favors of "the Father of the fatherless children" and "the Judge of the widow" abide with and sustain the bereaved family (Psa. 68: 5; Jer. 49: 11), and the sweet savor of our brother's life and testimony be treasured up among the Lord's beloved people, that fruit may continue from it.

A. E. B.

"WHAT IS YOUR THEORY OF THE ATONEMENT?"

THE question was pressed upon me by one distracted by conflicting views and definitions, involving such weighty words as expiation, propitiation, substitution, and many others.

"My theory of the atonement!" I was startled, almost shocked, by the question. I groped for a few moments for a suitable reply. Then I had to confess, "I have no theory of the atonement."

Through the atonement, so transcendently above and beyond my highest thoughts, my soul has been eternally saved. The blessed One who accomplished that atonement has become my personal Saviour and my rightful Lord. The Scriptures witness the glorious fact that on the basis of that atonement God has been fully glorified, and, as a result of this, there shall yet be brought in new heavens and a new earth, "wherein dwelleth righteousness"; where "the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and He

shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people and God Himself shall be their God"—and that to the ages of the ages.

All this I know, because the Holy Spirit has revealed it. But *theory* of the atonement I have none.

Every attempt to describe in theological terms just what took place when Christ Jesus died, and ere He died—yea, and after too—upon that cross of bitter anguish, seemed to me to hinder rather than to help me to a fuller apprehension of that sublime mystery.

Over that scene God drew a veil of darkness, blotting out the sun at noonday. I dare not try to turn that veil aside. I fear the just charge of impiety if I attempt it.

To argue and reason about *terms*, in view of this holy and inscrutable mystery, seems to me akin to the act of dissecting the body of my father, my mother, or my child. There *may* be much to be learned from such an act, but I can not bring myself to do it.

I rather bow with adoring gratitude and cry, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

In this I rejoice. Here my sheet-anchor is cast. But I have not—nor do I desire to have—any theory of the atonement.

H. A. I.

READINGS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

(Continued from page 151.)

Chapter 5 : 1-11.

NOW, in chap. 5 : 1-11 we have the practical results for the justified. Here we must remind ourselves that it is in no wise a question of how fully we are in the enjoyment of these results. This depends on the energy of faith. These most blessed consequences of God justifying us on the principle of faith may be enjoyed in greater measure by one than by another. There may be times when the same individual will be more fully in the enjoyment of them than at other times. But the apostle is not occupying us with this here. He is rather stating what are the normal consequences of justification for the believer.

Let us then seek to learn what these normal consequences are. The first practical result of justification by faith mentioned by the apostle is "peace with God." If God is the justifier, if He sets a believing sinner before His face in an abiding, unchangeable righteousness, then all controversy about sins between God and that soul is ended forever. By justifying him, God Himself has ended it. He has put the believing sinner before His face in righteousness, and no more charges up his sins against him. He no more presses upon him the need of answering to God for his sins, so far as bearing their penalty is concerned. This is peace—peace with God. The force of the expression is peace as respects God. Through the instrumen-

tality of our Lord Jesus Christ there is for the believer—the spiritual child of Abraham—peace as regards God. On the ground of the sacrifice of Christ God is for him, not against him. On account of the work of the Cross, he being now a believer, God has ended His controversy with him. What a blessed result of justification this is! God for us! God no longer maintaining His controversy with us! And this blessed result, let us remember, is true for “all them that believe.”

Another result is the God-given privilege of entering by faith into the grace in which we stand. Under law, the children of Abraham (his spiritual children) could not do this. The grace in which they stood was clouded. Law was a hindrance to them. The privilege of taking practically the place of sons was not given them. But now, through the instrumentality of the Lord Jesus Christ, on the ground of His atoning sacrifice, the privilege of entering by faith into the grace in which we stand is given. It is in grace we stand. God gratuitously sets the believer before His face in unchanging favor, and grants him now the privilege of enjoying that favor without a cloud. This too is the right, a God-given right, of “all them that believe”—a blessed consequence indeed of justification by faith!

A third result is the liberty of soul in which the believer can now anticipate and await the day in which God will display Himself. The justified may calmly contemplate the glory of God, and rejoice in it. God has made them meet for it. And since the glorious revelations of which the cross of Christ has been the occasion, no clouds or mists remain to disturb the mind in thinking of the day when there

shall be a full display of God. The Cross has settled every question concerning the believer's right to be with God in that day. It has disposed of everything that would make that day a thing to be dreaded. The glory of that day is the hope of those whom God has justified. It is their privilege to anticipate it with unspeakable joy.

A fourth result of justification by faith is the joy to be found in trials. The trials of the justified are innumerable. Justification does not exempt from them, but it gives power to rise above them. It enables the soul to value the priceless blessings they minister.

But what are these blessings? First, with the eye on the coming glory, the trials are judged as incomparable with it. They thus become "light afflictions, which are but for a moment," soon to pass away, and are thus easy to be endured. Trials, then, develop patient endurance—one of the marked characteristics of our blessed Saviour. How precious is fellowship with Christ in patient suffering! We may well endure trial to experience the preciousness of it.

Experience is next mentioned as the product of patient endurance. In patiently enduring trial, we prove how good the will of God for us is. We gain a practical experience of His thoughtful care, of the sufficiency of His love and the resources of His grace for us. We get to know Him better, to know better what His heart is. We realize better how Christ sympathizes with us, and we understand better what His own path was; that path of which He could say, "The lines are fallen unto Me in pleasant places" (Ps. 16: 6). We thus learn by a practical experi-

ence of it to say, with Him, "Yea, I have a goodly heritage." How immeasurably blessed is such an experience! But let us remember that it is in patiently enduring our trials that we find this precious experience.

We are next told that "experience works hope." As, in the path that leads to the glory, we experience what the God of glory is, how that glory brightens! As by patient endurance we learn experimentally the love and care and tender mercies of Christ in His never-failing ministry to us as He guides us on our way, how we are constrained to say, "What will it be to be with Him!" It is thus experience works hope. It is thus experience strengthens in us the desire to realize the hope that is set before us.

The apostle now assures us that hope makes not ashamed. The path we are in bestows upon us no worldly honors. The world disdains it, looks contemptuously upon it; but, with the light of our glorious hope shining upon it, we are not ashamed. Our hope, too, is an unfailling, unfading hope. Worldly hopes fail, and disappoint those who wait for them; but he who patiently endures the trials of the path of the justified will never be disappointed. He will never be made ashamed. As he draws nearer and nearer to the consummation of the glory he is waiting for, his confidence in its realization strengthens. He grows steadily stronger in hope because along the way he enjoys the love of the God of his hope. It is shed abroad in his heart. The God of eternity, with whom he is to eternally dwell, is the God of love—love already manifested and filling the heart by the power of the Holy Spirit that indwells the believer.

Here we must notice that the gift of the Spirit to indwell the body of the believer is a blessing from God that accompanies justification by faith. All who are justified by God have the Spirit. The Spirit is now given, since the death and resurrection of Christ, to all the children of Abraham—to all them that believe. All who are justified by God have the Spirit as the power of realizing and enjoying His love. It is the Spirit who sheds it abroad in the heart.

But while the love of God is shed abroad in the heart of the justified, it is not there that its full measure is to be found. For this we must ever turn to the Cross. It was there that the love was fully manifested. The love displayed in the cross of Christ is a love *for sinners*, for those who are without God, helplessly under the eternal doom of sin. It was for *such* Christ died. In this death of Christ for sinners God displayed what His love toward us is. In thus displaying His love toward us He commends it as surpassing all other love. Love in God finds all its motives in Himself, not in the objects toward which it goes out.

Love of that character is free to provide itself with the means by which to justify the objects toward which it goes out. It supplies itself with the basis on which it justifies itself for being the kind of love it is. This basis is the blood of Christ—His sacrificial death.

If then the blood of Christ is love's vindication of itself, and the basis on which it goes out to sinners, it is the basis of the sinner's justification, the basis on which God acts in justifying.

Here I must call attention to the difference be-

tween justification by *blood* and justification by *faith*. Justification by blood is justification on the basis of the sacrifice of Christ. The sacrifice of Christ is God's title, or right, to justify. It does not mean that because Christ died for all, that therefore everybody is justified, but that He died for all as providing a righteous basis *for God to justify*. But the *principle* on which He justifies is *faith*. It is only the sinner who *believes* that is justified. The actual justification of the sinner, therefore, is individual. We are all individually justified when we believe. Hence we may speak of being justified by faith.

But God's act in justifying us individually when we believe, i. e., on the principle of faith, is based on the blood—the sacrifice of Christ. Looking thus at our justification as based on the work of the cross, we may speak of being justified by blood. It is not that there are two ways of justification. There is only one way. This we may state as justification by or on the principle of faith, on the basis or ground of the blood of Christ.

In verse 9 it is the ground of justification that is in the mind of the apostle; so he says, "Justified by His blood." But if a righteous basis for our justification has been provided through the death of Christ, He who died to provide this has risen from the dead; He is a risen, living Christ, and believers live by and in Him. He is their life. He is thus our salvation from wrath. He as the living One, the source of life to us, the One by whom and in whom we live, stands forever between us and wrath.

We *were* enemies, but by the death of His Son God has reconciled us to Himself. By the power of the love displayed in the sacrifice of the cross, God

has won our hearts. We are now no longer enemies. But, being reconciled, our full and final salvation is bound up with Him who is our life. We live by and in One who, having triumphed over death, can never again be brought under its power. Death, then, can never have power over those who live by Him. Their full and final salvation is thus assured by His life.

And here let us remind ourselves that this is true for all the justified. All whom God has gratuitously justified; all whom He has set before His face in unchanging righteousness on the ground of the sacrificial death of Christ, are eternally secure in that place, because they live by Him who has brought them there. The power of life in Him must be applied to *their* bodies as well as His if they live by Him. They shall be saved by His life—finally and completely saved—finally and completely conformed to Him, their bodies made like His. All the justified are assured of such a salvation. It is a necessary consequence of justification.

There is yet one other result of justification mentioned by the apostle. The justified, knowing God as the author and revealer of such a full salvation, glory in His being what He is. He reveals Himself in the salvation He provides. Those who are the happy subjects of it glory in Him as thus revealed.

There is another thing to call attention to. It is the place our Lord Jesus Christ has in connection with all these blessed consequences of justification. It is by, or through, Him we have them. We must notice how the apostle emphasizes this. If he speaks of having peace with God, he adds, "through our Lord Jesus Christ"; if of access into the grace in

which we stand, he reminds us it is “by” Him we have this access. If he alludes to our being saved from wrath, he tells us it is “through Him.” If he refers to joying in God, he insists that it is “through our Lord Jesus Christ.” If he speaks of having received reconciliation with such a God as the salvation He has provided reveals Him to be, he reminds us it is by or through Him. Thus again and again our attention is fixed on the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ is the One to whom we are indebted for all these immeasurable blessings which are the portion of the justified. His sacrificial death is the ground on which they are ours. How well may we sing,

“Oh what a debt we owe!”

(To be continued.)

C. CRAIN.

“THE EARLY AND LATTER RAIN.”

(James 5 : 7.)

A SYSTEM of teaching has lately grown up around this passage concerning which it would seem time to give a word of warning. It has for its object the proving that there will be a time of special refreshment and infilling of the Spirit before the Lord comes, thus affording a season of conspicuous revival and blessing, which constitutes the making ready of the Bride for the marriage-supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19: 7-9). Of this season, it is claimed, “the latter rain” is a definite promise; while the early, or first, rain was fulfilled at Pentecost. This passage in James, with Deut. 11: 13-21, is taken up and greatly enlarged upon in the teaching referred to. It is argued that there is a time of special preparation of the Church, to be fulfilled just before the

Lord comes, and that this is the season of "the latter rain." The natural inference is that we are to look for and expect this before He comes. The teaching advanced is dangerous, because it leads to the looking for this latter blessing as a result of fulfilling certain conditions expressed in Deuteronomy and made applicable to the Christian; thus tending to displace the preeminence of Christ, to look for something to be accomplished, instead of looking *only* for His coming again. It affords an opportunity for boasting and self-exaltation, inasmuch as it sets forth the coming of this "latter-rain" blessing to be the result of carrying out certain conditions which will have its issue in a *second* filling of Christians with the Spirit.

Let us consider the passage in James. The apostle exhorts to a patient waiting for the Lord's return. The example he gives is the husbandman who with patience waits through the long winter months from the early or autumnal rains until the great latter rains, after which he can gather in the harvest. This is a simple but powerful example for us. And so the apostle concludes, "Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (verse 8). If it be anything for us here, "the latter rain" is clearly the Lord's coming, and not any preceding blessing. It is forcing Scripture to imply that it means we are to have some exceptional outpouring of blessing, which in that case, as waiting in patience, we are to look for, and would result in occupation with the *blessing* instead of the Lord's coming, which the Spirit of God presses here.

But further, we cannot make promises to Israel promises also to the Church. This is confusion.

Things which happened to Israel are indeed precious types. But this is different from trying to make the example of the husbandman prove that as Israel was promised “the latter rain” on condition of obedience, so the Church is to have literally its latter rain based upon the same principle.

Now what is the typical thought connected with the early, or first, and the latter rain? As they were of yearly occurrence, and definitely connected with Israel’s history, we may look at them in connection with the feasts, or set times of Jehovah, also of yearly occurrence. The early, or first, rain fell in autumn, beginning in the seventh month of Israel’s sacred year. The latter was in the spring, particularly in the first month of the sacred year. Typical as these rains must be of the ministry of the Spirit, we can discern from the connection between them, and the set times, the spiritual thought conveyed in them. The latter rain, or that of the first month, is connected with the Passover and sheaf of first-fruits, after which comes Pentecost. How precious a thought! Upon this latter rain the plenty or scantiness of crops and pasture depends. So, upon the outpouring of the Spirit, who came to minister to us Christ crucified (our Passover) and Christ risen (the sheaf of first-fruits), depends the full blessing and fruitfulness of Christianity, the great harvest of grace in this present dispensation. The early rain is connected with the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles. Here we see at once that the connection is with the recall, re-gathering, and final blessing, of Israel—not with Pentecost, as the teaching referred to implies. It is the time of plowing and sowing for Israel; and

not for her only, but also for the whole world—the time when, in unequalled judgment, God will plow up, but also put in that new seed, to ripen thereafter. The result will be, as He has said, "I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts . . . for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest" (Heb. 8: 10, 11). Of the ministry and outpouring of the Spirit at that time, the prophets bear ample witness; but it is clearly different from its present character. We gather from this the true meaning, typically, of the early and latter rain; and can easily see it has no such connection as has been given to it. It is evident the Spirit of God has given no promise of an epoch of special latter-day blessing, the fulfilment of which we should look for before the Lord's coming, as a making-ready, or preparation, of the Bride for the Bridegroom's coming.

How soon we would become, instead of men who wait for their Lord, men who are waiting for the blessing. And then, since it is to be obtained through special faithfulness and service, how soon, when the blessing had been given, would we plume ourselves with the thought that we had merited it! No; we are persuaded that such things are not what the Spirit of God sets before us. If there is revival among the Lord's people, it can only come through Christ having first place among a whole-hearted people. And how purifying and uplifting is that hope which we have! May God, in His mercy to us in our failure and weakness, revive His work in our midst, which is ever by the exaltation of Christ and the entwining of every affection and desire around Him. Oh, to know Him as our *chief* delight!

J. B., JR.

EXPOSITION OF THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

(Continued from page 155.)

DESTRUCTION OF APOSTATES.

“But I would put you in remembrance, you who once knew all things, that the Lord, having saved a people out of [the] land of Egypt, in the second place destroyed those who had not believed. And angels who had not kept their original estate, but had abandoned their own dwelling, He keeps in eternal chains, under gloomy darkness, to [the] judgment of [the] great day; as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities around them, committing greedily fornication, in like manner with them, and going after other flesh, lie there as an example, undergoing the judgment of eternal fire” (vers. 5-7).

WHEN the saint of God dwells on the end awaiting all apostates from the truth who persist in their impious doctrines and unholy practices, all bitterness toward them must of necessity be banished from the heart. They may seem to ride now on a crest of popular appreciation and support, but “their feet shall slide in due time,” for they are set in slippery places, and shall soon be cast down to destruction (Ps. 73 *et al.*).

This is the solemn lesson taught by the unbelieving host who fell in the wilderness. They started out well. All were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. All drank the same spiritual drink and ate the same spiritual food. But unbelief manifested itself when the time of testing came. Murmuring, idolatry, and the gainsaying of Korah (of which particular note is taken in this epistle farther down), told out the true state of many who sang with exultation on the banks of the Red Sea. Kadesh-Barnea, the place of opportunity, became but the memorial of lack of faith; and though once saved out of Egypt, they were destroyed in the wil-

derness because of having apostatized from the living God.

In the same way had the Nephilim (the fallen ones) been dealt with long before. Though created as sinless angels of God, they, like Lucifer, the son of the morning, bartered the realms of bliss for selfish ends. Keeping not the glorious estate in which they were created, they abandoned their holy abode, and are now kept "in eternal chains, under gloomy darkness," awaiting the judgment of the great day.

Whether the apostle is here referring to the "sons of God" of Gen. 6 has been a mooted question throughout the Christian centuries. That the beings there referred to could possibly be angels has been scouted by many spiritually-minded teachers, who see in "the sons of God" simply the seed of Seth, and in "the daughters of men" the maidens of the line of Cain. Others, equally deserving to be heard, identify the sons of God of the book of Job with those of Genesis; and, accepting the passage before us as the divine commentary on the solemn scene of apostasy described as the precursor of the flood, believe they here learn the judgment of the fallen ones whose sin is there delineated.

It must be admitted that the following verse in Jude seems to corroborate this latter view. "*As Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities around them, committing greedily fornication, in like manner with them,*" would appear to indicate a close relationship between the sin of these cities and that of the angels referred to.* At any rate, they were one in this,

* The comments of W. Kelly, C. E. Stuart, W. Scott, and others, may be consulted as favoring this view. Both J. N. Darby and F. W. Grant are, perhaps wisely, non-committal. The same

that both angels and the men of the plain fell into grievous sin through unbelief, and were punished accordingly.

It was light rejected that paved the way for the unprintable enormities of the inhabitants of the cities of the plain, who are now set forth as an example, suffering, or undergoing, the vengeance of eternal fire.

Nothing can be more solemn than this. Long ages have elapsed since fire from heaven destroyed those cities, reeking with moral pestilence. But the guilty apostates of that far-distant day are at this moment still suffering the judgment of God because of their wicked deeds. They are with the once rich man of Luke 16, tormented in the flames of hades, while waiting for the awful hour when death and hades shall be cast into the lake of fire!

This passage, carefully considered, will throw a lurid light on a scripture which, perverted from its proper meaning, has become a favorite one of late years with those who deny the eternal conscious punishment of the wicked, holding out instead the

is true of C. H. Mackintosh. W. Lincoln in "Typical Foreshadowings," opposes it with vigor.

Since writing the above, I have come across the following from the pen of J. N. D., in "Notes and Comments," Vol. I., page 73: "Jude and Peter seem to make the *B'ney ha-Elohim* (sons of God) the angels; but God effaced all this in the Deluge, and so may we; but the Titans and mighty men, heroes, find the origin of their traditions here.

"I have little doubt this is purposely obscure, but the language here, in itself, tends to the thought that *B'ney Elohim* were not of the race of Ha-Adam (man)."

delusive dream of annihilation: I refer to Mal. 4: 1-3. "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." This passage is looked upon by the annihilationist as one of his strongest proof-texts. Assuming that the passage is treating of the final judgment, he exclaims, "What could be clearer? If the wicked are burned up like stubble, if neither root nor branch is left remaining, must they not necessarily have utterly ceased to exist? Furthermore, if they become as ashes under the soles of the saints, where is room for the awful thought of an immortal soul suffering endless judgment?" The superficial observer is very apt to think such questions unanswerably conclusive in favor of annihilation. But a more careful survey of the chapter makes manifest the fact that it has no reference to judgment after death; but the Holy Ghost is there describing the destruction of apostates at the coming of the Lord to establish His kingdom; prior, therefore, to the Millennium of Rev. 20. It is the bodies of the wicked, not their souls, which are thus to become as ashes under the feet of triumphant Israel. Like stubble, they will be destroyed as with devouring fire, so that neither root nor branch shall remain. So it was in the day

when Sodom and Gomorrha, and the surrounding cities, met their doom. Lot or Abraham might then have trodden down the wicked, who would have been ashes under the soles of their feet after the terrible conflagration. All had been burned up, root and branch. But were they then annihilated? Not so. Our Lord Jesus says, "It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment" than for those who rejected His ministry when here on earth. The very men and women who were burned to ashes so long ago are to rise from the dead for judgment. Where are they now, and what is their condition? Are they wrapped in a dreamless slumber, waiting in unconsciousness, till the sounding of the trump of doom? Nay, the soul-sleeper and the annihilationist are both wrong. They "are set forth as an example, undergoing the judgment of eternal fire"!

Truly, "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Judgment unsparing must be the portion of all who trifle with the grace shown to guilty sinners in the cross. Better far never to have heard of Christ and His blood, than, having heard, to turn from the truth so earnestly pressed in the word of God, to the soul-destroying fables of the latter and the last days, which are yearly reaping their harvests of lost souls.

Oh, to be awake to the solemnity of these things! "Knowing the terror of the Lord," cried the great apostle to the nations, "we persuade men." And it was the very same who wrote, "The love of Christ constraineth us." Man, energized by Satan, would divorce the two, making much of love, and deriding the thought of eternal retribution. The soul subject

to Scripture remembers that "God is light" is as true as "God is love."

In turning from so solemn a theme, I add a word as to apostasy. It is only the Christless professor who thus sells his birthright for the devil's mess of pottage. God has said, "If any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him." But the Holy Ghost is careful to say of true believers, "We are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Heb. 10: 38, 39). It is only those who endure to the end who shall be finally saved; but all will endure, through grace divine, who are born of God. "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5: 5.)

(To be continued.)

H. A. I.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 21.—Do you know "The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life," and "The Science of Motherhood," by Mrs. Hannah Whit-tall Smith? If so, will you kindly say if they accord with truth?

ANS.—We read the first, long ago, and found it much tainted with the perfectionism of the flesh. This ever cultivates the love of self, and is therefore ever doomed to disappointment. Christ, the believer's All, is the only One in whom there is no disappointment. We are not acquainted with the other book you mention.

QUES. 22.—Will you kindly explain Matt. 6: 20? How may we lay up treasures in heaven?

ANS.—Laying up treasures upon earth is the accumulation of wealth. Laying up treasures in heaven is bestowing our goods in a way which God loves. Caring for those who spend their life ministering the word of God is one way. See Phil. 4: 10-20. Bestowing on the needy is another (Acts 2: 45). Even a cup of cold

water given for Christ's sake is treasure laid up in heaven (Mark 9: 41). If only God's people realized their present opportunity more, how much richer many might find themselves for eternity than they will be—how much less bestowed on self there would be—how much more on Christ!

QUES. 23 (To H. A. I.).—Can you show any internal evidence that Aquila and Priscilla were at Rome at the time when Rom. 16 was written? An infidel told me Rom. 16 was not inspired, for the two persons being Jews, could not go back to Rome so long as Claudius' orders held good (Acts 18: 2).

ANS.—The objection is far-fetched on the face of it. Claudius was, if not exactly an imbecile, yet so under the control of favorite freedmen, ambitious women, and even slaves, that orders given one day were often countermanded the next; so it is not to be wondered at if the decree of banishment in regard to the Jews was soon repealed. Many others to whom greetings are sent in Rom. 16 are also evidently Hellenistic Jews, to judge from their names; and we know that when Nero assumed the purple, a little later, there were vast numbers of Jews in Rome. H. A. I.

QUES. 24.—Kindly tell me, is it wrong, or sinful, as some say, for a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ to work on Sundays at a bakery, which hinders his attending the Lord's Supper? I work only six days out of the seven, as we have no work on Saturdays, all day and night. "Six days thou shalt work," the Word says. We understand that Saturday is the Jewish Sabbath. We are not Jews: we keep "Sunday." But what is the difference? Who can tell if any day is to be especially kept?

ANS.—First of all, we are redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ, not to live any more to ourselves, but unto Him who died for us, and rose again (2 Cor. 5: 15). We belong to Him—body, soul, and spirit.

Next, what we do with the Lord's day is not a question of rest, or of our comfort, in any sense. We are "dead to law" (Rom. 7: 4), and therefore have nothing to do with the seventh or any other day as a sabbath. The Lord's day is the day of our Saviour's resurrection—of His triumph over all our foes; and our keeping that day sacred is not as a command of law, nor for our rest or convenience, but to celebrate Him and His sorrows, to praise and wor-

ship Him, to edify ourselves, and to use our opportunities to make Him known to others.

Our redemption has cost Him a fearful price. He established His Supper as a memorial of this. His request to those who love Him is, "*Do this in remembrance of Me.*" The disciples, in their first love, apparently responded to this request day by day (Acts 2: 41-47). When church order was established by Paul, the apostle of the Church, they came together on the first day of the week ("Sunday") for this (Acts 20: 7).

Any disciple of Christ who willingly, or for self-interest, neglects such a request from his Master, sins against his Master (Jas. 4: 17). Love neglected or despised is a heinous thing. An Israelite indifferent about keeping the Passover was accounted guilty indeed (Num. 9: 13): how much more a Christian indifferent about remembering His Lord's sacrifice for a far greater deliverance!

Circumstances may come in which are beyond our control; others are permitted for the test of faith. Under the first, we can but bow our head and submit to the will of God. If He has placed me on a bed of sickness, or under some special care or circumstance which forbids my assembling with His people, I abide peacefully where He has put me. Under the second, we are not to surrender; we are being proved, or tempted, as Scripture calls it, that our true spiritual condition may be manifested. If I deliberately sacrifice the Lord's day—the day of my Christian privileges—because I need bread, I prove how little I really look to God for my bread. It is true I am responsible to earn my bread and to provide for my own, and if I do not I am worse than an unbeliever; *but is God the one I look to for my task in this?* If I fail to rightly provide for my own, it is plain I am not being led by Him; for a man who walks with God, in the path God appoints him, will be enabled to provide suitably for his own, even though he may pass through times of trial.

Realizing, therefore, both my responsibility to use the Lord's day according to the Lord's mind, and to provide for my needs and those of my own, I need to look to Him for such labor as will enable me to fulfil both. Nor will the Lord ever fail to answer the faith that trusts Him in truth.

EDITOR'S NOTES.

“And many sleep” Because of their evil ways and (1 Cor. 11: 30). lack of self-judgment the Corinthian saints had made it necessary for the Lord to judge them. For this cause therefore many of them were weak and sickly and others had died. No discipline is generally so effective as that which affects the health and comfort of our *bodies*.

But, some ask, are not saints who depart from the body present with the Lord? And is it not bliss for a child of God to be with Christ? How then can it be *discipline* to be cut off from this life?

In answer to this let us remember that we who believe are not only the *redeemed* of Jesus Christ but also His *servants* and *soldiers*. As His *redeemed* we possess His unchanging love. Our redemption is the fruit of His work—not ours. As His *servants* it is not so: we *seek* His approval by serving Him according to His revealed mind. We want to hear, each for ourself, those wonderful words, “Well done, thou good and faithful *servant*: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” (Matt. 25: 21).

Would it not be a great loss to lose this? And as the joys of redemption will eternally be the joys of all the *redeemed*, will not the loss of the Lord's approval for *service* be also an eternal loss? Will not the *burnt-up work* of the bad builder, as told in 1 Cor. 3: 15, be an eternal loss even as the *salvation of his person* is an eternal joy? Is it not therefore a sore judgment of the Lord to be cut off in the midst of the path of *service*?

Again, a great battle is going on. Every soldier is doing his part toward the victorious and glorious end. In the midst of it all here are some who disobey orders; they refuse obedience; they endanger the conflict; the chief orders them off the field of battle and sends them home in shame. Is there not a difference *as soldiers* between their end and the end of their fellows who fought in obedience to the last?

Though they were sent home, to the comfort of their families, would any true soldier envy their end, though any and every one of them might wish the war was over and they might go home, too? Thus, would there not be an everlasting difference *as soldiers of Jesus Christ* between Paul who could say, "I have fought the good fight," and Demas who had forsaken him in the midst of the fight out of love of this present world?

We know but in part here, and we may not always be able to understand clearly how this or that is to be accomplished, but we may rest assured that God's wisdom and power will never be at a loss to make good and true in the fullest way every word of His mouth. May we then *believe* and *obey*.

Died.

In Laodicea, of heart-disease, the PRAYER-MEETING. The health of the meeting was poor for a long time, and the life of the prayer-meeting was despaired of. But a few anxious friends kept it alive, and sometimes it would so revive as to encourage them. Discouragement, however, at last prevailed, and the prayer-meeting is *dead*. It died from neglect of the physician's orders. No one was present when it

died. Over *forty* Christians (?) were living within a mile of it, but most were at home, and some at their neighbors — so it died, and no tears were shed over its death. Had two or three only been there, its life might have been saved, for “where two of you are agreed as touching anything that they ask, it shall be done for them.” *Two-thirds* of the forty might have been there, had they been so disposed; but they were not. If actions be allowed to speak the prayer-meeting has few mourning friends. Oh, what will become of the Laodiceans? *Selected.*

READINGS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

(Continued from page 185.)

WE have seen that not only is salvation from wrath the assured portion of those who are justified by God on the ground of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, but that they live by and in the living and risen One. We have also seen that the power of resurrection which has already been applied to the body of our blessed Lord, in its due season will be applied to the bodies of the justified. Our salvation will not be a fully completed salvation until this is done. But such a salvation is assured to the justified.

If, then, there is power in Christ, the living, risen Christ, to conform the bodies of the justified (whether it be the mortal body or the dead body) to His own resurrection-body, there must be power in Him to use the mortal body as a vessel for the display of this life: there must be power in Him to produce practical holiness in those who have life in Him.

Nothing in the life, walk and service of the justified that is not produced by Him can be fruitfulness for God.

The living, risen Christ, then, is the power of practical deliverance from the power of sin still dwelling in the bodies of the justified. This practical salvation from the power of indwelling sin is involved and included in the apostle's expression, in verse 10 of chap. 5, "We shall be saved by His life."

Now, before we proceed with the epistle, it is important that this should be clearly understood. From this point on it is not a question of how a guilty sinner can be saved from the necessity of having to stand before God, to be judged for his sins—the deeds done in his body, but it is a question of how a person—who has already been saved from that dreadful necessity—can be saved from the present dominion of the sin that dwells in him. It is not a salvation from a future judgment of sins that is being considered, but a day by day salvation from a power that is realized to be ever inwardly present. Sin dwells in the mortal body, how can it be nullified? That is the great question. How can the tyranny of sin dwelling in the body be overcome? Can practical deliverance from the dominion of indwelling sin be realized?

Here many serious and fatal mistakes have been made. Many, not realizing that the living, risen Christ is the power of deliverance, have sought to curb the activities of indwelling sin. They have endeavored to resist it and fight it down. With many the conclusion has been accepted that it is not only a hopeless struggle, but that they have no

resource. They say, "We must go on in sin. They abandon the struggle and give up the very idea of ever in this life realizing deliverance from the power of sin. They reason that under grace it is permissible to continue in sin. Some carry the argument so far that they justify continuing in sin on the ground that the grace of God abounds by it. It is an unholy argument—a shocking abuse of grace.

Another mistake, often made, is that the struggle with indwelling sin, to repress and overcome it, is the normal Christian experience. They consider that the struggle and the exercises connected with it are the sure proofs of being a Christian. They would look upon one who has found deliverance, and lives in the sense and joy of it, as being presumptuous and treading on very dangerous ground. With them the cry, voiced by the apostle, where he says, "O wretched man that I am," is the very acme of Christian attainment. They, too, thus give up the idea of deliverance from the power of indwelling sin.

Others again consider that the struggle with the inward evil indicates that the Holy Spirit has not been received. Some of those who hold this view contend that we must die to sin. They constantly urge upon us that we must crucify self, that we must persist in the process of self-crucifixion until we have succeeded in eliminating the inward evil altogether. They argue that the Holy Spirit and sin cannot dwell together, that the body must be made a holy body—a sinless body, before the Holy Spirit can come into it to make it His habitation. Some, a few, have persuaded themselves that they have been successful in their efforts to destroy self,

and that, in their cases, the mortal body has actually become a sinless body. Many more are struggling hard to attain that result.

But there are others who would strenuously refuse such teaching as I have been referring to, who yet hold that the Holy Spirit does not indwell the body of one who has not learned or apprehended what is the real power of deliverance from the reign of the indwelling sin. According to their view the believer, who is passing through the exercises and experiences which are described and explained in the portion of the epistle we are about to consider, is not yet in Christ. While they have a more or less clear understanding of the character of the exercises and experiences themselves, they yet regard the one who is passing through them as still "in the flesh." For them he is neither in Christ nor in the Spirit.

Now all these views, and others, more or less akin to them, are erroneous. The section of the epistle that is now to be before us fully answers them. To enter intelligently on the study of it, it is needful to mark the character of it as distinguished from that of the section we have already reviewed. In this no question of the sinful nature inherent in all men was raised. There is no guilt attaching to the children of Adam for having a fallen, sinful nature. They are not responsible for it, will not be judged for it at the great white throne. They are, however, responsible for allowing it to act. Guilt attaches to the *allowing* the acts. It is for the deeds done in the body men are responsible. This is what constitutes them guilty. It is their guilt—the deeds done—that they will

have to face and be judged for at the great white throne.

We have already seen that what characterizes that part of the epistle we have gone over is the ground and principle on which God gratuitously and righteously delivers a guilty man from the necessity of being judged for what he is guilty of, from having to endure the eternal penalty of his sins.

Nothing of this is found in the next part of the epistle. The wrath of God, as the deserved due of sins, is not contemplated here. It is not this that causes the exercises and experiences that are described. We are not in any way occupied with a soul that is fearing the judgment of the great white throne and is seeking deliverance from it. This has been fully considered in the previous chapters, and peace with God established on a secure basis.

But what we find here is a soul that, having deliverance from eternal judgment, and being so in the sense of the love of God in providing such a deliverance for him, earnestly wants now to live for God. He wants to serve God in a life of holiness. He wants his life now henceforth to be one of fruitfulness for God. Hitherto his body has been a vessel for the use of sin, for Satan's use, now he wants it be a vessel for the use of God.

But with these desires, purposes, aims, longings and aspirations, he finds in himself a power that hinders him from realizing what he so ardently desires. By this power—the power of evil within him, an indwelling, fallen, sinful nature—he is turned from normal Christian occupation (the enjoyment of Christ) to self-occupation and intros-

peption. He longs to be delivered from this power. He feels what terrible bondage it is to be so helpless under a power which, the more he struggles against it, the more miserable he gets. It is a wretched condition to be in. The exceedingly sinful thing that is in him, his fallen, sinful nature, seems to be triumphant. It is reigning in his body.

Is there a power that is greater than this power of indwelling sin?—a power equal to the deliverance out of this wretched self-occupation and miserable introspection?—a power of sufficient energy to produce holiness notwithstanding an ever-present sinful nature?—to produce fruit for God, to use the body as a vessel for the display of the life of the risen Christ, though sin still dwells in it?

Yes, thank God, there *is* such a power. Only it needs that we be turned to the place where it is to find it, and be conscious of its workings. It is this need that the second part of Romans meets and provides for. It turns us to the place where the power for living the life of Christ practically is to be found. To be occupied with it *there* is to be practically under the delivering power, and practically delivered from the power of indwelling sin.

This part of the epistle, then, answers the question, Where do the justified find power to live practically by Christ? Where do they find power to display the life of the risen Christ in their mortal bodies?

We shall now turn to it to follow the apostle's discussion of the question. May the blessed Spirit guide us in doing so. And may we be helped to a

fuller and deeper apprehension of the deliverance that the God, who righteously justifies the sinner that believes, has provided for the justified to enjoy.

(To be continued.)

C. CRAIN.

Day After Day.

GUILTY and helpless, in sins we lay dead,
By Satan in slavish captivity led;
Freed by the ransom our Saviour did pay,
Now do we *live by* Him day after day.

Purchased and pardoned, redeemed by His blood,
Washed and made clean in that sin-cleansing flood,
Trusting His guidance—our steps in His way,
Thus shall we *live for* Him day after day.

Ofttimes we wander: the pathway we lose;
Stumbling, we fall, and the erring way choose;
Yet Jesus loves us, and prove Him we may,
As we turn *back to* Him day after day.

Worries and troubles may pile mountain-high,
Cares and afflictions surrounding us nigh;
Still let us trust Him, and cheerfully say,
"I shall be *led by* Him day after day."

Only one day at a time let us live:
Grace for the morrow He surely will give;
Then, when we come to it, prayerfully say,
"Help me to *live with* Thee just through this day."

Thus shall we gladden the One we adore,
Leaning upon His right arm evermore;
Thankfully, joyfully, trustfully say,
"I can live *unto Him* just for to-day."

Soon the redeemed unto glory shall come,
Pilgrims from every land gathering home;
Thronging around Him, and singing His praise,
We shall be *like Him* throughout endless days.

FROM WHAT WE ARE CALLED TO PURGE OURSELVES IN 2 TIM. 2?

J. P. R., a Brazilian correspondent, desires help on "the vessels to honor and to dishonor" in 2 Tim. 2; and suggests that an answer to certain questions be given in *HELP AND FOOD*, for the consideration of all.

With the Editor's permission, I would like to quote a portion of his letter, as also two statements recently put forth in an English periodical, and then what seems clear to my own mind, asking that all be carefully weighed in the presence of God.

J. P. R. writes: "I am sending you an article dealing with the much-discussed passage in 2 Tim. 2: 19-22. . . . Until this very moment, I used to regard this passage just as Mr. F. W. Grant comments on it in his Numerical Bible (which please see); but now I see there are others that see things just in the other way. Still I humbly confess the impossibility of my understanding how we can keep company with some who, while not doubting their being children of God, deliberately remain practising things which are pure iniquity, without thereby being defiled too. It seems to me there are some points in which moral separation cannot be reached without being *personally* separated too: not that my desire is to live without the circle of my brethren; only it is because I want to follow my Lord *outside* the camp, even if it be that I found myself alone with Him."

The extracts follow:

(1) "If a man therefore purge himself from these' does not mean one or more servants of Christ sepa-

rating from other servants, for that would tend to fill with pride and conceit the separatists, besides contravening Rom. 14: 4—'Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth.' Neither does it mean one or more or many children of God separating themselves from other *children of God*—the subject of fellowship or association of *persons* not being under review in the context. What *is* reviewed, however, is the servant of Christ's own moral and spiritual *condition*, as in 1 Tim. 5: 22—'Keep thyself pure'; and as in the context, 'Shun profane and vain babblings' (2 Tim. 2: 16)."

(2) "Take the whole chapter, and note that the letter is addressed to an individual, 'Thou, Timothy, my son'; it is not addressed to a church.

"Among other instructions, very special stress is laid on the necessity of avoiding vain babblings, words to no profit, false teaching, as not only harmful, but increasingly so, and sure to gender strife.

"The false teaching is indicated, and the false teachers named.

"This is, without doubt, the subject of the chapter from verse 14 onward.

"Now I would ask your readers to cover up verse 20 and read the passage through without it, and in my judgment it is very plain, and needs no comment.

"What Timothy, and you and I, are to do is to purge out from ourselves the false teaching, etc. The 'from these' refers to the vain babblings, etc., and not to a brother, or vessels.

"Verse 20 is simply a parenthesis to explain the metaphor used.

"If 'a man' purge 'himself' from these, the 'man' and 'himself' are both in the singular, as also is 'a good soldier,' verse 3, 'a man,' verse 5, 'the husbandman,' verse 6, 'a workman,' verse 15.

"The word 'purge' should be 'purge out,' and is only once used in Scripture besides this instance—'Purge out . . . the old leaven' (1 Cor. 5:7).

"Now the injunction to 'purge out' must refer to something within, and I suggest it would be impossible to have a literal or metaphorical vessel in one, and it could not therefore be purged out.

"Further, the vessels to honor and the vessels to dishonor are coupled together, and if the 'from these' refers to one, it refers to both; but surely it refers to neither.

"Those who take this passage as an injunction to put away a brother, have need of the caution to rightly divide the word of truth.

"The sword is a lethal weapon, and it is a dangerous matter to handle it by the point instead of the hilt."

Having then the "new light" on this passage clearly before us, let us seek grace to candidly examine once more both the scripture itself and the comments made upon it.

And first, I venture to say that a number of years ago, if any intelligent brethren among those separated from human ecclesiastical systems, had been asked for their authority for thus walking apart from others, they would have turned unhesitatingly to 2 Tim. 2:19-22. The wonder now is that, having since learned that this passage "does not mean one or more servants of Christ separating from other

servants," and "neither does it mean one or more or many children of God separating themselves from other children of God—the subject of fellowship or association of *persons* not being under review in the context"—they have not the candor to return to the systems they have left, nor frankly own their error in having done so. This has already, I know, been done by some; but why not by all who hold the new teaching? In all the Christian systems there are vessels to honor and to dishonor mixed up together. According to this view there is no word from God warranting separation from them. Yet many *have* so separated, and on account of this very scripture. Now they learn that their position is unwarrantable and untenable. What remains but to return to the mixed company and frankly confess, "We were hasty and pharisaic in our action; pride and conceit were at the bottom of our separation from you; forgive us, and receive us once more into your number"?

This would at least be consistent, and would—if carried out by all—blot out, at least, one or more of the unhappy divisions of Christendom. The "separatists" would be absorbed in the more liberal sects, and the added light enjoyed by those once gathered out on the ground of 2 Tim. 2: 19–22 would be carried inside, and brethren would get a hearing who are now denied it.

As long as this is not acted upon, I fail to see the consistency of the views held with the position taken; for those who write as above are, many of them, utterly unable to go on with the conditions described.

On many occasions I have heard the interpretation

given in the above extracts by well-known evangelists and teachers who, by maintaining a place inside the established denominations, avoid much of the reproach attached to the *living* of the truth they hold. "Just consent to be called a —, by taking out a membership in — church (though you never attend but once in a year, or even less), and you will have recognition among all denominations, and be able to do so much more good," said a well-meaning clergyman to me on one occasion. But I pointed to 2 Tim. 2: 21, and he was silent.

But now let us examine the passage in detail. And in so doing we will *not* place a finger over verse 20, but let it stand out in all its helpfulness and solemnity.

The apostle has been directing Timothy's attention to the evidences of increasing apostasy. He warns against striving about words* (verse 14), profane and vain babblings (verse 16), and points out two men, Hymeneus and Philetus, in verse 17, who have given themselves over to these unholy speculations, and have thereby, though accepted by many as Christian teachers, overthrown the faith of some. And this is but the beginning, as the next chapter shows, for "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (3: 13).

Now I apprehend that the first verse of chapter three follows verse 18 of chapter 2 in an orderly, connected manner. The apostle sees in Hymeneus

* Brethren need to remember this. It is *the truth* for which we are to stand, not particular forms of expression. The very word "atonement" may mean one thing to one, and another to some one else, while the great fact of atonement may be precious to both alike.

and Philetus the beginning of the awful harvest of iniquity soon to nearly smother everything that is of God. Go on with these men, listen to them, fellowship them, endorse them in any way, and you will soon lose all ability to discern between good and evil, to "take forth the precious from the vile."

But ere depicting the full character of the rapidly encroaching conditions, Timothy is given a word for his encouragement and instruction as to his own path when things reach a state where it is impossible longer to purge out the evil from the visible church.

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord* depart from iniquity" (or, lawlessness) (verse 19). Here is faith's encouragement, and here too is the responsibility of faithfulness. Faith says, "Let the evil rise as high as it may—let lawlessness abound, and the love of many wax cold—let all that seemed to be of God in the earth be swallowed up in the apostasy—nevertheless God's firm foundation stands, for Christ has declared, 'Upon this rock I will build Mine Assembly, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it'!"

But this brings in responsibility. Am I to go on with the evil—protesting, perhaps, but fellowshiping it still—though it be in a reserved, half-hearted way? Surely not. But how dare I separate from it? In so doing, will I not be separating from dear children of God and beloved servants of Christ? How can I so act? Am I more holy than they?

* See the Revised. It is the acknowledgment of the Lordship of Christ.

Will it not be conceit and pharisaism for me to withdraw myself from that which, while I admit it is being rapidly corrupted, nevertheless embraces many who are as truly Christ's as I?

Ah, brethren, these are solemn questions—heart-rending questions too. Many of us remember the days of anxious, prayerful concern, the sleepless nights, filled with painful thoughts, they gave us. But we turned to our Bibles, and we read, “The Lord knoweth them that are His”! and about that we had peace. It was too hard, too bewildering, for us to distinguish those who were really His from those who were not. We were glad to leave it with Himself.

Then we read, “Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.”

Our aroused, sensitive consciences responded at once to that. We must not only keep ourselves pure (that comes in farther on), but we must depart from—step outside of—the sphere where lawlessness was holding sway.

And then, once more, the wrench became hardest when we thought of leaving loved saints behind, who could not, or would not, see as we did. And this led us to carefully consider verse 20:

“But 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.” The picture is surely plain. In a house of wealth—a mansion—there are vessels to honor, of gold and silver, for use upon the banquet-table, and carefully cleansed after each season of use, then set away by themselves on the proper sideboard, or in the pantry, ready when wanted again. But there are other

vessels in the same house composed of very different materials, and for very different uses. There are vessels of wood and earth, used in the kitchen and in other parts of the house, often allowed to become exceedingly filthy, and at best to be kept at a distance from the valuable and easily scratched or polluted plate upstairs.

“If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work” (verse 21). The parable is here applied. The vessels are seen to be *persons*. And just as valuable plate might stand uncleansed and dirty with a lot of kitchen utensils waiting to be washed, and then carefully separated from the vessels for baser uses, so Timothy (and every other truly exercised soul) is called upon to take a place apart, to “purge out himself” from the mixed conditions, that he may be in very deed “a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work.”

The master of the great house brings home a friend. He wishes to serve him with a refreshing drink. He goes to the sideboard looking for a silver goblet, but there is none to be seen. A servant is called and inquiry made. Ah, the goblets are down in the kitchen waiting to be washed and separated from the rest of the household vessels. He is indignantly despatched to procure one, and soon returns with a vessel purged out from the unclean collection below; and thus separated and cleansed, it is meet for the use of the master.

Now apply it to the Church and people of God. Is there any difficulty? Surely all is plain, and one

would think that only self-will could mistake the implied instruction. But the objector says, "The vessels to honor and the vessels to dishonor are coupled together, and if the 'from these' refers to one, it refers to both; but surely it refers to neither." On the contrary, it surely does refer to both—if both be mixed together.

As another has observed long since, there are here three classes: First, vessels to honor unpurged; second, vessels to dishonor; third, vessels to honor separated and ready for use.

"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (verse 22).

It is not enough for the silver goblet to be kept apart from the kitchen vessels; it must be kept polished and bright among the others of its kind. So at once Timothy is warned against anything that would stain the separated vessel, and make it unfit for use. He is to flee those fleshly lusts that war against the soul: keeping a sharp watch upon the beginnings of self-indulgence, he is to preserve his vessel in holiness unto the Lord. Position alone will not do. There must be concern as to condition also. Otherwise he may indeed become like the Pharisees, and be a mere formal, conceited separatist, supposing that a place upon the sideboard makes him a vessel fit for use, while tarnished and defiled by lusts and impurities. Let him look well to his state of soul.

Nor need he go on alone because separated from the mixture he has left behind. He is called to "follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

Here great care is needed, for undoubtedly many grievous divisions have resulted from a failure to place due emphasis upon "righteousness." This the servant of the Lord is called to follow first of all. Then due weight will be given to faith, love, and peace. But I must not pursue this at greater length, for the question related only to the vessels.

H. A. I.

"Be Much in Prayer."

(Eph. 6 : 18-20.)

BE *much in prayer* in this dark hour,
For great are Satan's wiles:
Far worse than persecuting power
Are his seductive smiles.

And error comes in such disguise—
Smooth-tongued and circumspect—
That none but truth-enlightened eyes
The monster can detect!

And fair profession, hand in hand
With evil, stalks abroad
But to deceive. Oh, who can stand,
Save those who *trust in God*?

Be much in prayer 'mid all thy joys;
So shall their depths increase;
For lack of watchfulness alloys
The very sweetest peace.

What power to stand is gained by saints
Who love to "*watch and pray*";
And who escape the desert taints
In this defiling day!

Be much in prayer for laboring ones,
Who in their Master's name,

And with the Master's message, run
His mercy to proclaim.

The harvest's great, true workmen few,
And naught of time to spare;
Iniquity increases too—
Remember this in prayer.

A LETTER:

HOW IS GOD LEADING HIS PEOPLE?

MY DEAR BROTHER:

I have been thinking of late as to the way in which God seems to be leading His people at this time. We may be sure, indeed, that He will lead us, and that any failure to be led aright rests entirely with us. We may also be sure that as long as He leaves His Church upon earth, the Lord will not cease to appeal to His beloved people to walk in His ways.

There are certain spiritual instincts implanted in the heart of every child of God: a judging of evil, and a love of that which is holy and true, coupled with a sense of the presence of sin in us, and the absolute need of the Lord's grace if we are in any measure to please Him. We are also taught of God to love one another, and therefore, in spite of the manifold failures which have marred our testimony and the divided state of the people of God, there is a unity of heart and a unity of nature which cannot be broken.

In the endeavor to give expression to the instincts of the heart, no doubt we often make mistakes in judgment as to the manner in which it should be done. I am sure the Lord always recognizes and approves the love which is the motive of the conduct, no matter how much that

conduct may be a mistake. God approved the desire in David's heart to build Him a house, although His righteousness would not allow that desire its accomplishment in the *way* that David had purposed.

We may also be sure that if there is a desire in the heart which is produced by the Spirit of God, there will also be a way in which that desire can properly find expression. This will always be according to the word of God and the manifest presence of the Spirit in the Church of God.

We must distinguish, I am quite sure, between the instinct and the manner in which it seeks expression. It would be the greatest mistake to brand as "wicked" those who have evidently spiritual instincts of God, though their expression falls short of, or is even contrary to, principles of His word which may not be known. Indeed, to ascertain these principles is not a light or easy matter. It comes but partially to all, and as a result, no doubt, of much exercise, and even many failures. We are not so single-eyed that we at once learn and follow the full will of God as to our path. This should make us very pitiful one of another, and stir us up to fresh love and earnest longing that God will lead us all in His ways more fully. But that He is leading, we cannot doubt. We know this apart from any outward manifestation of it, from the fact that He loves His Church, and will never forsake it. Can we not see at the present time a distinct, fresh leading of the Lord?

To illustrate, I will refer frankly to the sad divisions which have so marred the testimony of the various companies of God's people, professedly gathered to the name of our Lord Jesus. Entrusted with much priceless truth which we hold in common, truth which reaches from the fundamentals of the gospel to the final display of the glo.

ries of Christ in His Church in eternity, there have yet been sad and disfiguring divisions which are our common shame and sorrow. Every true spiritual instinct would long to see the cause of these divisions removed. This is the common desire to which I have referred above, which I am sure meets with our Lord's approval wherever and in whatever measure He may see it; but it is as to the manner in which He would lead us to the healing of these breaches that I think we have needed, and still need, the exercise which will cast us the more upon our Lord's grace, in order that we may know His way.

Broadly speaking, there have been two thoughts as to this in the minds of the saints. Some, weary of the strife which has but too plainly indicated the pride that produced it, have felt that the best thing to do was to ignore and to forget all the sorrows of the past and to make a fresh start. In addition to this, they have found it necessary to modify certain principles which very many of us feel are absolutely necessary for any full scripture testimony as to God's thought of His Church. The principles have been blamed for the practices which have produced the divisions; and while perhaps not fully refusing them as unscriptural, these to whom I refer so link these principles with past failures that they would ignore and forget both the principles and the practices together. I think I might say that they would wish that we were back at the beginning again, with all the past entirely forgotten.

Now it is just here where I believe we need to be much on our guard. The principles of God's truth remain, no matter how much we have abused them through mistaken zeal or self-will. They can never alter; and any course which would sacrifice principles for the sake of giving expression even to a God-given love in the heart will only

pave the way for fresh sorrow, and indeed be tantamount to giving up that for which we should contend most earnestly. If there is to be a distinct testimony as to what we call Church truth, it must be according to the word of God, and not at the sacrifice of any portion of it.

On the other hand, others, to whom we would not deny a God-given desire for His honor, have maintained that the only way to heal the sorrows of the past is to return to a certain company of the Lord's people, with the fullest acknowledgment that *they* constituted the divinely recognized vehicle of testimony on earth, and that to depart from them, therefore, was schism which needs to be judged. In other words, the question is not, Where is the right? but, Where is the Church? It makes no difference who makes such a claim; it is a manifest tendency to ecclesiastical pride which cannot be overlooked. It assumes the prerogatives of the Church, and then on that ground, demands a bowing to its decrees, which is in principle, Rome—no matter by whom it may be practised.

Here, then, we have two extremes; the one of independency, the other of metropolitan tyranny. We can accept neither of these; but again the heart cries, Has God no relief for His beloved people who, in sorrow and simplicity, would still seek His way in the midst of the confusion to which we all confess we have contributed? I believe God has awakened this longing, and that He has heard the cry of many of His people; and I believe that He is leading in the way which is neither the undue pressing of a truth, nor the refusal to receive it. It is for us to ask, How is He leading, and how may we know it is His way? I believe that if we will but listen we cannot mistake His voice.

In the first place, a lowly, chastened spirit of sorrow, which realizes my own individual failure, will mark any

true exercise regarding this whole matter. Surely, a high and haughty spirit in a day of rebuke like this is mere madness. There never was a time when we could boast, and surely, least of all, the present. Our own slowness of heart, the constant tendency to follow the Lord afar off, the pressure of the world on all sides, the loss of the freshness of the hope of the Lord's coming, and many other things, should bring us to our faces individually and collectively.

Let us not assume that this is an easy matter, and dismiss it with a wave of the hand. Lowliness is a plant of slow and, alas, rare growth; and we all need to be deeply exercised in this direction. Therefore, wherever true contrition, self-judgment, and a lowly spirit are present, there, we may be sure, the Lord is. "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

Where we are thus before Him, will not our gracious God lead us to a full recognition of those principles of His truth which can never change?—principles of assembly order and fellowship; the objective truth of the unity of the body, coupled with its expression in the endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; there will be no sacrifice of these principles—they will be held all the more clearly because of our realization of how we have failed in the past.

If these two things are present with us, a lowly spirit and a clear apprehension of the principles of divine truth, we will next be ready for the step to which our gracious God would lead us:—not to a forgetting of the past and turning away from it (only to learn through fresh sorrow and failures lessons which we refuse to gather now), but in calmly and humbly examining the acts of the past

which have been the occasion of the divisions, and judging them in the light of divine truth, in all lowliness and meekness. We may be sure that the need of this judgment will not be on one side alone. Even where truth has been held, its application has often been mistaken, and pride has subtilly lurked behind many an act; but we will be in a position to judge the past, to see wherein we have failed, and without exacting one from another something as due to *us*, we will all be ready to take our share of the failure of the past. Our common state we will commonly acknowledge; our individual failures we will own, and to our corporate acts we will apportion whatever has been lacking, or contrary to the word of God which should have governed at that time. What will the effect of this be? Not a triumph for this or that party on the one hand; nor, on the other, a branding as evil those men of God who have been our leaders in the past (a cause of such deep exercise), but a happy learning of the lessons which God would teach us, that He may lead us on in His ways, and heal that which otherwise cannot be healed according to His mind.

There are doubtless many details which require patient care, but if the spirit which I have indicated above marks us, we may be sure that we are in a path where we can be led, and only blessing can result.

There is much cause for thankfulness that the Lord has been of late leading us in this way: slowly, we must confess, very slowly we yield to that which humbles us; but let us thank Him for what He has made known and for what He has done, and let us see to it that we are ready to follow Him as He says to us: "This is the way; walk ye in it."

In brief, then, the mark of a divine leading will be not the maintenance of pretentious claims, nor an ignor-

ing of Scripture principles, but holding them fast in lowliness, and in their light judging that which has in any of us been contrary to any of those principles.

May the Lord deepen in all our souls a longing for a true healing in any measure in these closing days, and exercise us more in prayer, and faith, unto all wisdom and patience and long suffering, and hope! S. R.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 25.—2 Cor. 13 : 4 speaks of our being "*weak* in Him," Eph. 6 : 10 tells us to "*be strong* in the Lord." Kindly give why the difference exists.

ANS.—In the first it is said that "though Christ was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God." To surrender Himself thus to death—the expression of utmost weakness—was a necessity, as we all know. And as identified with Him in that death, which is true of every child of God, we too confess our weakness and helplessness. When what we are in ourselves is the thing in view, Christ crucified is God's only answer—a most humbling yet wholesome lesson.

But Christ is not left there, nor we. "He liveth by the power of God." All power is His, and is displayed in the apostle, as he declares throughout the chapter.

In Eph. 6 : 10 he but exhorts us to be in such a state of soul as will enable us to make use of that power, detailing in the verses which follow the means of being strong.

QUES. 26.—Could Acts 21 : 24, 26 possibly mean that the apostle got back under the law? And could we call that obedience on his part which is mentioned in verses 4 to 11 of the same chapter?

ANS.—It was not getting back under the law as a principle of approach to God, but it was a violation of what he wrote later on in Eph. 2 : 13-22. It was yet maintaining a place in the Jewish system which prevailed yet so long among Jewish believers, with

which the Lord bore in patience, but to be totally abandoned as commanded in Heb. 13: 10-13.

As to verses 4 to 11, the apostle evidently did not recognize the entreaties of brethren as the voice of the Spirit, else it would have been disobedience; his passionate love for Israel led him on; and God never condemns love. It is not a safe guide, however. ¶

Paul's failure to recognize the voice of the Spirit was no doubt at the root of the weakness he displays in yielding to the advice of his Jewish brethren. Had he not gone to Jerusalem, as the Spirit warned, he might have gone to Rome as the Lord's *free* servant, instead of the Lord's *bound* servant. Let us learn from the mistakes of the Lord's dear servants, and also from the manner of the Lord toward them. As our sins and misery have manifested the depths of God's love, so the apostle's mistake, which puts him a prisoner in the hands of the Gentiles, becomes through grace the means of bringing the gospel before rulers and kings. Let us never despair because of our mistakes and sins. If we but bring them to God in brokenness, and hide nothing, He can, and will, use us the more, even while we suffer their natural consequences.

QUES. 27.—“Saturdarian Delusions.” The printed paper under this heading which you send us for review means well, no doubt, but it certainly can be no help to the cause it advocates. Its subject is scarcely within the purpose of our magazine.

QUES. 28.—Why are not *all* the gifts spoken of in 1 Cor. 12 recognized and exercised among those gathered to the Lord's name as well as those referred to in Eph. 4: 11, 12? We know that “the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

ANS.—How can they be recognized, or exercised, if they do not exist? If any had the gift of miracles, of healing, or of tongues, as they had in apostolic days, they could no more hide them than evangelists, pastors, or teachers, hide theirs. Indeed, so anxious are some to be found with such gifts—“sign-gifts”—that they pretend to have them while any sober person can see they have not.

The gifts of Eph. 4 are of absolute necessity to the Church during her passage here. They remain to the end therefore, for Christ's love to the Church cannot cease. Some of the gifts in 1 Cor. 12

are not for the Church. They were given as "signs and wonders" for *unbelievers* (1 Cor. 14: 22), that the origin of the new doctrine might not be questioned. When God judged that these sign-gifts had abundantly fulfilled their purpose, He withdrew them. They were given and withdrawn "according to His own will" (Heb. 2: 4). Nor is it difficult to understand why God should now refuse all sign gifts to His people. How could He call the attention of unbelievers to a Christianity which is fast becoming apostasy, and soon to be spewed out of His mouth as a loathsome thing? Christ Himself stands outside its door, appealing to every heart which still has an ear for Him (Rev. 3: 20).

Your use of the passage, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance," is not legitimate in this connection. It occurs in Rom. 11, where the promises and purposes of God toward Israel and the Gentiles are unfolded. Nothing can thwart *their* fulfilment; but God has not decreed that gifts of miracles should abide to the end. On the contrary, you will find in 2 Thess. 2 that "signs and lying wonders" are to characterize the closing days of Christiauity. Christ began it "with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will." Antichrist, "whose coming is after the working of Satan," closes it "with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; *because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*"

Sad picture indeed! but who that has his eyes opened by the Spirit of God does not see it fast forming about us on every hand?

Other questions remain for a future number.

EDITOR'S NOTES.

Service versus Communion.

A little incident recently came to our ears which illustrates so well a great matter that we give it to our readers as it came to us :

A loved and loving daughter made up her mind to work with her own hands a pair of slippers for her father's nearing birthday. She had to use every spare moment to accomplish the task in due time; and as she wished it to be a surprise, she had to hide from her father a good deal. Instead of welcoming him at the door, as was her wont when he returned home from his work, she had fled away up-stairs several times at sight of him through the window where she was working at the slippers.

Finally the birthday came, and the beautiful slippers were presented to her father. "Is this, my darling child, what has deprived me of late so much of your company? Well, I value the love expressed in the work, and thank you for it; but oh, my child, never again do such a thing. Your company and communion are worth to me more than all the work you can do."

Is not this just the lesson the word of God teaches us in Martha and Mary? (Luke 10: 38-42.) The Lord loved them both, and both loved the Lord; but Mary knew the Lord's heart as Martha did not: she abode therefore at His feet listening to Him and enjoying communion with Him while Martha was cumbered about much serving. Martha's chosen portion would be taken away therefore, for service is a thing of time; but Mary's would abide, for the communion of love is the very atmosphere of heaven our eternal home.

May we be "stedfast, unmovable, always abound-

ing in the work of the Lord," for we know that labor in the Lord is not in vain; but let not our service be of such importance in our eyes as to cause neglect of intercourse with the Lord Himself—neglect of His word and of prayer.

If we do, it will make our service savorless; it will cause us to be disobedient to the word of God where that word interferes with our ideas. Happy are they who, full of the joy of the Lord—the fruit of communion—serve unweariedly in the obedience which has no reserve.

"I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord."
(Zeph. 3 : 12.)

Such will be the remnant—those of faith—of the unbelieving nation of Israel just preceding the return in glory of the Lord whom they once rejected. To *them* He comes, and bids

them now "be glad and rejoice with all the heart . . . the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee : thou shalt not see evil any more" (vers. 14 and 15).

Are not present Christian times, just before the return of our Lord and the rapture of the Church, in principle like those Jewish times? Who that sees present Christian conditions from end to end of Christendom—sees them *with the eye of God*—can fail to be a mourner, and afflicted? Who that means to live by every word of God can avoid sharing the affliction and reproach that truth is now in? Who that purposes in his heart to obey the truth unreservedly will not find himself with a company of afflicted and poor people? Where is the man who, determined to declare the whole counsel of God, can abide in

peace to-day even in that which still calls itself orthodox?

Shall we then cease from "the good fight" because all odds are against the faith and cast reproach upon it? Why should we? It is a sign of the near fulfilment of our hope. Our redemption is nigh. The coming of the Lord is at hand. While afflicted *on the way* for a little while, the Holy Spirit—"the earnest of our inheritance"—fixes our eyes on the eternal joys of *the nearing end*.

"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

(1 John 1:7.)

This passage does not mean that cleansing by the blood of Christ is a continuous thing. It is not so at all. The believer is cleansed once for all by the blood of Christ, just as Christ shed His blood once for all, never again to be repeated. Heb. 10:1-22 teaches us this most forcibly. Believers are "sanctified (set apart to God) through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (ver. 10). They never need a second application of the blood of Christ, "For by one offering He hath *perfected forever* them that are sanctified" (ver. 14).

We need Christ *as Advocate* (1 John 2:1) every time we, *believers*, sin; we need Him constantly *as Priest* (Heb. 7:24-27), for in our life with God we are in incessant need—a need which He alone can supply; but *as Saviour*, the One who delivers us from the wrath to come, we meet Him thus once—"once for all." All thought of Him *as Saviour* after that is *remembrance*—the sweetest, indeed, of all remembrances, for time and all eternity.

READINGS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

(Continued from page 205.)

THE blessings which grace bestows along with justification by faith are all, as we have seen, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Now this suggests the idea of many being involved by the act of one, and sharing the results of that act. Possibly the thought was before the apostle's mind as an objection raised by some to his teaching. At all events, he fully indorses the idea. If the word "wherefore" is changed to the expression, "with reference to this" (which is really the force of the words in the original), the meaning is made more simple. Thus the apostle's argument is: With regard to the justified being involved in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ and sharing in its results, it is the same as it is with sin and death coming into the world by one man. Many are involved by the one sin of Adam, and share in the results of that sin.

There is no other explanation of the fact that the children of Adam universally have a corrupted moral nature. The moral nature of man was first corrupted in him—our progenitor. Having become corrupted in him, it has passed on naturally as an inheritance to his descendants. They have a fallen, sinful nature through him. All his children are thus involved in his fall and ruin—the many involved by the act of the one.

As regards death, it is the penalty of sin. It was by sin that death came to Adam, but the death that came thus to him has passed on to his descendants. Involved in his moral ruin by his sin, deriving from

him his fallen, sinful nature, to be righteously exempted from the death he brought in by sin, his children must establish a right to live. Not one has ever done this. They all sin, and so death justly passes to them. In the holy government of God it would be impossible to exempt from death the sinning children of Adam, although it is not *their* sinning that brought death into the world. It was brought into the world by the sin of Adam. It came in thus under the government of God as penalty for sin, and it necessarily passes to all that sin—which all do.* Righteously, therefore, all die.

The law did not alter this. It was a special system of dealing with man; a system in which sin was taken note of in detail, and under which sin became transgression, and was thus shown to be in nature and character *enmity* to God. If death thus rightly reigned under law, it is still true that it rightly reigned when and where there was no law; for it was not law that brought death into the world; it came in by sin, and sin was in the world before law.

* The apostle is not here taking the case of infants and idiots into consideration. It is quite true that they have, as an inheritance from Adam, a corrupt nature, and die. They are, so far, involved by his one act of disobedience. Still, when the apostle says, "For all have sinned," he must be exempting infants and idiots. He surely exempts them in chap. 3:23. Those who die in infancy, in irresponsibility, are exempt from a judgment of "deeds done in the body." It is of those in responsibility that the apostle says, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Even the irresponsible die, for they are linked by the body with the old creation which must pass away. But there is no reason why they will not have part in the first resurrection. If we view them in their irresponsibility as exempted from judgment, their case presents no difficulty

The principle, then, of many being affected by the act of one is clearly established by appealing to undoubted historical fact. The entire human race is involved in the one act of disobedience by which the moral nature of our progenitor became corrupted. The universal reign of death is a sufficient appeal to demonstrate the principle of many sharing in the consequences of the act of one.

Now Adam, looked at as the fountain-head of the stream of fallen, sinful humanity, a race of sinners, sharing in the disastrous results of his sinful act, is a "figure" of Christ. He, too, is the Head of a race, a spiritual race, all of whom are involved in His blessed obedience unto death, and share in its glorious consequences. The principles we have been considering are as true in connection with Christ as they are in connection with Adam.

However, before the apostle draws his conclusions from the argument he is using, he stops to point out certain features connected with those two fountain-heads in which they stand in remarkable contrast, and in which Christ abundantly exceeds over Adam. While Adam is a type of Christ, and thus in certain features there is a similarity between them, there are three features in which there is *dissimilarity*. The dissimilarity consists in this, that in the case of Adam there is the measuring of penalty in exact righteousness; while with Christ there is a wealth of blessing that far exceeds the need that has to be met. It is a "much more" than the recovery of a position and condition that have been lost. It is the gaining a much higher place and a condition of blessing infinitely greater than those which were forfeited by sin.

Let us look at the three features in which the dissimilarity between the first man, Adam, and the Second Man, the last Adam, is so strongly emphasized.

First, there is a difference between "the offence" of the one and "the free gift" which is by the Other. By Adam's one offence death has been transmitted to "the many" who have sprung from him. The death that came to Adam as penalty for sin has passed on in that character to those that have descended from him. Now the "free gift" by Christ, conferred on "the many" to whom it is given to "live by Him," abounds for them far beyond their deliverance from death, the penalty of sin. It means for them life in the abundance of its power. It is "much more" than salvation from the death duly and righteously deserved. It is the positive reality and blessedness of living with God.

Again, there is dissimilarity between the effects of "the one sin" and the effects of "the gift." A state of condemnation was established by one sin. One sin produced a subsisting state of condemnation. One sin brought it in. The gift through Christ has established a state of righteousness. An abiding, subsisting state of righteousness is the effect of the gift by Christ. This established state of positive righteousness is "much more" than deliverance out of the state of condemnation. The gift does indeed deliver out of the state of condemnation, taking full cognizance of the accumulation of offences; but beyond the deliverance from the condemnation, there is the provision of a state of positive righteousness, which is one of abiding acceptance. This is a righteousness already produced, fully accomplished—a

completed righteousness conferred by God in grace. How blessed to have it thus as the transcending favor of God!

The third feature in which there is dissimilarity relates to the final results. Through the offence of the one, there has come in by the one a reign of death. It has been an absolute reign—a reign of irresistible power. Now on the other hand there are those “who receive *abundance* of grace and the gift of righteousness.” It is not merely deliverance from the power of death, from its reign and triumph, but a “much more,” by which they themselves are “more than conquerors.” By the power of the life grace confers on them, they themselves reign. The life they have is life through and in the living, victorious Man, Jesus Christ. In this life they reign. What an abundance of grace!

Now we have seen that in verses 12–14 the apostle sets before us the features in which there is similarity between Adam and Christ; and in verses 15–17 the features in which there is *dissimilarity*. In verses 18–21 we get his conclusions. To rightly understand these we must keep in mind the dissimilarity as well as the similarity; the unlikeness as well as the likeness; the features in which there is contrast as well as the features in which there is resemblance. In other words, we must not forget the “much more” and the “abundance” of verses 15–17 while we are considering the apostle’s summing up of his argument.

There are three conclusions that the argument leads to. First, by one offence there was brought in for all men a state of condemnation. The one act of Adam operated in the way of establishing a sub-

sisting state of condemnation for all men. So, too, by one righteousness there has been brought in for all men an abiding state of righteousness. Before his fall Adam lived in a state of innocence. But it was living under conditions of testing, and so was not in an abiding state of righteousness. When he fell, he came into a new state. After he sinned, he was no longer under testing in innocence. He was in a new condition entirely. It was a state of condemnation. Condemnation was connected with the new condition in which he lived. This state of condemnation was brought in by his one offence. His one offence bringing in such a state, determined for all men a living in a state of condemnation.

Now Christ by His one righteousness has established an abiding state of righteousness. *He* is living in such a state. The abiding state of righteousness in which He lives is a provision He has made for all men. Just as Adam by his one offence passed out of a state of testing in innocence into a state of living under condemnation, so Christ by His one righteousness has passed out of a state of living in which He was in relation to sin (always personally sinless, of course), into a state in which He lives no more in reference to sin, but to God—a state of subsisting righteousness. He has passed out of a state in which He had to do with sin and death. He now lives in a state in which He no more has to do with them. He has established a state of abiding righteousness in the behalf of all men.

The apostle is affirming here the all-sufficiency of the provision of this state of righteousness. It has been established as a provision for all men. It is available for all. If any have difficulty about it, let

them remember the apostle, in the verse we are considering, is not speaking of the final results of either the one act of Adam or of Christ. He is speaking of the bearing of their acts. Just as the one offence of Adam was toward all for a state of condemnation, so the one righteousness of Christ is toward all for a state of subsisting righteousness of life.

Again, in speaking of a state of condemnation, he does not say "of life." Those who are living in this state are living in a state that is really death. When he speaks of a state of abiding righteousness, then he says, "of life." Those who are in this state are the only ones who are really living. They live by Him who has established a state of life in unchanging righteousness.

In verse 19 we get a second conclusion. By the disobedience of one the many springing from him have been caused to be sinners. They are sinners by the fact of inheriting his corrupt moral nature. So, too, on the other hand, by the obedience of Christ those who derive life and nature from Him, by that very fact have a life and nature *in which* they are righteous. They are not righteous in themselves, but in Him by whom they live. In Him they are holy, and unblameable, and unreprouable. In the life and nature they have derived from Him, the righteous One, they are in life and nature righteous. By His one obedience they have been caused to be righteous.

We must now look at the third conclusion—verses 20, 21. Here the apostle refers to the introduction of law as a special dealing with man. It did not bring in sin and death, but caused the *offence* to abound. It turned sin into transgression. It dem-

onstrated sin to be, in its essential character, enmity against God. It was given as a special system of dealing with man for that very purpose. But law did not bring either sin or death into the world. They were already in the world when the law was given. If sin reigned unto death under law, it did before law also. Nevertheless, whether in the time of law or before it, wherever sin abounded grace has abounded in a far more abundant measure. In every age-time there have been those who received "abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness." They reigned in life—a life not derived from the first Adam, but from Him of whom he is a "figure." They were involved in the one obedience. They were sharers in the results of the one righteousness.

How glorious these triumphs of the grace that is through Jesus Christ! How glorious, whatever the age-time, whether before law, after law came, now, or in the age-times to come!

If now sin has reigned in death, the reign of grace through righteousness is unto eternal life. While Old Testament believers derived their life—the life in which they reigned—from Him that then was to come, yet they did not have the life in the abundance and fulness of its power in which it is possessed by those who receive it now. But even we who derive life from Christ in this Christian age do not yet possess it in its most abundant power. For this all receivers of the "abundant grace" must wait until life is possessed in its final condition.

But this final condition—a condition that is permanent and eternal—is the assured portion of all the recipients of the grace that reigns through righteousness. All who derive life and nature from the

second Fountain-head live by Him. Living by Him, they are more than victors. The end will be the completion of the triumph of grace, living by Him still, but having life in its final and unchanging condition.

Now we must notice that the apostle adds, "through Jesus Christ our Lord." He has fully justified the principle of many being involved in the act of one, and sharing in the consequences of the act. Thus, in adding here, "through Jesus Christ," he reaffirms the principles.

Christ, then, is a new fountain, or source of life. Those who derive life from Him—the receivers of grace, the justified—live by and in Him. This fact assures of final and complete salvation—a salvation that will embrace the body.

C. CRAIN.

(To be continued.)

"THE VOICE OF THE LORD."

Unrevised Notes of an Address given some years ago by S. R.

Gen. 3: 6-9.

ADAM and Eve heard the *voice* of the Lord. We may see a person, but it has not the same effect on us as to hear his voice. When the Jews sent to John to find out who he was, he said, "Tell them I am *the voice of one crying in the wilderness.*" "My sheep hear *My voice*, and they follow Me."

The Lord said unto Adam, "*Where art thou?*" He does not say, "What have you done?" but, "Where art thou?" God wants the sinner to see, not only the sins he has committed, but the place he occupies—the place of *distance from God.* When God speaks, Adam hides himself, and he uses the very

gifts and blessings that God has given him to put them between himself and God: he hides among the trees of the garden. The sinner *hides from God*; but the one that hears the voice of the Son of God, and believes on Him, is *hidden in God*.

Matt. 3: 13, 17—Jesus comes to John to be baptized; and John knowing who He is, shrinks from putting Him on a level with the others. His baptism points on to the cross; His whole life pointed to the cross; as the grass was *cut down*, and put into the manger, so His birth too points to the cross. After His baptism, a *voice* from heaven said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Two things to be connected: God looks at the sinner, and says, "*Where art thou?*" then points to Christ, saying, "*That is My beloved Son*"—man's need, and God's remedy.

Num. 7: 89—Moses hears the *voice* from off the mercy-seat, saying, "Speak unto Aaron (chap. 8: 2), and say unto him, When thou lightest the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light over against the candlestick." When we light a light, it is to see the things around us. But this light, which is the Holy Spirit, is to shine on the candlestick—to show out the glories of Christ. If men were writing the seventh chapter, they would not make it so long, they would not repeat what each prince offered; for they are all the same. But God sees so much in Christ that He never tires to speak of Him. The sin-offering—what Christ is toward men—is but a small part, only one kid of the goats, while all the others speak of what Christ is toward God.

1 Kings 19: 11-13—God tells Elijah to stand upon the mount. There was a great wind that rent the

mountains, but the Lord *was not in the wind*; an earthquake, but the Lord *was not in the earthquake*; a fire, but the Lord *was not in the fire*; then, after the fire, *a still, small voice*. When he heard the voice he wrapped his face in his mantle, and the voice said, "*What doest thou here, Elijah?*" God does not *terrify* His children; He speaks to them in a still, small voice. How about *our path, our obedience, and our testimony?* Do *we* hear that still, small voice?

Song of Sol. 2: 8-17—"The voice of my Beloved!" Do we hear the voice of our Beloved? He looketh forth at the windows, showeth Himself through the lattice. We can almost see Him. He says, The winter is past, there is nothing to fear. The storm is past for us, and the singing-time has come. The *voice* of the turtle (Spirit) is heard in the land. Christ, from yonder side, is saying, "*Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.*" Turn from the things that drag you down, and be not like Lot, who was no pilgrim, but like Abraham, who, when God called him, left all—his country, kindred, and father's house. If we do not hear His voice calling us from earth *now*, we will not enjoy His coming.

"Take us the foxes, the *little foxes*, that spoil the vines. It is the *small things, the little trifles*, the gewgaws of this world, that do the harm. We close up the large holes in the fences, which the wild boar might get through; but the little foxes get through the little holes, and spoil the vines. We all know what our foxes are. The grapes are tender; God's Spirit is sensitive.

In the 14th verse there is another voice. God says, "Let Me hear *thy voice*; thy voice is sweet."

He loves to hear our voice, even if we only confess our failures.

“My Beloved is mine, and I am His. . . . Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my Beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.”

HOW RUTH GLEANED.

ONE of the most precious lessons we may learn from the story of Ruth is to be found in her manner of gleaning. In chapter 2:3 we read, “She went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers.” In verse 7 the servant said to Boaz, “She said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now.” Then in verse 23 the inspired writer adds, “She kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest.” She *came* to glean, she *continued* to glean, and she gleaned *unto the end*. Happy Ruth! she continued in the field, to find her need abundantly met through the goodness of God, under whose wings she had come to trust.

What an example of “patient continuance” and its reward this is for us who are privileged to “glean among the sheaves” of the word of God! How can we glean to profit?—continue unto the end? As we traverse the field of truth, we shall find, like the favored Moabitish damsel, “handfuls of purpose” let fall for us to gather. Our gracious Master, whom Boaz but faintly typifies, prepares for us, and drops

at our very feet, tokens of His love and care. "The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him" (Lam. 3: 25).

To follow Ruth further, she "beat out" that which she had gleaned. Now, if we would profit by spiritual gleaning, we must "*beat out*" the precious ears of truth by prayerful meditation. Then we shall be able to say with Jeremiah of old, "Thy words were found, and I did *eat* them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart" (Jer. 15: 16).

Then follows the practical application of the truth. "She took it up, and went into the city; and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed" (2: 18). What a complete picture of one who has been "abundantly satisfied" with the fatness of God's house! It is only by being thus satisfied, "filled with the finest of the wheat," that we can become His messengers, going out into the world laden with blessing for others.

May we therefore continue to glean, and glean unto the end, in this rich harvest-field. The time of gleaning brought Ruth food and gladness through the kindness of Boaz, to whom she had once been "a stranger" (2: 10): and what did the end of the harvest bring? Rest in His love and His home. So when our gleaning days are over, we shall pass into the glorious fulfilment of the promise left by our Lord Jesus, "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you *unto Myself*" (John 14: 2, 3). J. M. G.

For Me.

FOR me, my blessed Lord, to pity moved,
Looked down from heaven upon a soul He loved;
Yea, laid His glory by for love of me:
Believing, I accept the mystery.

His blessed head was crowned with crown of thorn
That mine might be refreshed when ofttimes worn;
And though the centuries have rolled between,
Eternity could ne'er efface that scene.

His piercèd hands outstretched in love for me
Insure sweet rest for mine eternally;
And though so many years have passed away,
'Tis just as real as though 'twere yesterday.

His heart was piercèd through with cruel spear
That mine might find its rest and lose its fear.
No past, no future, e'er that scene could set
So far from me that I could e'er forget.

His weary feet, once nailed to Calv'ry's tree,
Made possible the way to heaven for me;
And though the world hath drowned in revelry
His dying words, they still abide with me.

And He who died now lives in heaven for me.
His pleading day by day is constantly
My source of strength—He could not leave alone
The child for whom He suffered to atone.

The storm may break o'erhead, and sorrow crush
My heart; yea, and the silence of death's hush
May rend each tender tie all ruthlessly;
Yet, Lord, though *all* be gone, Thou art for me.

And soon I'll enter where Thy blessed face
Doth light all heaven with its glorious grace;
Yet even there Thou wilt eternally
(The ruler of all worlds) be *still* for me.

H. McD.

WATTS AND WESLEY.

THESE two servants of God to whom we owe so much in giving expression to the experiences of the Christian heart in their imperishable hymns, found in the experiences of their life frequent occasions, like David, for the outpouring of their hearts toward God. Isaac Watts' outburst of praise in

“Come, we that love the Lord,
And let our joys be known;
Join in a song of sweet accord,
And thus surround the throne”

found its birth it is said in some lovely scenery where he saw in nature “glory begun below.”

The beautiful stanza which closes one of his hymns,

“There shall I bathe my weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast.”

was inspired, it is said, by the calm beauty of the harbor within view of his home, with the vessels anchored and at rest after their voyage.

Isaac Watts was born at Southampton, England, in 1674, the son of a deacon of the Independent church. At the end of his 22d year he had written 110 hymns, and in the two following years 144 more, besides preparing himself for the ministry. Among his first 110 hymns is that jewel of his lyric work—

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

CHARLES WESLEY, took up the harp of Watts when the older poet laid it down. He was born at Epworth, Eng., in 1708, the third son of Rev. Samuel Wesley, and died in London, March, 1788.

His hymn,

“O, for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer’s praise,
The glories of my God and King,
And triumphs of His grace ”

is believed to have been written May 17, 1739, for the anniversary of his own conversion.

The remark of a fervent Christian friend, Peter Bohler, “Had I a thousand tongues I would praise Christ Jesus with them all,” struck an answering chord in Wesley’s heart, and he embalmed the wish in his fluent verse. The third stanza has made language for pardoned souls for more than four generations already:

“Jesus! the name that calms our fears
And bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music in the sinner’s ears,
'Tis life and health and peace.”

Charles Wesley was the poet of the soul, and knew its every mood. Most of the hymns of this good man, of which he wrote no less than six thousand, were hymns of *experience*—and this is why they are so dear to the Christian heart. The music of eternal life is in them. The happy glow of a single line in one of them—

“Love Divine, all love excelling,”

thrills through them all. He led a spotless life from youth to old age, and grew unceasingly in

spiritual knowledge and sweetness. His piety and purity were the weapons that alike humbled his scoffing fellow scholars at Oxford, and conquered the wild colliers of Kingwood. With his brother John, through persecution and ridicule, he preached and sang that Divine Love to his country-men and in the wilds of America, and on their return to England his quenchless melodies multiplied till they made an Evangelical literature around his name.

The voices of Wesley and Watts will ever be heard wherever Christian life is experienced here below.

Adapted from "Story of Hymns and Tunes."

EXPOSITION OF THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

(Continued from page 194.)

IRREVERENT AND IRRATIONAL DESPISERS OF THE TRUTH.

"Yet in like manner these dreamers also defile [the] flesh, and despise lordship, and speak railingly against dignities. But Michael the archangel, when disputing with the devil he reasoned about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a railing judgment against [him], but said, [The] Lord rebuke thee. But these, whatever things they know not, they speak railingly against; but what even, as the irrational animals, they understand by mere nature, in these things they corrupt themselves" (vers. 8-10).

UNHOLY ways always accompany, and indeed spring from, unholy teachings. Hence we can easily understand the readiness with which apostates from the truth give themselves up to what is defiling and abominable. It is noticeable that present-day advo-

cates of that insult to decency denominated "free love," are in large measure persons who have apostatized from a nominal Christianity, and now can tolerate, and even stand for, what they once would have abhorred. The loosening of the marriage tie, the prevalent evil of unscriptural divorce and all its train of iniquitous practices, find in modern latitudinarian thought and liberal theology earnest defenders. What would once have been rebuked, even by the world, is now pandered to by a Christless pulpit, and so men and women sustaining unholy relations are rocked to sleep in their sins and made comfortable with the vaporings of "filthy dreamers," while death, judgment and eternal punishment are fast hastening on!*

Coupled with this new standard of morals, so opposed to the purity of Scripture, will be found a pride that brooks no bounds, and vaunts itself against every unseen power. Satan is no longer feared, but his very existence denied on the one hand, or his superhuman ability ridiculed on the other.† How different was the behavior of Michael the archangel, who, when he disputed with the great

* If any think these words too strong, let them observe the many well-known apostates from orthodoxy who now glory in being linked up in a "fellowship" that not merely tolerates, but exults in, the recognition of leading advocates of all that is specified in this paragraph.

† It is a matter of sincere regret that the Salvation Army, numbering many earnest workers in its ranks, should have permitted so many loose and objectionable expressions in regard to the unseen prince of the bottomless pit as will be found in its literature and heard in its testimonies. Satan is a mighty foe, not to be made a subject of ridicule or jest.

adversary about the body of Moses, durst not rail, but said, "The Lord rebuke thee!"

All kinds of ingenious theories have been advanced concerning the nature of this dispute; but as God Himself has not given us the particulars, it would seem useless to speculate. Moses appeared in body on the mount of transfiguration, with Elijah. That the dispute may have had something to do with preserving his body from corruption in view of that wondrous occasion, seems likely; but beyond that, it is best not to give rein to the notions of the mind. When we know as we are known, this and all other mysteries will be solved in a scene where knowledge can no longer puff us up as here.

It is important to observe that we never read of archangels in Scripture. Men may so talk, but God's word never. The word occurs only in the singular. Michael (meaning, "who is [as] God") is *the* archangel. Gabriel, for instance, is never so called. Some have sought to identify Michael with the Son of God Himself. But as there is no word from the Holy Spirit that declares such an identity, it seems unwise to theorize, and in the writer's judgment the evidence is all the other way.

Michael appears in the book of Daniel as "the great prince that standeth for the children of [the prophet's] people"; that is, of Israel. In the Revelation he appears as the leader of the angelic hosts, driving Satan from the heavens when his days of accusing the brethren are ended. Here he is seen contending for the lawgiver's body; and in 1 Thess. 4 he seems to be a distinct being, whose voice (as Israel's prince) will be heard in connection with the shout of the Lord and the trump of God, at the Sa-

viour's coming to gather His redeemed to Himself in the air. It is noticeable that in Dan. 10: 13 he is called, by another angel, "Michael, one of the chief princes"; a title, it would seem, utterly inconsistent with Him who was known of old as "The Angel of the Covenant"—now as our Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God.

It is solemn indeed to be told that so great a being "durst not" bring a railing accusation against the devil, while proud, haughty men, ignorant of God, of Satan, and of themselves, speak boldly against all that is high, and rail concerning things utterly beyond their comprehension.

Even in what they do understand they do not behave with propriety, but, like natural brute beasts, they corrupt themselves, manifesting complete inability to curb their fleshly lusts; while, knowing no shame, they dare to rail against the admittedly unknowable, if a divine revelation be rejected. But, alas, this is the result of the deification of the human mind, the root-error of the so-called "New Thought," "Christian Science," and other "oppositions of science, falsely so called."

Thus the harvest is fast ripening for judgment, and it becomes increasingly important that those who know God search His word and value His truth; remembering that perilous times have indeed come, when, if it were possible, Satan would deceive the very elect.

If some are kept from error and the evil practices resultant, it is only through the same grace that saves; even as the apostle tells the Thessalonians, after warning them of the energetic working of the mystery of lawlessness and the coming strong delusion:

"But we ought to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, that God has chosen you from the beginning to salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (2 Thess. 2: 13). If any abide in the truth, it is owing to the fact that God Himself has chosen them, and sustains them in their path. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded!"

(To be continued.)

H. A. I.

QUESTIONS AS TO JUDE Ver. 4.

ABOUT the same time that the paper on Jude 4 appeared in print I received a letter from M—, Reading, Pa., reading as follows:

"In your articles on Jude, now running in **HELP AND FOOD**, I would like you to answer these questions:

"(a) Does the apostle teach that these apostates (in verse 4) at one time in their lives possessed divine faith in their souls?

"(b) They must have had the grace of God ere they could have turned it into lasciviousness; and if they had grace at one time, how could they get it apart from faith?

"(c) If these things are so, a soul can once have faith, lose the faith, and eventually be lost."

I think (a) is fully answered in the paper referred to (see June **HELP AND FOOD**). But I merely add that these men were ungodly, who had crept in with a view to leading astray the people of God. Who could conceive of such as these ever possessing divine faith in their souls? Observe, they were false from the start; otherwise they would not have "crept in." Like the "creeping things" of Lev. 11: 29-31, they were ever unclean.

As to the statement made in (b), the questioner misses the force of the word "grace" as here used. "The grace of God" is here synonymous with "the gospel of God." They perverted the message of God's favor toward guilty men by professing to believe the glad tidings of grace while living in sin, and teaching others to put license in the place of true Christian liberty. The questioner's premise here being unsound, the question based upon it becomes irrelevant.

As to (c), what has been supposed throughout is not according to the truth of God, which assures us of the abiding character of divinely-imparted faith. The word received is the "incorruptible seed." The life communicated is "eternal life." Consequently the believer shall never perish.

I would earnestly urge M—— to send to the Publishers for three very helpful pamphlets entitled, "Fallen from Grace; or, Castaway," by W. Barker; "Final Perseverance: What Is It?" by C. H. M.; and "The Perseverance of the Saints," by F. W. Grant. The three will be sent postpaid for 15 cents, and, if all are studied prayerfully over an open Bible, may prove to be one of the best investments ever made. H. A. I.

You must not confound peace and communion. One may have peace—not have the least thought of anything being imputed to one—and not have the joy of communion, because there is something that grieves the Holy Spirit, or some forbidden thing that the heart retains, or a state of soul where there has been evil, and where, though recovered from it, the work of God in the heart is not accomplished.

J. N. D.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 29.—I have been brought up in the orthodox way, but lately have become related to "Millennial Dawn" people, heard much of their teaching, and become interested in it. What do you think of it? Is it not strange that Christians should differ so much on such important subjects as the immortality of the soul, the trinity of the Godhead, hell, etc.?

Are you not looking for the Millennium? One of my people has fixed the date at 1936. Mr. Russell has the time of trouble beginning 1914.

I would be glad to hear what you have to say.

ANS.—Your inquiry covers much more ground than we have room for here. We are having our Publishers therefore send you some writings which bear on the subject. They were threatened with a lawsuit by Mr. Russell, the author of "Millennial Dawn" a while ago, on the plea that they injured its sale; so they must disagree very strongly with its teaching. And no wonder; for the very foundations of the faith are destroyed by Russellism.

Christians do not differ, as you seem to think, on the immortality of the soul, the trinity of the Godhead, hell, etc. All true Christians believe man has an immortal soul; believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit; believe that the wicked go into everlasting punishment as surely as the righteous go into everlasting life.

They believe these truths because they are revealed in the Scriptures.

By virtue of the "many antichrists" (1 John 2:18) which began in apostolic times, and have gone on increasing since, who deny these foundation truths, some of the children of God may have been, and may now be, disturbed and thrown into confusion; but this is not the rule; it is the exception. You must not confound the mere professors of Christianity with men who have been born of God, in whose hearts Christ dwells by faith. All such hold fast to these foundations, as a man in mid-ocean holds fast to the ship.

The devil is a master at craftiness. In the palmy days of Rome there was no gospel preached; it was all hell-fire, used to bring the masses into subjection to a church which could deliver none out of it. Now that the gospel is preached with clearness, there must no

hell-fire be preached, lest it disquiet the consciences of men, and they flee to Christ and the shelter of His precious blood, where there is deliverance from it—where indeed, and justly now, hell is heard of no more, but love which passes telling.

What a crime against humanity these no-hell preachers are guilty of! Even apart from their rendering useless the gospel of Christ, and making sinners comfortable in their sins, who knows how many murders, suicides, and crimes of all kinds, with their attending sorrows, they are accountable for by their removing all fear of God from the minds of men? Children of God are indeed ruled by love, for they know love, and its holy claims too; but not the ungodly.

As to your relative's view of the Millennium, or Mr. Russell's, both are vanity itself, if our Lord's words in Matt. 24:36 are taken into account. Every setter of dates has thus far had his folly proved, and will to the end. Dates belong to the Jew, not the Christian.

As to the trinity of the Godhead, it may be as much above man's philosophy as to create a sun is above his power; but to deny it must end in the denial of Scripture, for the two stand or fall together.

"Millennial Dawn"-ism is apostasy, not Christianity. It is a pious fraud; it acknowledges Christian truths which all Christians love and delight in, but only to annul them by its crooked reasonings and absurd vagaries. For instance, in the little book you send me, "The Plan of the Ages," Christ is owned as having been dead three days and then raised again. But this acknowledged resurrection is only a myth, for it is further denied that Christ's body ever came out of the grave, and He is declared to be "no longer a human being in any sense." Imagine, if you can, a man raised from the dead being no longer a human being in any sense! Look with me for a moment at an incident after the resurrection of Christ. It is related in Luke 24:36-43. As for very joy His disciples could not believe that He was indeed risen from the dead, "Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And He said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself: handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, AS YE SEE ME HAVE."

And in the face of this, the book you have sent me can say that Christ is no longer a man in any sense! It is silly, and only an infatuated people can be thus hoodwinked. It is *wicked*; for only wickedness can thus mock the Scriptures, and yet, with a show of piety, pretend to believe them. But it is easy to see what causes this infatuation; easy to explain why the crowds love it. The sum and substance of it all is, There is no everlasting punishment; if eternal bliss is missed, 'tis but a loss that is not missed, for the being exists no more to know it. How sweet this is to a proud and ungodly world which refuses to repent! Depend upon it, dear friend, a doctrine such as this has not holiness for its background, whatever it may profess. It may be sweet as honey now, but the spirit of rebellion toward God lies behind it, and that is always a spirit of corruption.

We would not have written so much at length had we not already found some of God's beloved people caught in this unholy net, and delivered from it. Were our answer to you the means of the deliverance of but one more such, we would feel many times repaid.

QUES. 30.—Will you kindly explain Matt. 5: 23, 24? What is meant by "Leave thy gift," etc.?

As a believer in Christ, do I, to please God, search for those whom I have injured, and ask forgiveness? God has forgiven my sins, I know, but I am not sure about getting the forgiveness of man. I want to stand right with God, and a pure heart I long for.

ANS.—Your understanding of the passage is quite right. We thank God for your tenderness of conscience. Maintain it all along the way, and you will reap blessing from it. Nothing is more detrimental to Christian holiness and progress than to present oneself before God for prayer or praise with a defiled conscience. If forgiveness is refused you upon confession of wrong, the burden is no more on you, but on him who does not forgive.

Other questions remain for future issues, D. V.

EDITOR'S NOTES.

Jacob and Esau.

Looking at these two men in their natural state Esau certainly seems the more attractive of the two. He is a commander, with those bold strong traits of character which men generally admire and submissively bow to. Jacob is crafty and wins in an underhanded way—a thing men ever despise.

Be the natural character this or that, however, is little matter to God, for He sees the selfishness and sinfulness of man in the one as in the other.

The immense difference between these two men in the sight of God is this: They both knew well the extraordinary promises which God had made to their grandfather Abraham (Gen. 17: 1-8) and repeated to their father Isaac (Gen. 26: 2-4), promises which indeed wait still for their fulfilment at the coming again of our Lord Jesus as King of the Jews (Ezek. 37: 21-28). These promises of everlasting blessing to the individual, of prosperity, peace, and imperial position to the nation over all the nations of the earth, might well be valued by them, for it was an inheritance above every other. Esau despised it, and chose above it the momentary gratification of present enjoyment. Jacob valued and secured it.

What greater insult can there be than slighting the proffered gift of sovereign grace? What more base than to barter away for a mere passing trifle that which is of immense and eternal value! Such was the insult Esau threw into God's face. He was a mere natural man, unable to appreciate anything but the present.

Jacob on the contrary, believing the promise God had made to his father, cast his eye on the future glories it involved. There might be no sign of that yet. There might be long waiting for it, for the God of eternity need never be in a hurry. There might be years of deep and painful discipline on the way. All this might be, but God cannot lie, and such an inheritance promised by Him is well worth waiting and suffering for. Such is *faith* and its nature even in such a naturally crooked man as Jacob.

Such is faith now in every quickened Jacob. It has *now* greater things in view than Jacob had, for the God of Abraham, of Isaac and Jacob is revealed to us as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and since Jesus Christ has come, greater things still have been promised to faith. Let all who are of faith rejoice, for the fulfilment of all promises, whether those to Abraham or to the Church, is fast nearing.

“The trial of your faith” (1 Pet. 1: 7). “My! oh my! What shall I do? I have now only the great God to look to!”

Such was the exclamation of a Roman Catholic girl as, by accident, the crucifix she carried about her neck had fallen down the stone steps and been broken to pieces.

Many less superstitious and better instructed may smile at the poor girl's dismay, who yet might be no less distressed if they really found themselves with *none but God* between them and their circumstances. *Nature* shrinks from the removal of props,

weak and failing as these may be. It wants to *see* something, even if it be but a piece of glass. *Faith* only it is that shrinks not from being left absolutely alone with the living God. And is it not to rid faith of what is of nature still that God puts it again and again into the furnace even as gold is tried in the fire to free it from amalgamation?

Peter, who is especially the apostle of the wilderness, tells us of this: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Let us not fret under the process, but peacefully submit ourselves to God, the eye fixed on the blessed results at the end.

"Ye are dead"

and

"Ye are risen"

(Col. 3: 1-4).

Once we have seen what sin is by the sufferings of Christ on the cross, where He "was made sin for us," there is no getting free from the distress of indwelling sin save by receiving in simplicity of faith the double fact that we are both dead and risen with Christ. It is not that we *ought to be dead*, or *ought to be risen*, but the *fact* that we *are* so. Not only were our sins laid on Christ but "our old man is crucified with Him" (Rom. 6: 6). This separates us from our evil self as well as from our sins, and we are no longer in bondage. Then we are "risen with Christ," and thus brought to the place of fruitfulness.

The open Red Sea let the people out of the land of bondage, and the open Jordan let them into the land of vines and fig-trees. How full is the grace

of our God, who will not only have a free people but also a fruitful people—a people who, if newly “created in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2: 10), are created “*unto good works*, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Christianity has wonderful dogmas, all of which are living, active, operative dogmas. No wonder Jude would have us contend earnestly for them.

The Jews.

Russia, in the wonted brutality of her intolerance and of her deep-seated hatred of the Jews, is driving them gradually from her territory. Massacres, some loud and public, others more or less hidden, all tacitly countenanced by the authorities, take place from time to time, and public edicts that they leave the country by such a time compel them to dispose hurriedly and at great sacrifice of what they possess, and remove to other countries.

Whilst their sufferings may well excite the compassion of all compassionate people and make all *true* Christians blush at the thought of such things being perpetrated by a people calling themselves Christians, God is no doubt making use of it to bring about the end of His own purpose of grace and glory toward Israel. Many thus driven away from their homes are turning to the land where the promises made to their fathers are yet to be fulfilled. The Turkish government once so oppressive to the Jews is now exceedingly favorable to them, and will doubtless end in restoring to them the land which, by divine right, belongs to them. When this is done, and the rising desire of the Jews to be a

nation again is accomplished, the thirty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel will be fulfilled. This portentous event may now take place at any time—portentous indeed! for the Church which has been meanwhile the sphere of the Spirit's activities is then taken to heaven, and the nations of the earth with their kings and mighty ones must one and all be abased to let Israel and her King step to the front and rule them. What moral and political convulsions then to bring about such a mighty change! Then will Russia, in her last endeavor to crush and spoil Israel and satisfy her pride, prove that God's judgment of her prophesied in the thirty-eighth chapter of the same prophet is, alas, but too true.

The Church may well be now as a bird with outspread wings on the topmost bough.

But what moral convulsions must these poor Jews also pass through before they are ready to recognize that the Jesus whom they crucified and still hate, is their promised Messiah, by whom they are to be elevated to such heights!

The nations of the earth are prepared for gigantic conflict. Alas, they are not preparing in vain! It will come indeed, ere they are willing to take submissively the place assigned them by the King of kings in relation to His people Israel.

There is much talk of peace also, and that will also come, but under the reign of Christ, not of any international court. When the nations have, by the manifestation of His power and glory, bowed submissively to Him, then shall they enjoy peace—universal peace—but not before.

“ABOLISHED RITES:” WHAT ARE THEY?

A PAMPHLET has been sent me entitled “Abolished Rites,” with a request that a word be given in *HELP AND FOOD* as to the proper application of Heb. 9: 10. In the tractate referred to, the passage is made to mean that baptism and the Lord’s Supper were instituted in the early church, by the Lord and His apostles, to last “until He come,” which is taken to refer to His providential coming at Jerusalem’s destruction. These precious emblematic observances are said to be included in the “divers washings (or baptisms) and carnal ordinances, imposed [on them] until the time of reformation.” This latter expression is made to be co-incident with the destruction of the city and temple by the Romans. Much stress is laid on the spiritual character of this dispensation, and ordinances of any kind are declared to be out of all harmony with it.

How any thoughtful reader of Heb. 9 can fail to see that the “abolished rites” of that chapter are the ritualistic services of the legal dispensation, is beyond my comprehension. The writer’s difficulty evidently arose from a faulty understanding of the last part of verse 8—“While as the first tabernacle was yet standing.” He jumps to the conclusion that *all* forms or ceremonies celebrated prior to the actual leveling of the temple, are to be considered as abolished afterwards. A little study would have made known to him that the true meaning of the clause is “While the first tabernacle had a standing.” J. N. D. renders it “While as yet the first tabernacle has [its] standing.” No matter how long the temple as a building existed, it had no standing before God

after the rending of the veil. At that moment all typical ceremonies and ordinances were abolished.

But Christian baptism and the Lord's Supper were both communicated to us after the rending of the veil. It was in resurrection the Lord Jesus gave commandment to His disciples concerning baptism (Matt. 28: 19); and it was as glorified He expressed His desire to Paul the apostle in regard to the breaking of bread (1 Cor. 11: 23-25). Nor have these directions ever been countermanded or these hallowed ordinances been abolished.

It is true that we live in a spiritual dispensation. But we are not merely spirits. We have our bodies still. And baptism and the Lord's Supper are, in a very real and precious sense, the links between the outward and the inward. He who talks of spiritual communion, while ignoring the "bread which we break," and "the cup of blessing which we bless,"—the "communion of the body," and of "the blood of Christ"—makes it manifest that he considers his own thoughts to be above the written (and material) Scriptures. Even as he who glories in the Spirit's baptism, while decrying baptism in water as taught by the Spirit, shows himself unsubject to Him whose Lordship he is supposed to own.

A godly member of the Society of Friends was once convinced of this by a visit to various mission stations in India. In Calcutta educated natives said to him, "Your Christianity is just what we like; it has no baptism to separate us from our people, and no Lord's Supper where we eat with all Christians and break our caste; it is all spiritual, and we can hold it spiritually while remaining where we

are!" He owned frankly that he saw in this the wisdom of God in giving these ordinances to the Church. Both speak of the Cross, and are precious reminders of the death of Christ, never to be abolished "till He come."

H. A. I.

A Christian's Prayer.

BLEST Saviour, manifest Thyself
 To keep me free from sin:
 Empty me thoroughly of self,
 And dwell alone within.

Thou art the Guardian of my life:
 O make me pure and strong,
 To win the vict'ry in the strife
 'Gainst wickedness and wrong.

Whene'er temptations fierce assail,
 Help me to trust in Thee,
 For Satan's power can ne'er prevail
 When Thou dost cover me.

Order my footsteps in the way
 That leads to bliss on high,
 Shape my endeavors day by day,
 And guide me with Thine eye;

So that the deeds of every hour
 May, in a Christ-like life,
 Show forth my Saviour's sovereign power
 To keep me in the strife. F.

READINGS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

(Continued from page 236.)

(Chap. 6 : 1-13.)

HAVING unfolded the character of the transcending triumph of grace over sin, the apostle is anxious that those who are participators in this triumph should be preserved from what is, alas, a common abuse of his doctrine.

Enemies of the doctrine of grace have sought to discredit it by charging it with making sin a necessity. There are those who understand the doctrine to mean that it permits going on still in sin. Flagrant violations of holiness have been defended by the plea that it is allowable under grace to continue in sin—to indulge the lusts of the flesh. In many quarters it is taught that victory over sin is not to be counted on as long as we remain in our earthly life. It is said, "We have not yet received our sinless body, and as long as we have the old sinful body we must inevitably be subject to sin. It must have at least a certain measure of rule over us."

But the apostle will not allow those who are in Christ, those who live by and in Him, to entertain such unholy deductions from his doctrine of grace. When he says, "What shall *we say* then?" he is speaking as one of the numerous subjects of the reign of grace. He speaks as representing those, once among the victims of sin, whose hearts have been laid hold of by the grace which is by the one Man, Jesus Christ, and who have thus come to be *of* Him—sharers with Him in the life and blessing

of which He is the Fountain-Head. On their behalf, in their name, we may say, he asks, "Does the doctrine of grace allow one to go on still in sin? Do we take the view that grace abounding over sin implies that sin, or a measure of it, is justifiable as furnishing occasion for the triumph of grace?"

How indignantly the apostle refuses the thought! With what vigor and earnestness he denounces such a conception of his doctrine! The thought is intolerable. It is an unholy implication. It would destroy the true character of grace; it would rob it of the reality of its triumph; it would mean serious damage to souls, as it would vitally affect the state of their minds and the condition of their hearts. No! Such a view is to be wholly condemned. Those who are participators in the triumph over sin through Jesus Christ are to put the unholy thought far, far away. The authoritative apostolic declaration of the doctrine of grace demands it. Be it so that we still have our old sinful body, we can not allow that we must therefore sin more or less. We are not on that account to justify going on still in more or less sin. That is not deliverance from the dominion of sin.

If it be said, "Our future deliverance is secure, but present deliverance is impossible," the answer is, That is not the apostle's teaching. He teaches and insists on a *present* deliverance from the dominion of sin. As our Lord in John 8: 34 said, "Who-soever committeth sin is the servant of sin." The doctrine of the apostle is the same. With him, being under grace and under sin is an impossibility. Those who are the subjects of grace should regard

bondage to sin as incompatible with subjection to grace.

We come now to the apostle's discussion of the subject of present deliverance from the dominion of sin. We shall see that he divides his discussion into two parts. In the first he dwells on our title, or right, to be in present practical deliverance from sin's dominion; in the second he shows how deliverance is practically attained, and what it is found to be when practically reached.

Before we begin to follow the apostle's argument, let us remind ourselves that all men, as sprung from fallen Adam, are victims of sin and of death. Those laid hold of by grace, which is by Jesus Christ, have become His seed (Isa. 53: 10). As thus sprung from Him, they are sharers in the eternal life which is in Him. This participation in eternal life in Christ Jesus is a blessing to be realized *now*, as well as in eternity. The subjects of grace have *now* the eternal life that is in Him. It is in that sense that they now live by and in Him. But living thus in connection with Him, i. e., as sprung *from* Him, they are *of* the position in which He is. They belong to *it*.

What then is His position? Here we must remember that Christ, in grace, once took our position under sin. He was not *personally* under it, but in grace entered into the position of being under sin in the behalf of those who were personally in that position. Having thus in grace taken the position, He died—death being the penalty of sin, and so the due of those in that position. It was a vicarious death; He could die in no other way. Having died thus atoningly in behalf of the victims of sin, in rising

again He has taken up a new position, and is dead to the former position under sin, which in grace He had taken for those under sin.

Now, as we have already said, as sprung from Him we are of Him in His new position. We are of the position in which He is, and therefore dead to sin.

It is to this blessed fact that the apostle appeals in beginning his discussion as to our right to be practically delivered from the dominion of sin. His argument is this: Sin having had its reign over us to its legitimate end in death, and Christ having taken our place in subjection to it, we who have been laid hold of by His grace have passed out of that position from under sin. We are subjects of grace, and as such dead to sin. We have the right to be free practically from sin's power and rule. We have a positional deliverance which entitles us to live in happy subjection to grace, in the realization that sin's rights over us have all been annulled. We are freed completely from every claim of sin upon us, even from its claim to the use of the old sinful body. What a perfect deliverance grace has thus provided for us!

Alas, how little it is understood! How difficult it is to lay hold of the true conception of what our deliverance is! How few are in reality entering into what the apostle means when he teaches, as he does here, that the subjects of grace—those who are in Christ—are dead to sin!

Some, in their inability to lay hold of the real import of the doctrine of being dead to sin, deny it altogether. They insist that the fact of our having still the old sinful body is the clearest proof that we

are not yet dead to sin. Others, while they do not deny that the doctrine is taught, and that there is a certain ideal sense in which it is true, yet deny that it can be *practically* true. Others still modify the form of the words in which the doctrine is taught, and say, "We *ought to* be dead to sin." In their teaching there is much exhortation to the effect that Christians should strive *to die* to sin. How forcefully sometimes we are exhorted to put the old man to death. But in all this teaching the true conception of what deliverance from sin is, and being dead to sin, is lacking. The widespread misunderstanding of what being dead to sin is, shows how difficult it is for us to lay hold of it. Those who so zealously promulgate such teachings as we have referred to, in contradiction to the teaching of the apostle, will do well to weigh the incontestable argument of verses 3-7, in which the fact of our being positionally in the place of death to sin is clearly demonstrated. Let us now turn to it.

The apostle's first appeal to prove that we are in the position of being dead to sin is the significance of baptism. Baptism is the badge of discipleship to the risen Lord Jesus Christ. What makes it a suitable badge of discipleship to Him is that, as Peter tells us (1 Peter 3: 21), it is a figure of salvation by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Baptism being such a figure, shows that in our being baptized we were in figure put into the position of being dead with Christ. Furthermore, our being figuratively put into this position was in view to our living henceforth in a new life. But the new life our baptism calls for is one in the likeness of Christ's life in resurrection. Plainly then our baptism, though it

is a figure, witnesses to a position of death to sin. It declares that Christ has died to sin (having in grace put Himself under sin to do so), and that we are in figure identified with Him in His position of being dead to sin, to be identified with Him in the life He is living as risen.

Now what baptism witnesses to, the gospel declares to be true of us. As having heard and received "the word of the truth of the gospel," we know that when Christ died, the old, fallen, sinful man was being judicially dealt with. We know that if One died in behalf of all men, judicially all men have died (2 Cor. 5: 14, *Greek*). Having heard and received the word of truth, by which we have become new creatures in Christ, we know that our old man (the man connected with the old position in Adam) has been crucified—judicially put to death. His claims to the body have been annulled in his judicial death. The body, therefore, which once was in the power of the old man, now belongs to the new man; and though yet unredeemed, is no more for the use of sin.

Even though still in our old body, we are of Him who died and rose again, and our body, though still a sinful body, belongs to Him; and as belonging to Him, it is not under sin's dominion. How manifestly we have title to be practically delivered from sin's power and rule! We are, positionally, delivered. Though we have still the old sinful body, as being in Christ we cannot be charged with being sinful men. We do not have to wait until we receive the redemption of the body to be in Christ. We are in Him now. We are His seed now by His grace having laid hold of us. We are thus constituted right-

eous; we are no more chargeable with our old state under sin than a dead body, a corpse, is.

Clearly then is our position demonstrated to be Christ's position of being dead to sin. But this implies and involves living with Him; and living with Him *now*, not merely by and by. We shall surely live with Him when we get our redeemed bodies, but we have title to live with Him *now*, while we are still in the old body. He lives no more under sin's dominion. He went under it once in grace, but by dying and rising again He lives in eternal deliverance from sin's power. As subjects of grace—as being in Him—we are in the same sphere of life in which He is, where sin cannot enter. It is not simply that we have life in Him, but that we live with Him; and living with Him implies living in practical deliverance from sin's dominion. The apostle is not yet ready, however, to take up the question of the practical deliverance. Other questions of serious moment must first be given attention to.

The reason why many never get far along in the road to deliverance from sin's power is because they fail to take the very first step. Having established beyond question that the subjects of grace have title to be practically delivered from the dominion of sin, the apostle now points out what is the first step in the road to deliverance. What is it?

It is taking the right standpoint from which to look at ourselves. Many who are in Christ do not think of themselves as in Him. They think of themselves as in Adam. They think of themselves as under sin, as necessarily so because of sin still dwelling in them. It is not true, however, that because we have still the sinful body, we are under sin. We

are under sin as yielding to it, as serving it, as yielding the members of the body to its use; but we are not under sin as being still in the old body. We are thinking wrongly when we think of ourselves as under sin because we have still the old body of sin.

Now, to think rightly of ourselves is the very first step toward deliverance from the service of sin. The apostle tells us in verse 11 how we should think of ourselves. He says, "Likewise reckon"—consider, think of—"yourselves as *dead to sin* and *alive to God.*" We are still in our earthly life, but as in Christ we are entitled to think of ourselves as if we had died and were risen from the dead. It is this right thought of our position that the apostle presses upon us here.

Now another thing necessarily accompanies this right thinking of ourselves as if we were dead and risen. Viewing ourselves as connected with Christ in His position of having died to sin and living to God, we will consider that sin has no longer any title to the use of the mortal body. We will not consent to its reigning there; we will refuse that its lusts should govern us. We will look upon the members of our body as belonging to God, as if they were members of the new body which we are yet to receive. We will hold them to be instruments of righteousness—not of sin.

If now we take the apostle's standpoint of looking at ourselves as being in Christ, as if we were thus dead and risen and living to God, we shall then regard sin's title to our body as annulled, and that our Saviour-God has claims upon it, its members to be instruments of righteousness; and, as under these claims, there will be in us a purpose to have God's

rights to our body realized. We will be actuated by the thought that God's title must be made good practically—that His title over us should be realized in practical life.

The formation in our minds of this purpose, the establishment in our souls of this aim to be practically attained, carries us on a good step in the road to a life of practical deliverance from the dominion of sin; but until this purpose is formed, and the aim becomes the absorbing desire of our soul, progress toward a practical life of liberty from sin's power is impossible. Alas, how many are lacking here! They are content to drag on in weary bondage to sin with little or no purpose to be free from its rule.

May the Lord use the apostle's exhortations in verses 11-13 to establish in the souls of all the subjects of His grace an insatiable desire to be practically delivered from sin's power in its use of the body for any sinful purpose.

C. CRAIN.

(To be continued.)

HAPPINESS.

WHILE your *salvation* depends on Jesus and His finished work, and on that alone, your *enjoyment* of that salvation depends very much on yourself—on your holy walk with God, on your living a life within the veil—living daily by faith on Him who loved you and gave Himself for you. Without this you may be a Christian, but you will never be a peaceful, praising, happy Christian.

EXPOSITION OF THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

(Continued from page 248.)

THREE-FOLD APOSTASY.

“Woe to them! because they have gone in the way of Cain, and given themselves up to the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core [Korah]” (ver. 11).

Three-fold is the apostasy here treated of. I propose to take up the distinct phases, brought here to our notice so solemnly, under three separate heads, and so direct attention first to

“The Way of Cain.”

Strictly speaking there are but two religions in the world; *—the true, that of God’s appointing; the false, the product of man’s own mind. The first is the religion of faith; the second that of credulity or superstition, in whatever form it may appear.

In the beginning God made known to guilty man the truth that death and judgment were his rightful portion, only to be averted by the sacrifice of the glorious Seed of the woman, who in the fullness of time should appear as the sinner’s Saviour, bruising the serpent’s head, though Himself wounded in the heel. This was the primeval revelation. In accordance therewith, faith taught those in whose souls grace had wrought, the propriety of approaching God, the Holy One, on the ground of sacrifice; each bleeding victim pointing on to Him who was

* See a gospel volume, by the same writer, “The Only Two Religions, and Other Papers.” Paper covers, 20cts.; cloth, 50cts. Same publishers.

to be made sin that guilty men might be delivered from their sins and stand before the throne of the Most High uncondemned. Therefore we read, "*By faith* Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it, he being dead, yet speaketh" (Heb. 11: 4). Mark, it was not by intuition, but by *faith*—through a revelation apprehending the mind of God—Abel offered. He brought that which told of a life forfeited—a sinless substitute, whose vicarious death could be placed over against the desert of the guilty one. Of this the lamb out of the flock speaks loudly, though he who offered it has long been numbered with the dead in Christ.

This is the pith and marrow of the gospel, "Christ died for the ungodly." "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him and by His stripes we are healed." "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." Everywhere in Scripture the same testimony is given, for "without shedding of blood there is no remission."

Now this is exactly what, in principle, Cain denied. He brought an offering to God according to the promptings of his own heart, "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," as is the heart of every natural man. His sacrifice seemed fair and lovely: the fruits of the ground, wrung therefrom by toil and travail. But there was no recognition of the true character of sin and its desert. God's sentence of death on account of sin is refused; therefore no life is given, no blood is brought. This

is natural religion as opposed to what has been revealed. The fruits presented picture well man's effort in all that is fairest in character-building, all that is loveliest in man's attainment;—beautiful indeed if seen to be the fruit of divine grace already known in the soul; but of no avail whatever to meet the claims of divine justice, to purge the conscience and cleanse the soul from the stain of sin. It is surely plain, then, that "the way of Cain" is a most comprehensive title, embracing every form of religious teaching, ceremony, or cult that ignores the need of the vicarious atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Whether it be the substitution of rites and ceremonies for simple faith in Him who died upon the cross, as is so frequently the case in Romanist or heathen communions; or whether it be the subtle and refined speculations of modern religio-metaphysical systems (denominated Theosophy, New Thought, Christian Science, Rationalism and so on, *ad lib.*), which all tend to deify man in his own estimation and free him from what is held to be "the degrading thought" that he is a sinner needing a Saviour;—all spring from one and the same thing, the pride of the human heart which substitutes the notions of the unregenerate mind for the revealed truth of the word of God. All are but different forms of the one common human religion—the way of Cain—and can only lead their deluded followers to share Cain's doom.

The vaunted new religion of Prof. Elliott is as old as the fallen creation. It was first pictured in the fig-leaf garments of Adam and Eve; then crystallized, as it were, in the offering of Cain; and every

sinner too proud to own his guilt and trust the atoning sacrifice of the Christ of God has been an adherent of it, whatever form his superstition may have taken.

Back to the way of Cain are thousands turning who once *professed* to have an interest in the blood of Christ. Counting that blood a common thing, as the blood of a mere martyr for righteousness' sake and liberty of conscience, they trample beneath their feet its *atoning* value, and haughtily dare to approach the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity with the fruits and flowers of nature, boasting in what would be the occasion of their deepest repentance if they had received the love of the truth that they might be saved.

So with readiness, refusing the ministry of the Holy Spirit they give themselves up to

“The Error of Balaam.”

Of the false prophet who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the people of Israel, we read three times in the New Testament. In a passage very nearly similar to the one before us, Peter writes of “the *way* of Balaam” (2 Pet. 2: 15). The glorified Christ, in the Apocalypse (2: 14) speaks of “the *doctrine* of Balaam,” and Jude, here, mentions his *error*. That the three are most intimately related is self-evident. Out of his error sprang both his way and his doctrine. He was a striking example of those who suppose that the object of godliness is to make gain, and who consider it a right and proper thing that religion should be used to minister to one's personal advantage. Leo the Tenth was a true disciple of Balaam when he ex-

claimed to his cardinals, "What a profitable thing this myth about Jesus Christ has been to us!" And every person, of whatever sect or system, or perchance outside of all such, has followed after the error of Balaam who enters upon the dispensing of religious mysteries with a view to financial or other emolument.

Balaam's history, as recorded in the book of Numbers is an intensely solemn one. He "loved the wages of unrighteousness" while professedly a prophet of God, he endeavored to prostitute his sacred office to the accumulation of wealth. At times, deterred by fear, again by a sense of the proprieties, he yet persists in the effort to either curse or seduce the people of God for his own advantage. He stands before us branded on the page of inspiration as one who, for temporary profit, would stifle his own convictions and lead astray those directed by him.

The same dreadful error is at the bottom of the vast majority of evil systems being at present propagated by zealous workers. Which of them would exist for a month if it were not for the baneful influence of gold? Try to imagine modern faddists giving freely what they profess to believe is divine; suffering uncomplainingly, in order to carry their false gospels to the ends of the earth; dying triumphantly to seal their testimony in blood, as did the early Christians, and as do many godly and zealous believers still!

Let the mind range o'er the whole host of heterodox sects: the golden spell of mammon is upon nearly every one. And in all human systems, however orthodox outwardly, where the Word of truth is departed from, the same potent spell assumes control

of preachers and teachers whose lips should keep knowledge, and whose hearts should be free from covetousness.

This it is that leads to the effort to please, not God, but men. Smooth things are prophesied; offensive truths to ticklish ears are scarcely touched upon, or altogether avoided, and all in order that the purse strings of the ungodly may be loosened and the ministry be made a profitable and honorable occupation.

Of old, Christ's servants went forth in simple dependence upon Himself, for His name's sake, "taking nothing of the Gentiles," Elisha-like, they refused anything that looked like payment tendered for the gift of God. Abraham-like, they would not be enriched by Sodom's king. Peter-like, they spurned the money of the unworthy that no evil taint might be upon their ministry, nor a salve be put upon the sinner's conscience. But it is far otherwise with the popular apostles of a Christless religion. Gehazi-like, they would run after every healed Naaman and beg or demand a fee. Lot-like, they pitch their tent towards, then build a house in, Sodom, and under Sodom's patronage. Like Simon Magus, whose very name gives title to this most odious of all sins, they practice their simony unblushingly and think indeed that the gift of God can be purchased with money. But the dark clouds of judgment are gathering overhead and soon they shall learn, as Balaam did, the folly of pursuing so evil a way.

"The gainsaying of Korah"

is the last of this unholy trinity of apostasy. The way of Cain is false religion. The error of Balaam is false ministry. The gainsaying of Korah is false

worship and rebellion against Christ's authority.

Korah was not a priest, neither were any of his rebellious company. They were Levites whose business it was to attend to the outward service of the tabernacle. But lured on by pride they rose up against Moses and Aaron (typical of Christ as "the Apostle and High Priest of our confession") and setting aside God's anointed, sought to force their way into His presence as priests to worship before Him, without divine warrant or title. This is what is everywhere prevalent to-day. Independent and inflated with a sense of their own self-importance, vain men openly rebel against the authority of the Lord as apostle and priest and dare to approach God as worshipers apart from Him, and ignore His claims. This is the kernel of Unitarianism, and the leaven that is fast permeating unbelieving Christendom. The cry that all men by nature are sons of God and need no mediating High Priest is heard on every hand, and will increase and spread as the end draws nearer.

Jude says of these apostates they "perished in the gainsaying of Korah." He speaks of their doom as a settled thing. Just as sure as judgment overtook the dwellers in the tents of wickedness of old, when the earth opened her mouth and Korah and all his company went down alive into the pit. So shall the yawning gulf of woe receive in due time these insolent rebels against the Lord of glory, in the day when He, who has borne with their impiety so long in grace, shall arise to judgment.

It is precious to read in Num. 26: 11, "Notwithstanding the sons of Korah died not." Linked as they were by natural ties to the proud rebel, they

chose a different course, and their children are heard singing, in Ps. 84, "I had rather sit on the threshold of the house of the Lord than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Happy indeed is it for all who are numbered in the same holy company, and who, saved from going down to the pit, eschew the practices of all who go in the way of Cain, and run greedily after the error of Balaam for temporary reward, whose doom will be to perish in the gain-saying of Korah!

(To be continued.)

H. A. I.

PRAYING ALWAYS.

LEARN to entwine with your prayers the small cares, the trifling sorrows, the little wants, of daily life. Whatever affects you—be it a changed look, an altered tone, an unkind word, a wrong, a wound, a demand you cannot meet, a sorrow you cannot disclose—turn it into prayer, and send it up to God. Disclosures which you may not make to man you can make to the Lord. Men may be too little for your great matter; God is not too great for your small ones. Only give yourself to prayer, whatever be the occasion that calls for it.

WHEN we speak of being filled with the Holy Spirit, we simply mean that He has complete, entire control of our whole being. He occupies the entire man. An illustration may help here. We speak of a family filling a house, and we mean they have entire and undisputed control of it. In fact, we can speak of an individual as filling the house, when he

makes his presence and influence felt everywhere. We could carry the illustration further. A person is received as a guest into our home. He is a person of beautiful character, and singularly helpful. He is received into our guest-rooms, but is tacitly excluded from the more private parts of the house, where the work is done. Such a person would be said to be dwelling in our home, but you could not say he was filling the house. He is limited to certain parts of it. Perhaps he feels he is not welcome in the very part where his help would be greatest.

From "The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit." S. R.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 31.—If there is known sin in the assembly and it is unjudged by them, can the assembly count on Christ being in their midst?

ANS.—Such an assembly will not be much concerned whether Christ is in their midst or not. All Christians know that Christ abhors sin; that He had to go through untold suffering to put it away; if they are not concerned therefore about its being practised among them, neither will they be concerned about having Christ in their midst. The two stand or fall together: unconcern about sin is unconcern about Christ, and this is Laodicea—a state of things at whose door Christ stands calling upon His own who may yet have an ear to hear.

But we apprehend that your question goes farther than this, and that it asks if other Christians, outside such an assembly, can consider it as having no more the presence of Christ in their midst. To this we reply that we do not believe any man has the power to pronounce on such a matter. It belongs to the Lord alone. He never asks us therefore in His word to leave an assembly because Christ is no more in the midst of it, but because

unrighteousness is there, and there in power. To judge that Christ is not there is *assumption*—a dangerous thing to say the least. As it cannot be proved, it cannot control the conscience. To “depart from unrighteousness,” which is God’s word and way (2 Tim. 2: 19), is *obedience*—the true Christian mind; and this controls the real conscience, for unrighteousness can always be proved.

In such presumptive mind some have professed to decide which among the various parties of Christians has the Lord’s table, and which has the exclusive right to ecclesiastical recognition. All this has unholy ends, for it is born of pride and destroys the sense of right or wrong, so frightfully illustrated in the church of Rome. The spirit of obedience is not so. It can give “Thus saith the Lord” for every step it takes.

QUES. 32.—1 Cor. 14 gives, I believe, the order of God in the assembly of His people, and verse 31 makes it evident that that order is not a one-man ministry since “all may prophesy one by one.” In the use of this God-given liberty may there not be abuse? May not some forward brother (and such are not always the most able to edify) take advantage of the liberty and oppress the assembly to the grief of the Holy Spirit?

ANS.—Most assuredly. There is not one privilege which man has not abused, and the high privilege of freedom of ministry is no exception. Where the true character and purposes of ministry is realized, however, men will not think of its freedom; they will think of its *responsibility*, and see to it that they minister in communion with God. If any one does not, but abuses the privilege to the detriment of the assembly, in kindness and love let the assembly tell him so.

Rev. 2: 2 plainly shows that the assembly is responsible to prove if what ministry comes to them is really sent by the Lord. It is responsible therefore to judge of the character of what is ministered among them. A man who ministers in communion with God always edifies.

QUES. 33.—Are the “Duukards” or “Tunkers” sound in the faith? We are much among them and can find out little about what they hold, save that they seem very strong on baptism and taking no medicine. A little information would be gratefully received.

ANS.—As far as we know they hold to the fundamentals of Christianity. They are little occupied with *truth* however, but much with externals, especially the manner of baptism, washing of feet, peculiar dress, etc. From what we have heard among themselves the burden of their preaching is against pride, but it seems to be limited to the pride of dress and like external things.

The salvation which God's grace has provided in Christ for lost man, when possessed, is that which alone reaches and breaks up *all* pride. As elsewhere generally, one hears very little of Christ among them. In the world of *eternal* things it will matter little in what manner we have been baptized, or what has been the shape of our garments, but it will matter greatly what place the Lord Jesus Christ has occupied in our hearts. The more fully He dwells there the less legal or taken up with externals we are, though it will regulate our life through and through, for "We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, *are changed into the same image*, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3: 18).

QUES. 34.—Are men possessed with demons to-day as in the time of Christ, and spoken of in Matt. 8: 28, or has His death and resurrection changed that condition of things in any way?

ANS.—Yes, the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, with the descent of the Holy Ghost and the introducing of a dispensation of heavenly things has made a great change. It has changed the sphere and character of Satan's work, as it has changed the sphere and character of God's work. When God's work and blessing were of an earthly and material nature, the opposition of Satan was in the same things. Now that God's work and blessing are of a heavenly and spiritual nature, the opposition of Satan follows there too. Eph. 6: 12 plainly shows this, and 1 Tim. 4 tells the character of the present working of demons.

Blessed are they who are under the entire control of the word of God that they may escape the deadly snares of the "perilous times" in which we are.

Other questions for future Nos., (D. V.)

EDITOR'S NOTES.

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord” (Jas. 5: 7).

We cannot settle anything by prayer which God has already settled in His word. He has revealed His whole mind to us there. He has therefore nothing more to say. We may be puzzled, through ignorance of His word or through self-will, about what He has said and we may therefore have plenty of reason to pray and supplicate for light, but we may rest assured that He has nothing more to communicate, no more revelation to make, no new principles to add. When He speaks again it will be to seal forever every word of His holy Book, either by His rewards to them who have been obedient to it, or His judgment upon them who have been disobedient.

Obedient child of God, only be patient. The coming of the Lord is near. Then will the present *trials* of obedience be turned into the *glories* of obedience.

“Ye have killed the people of the Lord”
(Num. 16: 41.)

Such was the low, rebellious state of Israel that they even denied the Lord His right to exercise government among His people. They could eat and drink the good things of His creation; they could enjoy all the sweets of His great redemption; but they could not bear His government; they rebelled at that. How like that is the present state of Christendom!

“Why so dwell on grace?”

While preaching lately at —
a young clergyman attended

assiduously. At the end of one of the services he remained behind for conversation.

“Why is it,” he asked, “that you dwell so much upon what establishes the eternal security of the believer?”

“Because,” we replied, “all true communion with God, Christian testimony, fruitfulness and service has its root there. If your child is not sure of being your child how can there be between him and you the true communion of father and child? If any question as to the final issues can be raised in the heart of the believer, how can he abide in the Father’s bosom in perfect peace? But this is the very secret of holiness without hypocrisy, of obedience without legality, of abounding service without restlessness—indeed of every fruit of the Spirit in the child of God.”

The young man, who had realized a good measure of blessing during these services, felt the truth of this, and though it crossed the system of theology under which he had been trained, he owned God’s way was better than man’s.

MARKS OF RIPENESS.

THERE are various marks of ripeness in the Christian character which are well illustrated in the fruits of the field.

One mark is *beauty*. As the fruit ripens the sun tints it with surpassing loveliness, and the colors deepen till the beauty of the fruit is equal to the beauty of the blossom, and in some respects superior. There is in ripe Christians the “beauty of holiness.”

Another mark of ripe fruit is tenderness. The young green fruit is hard and stone-like; but the ripe fruit is soft, yields to the pressure, can almost be moulded, retains the mark of the finger. So it is with the mature Christian; he is noted for tenderness of spirit.

Another mark of ripeness is sweetness. The unripe fruit is sour, and perhaps it ought to be, or else we should eat all the fruits while they are yet green. It may, therefore, be in the order of grace a fit thing that in the youthful Christian some sharpness should be formed which will ultimately be removed. As we grow in grace we are sure to grow in sympathy and love; we shall have greater and more intense affection for the person of Him "whom having not seen we love"; we shall have greater delight in the precious things of His gospel; the doctrines which perhaps we did not understand at first will become marrow and fatness to us as we advance in grace. We shall feel that there is honey dropping from the honeycomb in the deep things of our God. We shall, as we ripen in grace, have greater sweetness toward our fellow Christians. Bitter-spirited Christians may know a great deal, but they are immature. Those who are quick to censure may be very acute in judgment, but they are as yet immature in heart. I know we who are young beginners in grace think ourselves qualified to judge everything, but when our virtues become more mature I trust we shall not be more tolerant of evil, but we shall be more tolerant of infirmity, more hopeful for the people of God, and certainly less arrogant in our criticisms.

Another and very sure mark of ripeness is a loose

hold of earth. Ripe fruit easily parts from the bough. You shake the tree and the ripe apples fall. If you wish to eat fresh fruit you put out your hand to pluck it, and if it comes off with difficulty you feel you had better leave it alone a little longer; but when it drops into your hand, quite ready to be withdrawn from the branch, you know it to be in a good condition. —*Selected.*

READINGS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

(Continued from page 269.)

(Chap. 6.)

WE have seen that the apostle teaches that the victims of sin, who have been laid hold of by the grace of Christ, who took their place under sin's dominion, are now connected with Christ in the new position He has taken up as risen from the dead. They are *of* Him. They live now—live by Him. Living by Him, they belong to Him, are in Him; and *with* Him are dead to sin, and have title to think of themselves from this point of view—as *in Christ*. It is their right to take the place of being of the risen Christ—to look at themselves from this standpoint.

Now it may be said, "From that standpoint it is true that those who are the subjects of this grace have title to be practically free from the service of sin; but title to deliverance from sin is one thing, and ability to use the title is quite a different one. It will be said, "It is one thing to look at my mortal body and think of it as subject to the claims

of Christ, and quite another thing to keep from activity the sin that dwells in it." We are told, "It is quite right to regard our members as being instruments of righteousness and for the use and service of God, but it is another matter to hinder their being used as instruments of unrighteousness."

We are thus reminded that there is a distinction to be made between *title* to be free from the service of sin and *ability* to make the title good practically.

To this distinction we readily agree; but before we discuss the question of the power by which we live practically to God, and where we find that power, there are other questions which must be looked at first. We must first inquire, Are there any necessary hindrances in the way of being practically delivered from the rule of sin? Are there limitations to which practical deliverance is possible, and beyond which it is impossible?

If we turn back to the preceding dispensations we readily see that there were then subjects of grace—men who lived in faith, in the light of the prophecies of the grace that has been brought to us (1 Pet. 1: 10). They thus lived by the One of whom Adam was the figure, but they did not live in the abundance and fulness in which it is given to us to live (John 10: 10). Life and incorruptibility were not then illuminated as they are now (2 Tim. 1: 10). They lived the life of faith under limitations. Again, they did not have the full measure of God's estimate of sin as we have since the cross of Christ, and here we cannot fail to see a very great limitation which must very largely have affected their practical lives. Furthermore, the law, when it was given to Israel, must have been a very great limita-

tion to the extent in which the life of faith could be practically maintained.

Here is a matter which requires careful consideration. It should be remembered that the law as a rule of life was given to Israel as a nation—to men in the flesh; and the children of faith were not separated from the rest of the nation; they were not exempted from the rule of life under which the *nation* was put. Being thus under the same rule of life as the rest of the nation, they were under restraints that made it impossible for them to take the place of children with God. While they were children in reality, they could not be children practically (Gal. 4: 1-7).

Now, the rule of life under which they were put, as being a part of the nation upon whom it was imposed, is the strength of sin (1 Cor. 15: 56). It made the offense abound in them as well as in the rest of the nation. Being thus under an order of dealing which stirred sin in the flesh they were continually in bondage through fear of death (Heb. 2: 15). They could not be set free as long as that order of dealing with them stood. The law gave to sin an opportunity and advantage, and it was impossible for them to claim exemption from its penalty. They could never say sin did not have dominion over them.

Believers, then, under law, were under conditions of restraint—limitations which prevented the grace that had laid hold of them abounding in the fulness and abundance of its power. But Christ dead, risen and glorified, is the end of these conditions of restraint for believers. He is the end of the law for believers, whether it be for righteousness or for a

rule of life. The subjects of divine grace are not under it *now*. This has been authoritatively declared, and with this declaration there has come also the assurance that "sin shall not have dominion over us" (ver. 14).

In the apostle's statement, "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under law, but under grace," we learn there is no necessary hindrance to those who are of Christ being now practically free from the service of sin. God is not now requiring His children to live by a rule which is the strength of sin. He has brought to a complete end, for believers, the whole system under which formerly He held them under restraint, and under which it was impossible to know and enjoy the complete measure of grace.

It is, then, the privilege of every child of God now to be practically delivered from the rule of sin. Deliverance from the dominion of sin is his present right. It is not to be thought of as an ideal, impossible of realization until the body is changed. It is to be maintained that the grace of God, which is by Jesus Christ, provides for all its present subjects not only eternal exemption from judgment, but also present freedom from the service of sin; and that God is not now imposing on them a rule of life that hinders their enjoyment of deliverance from sin's power.

But the apostle's assertion that the subjects of grace are not under law is often disputed. Many still maintain that the law is the Christian's guide to right living. But freedom from it as the rule of life is most unequivocally stated by the apostle. There is not the least ambiguity about his expression of it.

He is speaking, too, as the exponent and representative of Christianity. His statement is authoritative. Nevertheless, it is not accepted as being the truth by many. There are many who refuse it with horror. They say it means license to sin. They tell us freedom from law as a rule of life means lawlessness, indulging in sin as much as one pleases.

But this is plainly a misconception of the apostle's teaching. It is a thorough misunderstanding of the character of divine grace. No one really entering into that grace, in which Christ took the place of the victims of sin, could conceive of it as meaning license to sin, or think it necessary that the subjects of that grace should be under law as a rule of life to them from sinning.

That freedom from law means lawlessness, the apostle resents, and strenuously refuses. That it means license to sin is an intolerable thought to him. He exclaims most vigorously against it. All who submit to his authoritative statement of what the grace of God means, will join with him in denouncing as a false conception the thought that freedom from the principle of law is liberty to indulge in sin;—a thought to be put far away.

Having strongly denounced the idea as repulsive and intolerable, the apostle now proceeds, in ver. 16, to show what the misconception really means. To say, "If we are not under law, then let us sin as much as we like," means deliberately choosing to be the servants of sin. To willingly indulge in sin is to make one's self a voluntary servant of it. That should be self-evident. What is so manifest ought to expose the error underlying the statement that "because we are not under law, but under

grace, therefore we may sin as much as we choose." It is plainly wrong: it certainly is not apostolic teaching.

The apostle goes on to insist that it is not the form of teaching to which the subjects of grace have submitted themselves (ver. 17). They have received a different type of teaching altogether. They have surrendered themselves to a teaching of another character. Having received the apostolic teaching, that which he denounces as intolerable must be unholy and abhorrent to them.

Now, let us remark, the teaching that freedom from law as the rule of life means lawlessness, is not the teaching to which the Roman saints had given their adherence. Taking them as representatives of the saints of apostolic times, we may say, such teaching was not a part of the faith of those saints. It is therefore a teaching antagonistic to Christianity. Those who are seeking to introduce it into Christian teaching, who would make it a part of Christian instruction, are corrupting and subverting Christianity. It is therefore to be vigorously refused and strenuously opposed. The defenders of the apostolic faith must join with the apostle in refusing it as a misconception of the character of Christianity, as unholy, and intolerable.

But we must follow the apostle further. Having thanked God that the Roman saints were not adherents of such a false and unholy teaching, he tells them (ver. 18) that through their surrender of themselves to the right form of teaching, they were made free from sin, and are now the servants of righteousness. He then exhorts them to let righteousness have the use of their members even as

formerly they had allowed sin to use them (ver. 19).

Then, next, he contrasts the fruit. He says, "When you were free from righteousness you lived in unholiness. You are now ashamed of the unholy lives you lived as the servants of sin. You were on the road that leads to and ends in death. But now as servants of righteousness you are living in holiness, and are on the road which leads to the final condition of life which is in prospect for all those who have become connected with the risen Christ."

We may, then, sum up the apostle's argument in the chapter; The grace that is by Jesus Christ has provided and secured, for those of whom it lays hold, a new position and condition of life in which they are entitled to be practically free from the service of sin. Though they are still in their old, mortal, sinful bodies, yet there is no necessary reason why these bodies should be under sin's power, or their members be yielded up to be used for sinful purposes. Christ, by whom we live, being the end of the law, both for righteousness or as rule of life, for those who have life in Him, we are not limited by what gives strength to the sin that dwells in us; hence there is full liberty for the life of Christ to manifest its power in using the body, though still mortal and sinful, to the glory of God.

This is what the grace of God confers on those who submit themselves to the grace of Christ in His one obedience unto death. We are granted the inestimable blessing of living with God. This is eternal life indeed. May we submit ourselves more fully to the grace that has made it our portion.

But in spite of the plain and authoritative state-

ment of the apostle, that we are not now under a rule of life that prevents our enjoying this liberty from sin's service, there are many who very mistakenly regard the principle of law as the only means by which a life of practical holiness can be produced. Notwithstanding the apostle's unequivocal statement that we are *not* under law, they insist that law is the power for holiness. Evidently, some in the apostle's day maintained this. It was necessary for the apostle to take up the question of law to show the effect of it upon a believer who undertakes to make it the rule of life.

As we shall see, the question that is raised is, What is the power by which a believer lives a life of holiness and fruitfulness to God? Is it law that gives him strength to serve God, or is it Christ enjoyed by the power of the Spirit? Does the one who is in Christ find in the principle of law power to yield himself to God? Is it the principle of law that gives him ability to yield his members to righteousness? Is practical righteousness produced in those who are in Christ by walking after the law as a rule of life?

These are all serious, sober-minded questions. Every soul that the grace of Christ lays hold of sooner or later raises them. Finding themselves the objects of the love of God they cannot long enjoy that love as the Holy Spirit sheds it abroad in the heart without feeling themselves under the obligation to live to God. In their efforts to do so they find they need power to enable them to live to the honor and praise of God. We naturally suppose a life to the glory of God can be lived by making the law the rule of life. The supposition is an en-

tire mistake. But the experience under the trial of it is necessary to manifest the mistake.

This experience is explained and interpreted in chap. 7. The explanation of the experience answers definitely and authoritatively the question, Is the law the Christian's power for a life of holiness and fruitfulness to God.

(To be continued.)

C. CRAIN.

OUR PATHWAY.

THE pathway of the Christian, as of Israel, may be viewed from three standpoints. An illustration of this is found in Ps. 105, 106, 107. The first views them as the objects of sovereign grace, purpose and counsel; the gracious ways of God are its theme. Sixty-one times "He" and "His" occur as the Psalmist celebrates "*His* deeds," "*His* wondrous works," and calls upon "*His* chosen to make known *His* acts," and "sing *His* praises."

This psalm reminds us of Ephesians. Here, as there, we see the blessed God moving and acting in the grace of His heart and the might of His hand.

"His every act pure blessing is."

It is *His* covenant He remembers. Canaan was *His* gift. He suffered none to touch His people; kings were reprov'd for their sake. It was no afterthought as to Joseph; he was the *sent one*; before the famine raged he had provided for the need and distress.

He was the type of another and greater Joseph. Ere sin, or man existed, God had His resource in the "man of opportunity." Man's sin culminated, when by wicked hands they crucified and slew the

sent One; but by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, the occasion was turned into the means whereby man's need was fully met. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Christ exalted became the dispenser of God's store-house of mercy, love and grace.

It was God who increased the people, and made them stronger than their enemies. Aaron was His choice, and Moses was sent to give effect to His promise. Fear fell upon Egypt, the people marched out in triumph. Silver and gold—figures of righteousness and redemption—were theirs. Strength and rejoicing were theirs, there was not a feeble person among them. Bread from heaven satisfied them; water gushed from the smitten rock. A river of refreshment followed them. He brought forth *His chosen* with gladness. He *gave* them the lands of the heathen; they inherited what they had not toiled for. All that the love of His heart had purposed, the power of His arm carried out.

That same power and love is for His saints to-day. Christ's death has expressed His love, Christ's resurrection His power. In that act power culminated. Satan, man, and even saints, would have kept Him in the stronghold of death; witness the Roman guard of soldiers; the seal, with the death-penalty if broken, the mighty stone on the grave's mouth; the hosts of hell marshalled in dread array! Christ held in death meant the defeat of all God's purposes; Christ raised, the defeat of all Satan's wiles. God had to cross the thoughts of His people who embalmed Christ, defeat the devil, and set death's power aside; but

“When He makes bare His arm
Who shall His work withstand.”

Let us now read Ps. 106. As we do so we must remember Scripture views saints as set in responsibility here, as well as in security in Christ.

In order to understand the ways of God we must hold the balances of the sanctuary with sovereign grace in one scale, and responsible beings in the other.

Some Christians dwell exclusively on the sovereignty of God; others are occupied wholly with the responsibility of man: both are found in Scripture; they are not conflicting, but parallel truths; one tells us what man is; the other what God is.

Ps. 106 contains the words "they" and "them" forty-six times. It is one long story of unbelief, sin and failure. The first charge against them is, "They *understood* not Thy wonders"; "They *remembered* not the multitude of Thy mercies."

The disciples in Mk. 8 resembled them; both memory and understanding were at fault. In the Lord's questions we discover how a reasoning mind and a perverted understanding, forgetfulness of God's mercies and a hardened heart, are all bound up together. Alas! Is not this often true of us? When we are in a difficulty, we are apt to forget the way God brought us through the last!

Verse 12 says, "Then *believed* they His words; they *sang* His praise." This was a good start, but it was on the Red Sea banks, and is the only bit of praise until the very end. What a picture of many a saint! Faith awakens praise, but this faith must be maintained; we are not only to start in faith, but we are to live by faith; it must be kept up if the soul is to be in vigor, either for worship or service.

Alas, Israel soon forgot God's works; they waited not for His counsel; lust followed, then leanness of soul, envy, and false worship. Why? "They forgot God their Saviour." Unbelief as to the inheritance caused them to despise God's rest, murmurs filled their lips, lower and lower still they travelled in their downward course; at length they went right into the world, with its lusts, false worship, and sacrifices to the dead; instead of overpowering the nations, they mingled among the heathen and learned their works; at length they murdered their offspring to sacrifice to devils! Could declension go further? Instead of possessing the lands of the heathen, they got under the power of the heathen. Are saints one whit less capable of this now? In the earliest and palmiest days of Christianity we find an Ananias and Sapphira; at Corinth they were guilty of things not even named among the heathen; are there not backsliders to-day who witness how far a man may depart *from* God who does not keep *near* God? Let us take warning; these things are written for our admonition.

Did God give them up because they gave Him up? Let verse 44 answer: "He regarded their affliction when He heard their cry." Should this fall into the hands of a poor backslider, let him take courage; let him turn to God as they did. They said "Save us"! This was the heartbroken utterance of a wandering saint. Look at the gracious response in verse 45. "He remembered *for them* His covenant." "For them," His poor, erring, wandering saints. He will do the same for you; His compassions fail not.

Restored now, they "give thanks," and triumph

in praise; so will you, if truly self-judged, and restored in spirit. It is when the world creeps into a saint's heart, praise leaves it.

The psalm ends with, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting!" a blessed finish to a sad journey! Why was Ps. 106 written? "For our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come" (1 Cor. 10: 11). Why was Ps. 105 written? "That we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15: 4). It tells us God has a storehouse of mercy and grace. No saint can go on without drawing from this divine provision. Even a Paul had to say, "Having obtained mercy, I continued to this day."

Let us follow his example, ever appropriating, if we would not merely start well and end well, but to go on well. How many a saint starts with praise, drifts into the world, and only wakes up on his death-bed! The only worship recorded of Jacob is at the end. What of you, my reader? May we hold fast grace, so that we may through all the journey serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

As we read Ps. 105, we say, "That is God;" as we read Ps. 106, we say, "That is man." God will surely carry out His purpose; how do we answer to our responsibility?

In Ps. 105, the people are seen in the vision of the Almighty; neither iniquity nor perversity is laid to their charge. Ps. 106 recounts the *same* journey, but their every step is marked by sin. Reading the one psalm we should infer there was "no bad in them;" and reading the other, there was "no good in them." One is the charming account of sovereign grace; the other the sad story of man's failure.

Let us now turn to Ps. 107. Here Israel's responsible history is closed, their dangers over, their sorrows passed, their wilderness journey ended. This psalm commences the fifth and last book, and shows us a happy redeemed people, who *have been guided*, and are *now gathered* in a land from which Jehovah never withdraws His eyes. From a haven where no storms ever come they recall their journey and celebrate the goodness of God. They recall the darkness and shadow of death, the bands that had bound them, the gates of brass and bars of iron which had imprisoned them, the times they had been driven to their "wits' end." But all is over now, their troubles ended; no tears dim the eye, no racking pain wears the body; the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne leads them to living fountains; they lie down in green pastures; they sing the song of *enjoyed, conscious redemption*; they are the *redeemed* of the Lord.

At home in their land, faith changed to sight, they remember that *redeeming love* is the key to all their present blessings; they recall the pitying love of a Saviour-God who had visited them in their low estate, ransomed them from the enemy, and planted them in their inheritance. The day of glory having now dawned, "guided and gathered," thanksgiving and praise occupy them.

Out of full hearts they invite the congregation of the people and the "assembly of the elders" to unite in exalting the Lord for His "*goodness*" and wonderful works to the children of men.

As we contemplate this redeemed company, with one heart and voice praising the Lord as they review the past, the last verse of this psalm reminds us that

these things are written for our learning: "Whoso is *wise*, and will *observe these things*, even they shall understand the loving kindness (or goodness) of the Lord."

We also are on a stormy journey. Sickness and suffering, death and darkness on every hand. The soul melted because of trouble, down in the depths; often at wits' end through family sorrows, adverse circumstances, or church troubles. But this precious psalm is written for our comfort. We are to be among the "wise" to observe how God is ever *for* His people; how His goodness triumphs over all!

"When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gathered thick and thundered loud,
He with His Church has always stood;
His loving kindness, oh *how good!*"

How variously we look at our journey now! We anticipate its difficulties, experience its sorrows, and are in heaviness through manifold temptations. All this often tends to cloud the vision of our souls. At such times let us remember that God is the God of all comfort; He *is* good and *doeth* good. We may therefore be encouraged to cry unto the Lord in "our trouble," for Israel's God is ours; and we may as surely count on His intervention for us as for them. He allowed them to draw near the "gates of death," they were almost overwhelmed "in the depths." "Gates of brass" shut them in, bars of iron "kept them captive," but when human efforts and hopes failed, then God's goodness shone out and He made a way of escape for them, just as He will for us.

Hear what Paul says when at "death's door:" "We were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch

that we despaired even of life; *but God delivered us from so great a death*, and doth deliver; in whom we trust He will yet deliver." He was "in the depths" troubled on every side; without were fightings, within fears, *nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted him*. The "gates of brass" and "bars of iron" encompassed him; persecutions, afflictions at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra, what sorrows he endured, but out of them all the Lord *delivered him*. Nay, more, that Master whom he served, that Saviour who had *redeemed* him, remained faithful, stood by him, and strengthened him. Thus encouraged, Paul says, "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever!"

Here we see a man, just like ourselves, sensitive to the trials of the way, but so sustained by the goodness of God that in spirit he antedates the day when wilderness journeying will be over, and from a Roman dungeon cries, "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." *Paul's God is ours*. How far the way will be remembered when we get to our city of habitation we may not know, but each recollection will only be a fresh incentive to celebrate the kindness and love of God our Saviour, who brought us safely to our desired haven. We shall then see that goodness did follow us all the days of our life, and that the most untoward events and the darkest dispensations of divine providence had goodness behind them.

How often on looking back we see that a poignant sorrow, a bitter trial, has been a real blessing in disguise, a fresh occasion for the display of God's

“loving kindness.” If that is so now, how much more in the light of that day! We shall then rejoice in the goodness which triumphed over everything. This will be one result of the judgment-seat of Christ. It precedes the day of the kingdom, and will show us how fully God has been *for us*, and how needful every trial and sorrow was, and behind all the storm-clouds were His loving kindnesses.

Nor will our earthly history close the story of goodness. The assembly will be gathered together, the entire company of the redeemed will unitedly in that day of glory celebrate the goodness of the Lord and His wonderful works to the children of men. Praise shall fill every heart and break forth from every lip. Among the varied families who will then swell the loud song, one is singled out as especially the object of “loving kindness.” Eph. 2:7 tells us that the *exceeding* riches of God’s grace will be displayed in His *kindness* towards us through Christ Jesus. The Church, above all others, is the vessel of glory in which the goodness of God will be displayed, the excellencies of our God, who is good and doeth good.

“How good is the God we adore,
Our faithful unchangeable Friend;
Whose love is as great as His power,
And knows neither measure nor end!”

H. N.

EXPOSITION OF THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

(Continued from page 277.)

THE DIVINE INDICTMENT OF EVIL WORKERS.

“These are spots in your love-feasts, feasting together [with you] without fear, pasturing themselves; clouds without water, carried along by [the] winds; autumnal trees, without fruit, twice dead, rooted up; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom has been reserved the gloom of darkness for eternity” (vers. 12, 13).

THERE is something unspeakably solemn in this severe indictment of those who, professedly followers of Christ and servants of God, really walk in a self-chosen path, and are elsewhere described as “enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things” (Phil. 3: 18, 19). Be it carefully remembered that, throughout Jude’s warning letter, the evil-workers referred to are not those who, outside the circle of profession, are confessedly the opponents of Christ and of the truth of God; but they are a self-seeking, worldly-minded, mammon-actuated class, inside the nominal church; who make their profession of faith in the Lord Jesus a cover for their own selfish ends. They are often looked upon as leaders of Christian thought and champions of truth and righteousness. But underlying all they say and do, there is the open, or covert, denial of everything that really makes for godliness. To the heavenly calling they are strangers; hence their aim and object to advance their own interests in this world. They dwell upon the earth. Pilgrimage in the scriptural sense they know not of. Their place and portion are in this scene, not up

there, where Christ as man glorified sits, rejected by earth, but accepted of heaven, at the right hand of God.

Metaphor after metaphor is used by the Holy Spirit to describe these false apostles and ministers of unrighteousness. Every phrase is important, and demands careful consideration.

“These are spots in your love-feasts.” Perhaps, in place of “spots,” it will be clearer if we read, “Sunken, or hidden, rocks.” Such are these apostate teachers. Clearly-marked charted rocks are not of great danger, as a rule, to the mariner. It is those that are hidden, over whose jagged edges roll the deceitfully-peaceful waters, that are most to be dreaded. Were these false guides to publicly proclaim themselves as opposed to what the godly hold sacred, their influence would be speedily nullified, save with a few whose senses have never been exercised to discern between good and evil. But, posing as advocates of the truth, soft-spoken and affable, with their good words and fair speeches they deceive the hearts of the simple.

The expression, “feasting themselves together [with you] without fear,” shows how fully they have gained the confidence of the mass. Participating fearlessly in the most hallowed seasons of Christian communion, they never enter into the spirit of those happy expressions of love and fellowship, but observe the form, pretending to piety and devotion, while all the time looking but to their own interests, as the next expression strikingly emphasizes.

“Pasturing, or shepherding, *themselves*,” in place of shepherding the flock of God—what could more vividly express the conception of the clerical position

in the minds of many who trade upon its privileges? They, who should feed the sheep and lambs of Christ's flock, fleece them instead, and look upon them as those whose place it is to contribute to their honor, wealth, and dignity. Scripture knows of no distinction between clergy and laity. All believers are God's *kleros**—His allotted portion. If of their own number there are those raised up to act as pastors, by guiding and caring for those weaker or less instructed, it is as doing a service to the Lord, the Chief Shepherd; "not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over possessions, but being ensamples to the flock" (1 Peter 5: 1-4).

To this single-eyed and true-hearted devotedness these deceitful workers are utter strangers. Their true characters are even more graphically depicted in the metaphors taken from nature that immediately follow.

"Clouds [they are] without water, carried along by the winds." Big with promise, pretentious and impressive, all knowledge and all mysteries seem to be in their keeping; but their utterances are a disappointment to any who know the mind of God as revealed in His word. In place of refreshing showers of spiritual blessing accompanying their ministry, there are but empty vaporings and idle threatenings. In place, too, of divine certainty because based on the Holy Scriptures, their fanciful theories and ever-changing notions manifest the fact that they themselves are carried about by every wind of human teaching, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

*The root of our word "clergy."

They are further described as "autumnal trees without fruit, twice dead, rooted up." Having a fair outward appearance, they are like trees which in the season of fruit bear only leaves; like the fig-tree cursed by the Lord, which dried up from the roots. These indeed are "twice dead"; for they are "dead in trespasses and sins," and dead too in a false profession, having a name that they live, but actually lifeless. "Every tree," said the Lord Jesus, "that My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." So these are seen already, in God's estimation, as plucked up by the roots. In man's eye they may make a fair show in the flesh, and tower skyward in loftiness and apparent beauty; but in the sight of Him who seeth not as man seeth their judgment is already come.

Impatient of restraint or rebuke of any kind, they are next likened to "raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame." It is not that they feel shame or remorse because of what they say or do; but by their very speech they manifest the true condition of their lawless wills when confronted with the word that exposes the hollowness of their contentions. "The unjust knoweth no shame"; but they proudly glory in what might well abase them before God and man. Blessed it is for those who seek to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart that He has set bounds to this sea, as to that in nature, beyond which its angry waters cannot go. He makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He restrains. See Ps. 76: 10.

The last awful figure portrays the doom yet awaiting these impious triflers in holy things. They are "wandering stars, to whom has been reserved the

gloom of darkness for eternity." Like lost planets hurled out of their natural orbit, they flare brilliantly for the moment, then plunge off at a tangent into ever-deepening darkness as they rush through the fathomless depths of space farther and farther from the Source of light. Such shall be the end of all who now refuse the Light of life, and prefer instead to kindle their own fire and compass themselves about with sparks (Isa. 50: 11).

Solemnly the Holy Spirit says to every child of grace, "From such turn away" (2 Tim. 3: 5).

H. A. I.

(To be continued.)

DEAR MR. EDITOR:—

Referring to your question "Is it so?" in Editor's Notes of July number of "HELP AND FOOD," concerning the statement of a correspondent that "The Lord was never called merely 'Jesus' by any but His enemies," I submit the following:

Matthew uses the name unqualified about 168 times, Mark about 88 times, Luke about 95 times, John, in his Gospel, 244 times, and 9 times in his first Epistle and Revelation. In the Acts the name "Jesus" alone occurs 26 times, in Paul's epistles 22 times; Peter uses it once.

If your correspondent meant that He was never *personally addressed* as merely "Jesus," he would not be quite exact, since Bartimaeus, the blind beggar, addressed Him as "Jesus, thou Son of David" (Mark 10: 47).

"Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1: 21); and the more fully one apprehends the meaning of this name, the more ready will he be to fall at His feet and say, "My Lord and my God."

At the same time no right-minded Christian would think of personally addressing Him as simply "Jesus," without, in thought at least, directly connecting that name with some of the glorious titles which He won by His cross.

J. B. J.

DEAR MR. EDITOR:—

I was glad to see the matter regarding addressing our Lord; for while one would not for a moment check the outpouring of the heart in any sincere love of our Lord Jesus Christ, we cannot too often nor too forcibly be reminded of the eternal glories of His person. One is often pained to hear among certain people, who make special claims to holiness, such expressions as "Lovely Jesus," "Sweet Jesus," and the like, all of which betoken a familiarity which is not born of humility nor of love, but from forgetfulness, or ignorance, of the glory of His Person.

From what comes to mind of the Holy Scriptures the Lord when personally addressed by His name "Jesus" has usually one of His titles with it.

I was struck in connecting John 6: 68 and 2 Tim. 2: 22, with the thought that true fellowship in following Christ aright can only be where there is the proper acknowledgment of His Lordship. Thank God, there is a time coming when, according to Philippians 2: 11, every tongue will own Him Lord.

Yours aff'ly in Christ,

S. W. M.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 35.—Did those saints who arose after Christ's resurrection (Matt. 27: 51-53) go back to their graves again until His coming, or go into glory with Him?

ANS.—As we know of no scripture which decides the matter we cannot answer in a dogmatic way. We can only speak by inference. In this way we judge that since their resurrection was not a mere act of power as, for instance, in the case of Lazarus (John 11), but the fruit of Christ's own resurrection, they did not return to their graves but went into glory with Him. God is not bound by rules. He has placed the great harvest of the resurrection of His saints at the coming again of our Lord, but He is not bound to that time for the resurrection and glory of every one of them.

The Cross is the foundation of all the glories to be revealed, but God could build upon it before it had taken place. He knew His Son would prove obedient even unto the death of the cross, and by the righteousness of the Cross God can act in sovereign grace when and how He pleases. We are limited but He is not.

QUES. 36.—Did our Lord have a glorified body when He arose, the same as He will have when He comes for His saints?

ANS.—We feel incompetent if not afraid to speak of any change taking place in relation to the Lord. He was like the sun veiling His glory behind a cloud, needing only the pushing away of the cloud to manifest that glory. We need a great change in our bodies to fit them for the glory, a change which only His almighty power can accomplish. He needs but a change of circumstances to manifest the glory of His being.

QUES. 37.—Why did Christ say He was not a spirit (Lk. 24: 39)?

ANS.—Because He was not *merely* that as (in their astonishment and inability to realize that He was risen from the dead) they thought He was. He was as truly now the *Man* Christ Jesus as He was before His death—with *body*, soul and spirit. The hu-

manity of our Lord is as essentially needful as His deity for the fulfilment of God's purposes. He has left us no possibility of doubt therefore concerning the perpetuity of the one as of the other. He is God from eternity to eternity; He is Man from incarnation to all eternity.

QUES. 38.—Kindly say why Paul wrote: "If *we* (seemingly including himself) sin wilfully," etc., (Heb. 10: 26); and again in Heb. 2: 3, "How shall *we* escape," etc. How could he write thus while at the same time saying, "There is now therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus;" "All that believe are justified from all things;" and very many other passages which affirm the everlasting security of such as believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? I am sure there is no contradiction in Scripture, and that all the darkness is in myself, and that is why I ask.

ANS.—It is the delicateness of grace for the speaker to put himself for the moment in the position of those whom he portrays. 2 Pet. 3: 9 is a striking example of the same thing. Peter was certainly not of them who were perishing, yet for the moment putting himself among them who were perishing he says, "The Lord . . . is long suffering to *us-ward*, not willing that any should perish."

Once we know the grace of God and understand well the difference between the saved and the unsaved, we need the spirit of love and sympathy toward all men which enables us to put ourselves in their place and to approach them without hardness.

QUES. 39.—In Matt. 12: 31 is it a believer, or an unbeliever, who may commit this unpardonable sin?

ANS.—Only an unbeliever, surely. The context shows this plainly: The *Pharisees* (ever the enemies of Christ) had seen Him do a great miracle, such as convicted them of its being the power of God at work. They will not bow, however; they resist the conviction; so they attribute to the devil the manifest power of God. No man who has ever bowed at the feet of Jesus could do such a thing, however low he might fall in moral ways.

EDITOR'S NOTES.

Not a Preacher only.
(Phil. 4 : 9.)

Paul was more than a preacher or teacher, as our text shows: "Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, *and seen in me*, do." The learning, and receiving, and hearing, refer, of course, to his preaching and teaching; and that was the great burden of his life—to communicate to men what was in Christ for them. But "*seen in me*" was not preaching or teaching. It was the character he bore in the carrying out of his task. It was "the life of Jesus" (2 Cor. 4 : 10) made manifest in his body—before the eyes of all men; and this was not the self-admiration which many in our present day call the "Jesus life"; it was by the 'bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.' Not a doctrine was on his lips but it was seen in his life. It is not that he was a faultless man. He could be rash sometimes, as when he called the high priest a whited wall. He could fail to recognize the voice of the Spirit, as when he went unsent to Jerusalem. But there was no self-denial, however costly, which he would refuse, to make good every part of the glorious Person and doctrine he proclaimed.

Again we say, with a longing desire to follow him, he was not a preacher *only*; he *lived* Christ, was a *witness* of Christ, as well as *preached* Christ.

God's Purposes. Nothing can thwart God's purposes. He has in Himself all that is required to carry to a full end whatsoever He designs. Power, patience, perseverance—all exer-

cised in love, in wisdom and grace—triumph finally over every obstacle. When He planned the formation of the universe, He commanded it into being; and there it stands to-day before our eyes for our wonder, that we may worship Him who made it. When He demanded the freedom of Israel from Pharaoh, He brought it to pass, in spite of all the opposition of Pharaoh, and He got it so fully that no victory was ever more complete.

We might follow up a multitude of cases in the Scriptures, showing, one and all, the same end to every purpose of God. One thing only He requires in them who are included in those purposes—*faith*. Faith clings to God, watches the processes by which He fulfils His purposes, and worships as it sees the sure end. Every promise of God in His Word is a purpose. Let our faith then lay hold of these promises; and though they be not yet fulfilled, praise Him beforehand. Nothing delights God more than this.

Instrumental Music. As the reality of Christ departs from the soul, ritualism takes the place, and forms without life rise up on every hand. To such an extent has this grown that even the world is losing respect for a Christianity which seems more bent on entertaining than converting men.

That music is of God no one who is not a fanatic can doubt. That it has a place in the worship of God every one knows who has drunk in His redeeming love. His *soul* sings, and his lips must also sing. He must praise God. If in company with others, that praise in song must be orderly—through tunes put to

the words which all can learn. So far all is real, full of life in the soul, and pleasing therefore to God. But here danger begins. Let love grow cold, and the song grows cold. It calls for instrumental music therefore now to fill in and make up for the want of love. Or it lets in the spirit of the world; and that comes not to worship, but to be entertained: so instruments (which cannot praise God in spirit and in truth, as Christian worship is to be) are introduced to please the ears.

It may be said that instruments were abundantly introduced in the Jewish worship. True; but if we, Christians, are to be guided by that, what becomes of our Saviour's words in John 4: 22-24? The Jewish order of things was a system of *types*; the Christian is *reality*. It took all the Jewish instruments to illustrate the varied praises which grace and truth create in the human soul.

We believe, therefore, that any use of instrumental music in the worship of God, from end to end, in the Sunday-school, the Gospel meeting, or any other (leaving out, of course, meetings for the learning of tunes), will be found to have a tendency to lower the character of Christian praise, and finally of Christianity itself. It also spoils the voices. It makes a noise which covers the faults in the singing, while, if there was the energy of love, meetings would be held to practice singing hymns, where those faults would be corrected. If God loves the hearty praise of His people issuing from their hearts, through their lips, the ungodly will feel its power also.

READINGS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

(Continued from page 292.)

(Chap. 7: 1—8: 4.)

WE will now consider the apostle's statement of the effect of one who is in Christ making the law the rule of life.

It is of very great importance to notice that the apostle does not admit that God imposes the law as a rule of life on those who are connected with the risen Christ. He looks upon them as being dead to the law with Christ. He recognizes that in the past dispensation the subjects of divine grace were put by God into relationship with law—a relationship he illustrates by the marriage bond. If death removes the husband, the woman is no longer in the marriage bond. So too the death of Christ, as our representative and substitute, ends for believers their relationship with law. A woman whose husband is dead is free to be joined to another man. So also, since the death of Christ, the law cannot prevent those who are of Christ being joined to Him. Their bond with law having been dissolved by the death upon the cross, they are thus freed from it, and a new bond has been formed. By the Spirit of God, who is given to believers (to all believers since the ascension of Christ—John 7: 39), those who are of Christ are united to Him in this a new bond (vers. 1-4).

We must also note another thing. Whatever fruit for God there was in the practical lives of those who were of Christ before His death, it was not the fruit of their bond with law. That was a barren, fruitless bond. But the new bond, the bond by the

Spirit, is *not* a fruitless one. The law's very prohibitions intensified the opposition of the natural man's sinful passions (ver. 5). For this reason it could not help the true children of faith to a life of fruitful service for God.

But now, since the death of Christ, believers are delivered from the bond with the law, and are in a bond with the risen Christ, in which the Spirit of God is the energy of service—a service acceptable to God. Serving thus by the Spirit, they serve in newness of spirit; not now with minds in rebellion against the authority of God, but with hearts in subjection to His grace.

The doctrine of the apostle, then, is that those who belong to Christ now, not only have title to be practically free from the law, but are in a bond with the risen Christ, the fruit of which is realized and enjoyed in the measure in which the Spirit, who is the power of the bond, is obeyed in His leading (ver. 5, 6).

Here an objection presents itself. An ardent defender of the doctrine that the law is the rule of life for Christians, says, "If Christians are dead to the law, then the law is sin." The apostle's answer shows that it is in nowise so. Instead of its being sin, it *convicts* of sin. This was one of the purposes for which it was given; and no matter to whom it has to say—an unconverted or a converted man—it convicts of sin. Whoever undertakes to live by it finds the lusts it forbids are in him, and that the very prohibition is the occasion of their vigorous activity. One just converted usually delights, with more or less ecstasy, in the love of God, which the Spirit that dwells in him sheds abroad in his heart.

While thus occupied, in the power of the Spirit, with the love of God, he is not concerned, or occupied with the sin that dwells in him. Without the law, it is not active (ver. 9). But as he begins to think of the claims which the love he has so much enjoyed has upon him, he assumes that the law is the power by which he is to meet those claims. He takes it up thus as the rule of his life. He finds, however, that he is continually being made aware of the presence in him of the prohibited lusts. Their activity has revived, and his conscience continually accuses him. What he took up for life, he finds to be a ministration of death—see 2 Cor. 3: 7. He has been deceived. The coming in of the law in this way, as the rule of life, was the occasion of his being deceived. The result of the experience is the writing upon his conscience that he has no title to live—his conscience is under the sentence of death. He has to own that even as a child of God he has not the least title to live.

The lesson thus learned is a good one; he has learned it through the law, though mistaken in taking it to be the rule of life. The law, then, is not sin. It is holy, and the commandment is "holy and just and good" (vers. 10-12).

There is yet another objection. The defender of the law as being the Christian's rule of life, considers the apostle's reasoning to imply that what is "good is made death" to the Christian. The apostle now shows that the objection is an entire misapprehension. Instead of the law being made death to a believer in Christ, as a ministration of death it shows how exceedingly sinful sin is. The fact that it is by means of what is good that sin works death

in one who belongs to Christ, makes the deadly character of sin the more manifest. The objection, then, is shown to have no force (ver. 13).

We come now to the apostle's explanation of the exercises and experiences resulting from the mistake which so many believers in Christ make in taking the law to be the rule of life (vers. 14-20). To understand this explanation we must remember the apostle is not speaking of the exercises and experiences of an unregenerate man—of a man whose position before God is that of being in Adam—in the flesh. He is speaking of a regenerate man—a man in Christ; in the new bond, therefore, possessed by believers ever since Pentecost. He is a man indwelt by the Spirit. While he is not walking *according to* the Spirit, yet the indwelling Spirit is leading him. He is leading him as to his aims and purposes, and He is also leading him in his decisions as he passes judgment on the strife that he finds going on within him. Terrible as it all is, he is being led and taught of the Spirit.

Let us trace the Spirit's ways with him under the authoritative guidance of the apostle.

First, let us mark that the spirituality of the law is spoken of as found in what we may call a common Christian consciousness. In other words, it is the instinctive consciousness of every regenerate soul. The *measure* of its spirituality is another matter. This, no doubt, differs in different individuals. But every new-born soul will unhesitatingly confess the spirituality of the law. With this common Christian instinct the Spirit allies Himself; hence the one who has mistakenly taken up the law as a rule of life is led to realize that by his carnality he is a captive

in sin's power. He consents to the law, agrees with the Spirit that it is good, in mind and heart is subject to the Spirit's view of the law as being spiritual, yet he finds inward insubjection as well.

Second, as, under the Spirit's watchful eye and superintending care, he studies the conflict going on within himself, he is taught to distinguish between himself and the sin that dwells in him. He is unwillingly serving sin. He sees there is an "I" that is right, though he has not yet learned to identify it. He does not yet see himself as a man in Christ, but he distinguishes the "I" that is right from the sin dwelling within him, and to which he is captive.

Third, further exercise and introspection, still by the sure guidance of the Spirit, teaches him the utter profitlessness of the flesh. The carnal mind, or the mind of the flesh, is not subject to the law of God. There is no power in the law to make it subject. He sees there is a will to do the good—a will that is not the will of the flesh—but power to do the good he does not find. His previous conviction and conclusion is thus confirmed, and in fact greatly strengthened. While he does not yet see himself to be a man in Christ, he is more than ever confirmed in the conviction that there is an I that is right, from which the indwelling sin is to be distinguished.

We come now to the final conclusions to which the Spirit leads him (vers. 21-23). All the exercises the Spirit has been pressing upon him, and all the experiences he has passed through in connection with the exercises, reveal plainly an ever-present law. However desirous of doing the good, evil is always present with him. It is a fixed, established law. While

he delights in the law of God, approves God's expressed will, he sees there is an opposing law in his members, not only antagonistic to the law of his renewed mind, but with sufficient power to make him a helpless captive to the law of sin dwelling in his members. Thus by the guidance of the Spirit, who characterizes his true condition before God as a subject of divine grace, he has learned to place a right estimate upon his practical condition in not enjoying the aims and purposes with which the Spirit has energized him. He has not yet learned what the Spirit's power is, but he has become assured that it is a mistake to look for it in himself. He is now ready to abandon his search for it by introspection. He turns thus away from himself to find in Another the power for holiness and fruitfulness that he has thus far been looking for in himself in vain.

We will now inquire, Where did he find the Spirit's power? How did he find it? When he found it, what did he find it to be? All these questions are answered for us in verses 7: 24—8: 4. Let us look at them.

Having learned to realize his wretchedness as a helpless captive to the power of indwelling sin, he turns away from himself to think of and enjoy Christ—the Christ that died and rose again, with whom he is connected as being a subject of grace. Occupied now with Him, he sees himself as *in* Him—as belonging *to* Him, as being *of* Him. This, that he now sees, has been true of him all through. It has been the mind of the Spirit as to him all along. But the discovery fills his soul with praise. Convicted of needing a deliverer, he finds the need fully met in the One to whom he has turned, and his soul re-

sponds, "I thank God!" Through Jesus Christ he has been delivered from his captivity, and the joy of it fills him.

Now as a delivered one he looks back with spiritual intelligence—the intelligence of the Spirit—upon the terrible struggles through which he has passed. He understands that, as serving the law of God with the mind, and the law of sin with the flesh, he had been entirely mistaken as to his real condition before God. He did not have the mind of the Spirit about it. He now understands that there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ: that God views them as being of the risen One, and thus as sharing in the favor and acceptability in which He stands before God.

If now (having learned to look at himself as belonging to the risen and accepted Man) he rejoices in being delivered from the bitter conflict he had been maintaining, what is it that has effected the deliverance? If it is the truth that sets free, what truth is it which sets free from the struggle we have been considering? Plainly, according to the apostle, it is learning this precious truth that, as being of Christ, he is under the operation of the law of life, which operates by and in Christ. Knowing, as he now does, that this is the law with which the Spirit identifies Himself, he understands that, according to the mind of the Spirit, he is no longer a subject of the law of sin and death.

Furthermore, he now sees that sin in the flesh has already been fully condemned of God in the death of Christ; that God therefore is not requiring fruit from the flesh; that the righteous thing required by the law, instead of being produced by the flesh as

he has hitherto supposed, is produced *in* him by Christ with whom now he is occupied. Walking according to the Spirit is holiness and fruitfulness.

Thus we see that all the victims of sin whose hearts have been laid hold of by the grace that comes in through Jesus Christ, belong to the risen Christ. They are of Him—are sharers in the nature and character of His risen life. They belong to the position into which He has entered as risen from the dead.

As being thus of Him they are entitled to be practically free from the power of indwelling sin; but to really enjoy this practical freedom from sin's power, they need to learn the impossibility of doing so by walking according to law; that holiness and fruitfulness are found in the enjoyment of the mind of the Spirit. Walking thus according to the Spirit in the enjoyment of the risen Christ is practical liberty.

C. CRAIN.

(To be continued.)

EXPOSITION OF THE EPISTLE OF JUDE.

(Continued from page 305.)

ENOCH'S PROPHECY.

“And Enoch, [the] seventh from Adam, prophesied also as to these, saying, Behold, [the] Lord has come amidst His holy myriads, to execute judgment against all; and to convict all the ungodly of them of all their works of ungodliness, which they have wrought ungodlily, and of all the hard [things] which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him” (vers. 14, 15).

THE source of Jude's information as to this prophecy of “Enoch the seventh from Adam,” is not given. Criticism has busied itself to find out, but all to little purpose, and certainly to no profit.

An apocryphal book of Enoch there is, which dates evidently from pre-Christian times, and which contains language very similar to that here recorded, but the nature of the book forbids the thought that it, in any sense, is a part of, or can be placed on the same plane as the Holy Scriptures. Yet its use of the words referred to makes it evident that in some way, whether orally or in writing, God had seen fit to preserve Enoch's prophecy, so that it was readily incorporated into the weird book to which some dreamer gave the name of the one who was translated that he should not see death. Jude, by divine inspiration, declares the words were uttered by the patriarch, and that they are to have their full application and final fulfilment, in common with all prophecy, at the ushering in of the yet future day of the Lord.

A partial fulfilment they had in the flood. A more complete one awaits the appearing of the Lord Jesus, in manifested glory, to take vengeance on all who have refused His grace and done despite to the Holy Spirit.

What is referred to here is something very different to the happy event predicted in John 14: 1-3; 1 Cor. 15: 51 and 1 Thess. 4: 13-18. In those scriptures, the theme is the return of the Lord to translate His saints to heaven, of which Enoch's rapture was a type. This may transpire ere the reader lays down this little book. In a moment, the Lord may descend and call all His own to meet Him in the air. But this will not be their, or His, manifestation before the world. That will take place later, the judgment-seat of Christ and the marriage-supper of the Lamb intervening above; while on earth

apostasy will rise to its full height in the revelation and acceptance of Antichrist, and the utter rejection of all that is of God.

Then, when the cup of guilty Christendom's iniquity is full, the Lord shall come to the earth with myriads of His holy ones—redeemed men and un-fallen angels—to execute the judgment long foretold upon the despisers of His word.

A very similar expression occurs in chapter 14 of Zechariah's prophecy: "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee" (ver. 5). In each passage "saints" or "holy ones" does not, of itself, necessarily refer to redeemed humanity. Angels are also thus spoken of, and some would therefore limit the application to them alone. But Scripture clearly teaches the double aspect of the second coming of the Lord alluded to above. He is coming *for* His saints (John 14: 3; 1 Thess. 4: 15-17). He is also coming *with* them (Col. 3: 4). Caught up to meet Him as He descends with a shout, they will return with Him in manifested glory—when Enoch's prophecy and that of Zechariah shall be fulfilled.

Then will righteousness reign—every enemy being destroyed. No longer will impious deceivers profit by a profession of Christianity while secretly working to undermine the faith of God's elect, and turning the grace of God into lasciviousness. To every one will be rendered according to their works.

The present period (from the cross to the coming again of the Lord) is denominated by the Holy Spirit, "man's day" (see 1 Cor. 4: 3, marginal reading). While it lasts, God endures with much long-

suffering vessels of wrath fitted, by their pertinacity in gainsaying His word, to destruction. But when man's day ends, the day of the Lord begins, when He who has been so long silent, while blaspheming and damnable heresies have been widely promulgated, to the ruin of untold myriads, will arise to act in judgment.

Then shall men who have despised the Word of Truth learn, when too late for blessing, that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

Reader: challenge your heart I pray you *now* as to how you will stand *then*!

(To be continued.)

H. A. I.

Till He Come.

"Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest."

"But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put HIS NAME there." —Deut. 12: 13, 5.

THERE is a plainly furnished room,
 'Tis in a village street,
 And to a company of saints
 It is a sweet retreat;
 For in that place the Lord has set
 His Name, to which we meet.

Each Lord's Day morn we gather there,
 Responding to His plea;
 "As oft as ye do this, beloved,
 Ye do remember Me—
 My body broken, and My blood
 Poured out in death for thee."

Our Lord Himself is there to bless
 His own memorial feast:

His presence "in the midst" ensures
 A welcome to the least;
 And all we need in Him we find—
 Our Sacrifice and Priest.

Around the table of His grace,
 Spread with this feast of love,
 We meditate in perfect peace
 On our High Priest above:
 With praise and gratitude we trace
 The wonders of His love.

The love that bore our sin and shame,
 And brought us nigh to God,
 Has cleansed our souls from every stain,
 Through faith in Jesus' blood.
 Each blood-washed soul, thus saved by grace,
 Is now a priest to God.

The prayer, or song, or scripture read,
 Repeats the same sweet strain,
 "All praise and glory to the Lamb—
 The Lamb for sinners slain:
 For us He died, for us He lives,
 For us He'll come again!"

His presence is a holy place—
 A Bethany most dear,
 Where we can sit at Jesus' feet,
 Forgetting every care.
 "Great peace have they which love Thy law,"
 And heaven-born pleasures share.

Oh, let not earthly things intrude,
 Or keep us from our place
 Before the table of our Lord,
 Drawn by His wondrous grace.
 Each Lord's Day morn may be the last
 Ere we shall see His face!

COMMUNICATIONS CONCERNING THE NEPHILIM

DEAR MR. EDITOR:—

Referring to the article on Jude by H. A. I. in which the question of the "Nephilim" comes up, allow me space for some remarks:

It is assumed that the Nephilim and the fallen angels are one and the same, but this cannot be, for we have exactly the same word in Num. 13: 33, "The Nephilim, the sons of Anak, of the Nephilim." So that we must separate the giants from angels, unless Anak were an angel, which will hardly be contended for, especially as he appears on the scene long after the flood. Nor are these Nephilim "sons of God" either, they are expressly distinguished from them in Gen. 6: 4: "There were giants (Nephilim) in the earth in those days; and also *after that*, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men"; i. e., the seed of the sons of God and the daughters of men became mighty men, men of renown; but they were not Nephilim—they came *after*.

It is safe to say that angels would never have been thought of in connection with "sons of God" had it not been for the passages in Job 1: 6; 2: 1 and 38: 7; and these are poetic, and not written until hundreds of years after the events recorded in Gen. 6: 4.

I make bold to say that there is not a trace of angelic beings in Gen. 6; the whole theme is earth, mankind. "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence . . . I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth: both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air . . . The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold I will destroy them with the earth" (vers. 5 to 13).

Angels are spirits, not flesh (Ps. 104: 4; Lk. 24: 39), and it is utterly impossible for the incongruous intercourse which men have imported into Gen. 6: 4 to take

place: and were it possible, what would the offspring be, angels or men? flesh or spirit? And whose would the responsibility be: that of the angels or that of the daughters of men? "And God saw the wickedness of *man* that it was great in the earth." We gather from our Lord's words to the Sadducees in Lk. 20: 35, 36 that the angels neither marry nor are given in marriage, but the "sons of God" in Gen. 6, are said to have taken "them *wives* of all which they chose." According to the passages cited from Job, angels are "sons of God," but as representing Him in their own sphere; it is to be seriously questioned if fallen angels would be so designated. It is a fact that men are called "sons of God," and this was so from the beginning: "Which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God" (Lk. 3: 38, and see Acts 17: 28).

Cain's seed are not recognized as God's representatives here on earth; Cain had gone out from the presence of the Lord with the brand of a murderer upon him, and had built his city: and God had appointed another seed instead of the one he had murdered, and here seems to be the culminating point of the corruption which filled the earth at this time, and which was so obnoxious to God: Seth's line, the "sons of God," those responsibly standing for God, as opposed to Cain's line, deliberately choose from the murderer's seed whom they would, as though all was right. Then all testimony for God is gone, and judgment must follow.

"In like manner with them" (Jude 7) cannot be pressed as applying to the similarity between Sodom's sin and that of the angels', but rather to "the cities around them." The sin of Sodom and Gomorrha had become well known from other Scriptures; that of "the cities around them" needed this explanatory word to make it definite—"the cities around them, in like manner with

them" (i. e., the surrounding cities were greedily committing fornication like Sodom and Gomorrhah). Nor would it do to say that angels went "after *other* flesh," which would be to make them flesh, whereas we are distinctly told that angels are not flesh.

2 Peter 2, which gives these judgments in their historical order, places the incarceration of angels that sinned before the judgment upon the old world (vers. 4, 5, 6).

"Sons of God" are those who are of and for God in a scene wholly against Him, this is precisely what Seth's seed were; but to mix with the enemy as though there were no difference was to obliterate all testimony, and judgment must follow.

Yours for the Truth,

J. B. J.

NOTE BY H. A. I.

HAVING, through the courtesy of the Editor, had the reading of J. B. J.'s expression of opinion as to the sons of God, and Jude 6, I am thankful for it. It will cause searching. A reference to my own paper will show that I do not attempt to speak authoritatively as to this admittedly mysterious passage, while, after having carefully weighed what has been put forth by many on both sides, I find my judgment inclined toward the view that the sons of God *were* Nephilim and super-human. But as to this I am not greatly concerned. What I am concerned about, is that neither I nor others miss the solemn lesson the apostle is pressing in verses 5 to 7; that we ever remember there is no safety in outward privilege—but God desires truth in the inward parts. Interested persons might consult the writings of the grave and scholarly brethren to which I referred in my note. J. B. J. gives the other side, which also deserves to be as carefully weighed.

SISTER MILDRED'S CONVERSION; HOW GOD REACHED A NUN IN A CONVENT.

The incident that follows was related to me lately by the brother whose initials appear in the story. For obvious reasons full names of persons and places are omitted, but the reader may rely upon the trustworthiness of the narrative.

IN the last decade of the century recently closed, there dwelt in the Convent of —, in Eastern Washington, a sweet-faced nun, of quiet and gentle demeanor, known as Sister Mildred. Who she really was, and whence she came, were secrets to all but her most intimate associates that will never be unravelled now until the judgment-seat of Christ is set up.

She manifested unmistakable signs of culture and innate refinement, and gave good evidence of having come from a home where the kindlier feelings were uppermost, and tenderness and affection had surrounded her. Warm-hearted, and solicitous for others' good, she seemed to delight in ministering to the welfare of any who required her simple services.

In the convent school, or girl's academy, she was employed in teaching stenography and typewriting. Her duties were discharged with conscientious faithfulness, and any who knew her might have supposed that hers was a peaceful, happy and contented life.

But Sister Mildred had a secret sorrow gnawing at her heart, that often filled her with fear and anxiety. She felt the burden of her sins, and longed to know how she might find true peace with God. In vain had she sought to obtain this through confession, penance, mortification and the daily (and even nightly) round of religious exercises. Tears, prayers and austerities were all in vain. There were memories that would not down;

an anxiety that would not be appeased; and soul trouble that neither sacraments nor indulgences, granted by the church, could allay.

So far as I am aware, Sister Mildred had never dared to open her heart to anyone as to her true condition of soul, until an event occurred which I will now relate.

In the same city there dwelt an earnest Christian, Mr. F—— S——, who had, for several years, been rejoicing in the knowledge of sins forgiven and a conscience purged from every guilty stain, through the precious atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Taught of the Holy Spirit, through the sacred Scriptures, he had learned that all human efforts to attain to righteousness could but end in failure; yea, that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy (polluted) rags" in God's sight, because of the incurable evil of the heart of man, which is described as "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked."

Such a heart had F—— S—— (and such is the natural heart of every reader of these lines!), but he had been "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." Through that Word he had been led to personal faith in the gospel message, revealing Christ to his soul as the all-sufficient Saviour for the confessedly lost and guilty. Thus he was the happy possessor of a new life, even life eternal, having been born of the Word and Spirit.

This man was an expert mechanic whose special work had to do with the setting up and repairing of safes and vaults, and the regulation of time-locks and intricate combinations. While engaged in this business, he was frequently called for to repair the typewriters used by Sister Mildred at the convent-school; and thus had op-

portunity of becoming somewhat acquainted with the quiet nun who presided over this part of the academy. She spoke freely to him on various subjects, and on one occasion voluntarily offered to do some copying for him, if there should be any thing of that nature he wished done.

Now it so happened that he was carrying a letter in his pocket at that very time, of which he had been very desirous to have a number of duplicates, for distribution among several of his brethren.

But in order to show the remarkable actings of God's Providence, and the wonderful way in which He was about to bring good out of a grave evil, by overruling a serious wrong for this soul-weary nun's blessing, I must go back and explain both the reason for, and the nature of this letter.

Some years before, there had been a sad and much-to-be-regretted breach of fellowship among the Christians, with a part of whom Mr. S—— had become associated later on. Through an unhappy combination of pride, self-will and misunderstanding, (of which many now feel heartily ashamed) a division had been perpetrated and saints once rejoicing in each other's love and confidence had been parted into almost hostile sections, and learned to look upon each other with coldness and suspicion. No doubt there were many who honestly differed in judgment who were superior to these petty feelings; but, alas, in many places they were only too much in evidence.

The unhappy consequences of that separation exist to this day, and are often a source of grave concern and perplexity to simple-minded believers desiring to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Mr. S—— was numbered among these. In distress of mind, over

what he feared was the countenancing of a serious wrong done to many saints of God, he felt led of the Lord to apply to a brother, well-reputed of as a help and a teacher (albeit on the opposite side in the controversy), who was known to be a man of sober judgment, and well acquainted with the facts. In reply he received a somewhat lengthy letter, in which the questions really at issue were set forth in a clear and succinct, but godly and kindly manner. In order to do this satisfactorily, the writer referred repeatedly to the Scriptures, thus directing his correspondent's attention to many important passages that brought out, in a lucid way, the true condition of all men by nature, as having "no life" until they have been born again by the Word and Spirit of God; and the privileges and responsibilities of those who have become "sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus,"—who are saved through His precious blood, and who, from the moment they trust in Him, are "sealed with the Holy Spirit," and that "to the day of redemption." Following this out a little, he developed the teaching of God's word as to the present standing and future portion of these sealed ones, possessors, in common with all saints, of life eternal, communicated through the Son of God. Other things were touched on which I need not dwell on here.

This letter proved so helpful to Mr. S—— that he wished to share it with others, and without a thought of the apparent impropriety of his action, he was pleased indeed to accept the nun's kind offer. He handed her the letter, of which she promised to make a certain number of copies.*

* I purposely avoid going into details in regard to the unhappy strife briefly referred to. But for the information of those intimately concerned, I merely mention the fact that it was the

Upon his calling for them, a few days later, she handed these to him, and then, visibly moved, asked if she might keep an extra copy which she had ventured to make for herself, saying: "Mr. S——, that letter is the most wonderful thing I have ever read. I do not understand all about the controversy; but I think I understand what he is teaching, and I would like so much to be allowed to keep one for myself that I might often read it over. It explains so many things, and contains what I have longed to know for years, about how to get peace with God, and how one may know he has eternal life and is accepted in Christ." *

Needless to say, Mr. S—— was amazed and rejoiced at this frank confession, and readily gave the requested permission.

The nun went on to speak of the gracious tone of the letter, and to say that she had noticed many of the quotations were from the Bible, a book with which she was very imperfectly acquainted. She spoke wistfully of longing to know more of it, upon which Mr. S—— at once offered her a copy of the New Testament, which he carried in his pocket. She was grateful for the kindness, but timid about receiving it; saying, "I am

sorrow of 1884-85 among believers who assembled in the Name of the Lord Jesus, with which the correspondence in question had to do. The writer of the letter, copied by the nun, will be known to many under the familiar initials of T. O. L. I doubt not, this paper will be the first intimation he has ever had of the manner in which his letter was used by the God of all grace.

* It is quite possible this conversation is somewhat "Protestantised." The events occurred, as mentioned before, a number of years ago, but the words are given as nearly as I can recollect them, Mr. S—— having related the particulars to me very recently.

afraid we ought not to read the Bible for ourselves, because we cannot understand it." He overcame her scruples by a few earnest words, and she accepted it thankfully and promised to read it.

Some time elapsed, ere business again called him to the convent; but on the next occasion he noticed that Sister Mildred was nowhere to be seen. The Mother Superior was present while he worked, and he finally ventured to inquire if the sister were well. He was told that she was ill, and in the infirmary. Upon his earnest request, permission was accorded him to see her for a few minutes. She was pale and wasted, but greeted him cordially, and, in the presence of another nun, spoke only of her illness and related topics.

But the other leaving the room for a brief interval, she at once became more free and thanked him with all her heart for the Testament, the letter, and the gospel message he had given her, "It has been the Word of life to me," she declared, "I know the blood of Christ has washed me, and I have peace." More would have been added, but the other sister returned, and Mr. S—— left her to see her no more until "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him."

But my story is not yet ended; for he was not to be left without additional testimony to her salvation and steadfastness, and that from a most unlikely source.

When he next inquired for her, he was told that she had been sent for treatment to a hospital in the western part of the state, also connected with a convent. So he despaired of ever hearing from, or of her again; and could only pray that God would keep her in the joy of what she had learned from His word, "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," even though that *work* for her meant but patient suffering.

However, a change in his own business affairs resulted sometime afterwards in his removing with his family to Portland, Oregon. There he was connected with a large safe and vault firm, by which he was frequently sent to near-by towns and cities on both sides of the Columbia to do special work. One day he was despatched to the residence of the Romish priests, in the very city to which the sick nun had been taken.

While he was engaged upon the safe, two priests were conversing together in the room, one of whom was clearly the worse for liquor. They happened to mention the convent and the hospital, and Mr. S—— took the liberty to ask if they had ever known a Sister Mildred there. The partially inebriated priest replied at once that he believed such a person had been there but she was dead now. The other was evidently much perturbed, and at once called his companion into an adjoining room. There, supposing himself out of earshot, he spoke warningly, saying, "Don't you know that was that heretic sister from ——?" The name was that of the city in which Mr. S—— had met her. The words were spoken bitterly; but they were sweet indeed to him, for he was now assured that, although "after the way which they called heresy," she worshiped God, she had in reality found the sweet consolations of the gospel, and had doubtless been faithful unto death in maintaining the precious truth revealed to her soul through the letter and the Testament.

Thus had grace triumphed, and God been glorified through what might have seemed a most unlikely channel; namely a letter referring to sorrows among Christians which prudence would have suggested was not proper for a nun's eyes.

I have thought it well to preserve the story for the

encouragement of the Lord's servants that they may sow in faith beside all waters. And I trust it may also speak to any unsaved ones who may read it, bidding them profit by the knowledge given them by our gracious God in His precious life-giving Word.

H. A. I.

The Man of God.

THERE is no glory halo
 Round his devoted head,
 No lustre marks the sacred path
 In which his footsteps tread,
 Yet *holiness* is graven
 Upon his thoughtful brow;
 And all his steps are ordered in
 The light of Heav'n e'en now.

He often is peculiar,
 And oft misunderstood;
 And yet his power is felt by both
 The evil and the good:
 For he doth live in touch with Heaven—
 A life of faith and prayer;
 His sympathies, his hopes, his joys—
 His all is centred there.

His body is God's temple,
 His heart the Master's shrine,
 He lives, and thinks, and speaks, and acts,
 As moved by power divine.
 His is the calm of Heaven—
 The faith that can be still;
 For God revealeth unto him
 The secrets of His will.

He is a chosen servant
 Among God's many sons;
 He bears His sayings on his lips,
 And on His errands runs.

No human frown he feareth,
 No earthly praise he seeks,
 But in the dignity of Heaven
 His burning message speaks.

He with delight most holy
 Hangs o'er God's precious page;
There finds his path, and learns the end
 Of this self-loving age.
 In Jesus' sacred footprints
 He long hath humbly trod;
 A constant man of faith and prayer—
 Such is the man of God.

I've found him in the workshop,
 And in the busy street;
 The plainest, simplest, humblest man
 That one could wish to meet.
 I've treasured up his sayings,
 And marked his faithful ways;
 And oft to follow in his steps
 My longing spirit prays.

W. B.

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ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 40.—What course should the Assembly take toward a brother in a case similar to 1 Cor. 5, if he had confessed his sin before it became known, and they were satisfied he was broken about it? Had it become public, and he was charged with it, and he confessed it, and the assembly was satisfied he was truly repentant, should he then be put away?

ANS.—Discipline in the house of God has two principal objects: the holiness of God, and the restoration of the offender. In connection with this the principle of God is, "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." If the offender therefore judge himself, who can judge him? What is there to be judged? This is the principle of salvation itself: If the sinner condemns himself,

he has Christ for his Saviour, and there is therefore no condemnation for him. So it is with the saint who offends. It may be far more painful for him to judge himself, because, when he sins, he sins in the light, and this is great guilt. But when he does judge himself, Christ is on his side—his advocate. Who then will be his accuser? 2 Cor. 12: 20, 21 illustrates this. It seems evident by the language of verse 21 that the apostle would have no thought of discipline in his mind if the sins mentioned were repented of by the offenders.

Of course, in the sins which come to the knowledge of the assembly, it is the assembly's responsibility to determine if the offender has truly judged himself. In the first phase of your question there is little to be feared as to genuineness of the repentance. None would be likely to confess a sin which no one knows unless his conscience were in exercise before God. In the second occasion mentioned, much greater care would be required. The offender might well be placed as one in the Old Testament suspected of leprosy (Lev. 13) until it is evident to all that the sin is judged not only because it has been discovered, but because it is seen in the light of the holiness of God. What concerns the assembly most deeply is sin *working*—sin that is unjudged, active. It was active in Achan, therefore his judgment; also in the man of 1 Cor. 5, therefore his judgment also. 2 Cor. 2: 6, however, gives also the thought of "*punishment*" in discipline. There may be cases therefore in which the offender has brought such great public dishonor on the name of the Lord that only a public judgment by the assembly will meet the requirement. But whatever kind of sin it be, whether judged by the offender himself or not, it is ever cause for humiliation and confession in the assembly—the only right mind in which discipline of any kind can be exercised. Nothing, perhaps, tests the state of an assembly more than discipline. 2 Cor. 2: 9 shows that its exercise is required partly in view of this. Insubordinate Christians cannot exercise it aright. They are either opposed to it, or tyrannical in it.