

HELPS IN  
“Things concerning Himself.”

EDITED BY W. T. TURPIN.

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“Christ is all.”—Col. iii. 11.

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## Helps in "Things concerning Himself."

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### "WITH CHRIST IN DEATH AND RESURRECTION."

NO words can sufficiently express the momentous and solemn nature of this subject. The Lord helping me, I desire to set before my readers, all the fellow-members of His body, the nature of the position set forth by the words, "With Christ in death and resurrection," and the *practice* which flows from it. Oh! for a renewed and deepening sense of the enormous importance of not overlooking or underrating the latter. It would be a fearful triumph of the enemy if the saints of God were to receive the truth only in *terms*. If it were possible to adopt the loftiest and highest *expressions* of truth without the corresponding displacement of all that belongs to the first man, which is the divine result; remembering that the characteristic mark of the last days is the having a form of piety, but denying the power of it. (See 2 Tim. iii. 5, 6.) It is well we should jealously watch all the inroads of the enemy by which he might stealthily set aside the truth.

First, then, let us inquire into the meaning of the expression, "*With Christ in death.*" What



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does it imply? Is it not clearly such an *association* with Christ in His death as closes for ever before God, judicially, our previous history as connected with Adam fallen? The true condition of every believer, that which from the very starting point this doctrine teaches, is the utter judgment of the old man; the sentence of death passed upon it, and condemnation altogether. This was accomplished in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the one true, spotless Man. There is no recognition of the flesh as to allowance or acceptance of it. I trust my beloved brethren will allow me in all affection to italicise the word *association*, when I say, *With* Christ in death, I mean that I am *associated* with Him in death. Union with Christ was impossible until He had died, risen again, and ascended into glory. Union with Christ *in incarnation* is a solemn denial of His own words (see John xii. 24), and is the root of popery and its adjuncts. *Association* and *identification* are not the same as *union*. A Christian is indeed united to Christ by the Holy Ghost, but it is to Christ who *has died*, is *risen again*, and has gone into glory. Nothing can be more important in its place than a distinct and definite apprehension of this great reality. Not only has Christ died for us, but we have died with Him. Do we see how this cuts at the root of everything? What can a dead man seek? This question is suggested by the great

## WITH CHRIST IN DEATH AND RESURRECTION. 3

fact I am pressing ; everything that man in the flesh had to reckon with God about, but which he never could have settled, has all been disposed of between God and Christ. To nature and to common-sense the thing is impossible, unreasonable, absurd. But to faith not only is it most blessedly true, but the believer can say that he has died, and is past the judgment, so that there is naught against him, but that he is alive again for evermore in a life which death cannot touch, which knows no grave, is beyond judgment, yea, even in which judgment is turned into victory.

Further, as regards this life, nothing can be more blessed than to see how it has *objects* and *motives* entirely its own. This is what may be called the positive side of the subject, and on this we may dwell a little further in detail another time. Just now I press Christ's death, and the association of the Christian with Him in death, and the value of that association—not to get judicially clear from all the penalties resting upon man as a creature, and as a descendant of Adam, though, without doubt, in that light all judgment is past, and none remains ; but what is blessed is the value of that association as setting one free from *self* and the *world*, so that one can brightly and happily say, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified

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unto me, and I unto the world." I close our present meditation with the words of another, which I desire most fully to adopt as my own : "The way that Christ's death is made of little effect by most Christians ; the way that they have Judaised it out of its eternal value and the estimate heaven forms of it, and deduced it down to be a part of a human system of their own, borrowed from the law of fallen humanity and the elements of the world, both of which marked Judaism, is a most solemn sin. The Colossians, who had been dead in their sins and in the uncircumcision of the flesh, that is, morally dead, are thus charged : 'Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances ?' They would sanction worldliness, and accredit their own flesh if they did so. And he adds, 'Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.' He has so appropriated all that I was as to bear the record of it in His own body. My soul knows those hands, those feet, that side, that forehead ; but, blessed be God, I know them in Him who was dead, but is alive again. I know them in Him who shall reign for ever as the Lamb that was dead, but is alive again for evermore."

Beloved brethren, has God shewn us these

## THE CONTRAST, ETC.

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things? If He has, shall we not earnestly cry to Him, that this further grace may be given to all who own them as true, that they act in power upon us, and that we may find power to act on them?

W. T. T.



THE CONTRAST BETWEEN ALL  
THAT WAS IN MAN, AND WHAT  
WAS IN CHRIST.

IT is very striking to notice, when the eye is opened to see it, how the manner of Paul's conversion brought out of his soul *the entire contrast of all that was in man, and what was in Christ*. Every principle on which man could rest was gone; *conscience* had failed to be a guide; Paul thought he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. That was: his conscience led him, making him destroy Christ if he could; *his righteousness*, according to the law, wrought the same thing; he could not have Christ, he was a Pharisee; *his religiousness* too made him bow to the authority of the chief priests. By *conscience*, *law* and *religiousness*, he was against God. All the things which could act religiously upon the senses, which God had Himself appointed, and had been present Himself upon the earth to maintain, all had brought man to enmity against God. Paul had lived in

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it all, and found himself thereby only in activity against God. His religion as to the flesh was all smashed; it all went for nothing: of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law, a blameless Pharisee; all was gone! It had brought him into enmity against the Lord of glory. And, let me say here, that ritualism, by which in these days people are seeking to build up all this again, is the *denial* of Christ; before, it was only *ignorance* of Him.

J. N. D.



### PAUL'S MINISTRY.

I JUDGE that it is very profitable to the saints that they discern rightly that Paul's ministry was thus one stage in the divine process of telling out the purposes of God. That he holds a distinguished place in the church, the feeling of every saint will at once and without effort bear witness; for there is no name more kept in the recollections of the saints than that of our apostle, save the name of Him who in the hearts of His people has no fellow.

And his office being thus from heaven, he refuses to confer with flesh and blood, refuses to go up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before him. He was not to get himself sanctioned there or by them. Before this, the twelve at

## PAUL'S MINISTRY.

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Jerusalem had all authority. But the apostles at Jerusalem are nothing to Paul and his ministry. They had not cast the lot over him, nor are they now to send him forth ; but it is the Holy Ghost who says, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." And having thus received grace and apostleship from the Lord in the glory, and being now sent forth by the Holy Ghost, in full consistency with all this, he and Barnabas receive recommendation to the grace of God, from the unconsecrated hands of some unnamed brethren at Antioch. All this was a grievous breach upon that order that was to establish the earth in righteousness, beginning at Jerusalem.

And not only was Paul's apostleship and mission thus independent of Jerusalem and of the twelve ; but the gospel which he preached (the nature of which we have before considered) he did not learn either there or from them. He received it not from man, neither was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. He goes up, most truly, from Antioch, with Barnabas, to Jerusalem, to confer with the apostles about circumcision ; but before he does so, he withstood some though they had come from James, and rebuked Peter before them all. And these things were ordered in the provident wisdom of the Spirit ; just as our Lord's rebukes of His mother ; the Spirit of God foreseeing the

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boasts in the flesh which would arise from both these sources, from Mary and from Peter ; and thus has given the wayfaring man these tokens of His heavenward path. He circulates the decree upon the question of circumcision for present peace. But when counselling the Gentile churches afterwards on one of the subjects which this decree determines, namely, *eating meats offered to idols* ; he does so on the ground merely of brotherly love. He never refers to this decree. (1 Cor. viii.) He was taught his gospel entirely by revelation (Gal. i. 12), for at his conversion it had been so promised to him. (Acts xxvi. 16.) And accordingly it was from the Lord Himself that he received his knowledge of the death, burial, resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 3), and his knowledge also of the last supper and its meaning (1 Cor. xi. 23) though these things lay within the common acquaintance of those who had companied with the Lord, and he might have received them from them. But no, he must be taught them all by revelation. The Lord appeared to him in those things of which he was to be a minister and a witness. The Lord was jealous that Paul should not confer with flesh and blood, should not be a debtor to any but to Himself for his gospel. For as the dispensation was to allow of no confidence in the flesh, neither was Paul's apostleship. All that might have been gain in the

## PAUL'S MINISTRY.

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flesh was to be counted loss. Confidence with those who had seen and heard, eaten and drunk with Jesus might have been gain, but all this was set aside. Paul would thankfully be refreshed in spirit by the mutual faith of himself and the humblest disciple. Nay, he would have such acknowledged ; all such in whose belly the Spirit had opened the river of God for the refreshing of the saints. (Rom. i. 12 ; 1 Cor. xvi. 18.) But he could accept no man's person. The previous pillars of the church could not be used to support his ministry. The Jewish order was gone. Of all, we know, Jehovah had respect to that order. It was according to the number of the children of Israel, that at first he divided the nations. (Deut. xxxii. 8.) Afterwards He distributed the land of Canaan according to this number also, that is, among the *twelve* tribes. (Joshua xiii.-xix.) So David in his day, under the guiding of Jehovah, had respect to the same number, when he settled the ministries of the temple and the officers of the palace at Jerusalem. (1 Chron. xxiii.-xxvii.) And in like manner the Lord, providing for the healing and teaching of Israel, appointed *twelve* apostles, still having respect to the Jewish order. And this order of twelve apostles was preserved, as we have seen, under the hand of Peter afterwards, for he was the guardian of the Jewish order, and pastor of the Jewish church. But



## IO HELPS IN THINGS CONCERNING HIMSELF.

Paul's apostleship is at once an invasion upon all this. It has no respect whatever to Jewish, earthly, or fleshly order. It interferes with it. It is a writing under the hand of the Spirit of God, for the revoking of that order. And this was, as was natural, a great trial to the Jewish Christians. They could not easily understand this undue apostleship, and we find that he was considerate of them under this trial. And indeed those who stand with him in the assertion of the sovereignty of the Spirit, and in the rejection of all fleshly authority, should with him likewise be considerate of the difficulties which many now experience from the Jewish feelings and rules of judgment in which they have been educated. But still Paul was an apostle, let them hear or let them forbear.

And not only was it a trial to Jewish believers, but there were found evil men moved of Satan, who made their use of this state of things. We find it to have been so at Corinth. In Galatia it was not this. In his epistle to the churches there, he does not speak of his apostleship, because it had been slandered among them ; but because it was the divine sanction of that gospel which he had preached, but from which they had departed. But at Corinth his apostleship had been questioned, and by what witnesses would he have it approved? Why by his pureness, his knowledge, his armour of righteousness.

## PAUL'S MINISTRY.

II

(2 Cor. vii.) How does he seek to be received? Why, because he had corrupted no man, he had defrauded no man. (2 Cor. vii.) How does he vindicate and establish his ministry? Read his proofs in such words as these, "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are not ye my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you, for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord;" and again, "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." Does he not by all this commit the proof of his apostleship to the manifest presence of the Spirit with him? His children in the faith were the seal of his office (1 Cor. ix. 2), the epistle that ought to commend it to the acceptance of all men. The signs of an apostle had been wrought by him. (2 Cor. xii. 12.) And must it not have been so? What office or ministry could now be warranted without the presence and exercise of the gifts received for men? Could the purpose of the ascension be evaded or annulled? Could fleshly authority and order be allowed in despite of the revelation now given, that the ascended Head was the dispenser and Lord of all these ministries that were for "the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ?"

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When the Lord ascended, on His way up, He was a conqueror in triumph, leading captivity captive. But when He reached His heavenly seat He became a crowned priest, and sent down ordination gifts to His church, by the ministry of which He is either forming or strengthening the union between Himself and the members here, and their union among themselves. Then ministries thus act like the joints and bands in the human body, and all other ministeries the apostle sets aside as "rudiments of the world," fitted to those who are alive in the world, but most unsuited to those who are dead and risen with Christ as the church is. (See Eph. iv. 16; Col. ii. 19-23.) J. G. B.



## RELATIONSHIP, PRIVILEGE, AND RESPONSIBILITY.

(MAT. XII. 46-50; EPH. I. 5, 6; II. 18; I. 22, 23, III. 14-21.)

IN Matthew xii. the Lord Jesus disowns His relationships with Israel after the flesh, and acknowledges those alone to be in relationship with Him who did "the will of his Father which is in heaven," "the same is my brother and sister and mother."

Nothing can be more blessed than to be brought into relationship with divine persons,

## RELATIONSHIP, PRIVILEGE, ETC. 13

and Christians are brought into relationships of the nearest and most intimate character, both with the Father and with the Son, but with the Son become Man and now glorified, *and through* the Son become Man, and as the fruit of divine counsels and on the ground of accomplished redemption ; which relationships subsist in the power of the Holy Spirit which has been given to us, "Marked out beforehand for *sonship* through Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Here is set forth our relationship with the Father, as also in other scriptures, to wit, 1 John iii. 1-3. This relationship is indissoluble and carries with it certain ineffable privileges, greater than which perhaps none can be found than what we get in Ephesians ii. 18, namely, "access," "for through him [Jesus] we both [Jew and Gentile, and equally] have access by [or in the power of] one Spirit unto the Father." But are we enjoying this privilege? because like every other blessing which belongs to us it has to be taken up in faith to be enjoyed.

In this relationship we do not lose our individuality. Each child of God has its own peculiar place in the Father's affections and before Him ; we are loved as Jesus was loved, and have none other than His own place before the Father.

Then there is our relationship to the Son, but

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to the Son become Man and as risen and glorified. I do not now refer to the fact that consequent upon what we are through grace namely, of His own order, "as is the heavenly one, such also the heavenly ones"). He is not ashamed to call us *brethren*, for blessed as is this relationship in which we are seen as in *association* with Him, the one to which I refer is, I judge, of a higher and more intimate character and involves *union*. We are "his body," God "gave him [the risen and exalted Man] to be head over all things to the assembly, which is *his body*, the fulness of him who fills all in all."

In this relationship we lose our individuality, it becomes merged. I could not say, *I* am His body, though a member of it, but I can say *I* am God's child.

As the privilege of the child is access to the Father, so the privilege of the church is to enjoy the results of *union*. Just as a bride quits her own circumstances for those of the one to whom she is to be united, so it is the church's privilege to realise that her interests are *identical with those of Christ* to whom she is united; and in Ephesians iii. the desires of the apostle, who ministers the truth as to the assembly, are that we "may be fully able to apprehend what is the breadth and length and depth and height [the full extent of the Lord's domain] and to know the love of the Christ which surpasses know-

## RELATIONSHIP, PRIVILEGE, ETC. 15

ledge!" All is hers as united to Him who loves her with a love which surpasses knowledge. But the desire is that we may fully apprehend the one and know the other. This is our privilege, but are we enjoying it? is faith in exercise with a view to this?

Then there are responsibilities flowing from these relationships and privileges. On the one hand we are called to be "imitators of God as dear children," to exhibit our Father's character, who has shewn such grace to us in Christ; and on the other hand, seeing that we have life and everything in common with Jesus, we are to manifest His life (what that life is morally, displayed in all its perfectness in Him) in our mortal bodies. For the fulfilment of these responsibilities the Spirit of God, which has been given to us and indwells us, is the power, even as the relationships themselves subsist by Him, and the privileges are enjoyed through Him.

May it be given to every member of the family of God, and to all who compose the church of Christ, *to know* these relationships in which they stand, by faith to *take up and enjoy* the privileges which are connected with them, and in the power of the Spirit *to fulfil* the responsibilities which flow from them.

T. H.



## PHILADELPHIA.

IT seems not much to say of those in Philadelphia, "Thou hast kept my word and hast not denied my name," for there was not much done by them; well, what could they do? But in fact this was saying *everything* of them, when all that was going on was to the setting aside of the written word, they *kept* it; and when everything went to the denial of Christ's name, they did not deny His name. That which is great in God's sight is not the calling down fire from heaven, as Elijah did, but the being faithful amid surrounding unfaithfulness. So likewise it did not seem to be saying much for the 7,000 that did not conform to the gross act of worshipping Baal, in merely saying they had not *bowed the knee* to Baal, but it was in truth saying everything for them, because they were surrounded by all those that did bow *the knee* to Baal.

J. N. D.

PRONOUNCED UNCLEAN AND  
CLEAN.

(LEV. XIII. 38-46; XIV. 1-7.)

NOTHING can be more wonderful than that a poor sinner should be able to confide in perfect peace, here on earth, in the midst of his leprosy and misery, in the very One who is on the throne of God in the heavens. Wondrous grace, that such

## PRONOUNCED UNCLEAN AND CLEAN. 17

a One up there in glory should have a heart full of pity for guilty, daring rebels ! Just conceive, if possible, for a moment, what such tidings would be to a poor, friendless, hopeless, homeless rebel, whose sins and sorrows had reached to such a height that nothing but despair was left ; for him to hear that any one thinks of him, or cares for him, is good news so wonderful that he almost fears it is too good to be true. A Saviour in glory, who died for rebels on the earth, is a contrast indeed, and yet such is the testimony of God at this moment—a testimony to be repeated wherever there is a sinner, a guilty, lost one, on the face of the whole earth.

In writing a little concerning the scriptures above quoted, my object is to point out, as simply as I can, the *place* the word of God has in *convicting* and *assuring* the soul. I greatly desire to press upon the conscience the all-important fact that the discovery of our misery, or of the only One who has heart and power to meet us in it, is in no way consequent upon our feeling or sense, but upon the unchanging word of the living God. I have heard the question asked, “Do you *feel* you are a sinner?” Yet I humbly submit it is not the *first* question. It would be felt, no doubt, if the testimony of God about man as a child of Adam were believed. We may be well assured that the testimony of God is as clear and dis-



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tinct as can be. By nature man is a leper before God—without Christ, without hope, without God in the world; an unclean rebel, with a mind and will set against God. Hear His word, “There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit, the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.” (Rom. iii. 10–18.)

Nothing could be more decisive or convicting. It is the great antitype of the leper, who is convicted and shut out of the camp of Israel by the word of the priest. It was not a question of his feeling his leprosy; the question was, what the priest had said—what was his word who knew the fatal plague spot? The leper in Israel, with rent clothes, his head bare, a covering upon his upper lip, crying “Unclean, unclean!” must go outside the camp; that is, he must take the position the priest of Israel by his word placed him in. What a solemn picture of the condition of man as a child of Adam now! God

## PRONOUNCED UNCLEAN AND CLEAN. 19

has shut every man's mouth, has pronounced man unclean, unfit for His presence ; but along with this (of which no adequate picture could be given), that same blessed God assures man that there are in Himself springs of compassion and mercy, of which He has the heart to make guilty, polluted, loathsome lepers, the object. This, God has *announced* to sinners, has *demonstrated* in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, and *bestows* now wherever there is the faith that casts itself on Him. How wonderful to know that I have a Saviour in glory ! A Saviour who came to earth and died for me, rose again from the dead, having, in death, closed my history as a leper before God ; and because of who He was, as well as having righteously met all the claims of the throne of God, took His seat on high in glory, from whence He lets His voice be heard and His light seen, from whence all that I need comes, and to which glory it is the *purpose* of His heart to bring me. It is the word of God that convicts me of my condition, as seen and judged by Him in righteousness, and it is the same word that bids me take comfort, because He who shuts my mouth, if I may so say, opens His to tell me of the grace and mercy that is in Himself for me, as well as the full provision He has made through the agonies and the blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus Christ, to take such as us out

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of the state in which, by nature, we are, at a distance from Him, and to bring us unto Himself. What a message to be put in trust with to poor man in this world, declaring to him, in his leprosy and ruin, a love so wonderful, that it rests satisfied with nothing short of his complete deliverance from condemnation and death, and his full satisfaction in the place where God would have him, justified from all things, accepted in the Beloved, and united by the Holy Ghost to Christ in heaven. Oh! how wonderful this is, God's own joy, accomplished in and through His own Son the Lord Jesus Christ. Once again, let me press it upon my readers, all this is on the testimony of God, borne in the word of God to man's ruin and God's love; the picture of the former being the leper in Israel placed outside the camp by the word of the priest.

I turn now to look at the second scripture, and there we shall find the same principle. The leper being cleansed is once again to be brought back; but how? "Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed, two birds, *alive* and *clean*, and cedar-wood, and scarlet, and hyssop. And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water; as for the living bird, he shall take it and the cedar-wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall

## PRONOUNCED UNCLEAN AND CLEAN. 21

dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water ; and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall *pronounce* him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field." (Vers. 4-7.)

In the above verses, which describe the cleansing of the leper, we have a striking picture of the principle on which God now justifies the ungodly, namely, on the ground of the death of Christ, by which sin is condemned and righteousness established, and the resurrection of Christ, which proclaims God's satisfaction and our justification.

The bird killed in an earthen vessel, over running water, is, in picture, Christ crucified, and the living bird let loose, Christ risen and glorified, and all this the result of that which was in God's heart respecting poor sinners on earth, helpless and hopeless in their ruin. What a comfort to be able to shew all this to poor sinners as God's *testimony*, that the word which silences him on his side opens the door of hope on God's side. Wonderful message! yet more wonderful messenger, He, the beloved Son, who came from heaven to make it all good in His death and resurrection for us.

One point more, and I close. We have seen, I trust, that it is *God's testimony* to man's ruin, not man's feelings or thoughts about his ruin,

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that is the question ; and that God has likewise given testimony to all that was in *His heart* in the gift, death, resurrection, and glory of His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. There is another point of testimony to which I would direct attention : how did the leper *know* he was cleansed ? On the same authority as that which convicted him of leprosy. At the first he was pronounced unclean by the priest, so now being cleansed, he is "*pronounced clean.*" As at first, on the word of the priest, he took his place *outside*, so now, on the word of the priest, he takes his place *inside* ; in both cases it was the *word of the priest*. How important, how blessed is this ! Many a soul perplexes itself from want of simply taking God at His word, which is the true source and spring of all known enjoyment, as it is written, "The God of hope fill you with all joy, and peace in *believing.*" And on the other hand, many souls are blinded and deceived, judging the state they are in by their own apprehension of it, or their own feeling about themselves ; they consequently fail to see the complete ruin they are in, and the wonderful provision God has in perfect suitability to Himself made in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to meet them where they are.

Another point of great beauty is the fact, that from the same spot whence *trouble* came, *comfort*

## PRONOUNCED UNCLEAN AND CLEAN. 23

likewise comes ; and this is seen constantly in scripture. If we look at Isaiah vi. we find it—the glory of Jehovah's presence *convicts* Isaiah ; the throne with all its holiness and majesty penetrates the depths of the prophet's conscience, and he is as the leper in Israel ; the light of the throne is too much for him, he is compelled to write the sentence of death on himself, and that he does so the following words sufficiently attest—"Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." It is very solemn to see that the presence of God and the word of God have like power over the conscience and the heart. In the New Testament, namely, Hebrews iv. 12, 13, both are spoken of as if one.

Now, observe, when the prophet's trouble was, as it were, at its height, comfort is ministered to him from the very same place whence that which produced his unhappiness flowed : "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar, and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." The rapidity with which the comfort flows is worthy of note, it is like His heart whose mission it

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was in person, and now by the Holy Ghost, "to bind up the broken-hearted." It is like Him of whom it is said, "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds."

How very blessed it is to know that from this moment the prophet dates his commission ; his ear was opened when his heart was healed !

"I *heard* the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us ? Then said I, Here am I, send me."

It is a wondrous sight this ; the heart healed, the ear opened, and the feet swift to run in Jehovah's service—"I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou hast enlarged my heart." Again, we shall find the very same thing in the New Testament ; turn to Luke v., and who can deny it was a leading moment in Peter's history and life ? What else can that moment be to any of us, in which the sense of what we are is present to us in His light who makes manifest the secrets of the heart ? Such was this scene in Luke v. The beloved Son had met Satan in the wilderness, and driven him away by the obedience and dependence of a perfect man, in chapter iv. ; and here, in chapter v., He is as perfectly God on the lake of Gennesaret as He was perfectly man in the wilderness ; by His power He commands the treasures of the deep into Peter's net, and at the same moment com-

## PRONOUNCED UNCLEAN AND CLEAN. 25

manded the light of His own glory to shine around Peter's soul ; and in His presence what could Peter say but " I am a sinful man, O Lord " ? And mark it well, as in Isaiah vi. so here in Luke v., " Fear not " comes from His lips whose glory produced that state which nothing but His " Fear not " could allay. Blessed, precious Lord, everywhere and in every thing perfect.

" 'Midst sin and all corruption,  
Where hatred did abound,  
Thy path of true perfection  
Was light on all around.

" In scorn, neglect, reviling,  
Thy patient grace stood fast,  
Man's malice unavailing  
To move Thy heart to haste.

" O'er all, Thy perfect goodness  
Rose blessedly divine ;  
Poor hearts, oppress'd with sadness,  
Found ever rest in Thine ! "

And mark it well, how all is here forsaken and left to follow Him, who that day won Peter's heart for Himself, and though this same Peter very grievously failed after this, and was restored again, yet a link was forged between him and the blessed Lord on the lake of Gennesaret which nothing ever could break—nor is it only Peter, but all the disciples, as has been so blessedly said, " They are absorbed with Christ now. They not only look to Him



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for salvation, but they think of nothing else for life, speaking now generally and apart from any particular failure—‘They forsook all and followed him’—Christ becomes their *life*. It is a new line altogether—not merely obedience to an express command, with the reserve of thinking and saying, perhaps, ‘there is no harm in this or that.’ Christ pleased not Himself. His reason for action was His Father’s will, and not the absence of a prohibition. And *we* are sanctified unto the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. ‘They forsook all,’ and where Christ went they went. They are associated with their Lord in His love to souls, and in the walk of life. This is liberty. May we, having Christ our life, have Him as our one motive! Detached from all to Him, yet channels for all the blessing and grace we have ourselves tasted in Him! There is power to attract out of every corruption around, and to gather the soul into the thoughts and ways of God, by the revelation of Christ Himself.”

This testimony is true—how true, may every heart that reads it be sensible of His own grace and learn only to confide in Him. W. T. T.



## THE CHILD ON THE JUDGMENT SEAT.

‘WHERE hast been toiling all day, sweet heart,  
That thy brow is burden’d and sad?  
The Master’s work may make weary feet,  
But it leaves the spirit glad.

THE CHILD ON THE JUDGMENT SEAT 27

- “ Was thy garden nipp’d with the midnight frost,  
Or scorch’d with the midday glare ?  
Were thy vines laid low, or thy lilies crush’d,  
That thy face is full of care ? ”
- “ No pleasant garden toils were mine ;  
I have sat on the judgment-seat,  
Where the Master sits at eve and calls  
The children round His feet.”
- “ How camest thou on the judgment-seat,  
Sweet heart ? Who set thee there ?  
’Tis a lonely and lofty seat for thee,  
And well might fill thee with care.”
- “ I climb’d on the judgment seat myself,  
I have sat there alone all day,  
For it grieved me to see the children around,  
Idling their life away.
- “ They wasted the Master’s precious seed,  
They wasted the precious hours ;  
They train’d not the vines, nor gather’d the fruits,  
And they trampled the sweet, meek flowers.”
- “ And what hast thou done on the judgment-seat,  
Sweet heart ? What didst thou there ?  
Would the idlers heed thy childish voice ?  
Did the garden mend by thy care ? ”
- “ Nay, that grieved me more ; I call’d and I cried,  
But they left me there forlorn ;  
My voice was weak, and they heeded not,  
Or they laugh’d my words to scorn.”
- “ Ah, the judgment-seat was not for thee ;  
The servants were not thine !  
And the eyes which adjudge the praise and the blame  
See further than thine or mine.
- “ The voice that shall sound there at eve, sweet heart,  
Will not raise its tones to be heard ;

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It will hush the hearts and hush the earth,  
And none will resist its word."

"Should I see the Master's treasures lost,  
The stores that should feed His poor,  
And *not* lift my voice, be it weak as it may,  
And not be grievèd sore?"

"Wait till the evening falls, sweet heart,  
Wait till the evening falls,  
The Master is near and knoweth all ;  
Wait till the Master calls.

"But how fared thy garden plot, sweet heart,  
Whilst thou sat on the judgment-seat ?  
Who watered thy roses and trained thy vines,  
And kept them from careless feet?"

"Nay, that is the saddest of all to me,  
That is the saddest of all !  
My vines are trailing, my roses are parched,  
My lilies droop and fall."

"Go back to thy garden plot, sweet heart !  
Go back till the evening falls !  
And bind thy lilies, and train thy vines,  
Till for thee the Master calls.

"Go, make thy garden fair as thou canst ;  
Thou workest never alone,  
Perchance he whose plot is next to thine  
Will see it and mend his own ;

"And the next may copy his, sweet heart,  
Till all grows fair and sweet,  
And when the Master comes at eve,  
Happy faces His coming will greet.

"Then shall thy joy be full, sweet heart,  
In the garden so fair to see,  
In the Master's words of praise for all,  
In a look of His own for thee !"

*Author of "Chronicles of Schonberg-Cotta Family."*

## THE IMPORTANCE AND SOLEMNITY OF OUR CALLING.

(NUM. XXXII. 1-33.)

I DESIRE to bring before you on the one hand the intense solemnity, and on the other the great importance, of knowing what our true calling is. All depends on the standpoint from which we view things, as to the solution of the difficulties that arise, and this is of the deepest moment for each of us. It so often happens that we are, as it were, all adrift, and do not know how to solve them, or what to do. It is because of where we are standing at the time, because of the state of the soul, for we can never reach the true solution of these difficulties save as we are occupying our true position. It is not possible to know how to grapple with difficulties, nor how to find the way through the labyrinths, apart from the position in which we are standing at the moment. Balak was a shrewd man on his own ground when he changed Balaam's place to get him to curse the children of Israel: there is a great principle in that. "Come," he says, "I pray thee, unto *another place* . . . and curse me them from thence." It was the most consummate piece of wickedness to curse the Lord's people, and he saw how much depended on the standpoint from whence he looked at them.

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And we must be really holding things in faith with God, and looking at them from that standpoint to know how to act in relation to all that comes in our path. Mere credence will not do. Credence is not faith. Faith is that which acts as well as asserts the truth of a thing. It acts out practically, and puts into operation that which it accepts as of God. You cannot leave out that part, for if you are not maintaining in faith your true standing you will be simply and only holding a creed. Sooner or later you will find with regard to the questions which arise, you will be obliged to resort to what I have alluded to, as was the case with the two and a half tribes—a thing exceedingly popular at the present moment, and which is supposed to be the only safeguard in the midst of confusion, and that is a confession of faith. But this is not the true standing. The true standing is the confession, and it is not only a confession of faith if in your true standing.

Look at the beginning, and you will see how it comes out. Further you will find we are all tested. And it does not follow, because we have, through God's infinite grace, been preserved through one test, that we shall be necessarily preserved through another. Perhaps we have been rudely instructed as to this. We have found those who stood firmly through one test falling before another. And it is very

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important we should make up our minds to this, that all along the road, every step of the way, we shall find one series of tests after another. It will be all test throughout. And that is how God keeps alive a bright side in all the trouble, that is how He keeps alive the truth of His own testimony, and it is a great thing to keep that side in view. Sometimes we get too low down, and as we see the result of the sifting we wonder what God means by it. But God will sift, and why? Because the tendency of every one of us is to drop. Is it not so? I am afraid we have too good an opinion of ourselves. It does not follow because we have been kept so far that we shall not fall under another test.

God has committed to His people the most precious thing, and the tendency is to let it go; but it is revived through sifting. That is the meaning of the whole thing, and we ought to look at it so. What do we find? As a matter of fact there are places where everything goes on so quietly, and so peacefully. Yes; but there is a quietness in death. Let us not forget that. The grave is a quiet place, the shroud is a quiet robe; and that is positively what has been seen—not life enough oftentimes to assert itself in the corruption. And then what does God do? He comes in with some test that brings everything into its true position. It is not His doing, but

## 32 HELPS IN THINGS CONCERNING HIMSELF.

He *permits* something to come up that manifests and brings out into the true light what would otherwise continue to lie concealed and be passed over under a veil. That is the history of the testimony in this world. What a tendency in God's people to get away from the ways of God as revealed in His book! The principles of God are here, why should we be subjected to a different order of principles? What we have to learn is this, and it is a lesson of the deepest importance, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils." Very solemnly, very severely that lesson has had to be pressed upon us.

Now look at the beginning. Here is a start in what I call the departure from the true calling. At least it is so in a certain way, perhaps there are links farther back. Here we see it, as it were, full-blown in the two and a half tribes. Now a question arises, and I ask your special attention to it, a question of positively and practically taking possession of what God has given them. There are two things I do want the youngest believer to get hold of. People say God has given it to us. Yes; but have you taken it? Oh, yes; I see my title to it all very clear; but you have no enjoyment of any of it. I tell you what it is like, even a man who is the owner of the most lovely domain possible to conceive. That, he will say, all belongs to me, and

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he will shew you with the greatest clearness that he has got his title to it; and there are the deeds all secure. But do you know he has never lived a day on the estate, never been to the castle, never walked the green sward of the beautiful lawns; he has never once settled down there; never taken into his view the beauty of its landscapes and the magnificence of all the scene—he can only talk to you about his title. He has no sense of possession, not the least. He will talk to you from morning till night about his title-deeds. But the man who lives there can tell you about the *thing* itself, and not the title merely. Oh! he says, it is a lovely spot. Will you only come and live with me in my beautiful place? It is the *place* he is thinking of now. He has got it. That is the difference between our title to the inheritance, and our having set our foot upon it, having got it in conscious possession; and that is just what some would have us part with, and be content with having the title. And suppose you talk about conscious possession, and conscious results, what is the answer? Take care, you are thinking about yourself. Though, for that matter, you may be thinking quite as much about yourself if talking only of your title. But here is a very serious question: how can I know the blessedness and the greatness and the perfectness and



## 34 HELPS IN THINGS CONCERNING HIMSELF.

the glory and the beauty of what God in His wonderful grace has given me, if I refuse to allow my heart to be carried by the Spirit of God into the realisation of it? You cannot ; it is impossible !

Now you will find that is what meets us here. God had given to the two and a half tribes the land of Canaan for an inheritance. That is a distinct feature. It was the other side of Jordan, in figure that which answers to being dead and risen with Christ. That is the meaning of Jordan. The inheritance was the other side of the river of death, and there was no other way to it but to cross over. This was clearly the case as to Israel, and certainly it is the same now as to the inheritance God has in infinite grace given to us—it is the other side of death and resurrection.

Now look at the first thing. Here are the two and a half tribes, the genuine people of God ; and God had given them the land, and now it was a question of setting their foot on it, or, in other words, taking possession. Did you ever notice that little word in Joshua i.? Take notice of it. Joshua who is their new leader, a picture of Christ in resurrection, says to them : “ Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you.” He does not only give, but it is for

## THE IMPORTANCE, ETC.

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them to possess ; their foot must be set upon it, and you cannot possess it otherwise. You might stop short with the fact that God had given it ; but the thing is, that you possess it. They were "to go in to possess the land which the Lord your God giveth you to possess it." You are to practically realise, and have the enjoyment of, what God has given.

There is another thing concerning which, perhaps, we have made a little mistake—the way in which they are put in possession in verse 5. It says : "There shall not any man be able to stand before *thee* all the days of thy life." Who was this said to? Not to Israel, but to Joshua! He was the leader, the one to bring them into possession. He is the one who leads them across the river of death, a type of Christ. And you see that is an immense comfort ; our leader is an invincible leader, One whom no power can stand against. How is it, then, we fail when something arises? Is it not because we do not submit ourselves to, and follow our Leader? It is a simple question of confidence in Him who can lead us across, and bring us into practical possession of what God has given us.

Now see these two and a half tribes when the question of taking possession comes up. They say, we have certain possessions of our own, and what is that? Now that cuts at us

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all ; we have certain possessions of our own. Well, we have cattle, and this is a good place for cattle. Yes ; that is so, thinking of our cattle, our substance, our possessions in the wilderness, all we have got down here. And there was a country which God had subdued before Israel, which was not Canaan properly, a place they wished to take as their possession. It was not Egypt, and it was not the wilderness ; but it was not Canaan. It was a country that expresses the very thing that so many people look out for, a sort of *via media* (a middle path), and you lay the flattering unction to yourselves that you are not resting in Egypt, nor yet in the desert, though not in the land ; and that is just the point, it is not Canaan, *not the other side of Jordan* ; but it is a good country for cattle, and we have cattle. Like Lot, it was the same principle, he saw the place that it was well watered—even as the garden of the Lord. There was the snare—it was *like* the garden of the Lord. Thus, when people intend to have a thing like this, they attach the Lord's name to it, as they must have a religious sop for the conscience. They say, I am quite sure the Lord gave me this or that ; and alas, it is clear He did not.

Now see what a solemn thing it is : they give up their calling, their true inheritance, and positively refuse to be brought across the river of death to take their possession. Bring us

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not, they say, over Jordan. And what makes it the more striking is, they are actually ready to go across and to fight for a country they do not intend to possess or enjoy at all. They are actually ready to accept the trials and vicissitudes and dangers, and engage in the battles of their brethren to subdue their enemies, and fight for a land they were not going to possess, and would not have. And they are very solicitous about it, too. I often think they were in a certain sense very superior to a great many Christians of the present day.

But God was overruling. He would not have the unity of the nation broken in taking possession. It is perfectly true the unity of the nation and the unity of the body are not the same thing, but the unity of the nation is a striking *illustration* of the unity of the body. God had His thoughts about a unity in those days, and had got then a unity, mark, that He would not have violated, would not have touched, though it was only the unity of the nation. And if He was so jealous about the unity of a nation that He would not have it infringed upon in the slightest degree, how much more do you think He is jealous of anything that in the slightest degree touches or infringes upon the great truth of the unity of the body now? You see how all these truths are enforced and illustrated.

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But what was the effect of this departure from the calling? See where it places them? You see they had set the commonest details of their life—their substance—before their calling. What did they care for their calling? Did they care to be in Jehovah's territory, in that place which He had described as "a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven; a land which the Lord thy God careth for, the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year;" did they care for this before their cattle which they had down here in this world? That is where the test comes. It comes down into the practical details. That is the way we are tested to-day. I do not believe any saint of God at this present moment, who is going on with his calling, and living in the truth of it, can possibly prosper in this world. It is in the nature of things perfectly incompatible.

You cannot prosper in both. Possession in heaven is that which shakes you out of the desire to have possession here. And there is where the test comes in. This is a most solemn instance. It is said, "And when they saw the land of Jazer, and the land of Gilead, that, behold, the place was a place for cattle"—then they desired it. Ah! those Jazers and Gileads, may we not well dread them!

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They are the snares to draw the heart from the calling, exactly what they proved to the two and a half tribes. There the calling was really given up. I will now point out the effect of this in a certain way. Turn to Joshua xxii. 9, 10.

The two and a half tribes were now going back. We were looking at how they were compelled to share in the fortunes of the war, and now they were taking their departure to the land which had been given to them by the hand of Moses. Let me remark here, as it may be some have a difficulty about it, and say, Did not Moses allow this? Yes, they were allowed, so that they might work out in God's government His own ways, which He permits for chastisement, but not the purposes of God at all. You remember at the first when this proposition was made Moses was indignant at it, afterwards the thing passed and was permitted. Just as in the same way when afterwards the children of Israel desired a king to be set over them, Samuel was at first indignant at their rebellion; and yet afterwards they were allowed to have their desire. In both cases it was the *permission* of God, but only to work out His own moral government. Well, now the people are returning unto their possession, and coming to the border of Jordan they set up a great altar to see to. What was the meaning of this? Now here was the first

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effect of giving up the calling, the first consequence of it. Now they begin to realise what they had not thought of before. They said, we shall soon be passing away, and our children will come on the scene, and then they turn to the other tribes and say, "your children may speak unto our children, saying, What have ye to do with the Lord God of Israel? For the Lord hath made Jordan a border between us and you." Look at the effect of giving up the true calling of God. The effect is not all seen exactly at the moment. Now the thing is upon them, and they are going over to the wrong side of Jordan, to take up a position there, and then they begin to think what may result from this. Well, there is the effect of giving up the calling, and mark what they did; they set up an altar. What does that mean? Well, they set up what was in reality a sort of crutch, the result of their lameness—a great altar to see to, something the eye could rest on, point to, and say, Look at this! There is no difference between us.

Well, as soon as ever the altar was built, set up, and called "Ed," that is, "witness," the rest of the tribes were indignant, and rightly so. And they were not only indignant, but were actually prepared to go up against them. Why? Because they had broken the unity of the nation, and they were setting

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up a kind of independency there on the borders of the Jordan, seeking to establish something, the result of their self-will, being outside the unity of the nation, outside the divine calling and divine portion, a resort to human expediency, which appeared like a connection, but the worst thing possible. For the thing that is nearest to the truth is the worst thing, because it *resembles*, but is not the truth.

And that is the tendency at this moment. People say, Are we not free? What do they mean? Alas, is it free to do their own will? But that is not liberty, it is licence; and that is the prevailing spirit of the day. It is called liberty, but that is not the right name at all. It is very low down indeed, it is in reality licence. Oh, but, say they, will not the Lord be just as much here as He is there? Surely the Lord is as much in one place as another? Do you think we can put the Lord where we please? Let us take care what we say about these things. It is a great and a solemn and a serious mistake to say that the Lord is in that which is not His call. He is not in that which is not His call. I do not for a moment question that the Lord, in His grace and care and goodness and kindness, is with His people individually, that He takes account of their feebleness, and bears with them in His longsuffering in all their slowness; but that



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is a very different thing from having a great altar like Ed, a great piece of independency, the result of having departed from their true calling.

And I know this spirit may creep in among us ; it is the tendency all round, and people get so far from the true calling that they positively come to be a centre to themselves. What is it the result of? Simply and plainly of having given up the calling. Do you ask what is our calling to-day? "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." And you cannot depart from it, you cannot surrender it, you cannot infringe it, and then say you will have your altar set up. You are not to carry out what you think right, and do what you think best. The intention, perhaps, here was good ; but good intentions and the leading of the Spirit are not the same thing. The question is, Is the Spirit of God leading? He leads only in a divine way, in the divine calling, and according to divine principles ; who can doubt it?

And we must face this question plainly and distinctly : are we to return, and give up this truth which God in His infinite mercy recovered to us, now over fifty years ago, which, through the Lord's mercy, has been so wonderfully kept alive to this day, and which He has brought out now so clearly—are we to give all this up, and

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drift back into independency, and I know not what else? Impossible. As a matter of fact I have seen it. I observe that where this has been departed from, sooner or later the drift is down into the very worst order of things in all this unhappy Christendom. Some have got away from God and been unable to help themselves from drifting thus. There is no security outside the calling. In fact, if you surrender it in the first instance in connection with the thing that comes near to yourself, or because of your cattle, your substance, you soon surrender it altogether. And it is in this way that the call of God is surrendered in the things that come nearest and closest to us. It is a very solemn thing to take into account, that thus it was with the two and a half tribes.

Well, Israel did not go up to war with them; they were satisfied that while the thing was wrong *in principle*, it was not *in intention*; and therefore the grace and kindness of God settled it.

But who was the man they sent down about this matter? The man they sent down was the javelin man, Phineas! He who, when it was a case of fornication, in faithfulness to his God vindicated the right and the authority of God Himself even unto death, and earned by his faithfulness an everlasting priesthood. They chose Phineas, who would so maintain God's

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glory—that was the man for the occasion. The man who put the fornicator to death will maintain the glory of God now. He was the man for the crisis. And we see Phineas brings three cases before them, and he presents them in their moral order—Achan's comes first. Well, you remember about Achan, and what he did. He coveted the world, and the world, beloved friends, in the two great features so marked in this day—clothes and money. The things Achan coveted were the Babylonish garment and the gold and silver. And we see Achan driven off his feet by these two things, clothes and money. You remember as to him, how his heart went out for the things of this world, and how that overthrew him?

The next case is what is called here Peor, which is Balaam's case. You remember about Peor. Phineas says (Josh. xxii. 17, 18): "Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us," &c. Balaam was the man who of all others brought about the idolatrous association between the Moabites and the people of God, and taught them to commit fornication. Ecclesiastical evil taught for reward, that was Balaam's error, as we find in Jude; and again referred to by the apostle in the address to the church in Pergamos, "Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam," &c.

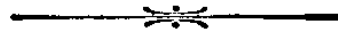
Now what a solemn thing this is, first the covetousness of the world, and secondly asso-

## CHRIST'S ASCENSION GIFTS.

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ciation with its religion. And is not that what we see all around us in the present moment, and it marks those who have departed from the calling? Associate with the religion of the world, and with the ways of it, give up your calling, and you become a great man in the religious world at once; it is only necessary to fall in with it, and adopt its ways and principles. But the more you do that the more blinded you will become. These are important things, and our God would have us wise and discerning.

The third thing that Phineas presses, and which is included in the case of Balaam, was religious independency. Thus we have the three—covetousness, association with the religious world, and independency. And depend upon it, when we give up our calling and attempt to depart from it, these are the things that meet us at every turn. I pray God we may be kept from them. We have as it were bidders for us on all sides, and there is no safety and no security outside our calling. W. T. T.



## CHRIST'S ASCENSION GIFTS.

WE are therefore not true to the ascension of our Head if we do not look for His ascension gifts in those who minister in His name. They constitute the hand-writing of the Lord in the church's genealogies. The Jews were careful to put from the priesthood those whose genealogy

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could not be proved. They refused to register them. (Ezra ii. 62 ; Neh. vii. 63.) And this, too, in a day when all was feebleness in Israel. No cloudy pillar led them on their way home from Babylon ; no arm of the Lord had gloriously made a passage for them through the deserts ; no rain of angel's food from heaven, nor ark of the covenant was with them. All this, and more than this, was gone. But did they plead their feebleness and do nothing ? Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah do what they can, and they cannot recover everything, but they do what they can : and among other services, they read the genealogies, and do not allow the holy things to be eaten by unproved claimants of the priesthood. And ours, dear brethren, is a day of feebleness like theirs. Much of the former strength and beauty is gone, and we cannot recover everything. But it is not therefore to be a day of allowed evil, nor are we in the spirit of slumber to fold the arms, and say, "there is no life."

The time for glorying only in the Lord and in that authority, and in that only which had been formed by the Holy Ghost, had now fully come ; and therefore the fact that the Lord had given Paul authority in the church, was shewn by witnesses to the presence of the Spirit with him. The signs of an apostle were wrought by him. His authority stood approved by this,

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that he could "do nothing against the truth, but for the truth;" and because the power used by him was used "to edification and not to destruction." (2 Cor. xiii. 5-10.) He claims no authority save what was thus verified by the presence of the Spirit with him, and used by him for the furtherance of the truth and the profit of the church. For the Holy Ghost had been publicly avouched to be sovereign *in* the church, as the Son had been proclaimed Head *to* the church. The gifts of the Spirit may be among us in various measures of strength; but the Holy Ghost in us is the title of all present *worship* and *service*. Whatever *worship* is now to be had in the temples of God, it is to be in the Spirit, for "we are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit;" and the apostle speaking of worship, says, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord [that is, no man can call Jesus Lord, or Lord Jesus], but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. xii. 2.) So whatever *service* is now to be rendered in the church is with this limitation, "according to the ability which God giveth;" it is by this rule, "the manifestation of the Spirit." Paul might lay hands on Timothy, and Titus might appoint elders; but the presence of the Spirit was in measure according to the authority and service. Timothy was left in Ephesus; but the charge entrusted to him there was according to the gifts bestowed upon him. (1 Tim. i. 18;

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iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6) To assume any ministry beyond this measure, is to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. (Rom. xii. 3.) And as every individual saint has title through the in-dwelling Spirit to "prove all things" (with this condition doubtless, that he "hold fast that which is good"), so the congregations of the saints, or the temples of God, as spiritual, are to judge also (1 Cor. xiv. 29); and if the resources of the flesh, the name, the human advantages, or earthly distinctions of men be gloried in and trusted, the temple is defiled. And the temple of God at Corinth was thus defiled. (1 Cor. iii. 16-23.) Some had rested in Paul, some in Cephas, some in Apollos. But this was carnal. This was walking as men, and not in the presence and sufficiency of the Spirit whose temple they were. They became untrue to the Spirit who dwelt in them.

And here let me say, that it is not so much *right* to minister which the New Testament speaks of, as *obligation*. If any man have the gift he is *debtor* to exercise it, and to wait on his ministry. The habit of looking on ministry as a right, rather than as an obligation has given the church its worldly aspect. The "great house" has forgotten that *service on earth is glory*. But our apostle did not forget it, and he never affected anything that might have its influence in the world, upon the world's princi-

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ples. He was one whom the world would pass by. He laboured with his own hands, followed his trade, and made tents, just at the time when in the authority of the Spirit he shook his raiment upon the unbelieving Jews. He was among the meanest of his company (mean in the world's judgment) gathering sticks for the fire, when in the power of Christ he shook the viper from his hand.

Beloved! this is unlike all that which corrupted Christendom has sanctioned in her ministers as their due and suitable dignities! But Paul was in his own esteem (and would have others esteem him by that rule also) just what the Lord had made him. He would not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ had not wrought by him. (Rom. xv. 18.) He measured himself only by that line which the Lord had distributed to him. (2 Cor. x.) What folly does he count all boasting in the flesh. He was compelled for a little moment thus to be a fool before the church at Corinth, but with what zeal, with what revenge, with what clearing of himself, does he leave off this "folly" as he calls it! (2 Cor. xi.) Would that the same mind were in us all, the same zeal for the Lord, the same revenge upon the flesh which is fit, like the offal of a sacrifice, only for the burning outside the camp.

To me, brethren, I confess these principles are



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very clear from the New Testament. The Lord knows that naturally I would rather have all continued and settled in the flesh, that we might the more securely hold on our quiet and even way. But I pray for more faith, for more living and powerful apprehension of this truth, that the earth and its inhabitants are to be dissolved, and that Christ alone is to bear up its pillars. We need the faith that would root us out of that earth in which the cross of the Son of God was once planted, and in which the course of this world, continuing the same as it then was, has fixed that cross only more firmly. We want that faith that would call us to arise and depart from it, and to go forth and meet the bridegroom.

But I would now hasten to a close, and take a few short notices of our apostle in his *person*, *ministry*, and *conduct*; for in these he will be found to illustrate many features of the dispensation, as his apostleship was the general sign of it.

In his *person* we can see much of the dispensation reflected. He could call himself the *chief of sinners*, when he would magnify the *grace* of the dispensation, and shew that it could reach over all the aboundings of sin. But he could also call himself *blameless as touching the righteousness which is in the law*, when he would make known the character of the *righteousness* of the dispensation, and shew how it sets aside all

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other as loss and dung. (1 Tim. i. 15 ; Phil. iii. 8.) These things are wondrous and yet perfect. Saul of Tarsus is taken up by the Spirit, in order to present in him the *grace* and the *righteousness* that are now brought to us. Strange that we should find the first place in the first rank of sinners occupied by him who was thus touching the law blameless. But so it was. A fair, bright, and full sample of the workmanship of the dispensation is given to us in him who was made the representative minister of it. The *grace* of God and the *righteousness* of God are displayed in his person.

J. G. B.



## PERFECTED FOR EVER.

HEBREWS X. 14.

IN the ninth chapter of this epistle is set forth, in the most complete argument, the manner in which sins are put away by the one offering of Jesus Christ ; whereas in this chapter, the subject is, how this is applied to the conscience, so purging it, that no dread of God's judging because of sins any longer remains. This is the meaning of "no more conscience of sins." So *full, perfect, and sufficient*, is Christ's offering, that by Him all who believe are not only justified from all things, but are entitled to be within the Holiest, *and to know it*. Could anything be more wonderful or excellent?—inside the veil, where of old only one man, of one tribe, of one nation, on one day of the year,

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could enter ; there, too, not by sufferance, but by *right* and *title*, and suited for such a place, having a conscience so purged that it is fit for the presence of God. I may just observe in passing, that Hebrews shews the two-fold position of a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. As regards heaven, he is, as in this chapter, within the holiest *now* ; as regards this world, his place is outside the camp, as in chapter xiii. On this latter I do not now enlarge ; it does not come within my present purpose.

Let us look a little at the *foundation* of this great salvation. First we have it in verse 10, "By the *which will* we are sanctified." God willed *not*, and had no pleasure in the death of a sinner, nor had He pleasure in the sacrifices offered by the law, which could never make the worshipper perfect. In these repeated sacrifices there was a remembrance of sin every year : "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me ; in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." Thus we are let into the secrets that passed between the Father and the Son in the council chamber of eternity before the foundation of the world. It was the *will* of God, and the Son sets

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Himself to do that will, "A body hast thou prepared me." Oh, how different from man's natural thoughts of God! How eclipsed, even the very best thoughts about His character and love! He *willed* it, and what His heart conceived, the Son of His love will undertake to accomplish. Will you, beloved reader, say what are your thoughts about God? Whoever could have stooped so low in a love that removed out of the way all that hindered its expression, and that too at the cost of all that was dear to itself! Such, then, was His will, which is the great *source* and *spring* of this wonderful display of grace.

Second, we have the person and work by which it has been accomplished. The person, the Lord Jesus, the eternal Son of the Father, He it was who took a body prepared for Him by God, and in it glorified Him, as well as established a righteous ground upon which God can be "just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Hear His own words—"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again." "I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." He was the One who shed His blood. The righteousness of God demanded the blood of such a victim, so perfect and so blessed. Sin could be put away by nothing less; and for the purging of the conscience there was required nothing more. He it

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was who, by the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God (and only He could) ; and now that very same righteousness of God raises Him up from the dead, from the very death by which He glorified God, and sets Him in glory, and likewise rends the veil from the top to the bottom. Could anything be more wonderful ? “ This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down (that is, sat down in perpetuity) on the right hand of God . . . . for by one offering he had perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” This one offering accomplished what the blood of bulls and of goats, shed from the beginning of the world, could never do. This one offering needed no repetition, and there remaineth no more offering for sin.

Lastly, we have the way by which it is known and enjoyed in those words, “ Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us . . . . their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” Oh, how blessed to have the knowledge and enjoyment of this ! Could there be anything equal to the blessed certainty in the soul, founded on God’s will, Christ’s offering, and the Holy Ghost’s testimony ? The Holy Ghost could not have come down until Jesus was glorified ; but Christ being glorified out of the very judgment by enduring which He for ever put away sin, the Holy Ghost has come down. Wherever I look I see infinite power and infinite

## JOHN XI. 25.

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love, the love that gave Christ and brought Him  
down to the grave and the power that raised Him  
up and set Him at God's right hand in glory.

W. T. T.



## JOHN XI. 25.

"I AM the Resurrection and the Life!"  
What words of power these  
From human lips ; from One  
Truly of woman come ;  
Yet who was never less than God,  
Of all created beings sov'reign Lord.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life!"  
Thus spake that lowly Man  
Whose meat it was to do  
His Father's will alway ;  
That will His only motive here,  
Waiting on Him that will to do, in prayer.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life!"  
Thus spake the Man who wept,  
Who groan'd, was troubl'd deeply,  
Seeing the pressure of  
The pow'r of death upon the race,  
Whose cause He came to undertake, in grace.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life!"  
What wondrous, blessed words,  
What pow'r of life in Him  
Do they reveal to us ;  
A pow'r which proves Him all divine,  
The Son of God revealèd here in time.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life!"  
Are those that are His own

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O'ercome of death (dread foe,  
Just judgment this on sin) ?  
Yet shall they live, no more to die,  
For death is swallow'd up in victory !

"I am the Resurrection and the Life !"  
Are those that are His own  
(Believers living here)  
Awaiting Him their Hope ?  
They ne'er shall die ! Life's energy  
In Him shall swallow up mortality.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life !"  
Thus spake the Son of man,  
Himself about to die,  
*Obedient* unto death.  
Thus was His God full glorified,  
And death and he who sway'd its pow'r destroy'd.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life !"  
Thou Son of God, thus proved,  
Thou who from death didst call  
To life and liberty,  
Thyself wast raised by pow'r divine,  
And now as Man Thou dost in glory shine !

"I am the Resurrection and the Life !"  
Lord, Thou art coming soon,  
And all Thy saints—both they  
Who sleep and they who watch—  
Thy pow'r shall prove—swallow up death  
In victory—mortality in life !

"I am the Resurrection and the Life !"  
Lord, to Thine own estate,  
Thou risen, heav'nly Man,  
Thy saints shall correspond ;  
As fruit of love and pow'r divine,  
Eternal life is ours ! The praise be Thine !—T. H.

## THE BONDSMAN OF JESUS CHRIST.

WE are passing through a period which is very distinctly delineated in scripture as "perilous times" of "the last days," and for which special instruction is vouchsafed. The rocks and shoals, with which the troubled waters of our time abound, are all divinely marked out for us in that epistle which faith recognises as its special chart in days like these. The fulness and explicit nature of that revelation is most blessed; nothing is overlooked; the difficulties are neither magnified nor diminished; and the power and presence of God are held out to faith as its sufficiency when the darkness is at its height.

We find, in the second epistle of Timothy, most full and minute directions as to how the saints are to carry themselves. The path of the true-hearted is through persecution, pressure, and trial: evil men and seducers waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. One principle of immense importance is found in chapter ii. 19: "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."



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Another is, that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, and for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (Chap. iii. 16.)

Thus while there is nothing but failure around, and confusion and evil are on the increase, the resources and provisional care of God are unfolded with a divine precision and accuracy not to be found outside the book of God.

Now it is plain that the servant of the Lord stands in need of peculiar qualities at all times; indeed nothing that has ever been written or conceived by men could over-rate, or magnify beyond its importance, the servant's place and path. And there never were times in which it was more needful to press that than the present, surrounded as we are by a double fallacy: on the one hand, men taking upon themselves, without any divine right or authority, to make others servants, thereby constituting them servants of men instead of ministers of God. On the other hand, those who in mercy have escaped this delusion, are themselves as ready to fall into another, and to suppose that every one who is a saint is *ipso facto* a servant or minister of Jesus Christ.

It cannot be denied that, if saints are walking with God, He will give them something

## THE BONDSMAN OF JESUS CHRIST. 59

to do for Him, whereby, in communion with Himself, and by the power of His Spirit, they can serve Him ; but this in no wise interferes with, or sets aside the fact, that Christ ascended on high into glory, gave *distinct and special gifts* to His church, enumerated in Ephesians iv., "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Now it is the qualities of the one who is called to be a servant that I am occupied with at this time. I suppose the nature of the day will very greatly indicate the needed graces ; and hence it is, I conclude, that, after the Spirit of God had foretold the storm that was then raging, and would rage with greater fury after the apostle's departure, He also specifies in *detail* certain qualities which would be indispensable in the bondsman of the Lord, who would in respect of these be tested to the uttermost.

We know that this world has been the scene and platform of the perfect service of One who was *the* perfect Servant ; the gospels, and especially that of Mark, record it. There we follow Him, and track His *patient* blessed footprints, passing through the earth a stranger, unnoticed and unknown ; but, more than that, despised and rejected by Israel, whose Messiah He was, and scorned and hated by poor man

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whom He came to serve. If we look at Him as Jehovah's Servant, how the heart bows down and adores Him! "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen ; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased ; I will put my Spirit upon him ; he shall not strive, nor cry ; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets." (Matt. xii. 18-19.) Oh, what unobtrusive lowliness and meek retirement thus mark Him!

Again, when we consider Him amid the scenes of sorrow, scorn, and hatred through which His love led Him ; His patience, His meekness, His gentleness, silent when accused, and unchanged even when denied by His own, breaking the heart of Peter by the tender look He cast upon him ; do we not wonder and adore in the presence of such qualities, with such demands made upon them both by foes and friends? And is it not a satisfaction to our hearts to retire from all else, and allow such a servant as Jesus to fill the vision of our souls?

There is nothing that more marks every one else but Himself, than *unevenness* ; He, and He alone, was a stranger to such, not only in His manhood, but in that which is specially before us, His *service*. Who was *faithful* as He? And yet withal *tender and patient*? The combination of these qualities in Christ are most blessed ; the fine flour mingled with oil shewed itself in His service, as in His nature. With us, alas! observe

## THE BONDSMAN OF JESUS CHRIST. 61

the contrast. Some are faithful, and others are tender. But what God is looking for in these last times is a servant in His measure after the pattern of His own Son; and hence note that the qualities, or graces, by which the servant of the Lord is to be characterised, according to 2 Timothy ii., are those exactly which shone in perfection in Him who was the perfect Servant in the perfect Man; God, God over all, blessed for ever.

Further observe the qualities which are needed by a servant of the Lord. First of all, full and unhesitating courage and faithfulness. He was to be "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." If everything has gone, and all have turned away, Christ remains unchanged. What a resource He is at all times, blessed be His name! And what force and power there is in an exhortation of this nature from one who himself could speak of how the Lord stood with him, and strengthened him, when he was abandoned and forsaken by all.

Also he was to "endure *hardness*," and not to "*entangle* himself with the affairs of this life." That is to say, on the one hand he was to accept, in all its parts, the path through the storm and tempest; and not only that, but he was to be inured to it. On the other hand, he was to shun and avoid everything of the nature of entanglement. So that we have these three things ex-

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pected from the servant of the Lord and the minister of Jesus Christ.

First: patient endurance. Second: distinct separation from all that would be incompatible with his service. Third: an ardent desire to answer to the wishes of his Master.

Again: "If a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." That is, he cannot obtain the prize unless he complies with the regulations. Now these regulations insisted upon systematic discipline and training as indispensable qualifications for entering the lists; history furnishes us with particulars of the training which the competitors in the Greek athletic sports underwent; the diet, exercise, fixed hours, and hard life which were endured in order to obtain a corruptible crown. So the servant of the Lord in these days of ease, affluence, and self-indulgence, is to practise the very contrary on himself, in order that, according to the will of his Lord, he may exercise his ministry and service.

He was also to be as the husbandman "labouring first," that he might have the first claim to the profits of the produce of his farm. Then the first part of the exhortation is closed by that magnificent eighth verse: "Remember Jesus Christ of the seed of David, raised from among the dead, according to my glad tidings." How blessed this is to have the heart and thoughts,

## THE BONDSMAN OF JESUS CHRIST. 63

by the Holy Ghost, thus fixed on that blessed One, that perfect Servant, who, from the manger to the cross, served through suffering, sorrow, shame, contempt, and is now presented to the adoring gaze of faith as "raised from among the dead."

So far we have looked at the qualities—the indispensable requirements—of the servant of the Lord in perilous times. As yet we have not touched upon the spirit in which these qualities are to be exercised, the tone and the temper in which the faithful servant is to address himself to his work. But it will be readily granted that in proportion to a man's courage and faithfulness in a time of general declension and spiritual decay, will be the pressure brought to bear upon his spirit. *Endurance, tenderness, meekness*, will have large drafts made upon them; and standing faithful will expose the servant to those rude blasts which will only elicit, if there, the qualities I have spoken of.

It is not enough to be faithful in dealing with souls; the manner and methods of its display surely have their place. The *tone* and *temper* of the servant in the faithful exercise of his gift, surely are important. Very touching are the words of the apostle on this head. "Now I Paul myself, beseech you by the *meekness* and *gentleness* of Christ." Again: "But we were *gentle* among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children."

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No doubt, in days of declension and unfaithfulness, the true servant must pass through many a sore exercise respecting those whom he seeks to serve, and many a trial, and many an anxiety will his heart endure in connection with such ; but, while that is fully admitted and felt to the utmost, it cannot but be felt that a little more of the tone and temper of 2 Timothy ii. would secure the absence of many a pang which true and faithful hearts have inflicted upon themselves ; and some whom we may have thought to drive, instead of leading and instructing, might have been *won*, when they could not be *coerced*. Alas there are too many instances of hearts sad and broken amid the corruptions of the age, retarded on their way, whilst they groped about to find a clean path for their weary feet, as well as grieved and stumbled as they sought to walk therein, by the ungracious and unwise methods adopted towards them. “*Feed my lambs,*” “*Shepherd my sheep,*” “*Feed my sheep,*” are terms of the blessed Lord’s commission to restored Peter. The *shepherd* and the *nurse* are the similitudes employed by the Holy Ghost, when he would set forth the manner of a servant’s fulfilment of his work. “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof.”

If any who read this paper turn away in their mind from what they most likely will regard as common-place truisms, I can only

## THE BONDSMAN OF JESUS CHRIST. 65

plead as an excuse for introducing the subject here, the great danger of its being *overlooked*.

No doubt the peculiar character of these days makes large demands on the servant ; but be trials ever so many, and disappointments ever so great, nothing can compensate for the absence of such a spirit as is implied in these words : “ And 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.”

I might have urged the patient, gracious dealing of the chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls Himself, as the type and pattern for those whom He has gifted, with a view to the leading and helping of His sheep ; or I might have urged the same blessed, tender care of Him who is the Head of the church, His body, towards His poor members here. “ No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but *nourisheth* it, and *cherisheth* it, even as Christ the church ” —but I forbear.

One other scripture only will I refer to, namely, Ezekiel xxxiv. 2-6 : “ Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves ! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks ? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed : but ye feed not the flock. The *diseased* have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which



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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 beast 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."

W. T. T.



THE DISPENSATION EXHIBITED IN  
PAUL'S PERSON.

IN his person we see the "thorn in the flesh." And let this particularly be what it may, it was, in the judgment of the world, a blot. The comeliness that the world could estimate was tarnished by this. In the Spirit he had wondrous revelations, and the secret of God was blessedly with him; but before men there was a stain upon him. But all this is in character with the dispensation. The saints exalted in Christ, before men are to be humbled. The world is not to know them. The dispensation admits of no confidence in the flesh. In it God

## THE DISPENSATION EXHIBITED, ETC. 67

has set the flesh aside as profitless. The right eye is gone, and the right hand is gone, things after the external appearance are not to be looked after, there is to be no measuring or comparing of things by any such rule. And according to this, Paul had a temptation in the flesh. There was put upon him something that tempted the scorn of men. As when Jacob became Israel, he halted across the plain of Peniel. The flesh was marred, when before God he got a new and honourable name. But the shrinking of his thigh was in the same love as his victory over the divine stranger. And so the thorn in Paul's flesh was in the same love as his rapture into paradise. Hezekiah, in the day when he was exalted, had been left alone, that God might prove him. (2 Chron. xxxii. 31.) But the Lord was gracious to Paul, and would not leave him alone, but put a thorn in his flesh. And if he had stood in the full intelligence of the Spirit, he would not have prayed for its removal; for he had soon to recall his prayer, and to glory rather in his infirmities.

Thus there is none perfect, dear brethren, but the Master Himself. Favoured and honoured as Paul and others may have been, there is none perfect but the Lord. This is comfort to our souls. God rests well pleased in Him for ever, but in Him only. He never had a desire to recall, never to summon back from the Father's ear,

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"He was heard." But Paul had to learn that he had mistaken the rule of blessing and of glory ; he had to learn, as every saint has, that when he was weak, then he was strong. And thus with the thorn in his flesh, but the power of Christ resting on him, he shews forth the saints in this dispensation.

In his *ministry*, we see something of the dispensation also. "The foolishness of God" and "the weakness of God" (that is the testimony to Christ crucified which the world judges "mean and slight") were now dispensed, and according to this was Paul's ministry. It was weak and foolish in the judgment of the Greeks of this world. He came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom. His preaching was not with enticing words, but he was among the saints in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. (1 Cor. ii.)

But further extended as his preaching was over the world, it set forth the *comprehensiveness* of the grace of God in this dispensation. In principle the sound of this grace was to go to the ends of the earth ; and so Paul speaks of his ministry as stretching itself on the right hand and on the left from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum. He had received "apostleship for the obedience to the faith among all nations," and he felt himself debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to

## THE DISPENSATION EXHIBITED, ETC. 69

the unwise. He spake to the Jews, and to the devout persons, to the common people as many as he met with, and then with the philosophers. (Acts xvii.) His purpose was to compass the whole earth. And thus he speaks continually to the churches of passing from place to place, by Corinth into Macedonia, returning from thence to Corinth again, and so being brought into Judea; and again, he speaks of going to Rome as he takes his journey into Spain. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and the Spirit that was in this apostle of God, therefore, thus reached the ends of the world. He was calling on men everywhere to repent, as did the dispensation. And when he could no longer go about with the gospel, being the prisoner of Jesus Christ for the Gentiles, "he received *all* that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concerned the Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts xxviii. 30.) All this was expression of the comprehensiveness of the grace that was now calling in "bad and good that the wedding might be furnished with guests." In the Jewish times the ordinances of God were all at Jerusalem. It was there that men ought to worship. The priest abode in the temple, for the dispensation was one that refused converse with men, but in righteousness kept the flock of God folded in the land of Judea. But now the dispensation is

## 70 HELPS IN THINGS CONCERNING HIMSELF.

one of grace, going forth in the activities of love, to gather home the lost sheep that have gone astray upon the mountains; and preaching is therefore the great ordinance of God now. Preaching is the new appointment of God, something that is beyond the mere services of a secluded temple; and of this new ordinance Paul was made the most distinguished minister.

Then in his *conduct*, I may say that in a very general way it was made to exhibit the dispensation. In his conduct, as he says, there was "a manifestation of the truth." And this is what faith always in measure does. Faith in a living form reflects the truth dispensed. The *conduct* of faith, as one has observed, is always according to the *principle* of God's present dealing. As St. Paul says, "If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." And as St. Peter says, "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise *blessing*, knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a *blessing*." (1 Pet. iii. 9.) That is, *blessing* being bestowed on us, *blessing* is required of us. And so in St. Paul's conduct, we trace the great principles of God's present dealing with the church. The Son of God emptied Himself of the glory that He had before the world was; and while on earth ever refused Himself. With title to call for legions of angels, He was dumb as a sheep before his shearers; being free as the

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Son, He submitted to the exactions of others. (Matt. xvii. 27.) So St. Paul, though free from all, made himself the servant of all, becoming all things to all men for their good. (1 Cor. xi. 1; 2 Cor. xi. 29.) And mark his words to the Ephesian elders, when he takes leave not only of them but of his ministry, ready to go into prison or unto death, for his Master, Jesus. (Acts xx. 17-35.) Mark what he there declares his conduct in his ministry had been, and how he testifies of himself that "he had shewed them all things," thus telling them that he had been made to take the honoured place of reflecting the actings of God in the gospel, letting the churches see in him the blessedness of dealing in grace, which is (as we to our salvation know) the way of the Son of God in the gospel. "I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." This was a holy testimony which the Spirit enabled him to bear.

J. G. B.



## READINGS ON I CORINTHIANS.

### CHAPTER I.

THE first two chapters are introductory. In them we have the great principles of Chris-

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tianity—Christ crucified, and the bestowal and actings of the Holy Ghost.

In the third chapter we have the “Temple of God,” with the privilege of saints as forming that temple; and in connection with that the apostle shews the necessity of purity within, and then separation from the world and idolatrous associations without. A true idea of the temple is that it is not only the place where God dwells, but where He speaks also. His voice is heard and His mind is made known there. Hence we find (chap. xiv. 24, 25) great stress is laid upon “prophecy,” and this was of the greatest moment when as yet the New Testament scriptures hardly existed. It is more difficult to realise the truth of the temple in the present divided and corrupt state of Christendom; but we have the scriptures in their completeness, and the Spirit of truth is still here in the assembly, the habitation of God by the Spirit. Prophecy shewed that God was indeed amongst them. Another important thing to bear in mind is that the temple of God is holy: whatever may come in, the normal character remains, it cannot be altered, and if corrupted will be vindicated by the judgment of the corrupter.

In chapter xii. the truth of “the body” is brought in, but this can never be rightly understood unless the truth of the assembly as “the temple” has been apprehended. This

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latter is more the outward aspect of the assembly, but "the body" that which is within.

The fifteenth chapter presents the truth of the resurrection, and it closes by shewing that we must undergo a change to inherit the kingdom of God.

As to the statement in verse 2: "All that call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord"—it clearly intimates that they are brought within the scope of his salutation, though the epistle itself is more immediately addressed to the assembly at Corinth; but undoubtedly all who are addressed are responsible to listen to what the apostle says.

It is sometimes useful to notice the absence of certain truths in the different parts of scripture. In this epistle the truth of "union" is not brought forward, nor is "the rapture" alluded to in connection with the resurrection. The order of the great truth of resurrection is unfolded, and the change of the living. Death is swallowed up in victory, and this introduces what is millennial; but the rapture, or being taken up, is not mentioned. A distinct feature of the epistle being its relation to the ordering of things upon earth.

In saying that we have not "union" in Corinthians, the fact of it is recognised but not the import of it, because the great feature of union is, that you are united to Christ where



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He is, and therefore it must take you to where He is while, as we have seen, the line of truth in this epistle is the ordering of things in the assembly upon earth. The nearest to it, and what flows from it, is "unity," and that is what we have in Corinthians.

In Romans, the Spirit of God is presented in connection with our individuality ; but in Corinthians with what is collective and corporate. For the Christian *everything* is involved in his having the Spirit. Every believer has the Spirit, but there is a great difference between what is true as a fact and our entering into the import of it. Scripture is given to us that we may enter into what is already true. The Spirit has come down from the glory, and to speak reverently, He is enamoured with the blessed Man who is in the glory, so that He is never content until He has brought believers to where Christ is. Where the Head is we should be in spirit now ; that is the import necessarily of "union."

If we had power we might take in at once all that is unfolded to us in scripture ; but the scope is so great that we might ask where can one be found with capacity for it ?

The epistle speaks of the ordering of our ways collectively, and we have to recognise that the assembly is set up locally in a way suited to earth. Each assembly in those days

## READINGS ON I CORINTHIANS. 75

had what was needed for its edification, they were fully furnished. If God set up an assembly, He took care to supply it.

In chapter xii. we have the organism of the assembly, baptised by one Spirit into one body. In chapter xiii., the vitality—"pursue love," which is really the vitality—and when once you bring in love you must edify. (Chap. xiv.) It is well to notice that chapters xi. to xiv. all run together, the division into chapters spoils the sequence.

To return to chapter i.—it is exceedingly important that we should understand how these two great truths of Christ crucified, and the gift of the Spirit, are brought in, for evidently the first man had been allowed a place at Corinth. The same truths are pressed on the Galatians. The cross brings in the revelation of God, whilst it puts man out: the Spirit makes this revelation good in us. Christ is both the wisdom and power of God, thus God is brought in. So in John iii., it was necessary for us that the Son of man should be lifted up; but herein was the revelation of God in love. "*For* God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." God has put man out by the cross, to open a way for Himself, and the great point of His power is the cross. The Jew sought a sign, and the cross was the most wonderful sign He could give of His intervention.

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In John vi. Christ speaks of Himself as the sign. A sign is the evidence of divine intervention, and the greatest miracle of all was that *He was here*—the living bread come down from heaven. The insensibility of man could not alter the value of the sign. If they did not see who He was, it did not alter the value of His presence. Although the Jew might stumble at the cross, and the Greek count it foolishness, its eternal value remained unchanging. Wonderful indeed was the sign which set man aside, to bring God in, and that for the object of saving man. It was marvellous wisdom, and when once a man accepts the testimony of the cross, he will delight in that which is revealed in it. We little think of what it was to God to come in thus by the cross. We may say reverently that not only did man suffer by the fall and its consequences, but that God did. The evil into which man got “grieved him at his heart.”

An assembly can never be right if those who compose it are not right individually. The meetings are often a great witness of our weakness. People often look for the Spirit to come upon them in some special way to enable them to take part. What is wanted is liberty, that is, to be disentangled from all that is without and from what is connected with my own individuality so as to be there

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sensibly as a vessel for the Lord. If we are there in liberty, we have nothing before us but the Lord Himself, and as we apprehend that He is there we apprehend that we have everything in Himself.

We should also bear in mind that we are *all* at "the table" *on the same ground*—the Lord's death. It is the sole ground for each and all, therefore individual feelings should not be brought in. Often people are occupied with their own feelings as to the Lord's death, instead of with the death itself. The assembly is the spherewhere Christ is all and in all. It is the sense of each one being at the Lord's table on this one ground, and where consequently individuality must be dropped, that shews the wickedness of divisions. It is to be feared that we have been too ready for division in the spirit of our minds. Separation is a last resource when evil is irremediable. In regard to fellowship we maintain that the Lord is with us; if evil arises, the question arises, is it such that we are assured the Lord has left, for until this is the case we have no ground for leaving. Evil coming in does not drive the Lord out; it is when it is sanctioned that His presence is withdrawn. This is seen in the case of Achan: His presence discovered the evil, and if they did not judge it He would not be with them any more.

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We have seen that in the cross is brought in both the wisdom and the power of God. In preaching the cross, righteousness is often left out, and Christ is presented merely as a substitute: that is, that *He* was punished and on that ground *we* go free; but that is not enough, the truth of righteousness is seen in that He not only endured the punishment but that *He*, the Substitute, goes free. He has not been left under the penalty that we might go free, but He was the first to go free. He has, so to speak, been justified. It is the force of the word in Romans v. 18, "one righteousness," an accomplished act of righteousness and justification made good in Him. He was raised for our justifying. Besides, it is not the mere payment of a penalty, for God has been glorified as to the whole moral turpitude of sin, and this declared in raising Christ from the dead.

The scapegoat sets forth the forgiveness of sins *in connection with this earth*. If we had it in that way we should not die, but death has to do with us here. It has often been remarked, that for Aaron and his sons (in figure, the heavenly saints) there was no scape bullock. The grace of God takes a different course with us, we have forgiveness in connection with the Holy Ghost and life in the Spirit. The Christian enters on life in a completely new order and connection. He is of

## READINGS ON I CORINTHIANS. 79

the priestly family (as Aaron's sons), indwelt by the Holy Ghost and belonging to heaven, though still here in his responsible life on earth.

Besides the two great points that Christ is the wisdom and the power of God, we have further that He is made to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. It is a wonderful thing to contemplate the wisdom of God. He has never been baffled. Whatever crisis has occurred in the moral history of man, God has never been defeated ; on the contrary, it has been the avenue for His resources. If we take Babel, for instance, what could be worse on the part of man? His thought was to shut God out, but what does God do? He scatters man, and calls Abraham out to be the heir and depositary of *His* promises. We have the wisdom of God in forming all His purposes, and it is displayed in the working out of His counsels. At the death of Christ we should naturally have thought that all the purposes and promises of God were gone, but on the contrary it is in that event the illimitable resources of God's wisdom are brought out. He cannot bring out anything that is new to Himself, for He is God ; all has been in His thoughts from eternity.

In verse 30 wisdom is marked off from righteousness, sanctification, and redemption : it is

## 80 HELPS IN THINGS CONCERNING HIMSELF.

brought in first because the Corinthians were allowing human philosophy, and that has to go. Christ is made unto us wisdom from God—then righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. We have these alone in Him. If I want to prove my righteousness, it is declared in Him, and it becomes ours on the principle of faith. It is in Christ that I have all, and as the soul enters into what is true of it in Him, it is made practically good in us. We never reach what belongs to us as saints by merely taking things as facts, but we are called to enter by the Spirit of God into the practical power of them. We see what is ours in Christ that we may be morally conformed to it.

*Burford, December, 1892.*



## EVIL THOUGHTS, UNBIDDEN AND HATED.

I HAVE your letter, and I am sure that the enemy is very busy, as well as the evil heart within. What you need is thorough deliverance from yourself, that is the flesh. You speak of evil thoughts, unbidden and hated, springing up in the heart even when you seek to be occupied with the Lord, this too when really thinking of Him. Then you stop to confess them, and the occupation for a moment in confession only pro-

## EVIL THOUGHTS, UNBIDDEN AND HATED. 81

vokes another evil thought. And so it is, as you say, an unending, all-day work.

My feeling is that you have never yet enjoyed full deliverance from self and flesh. You are what scripture calls still "in the flesh," though a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe if your soul were free you would find the simple yet profound truth of "reckoning yourself dead" (Rom. vi. 2), would so act that the thought of turning aside to confess what would spring up unsought for in your soul, would be found to be really and only *allowing the flesh a triumph*, in leading you to be occupied with it.

When there is no *will*, such thoughts will be left, turned aside from, and treated as "not I." Of course when the soul is not free I could not say you could do so at all, but were freedom enjoyed you would not be the sufferer from such things. What I would simply say to you is, when evil thoughts are present to your soul, unsought for and hated, do not stop or cease from your measure of occupation with the Lord, to confess them. If *will* enters they must be confessed, but if not pass them by as you would avoid an evil person who is not yourself, and who you know is incorrigible, and with whom contact is only misery and defilement. "Avoid such, pass not by them," but leave them there. To *own them at all*, is but to give the flesh the place it seeks—a recognition in some way or another. This, even



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when it is only to abhor its workings, will be a *satisfaction to the flesh*.

Oh! that you had grace to leave "the flesh" unrecognised and disowned, and to pass on conscious that it is always there and will be in you to the end. How blessed that we can by grace disown and refuse to hear its suggestions when it works, knowing through mercy that it is no more "I." Your case is one that has been and is common to most of the Lord's people, if not all. I refer to unsolicited, hated, and wandering thoughts. You should simply go on and take no notice of them whatever, as by doing so you only give the flesh the place it seeks. Go on as not hearing the suggestions—be as it were deaf to them. Confess to God if you find *will* at work, but not so as to be occupied with the analysis of the evil: rather look up to Him, the sense of weakness and impotency filling your heart, and in the attitude of dependence of soul, pass on with your eye resting on Him, out of whom strength comes whenever there is conscious weakness.

*Extracted.*

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### HARD JUDGMENT.

IF there is one thing more than another for which we should plead, it is that the spirit of fault-finding and hard judgment may be put

THE REBEL'S SURRENDER TO GRACE. 83

away from us ; that there may be amongst us such an *esprit de corps* that the gift bestowed upon one may be accepted as a gift bestowed upon all—the blessing that comes to one, as the blessing of all. When love is in exercise the family feels a family joy in what is bestowed on a member. If more of this spirit were cherished and encouraged, and the opposite watched against, there would surely be more blessing and more thanksgiving.

*Extracted.*



THE REBEL'S SURRENDER TO GRACE.

LORD, Thou hast won, at length I yield ;  
My heart by mighty grace compelled,  
Surrenders all to Thee ;  
Against Thy terrors long I strove,  
But who can stand against Thy love ?  
Love conquers even me.

All that a wretch could do, I tried,  
Thy patience scorn'd, Thy power defied,  
And trampled on Thy laws ;  
Scarcely Thy martyrs at the stake  
Could stand more steadfast for Thy sake  
Than I in Satan's cause.

But since 'Thou hast Thy love reveal'd,  
And shewn my soul a pardon seal'd,  
I can resist no more ;

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Couldst Thou for such a sinner bleed ?  
Canst Thou for such a rebel plead ?  
I wonder and adore.

If Thou hadst bid Thy thunders roll,  
And lightnings flash to blast my soul,  
I still had stubborn been ;  
But mercy has my heart subdu'd,  
A bleeding Saviour I have view'd,  
And now I hate my sin.

Now, Lord, I would be Thine alone,  
Come, take possession of Thine own,  
For Thou hast set me free ;  
Releas'd from Satan's hard command,  
See all my powers waiting stand,  
To be employ'd by Thee.

My will conform'd to Thine would move ;  
On Thee my hope, desire, and love,  
In fix'd attention join ;  
My hands, my eyes, my ears, my tongue,  
Have Satan's servants been too long,  
But now they shall be Thine.

And can I be the very same,  
Who lately durst blaspheme Thy Name,  
And on Thy gospel tread ?  
Surely each one who hears my case,  
Will praise Thee and confess Thy grace,  
Invincible indeed !

JOHN NEWTON.



## “THAT WAITED UPON ME.”

ZECHARIAH XI. 11.

IT is with the *moral* teaching of the passage, rather than with its dispensational and primary application, I am now dealing. With regard to the latter, it may be well to say that the subject evidently is the history of Israel in connection with Christ. Jehovah takes up the case of His desolate people and flock. There was no compassion in their own shepherds towards them ; it is very blessed to see that while the nation is handed over to reap the fruit of its own ways and sins, Jehovah, in the infinite compassion of His heart, cares for the poor and oppressed of His people, but the nation as such are left to themselves, Jehovah gives up for the time being the inheritance of the Gentiles, it is in His earthly people He is to possess it. Then it is we find that the poor of the flock are they who recognise *the fulfilment of the prophetic word* in those ways of Jehovah. So much for the literal application of the passage. Now the *moral* bearing of this is of the deepest moment for our souls in these days, for there are now morally as then in the history of Israel, “the poor of the flock.” How blessed to think of this divine characteristic ! It carries one’s thoughts at once to Matthew v., the very first mark of that which

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meets the mind of God in a world where all has departed from Him, is poverty of spirit—that which is in no sense indigenous to man on the earth, that which so far from being promoted, is suppressed and hindered by all that obtains amongst men and in the age.

Poverty of spirit is only found in those who are broken, those who are down in the dust before the Lord, as their rightful place. Alas! how little of it is to be seen, how much of the opposite; self-elevation and self-assertion, a determination to maintain self at all costs; lowliness of mind and humility of mind are not virtues of the present moment or age; on the contrary, high-mindedness and pride, alas! prevail to a sad extent. How blessed to dwell upon that which is kindred to the thoughts of God, that which He takes pleasure in, and that which has ever met His mind from the very first. But, further, this spirit has, as it were, its own surroundings and atmosphere; it grows and flourishes far away from that which is found amongst men. It is impossible to maintain poverty of spirit if men and the world are mingled with. "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world." These are the principles and objects governing in the world, and none else beside. It is a solemn question for conscience and heart, how

## "THAT WAITED UPON ME."

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far apart from such a sphere do we walk? May the Lord exercise each of us before Himself as to this.

But not only do we find here "the poor of the flock," but we also find their *attitude*—"that waited upon me." This is ever the attitude of the soul where poverty of spirit is the characteristic, confiding dependence and expectation mark them at all times, whether the remnant in Israel, or the few who to-day in loyalty of heart cleave to the Lord: hated, reviled, slandered, and despised, they ever have been, and will be, yet He knows them as trusting in Himself and waiting on Him.

But not only is there in this attitude a very marked dependence on, and expectation from the Lord Himself, but there is an active exercise of heart implied in the words, "*waited upon me.*" How unlike the busy restlessness of the moment we are in, and the scene we are passing through! The moral magnificence of one who waits on God simply is beyond all admiration. How blessed to be brought to this simply, so as to say, "Thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I *wait* all the day;" or again, "This is our God, we have *waited* for him;" or again, "Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we *waited* for thee."

It was this which marked the Lord Jesus in all His blessed perfection as a man on earth; how

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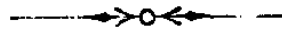
blessed to hear Him speak, as in Psalm xl. 1. He takes the place of patience *without failure*, "I waited patiently for Jehovah:" it is exactly opposite to what man is as man, with his will and all that belongs to it. Observe it is "for Jehovah," that is, until He came in; His own will never moved; Christ would have no other deliverance than Jehovah's. That which was found in the blessed One in His own perfection, is by grace wrought in the poor of the flock, and in feebleness and imperfection still is exhibited in some small measure by them. Oh, may it be ours more and more to be known, simply as a poor and an afflicted people who wait on the Lord and trust in Him.

Then, lastly, observe here how the Lord says "The poor of the flock that waited upon me, knew that it was the word of the Lord." This shews very blessedly the connection between the *state of soul* according to God, and the discernment of His mind through His word; and may we not ask, Is it not ever so? The *wise and prudent* on the one hand, and the *unseparated* on the other, never discern His will; it is *hidden* from the former (very solemn reflection this); it is revealed to babes. As to the other class, those who are separated and consecrated to God, it is written, "The knowledge of the *holy* is understanding;" and further, "Do not drink wine nor strong drink . . . when ye go into the taber-

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nacle of the congregation . . . . that ye may put a difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean." (Lev. x. 9, 10.) May the Lord apply His own word to all that needs its piercing light at this moment, so that there may be, by its divine action, formed in our souls that capacity and ability of His Spirit, to know what is the word of the Lord in its application to all the difficulties and exercises of the way at this present moment. W. T. T.



SUBSTANCE OF READINGS ON  
I CORINTHIANS.

## CHAPTER II.

THIS chapter takes up the manner in which God has been pleased to reveal the deep things of God. Paul did not come to the Corinthians speaking of these things in words of human wisdom—the cross set all that aside. In the close of the chapter we have the proper or normal christian state—the “spiritual”—by which only we enter into them.

God's wisdom *in a mystery* has reference to something not displayed. It is only known to those who are in the secret. The secret belongs to all Christians, but we must be spiritual to apprehend it. It refers to what is headed up in Christ and the place of the church in Him.

Later on we have the statement, “But we have



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the mind of Christ." This also depends upon our having the Spirit, because it is not our mind but the mind of the Lord. The Spirit is the revealer of all the things of God, but you have to be spiritual to understand them. No one could possibly enter into their meaning from merely having the words, which are human words, though used by the Spirit of God to convey to us the mind of Christ. It is connected with the new man.

It is impossible that scripture should correspond to mere human philosophy. Human language of itself cannot be the measure of what is revealed of God ; therefore to know it we must have something beyond what is human—the Spirit. This brings us to another thing—the renewing of the mind, and this is essential in order to realise our relationship to Christ and his saints.

He that is spiritual is one that is characterised by the Spirit, which is the proper christian state, and having the mind of Christ must necessarily be in connection with the Spirit of God. We have the Spirit as the revealer, and the spiritual man receives what is revealed.

"Who hath known the mind of the Lord"—this refers to the range of His thoughts. Verses 12 and 13 refer to the apostles. "Which things also we speak," that is, they communicated in words taught by the Spirit what had been re-

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vealed to them by the Spirit, and then in verses 14-16 there is the christian condition to receive them.

Though there is no right understanding of divine things by the mere force of words, nevertheless they are the words which the Holy Ghost taught, and by which we learn.

In accepting this scripture we must accept what is commonly called plenary inspiration. Another important point to remember is that we can never come to the end of scripture. We only know in part, but there is an infinite fulness in it. The mind of man cannot interpret the mind of God. J. N. D. said that you may unfold scripture, but the Spirit of God alone can enable one to unfold it in a way so as to give it a present living application to the soul.

We must be sensible that what is needed in the moment of peculiar difficulties is the application of the truth so as to meet them. It is so in meeting the state of the soul.

People very often do not like to admit that the understanding of things is dependent on their state. As we have said, in these two first chapters man and his wisdom are put out, and God and His wisdom are revealed and brought in. Then the power is given that is to characterise a person and enable him to enter into the things of God. Man of himself can never get outside the present range of things.

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In Genesis i. we have the creation of the present order of things by *God*, but in chapter ii. we have the name of *Jehovah* introduced, and this tells of One who had thoughts of His own in view in creation. Behind the seen things He had a plan and purpose known to Himself, and from which He never swerves.

In chapter iii. we have the truth of God's temple brought in, and the presence of the Spirit sets aside the pretensions of man. Man as such has no voice in God's temple. The apostle recognises those at Corinth as Christians, and as being the temple; he had been the vessel of their blessing, and been used in laying the foundation, others coming after him were building in bad material—wood, hay and stubble—it may be bad doctrine, evidently it is what is perishable: people are formed by the doctrine. The bad material might be Judaism or philosophy; it was something other than Christ. Paul advances the great and solemn fact that there was One in the temple far greater than any school of philosophy.

The "house of God" brings in the thought of how people ought to conduct themselves whether in reference to men or women. We find from 1 Timothy ii. men were to be marked by prayer and holy hands, women by adorning themselves in modest apparel and by subjection. "The temple" is not only the place where God is, but

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where He speaks. "They have no need of the light of the sun or of the moon." Therefore the voice of man must not be heard there, but the voice of God, that is, the prophetic word was to be heard in the assembly. There were those speaking who were speaking what was of man.

Nothing must be introduced into the temple of God that is contrary to its nature. Supposing the church were in order, and the assembly convened, and those speaking were truly doing it in the power of the Spirit, we should have truth unfolded in an extraordinary way, though of course we could have nothing outside of revelation. If we were in the truth of the temple of God, we should there wait on God to communicate His mind. We should never think of coming there with our own prepared thoughts. People have lost too much the real idea of the prophetic word. We have it both in connection with the assembly and the gospel also. The temple should be regarded as the place of light from God in the midst of a world where all is dark. If a servant were lecturing on his individual responsibility, it would be right to look into his subject and so be prepared to present it to his hearers, of course in dependence on the Lord, but in the assembly one would not think of doing this, but seek to wait on God and look for the prophetic word.

An unconverted man might prophesy in the

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assembly. (1 Cor. xiii. 2.) Clearly in early days a man might be under the influence of the Spirit without having the Spirit to indwell him. This may be gathered from Hebrews vi. 4. Balaam and Saul supply instances of that character from the Old Testament. In Acts we are told that a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. It would be difficult to say whether they really had the Spirit.

After dealing with the subject of the temple of God in this third chapter, in the next we come to that of rightly accounting of the servants of Christ. In the systems of men the thought of God's temple has been lost, and of God being there, and consequently the obligation to hear Him speak. Hence the servants are put out of their place. The sense of God being there would be a great safeguard for us.

There is another thing. A brother who ministers in the assembly, and does not mix freely with his brethren is in jeopardy of going wrong some day. He does not keep in touch with Christ's interests. A man must be, so to speak, a good brother before he can be a good minister. The thought of the house of God is more in connection with the persons who are of it and their behaviour. We have to be in the companionship of those who are of it.

It is a great truth that believers are the temple of God, and that God is there, and another fea-

## THE APOSTLE'S PRAYER, ETC. 95

ture is that it goes on to the future, and it is a wonderful thing that after all that has attached to it here, it grows finally to a holy temple in the Lord.—*Burford, December, 1892.*

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THE APOSTLE'S PRAYER AND DESIRE  
FOR THE SAINTS.

(COL. I. 9-14.)

AFTER the introductory greeting in the Epistle to the Colossians, and a reference to the faith, love, and hope of the saints, &c., the apostle adds: "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to *pray* for you, and to *desire* that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light," &c. (Col. i. 9-14.)

Now, these lines were surely not penned exclusively for the saints in and around Colosse: they are of equal importance for all the Lord's people to-day. The prayer and desire of the apostle embrace a very wide range, and leave

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no time for Christians to fold their arms, and sink down in listlessness and indifference, content with the little progress we may have made. Every honest soul will acknowledge he is a long way from God's standard of practical life and walk yet, as he ponders over this and other scriptures bearing on similar subjects. His standard for all is *Christ*. Paul, who wrote the above, in communion with Him who had called him, had this before him, and was so thoroughly heart and soul in what he enjoined on others, that he could say to them in the presence of the Searcher of hearts, "*To me to live is Christ.*"

And we cannot afford to pass over a single exhortation in the passage before us, if we desire to live likewise; and in true Christianity there is no other path.

The first burden of his prayer for the saint is, "that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." The state of Christendom all around, when compared with the revelation of His will in scripture, is a standing witness of the utter failure of the professing church, as regards this verse. The endless confusion that exists and increases, as the apostasy ripens for judgment, is a display of the ignorance of His will, professing Christians (and oft real ones mixed up with them) falling into all kinds of folly

## THE APOSTLE'S PRAYER, ETC. 97

and extravagance, the fruit of their own natural understanding, in connection with the professed worship and service of God.

Shall we who know the Lord and His grace, and the abiding authority of His word, follow our own will, and float easily with the stream? Nay, beloved fellow-Christian, may we be rather "filled with the [full] knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." His will is revealed in His word, and by its daily diligent and thoughtful study, in dependence on Him, we shall progress towards the full knowledge of it. And mark what is added, "in all wisdom." We may grow in the knowledge, and yet make a faulty or bad use of it through our own ignorance. He alone can minister all wisdom to us. And "spiritual understanding." A most needful appendage, for it is so easy to lean to our own understanding. In nothing do we need greater mistrust of ourselves than in this, that we may be in communion with the thoughts of God, and so act with spiritual understanding in carrying out His will.

Then adds the apostle, "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing." This, we take it, is clearly linked with that which precedes. We are left here on earth as witnesses for our absent Lord. He has connected His glory with His saints here below. "I am glori-



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fied in them." (John xvii. 10.) Wondrous grace! He glorified His Father perfectly, and now, having gone on high, He leaves us here a little while to glorify Him. If we are not seeking to glorify Him in our whole pathway through this scene, what are we doing? Losing time and dishonouring Him. He Himself has set us an example how we should walk—in His own blessed steps. He has led the way. His walk before God, as the obedient and dependent Man, was perfect. It was worthy of Him, worthy of God. He pleased not Himself. (Rom. xv. 3.) He did always those things which pleased His Father. (John viii. 27.) Now, "he that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." (1 John ii. 6.) We ought not to please ourselves, for we are not our own, but bought with a price. Our one aim here should be to please the Lord in all things. As the apostle expresses it, "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto *all pleasing*." This little sentence touches everything. If we seek to act upon it, it will affect every detail of our practical course—our motives, our words, our habits, our actions, our associations, our whole manner of life. And it will raise us above the mean and selfish motives of the natural heart, and make us happy in our varied pathways, however small and unimportant our sphere may appear in our own

## THE APOSTLE'S PRAYER, ETC. 99

eyes or to others. *The Lord is glorified in little things.*

“Being fruitful in every good work.” We hear much about good works! But whence do they proceed? “Being fruitful in every good work” supposes a branch and a tree and a root, according to the thought connected with the word “fruit.” Now the natural man, with the most beautiful mantle of christian profession, can no more bring forth the lovely fruit of good works to God than a withered branch in a lifeless tree with a rotten root. Man in his natural state is fallen, dead in sins, corrupt, lost. But the Christian is born of God and has the Holy Ghost. He is a branch in Him, who came up out of death, and has power through the Spirit to bring fruit. And in what does this fruitfulness consist? In *every good work*. The world is full of bad ones. Thousands in the professing church are crying to-day, “In thy name we have done many wonderful works,” whose plea before God in the future will be as vain as it is to-day in the light of His word.

Fellow Christian, it is a wonderful moment! The whole tide is against you; but God is for you—His eye is upon you, He reads your heart, observes your actions, notes your words. No good work done to please Him, not even the cup of cold water in the name of a disciple,

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shall lose its reward. May we then be found abiding in Christ, and so without legal effort or fleshly pretension, in quiet communion, bring forth fruit to His praise, abounding in every good work, doing good unto all men, specially to the household of faith. But let us see that all is done in His way, and not our own.

“And increasing in the knowledge of God.” It is a blessed thing to know God. When Christ was here as Man on earth, God manifest in flesh, the world knew Him not. The world refused to have God near them, and men remain in ignorance of Him till this day. Every Christian can say through grace, “I know God.” But are we to rest satisfied with that? Surely not. We are to increase *by* (which is the thought, rather than “in”) the knowledge of Him. The more we truly know of Him, the more we shall want to know. The more we learn what a God we are brought to, the more we shall increase and grow in our own souls. As a plant in the rays of the sun buds and flowers according to its kind, displaying lovely colours and tints, and emitting a sweet scent all around, so also the Christian, receiving in his soul by the knowledge of God, expands and develops in his practical christian life, displays the lovely moral tints and colours of the character of Christ, and emits a sweet savour of Him, as He passes through this scene. To increase, then, by this

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knowledge, we need to remind our reader that we learn what God is in His word ; and hence the importance, as we have already remarked, of its habitual study day by day till we are called to His presence, when we shall know even as we are known.

“Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.” Now if we are seeking to answer to that which we have been looking at, we shall assuredly be *tested*. We are in a scene where all is under Satan’s power, a world away from God, lying in the wicked one ; and our faith will be put to the proof. To follow Christ here is to suffer, and we none of us like suffering. We think it will be easy enough to be patient and happy in trial, when our souls first enter into the joys of an eternal salvation in Christ, that is, if, ’mid our new-found joy, we give it a thought. But as we go on, we soon begin to find out what poor martyrs we are. One would think it would be easy to shew a little patience, &c. Alas ! we are as weak as water spilled upon the ground. God fully knows our weakness, and what is needful for us. Hence this encouraging eleventh verse, “Strengthened with all might, *according to the power of his glory* [which is the true rendering] unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.”

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We have no strength, no might at all in ourselves, and the sooner we learn it the better. But all the might of God, so to speak, is stored up for us, and all the power of His glory, if we only know how to use it. And without it, daily breaking down through *self-trust*, we display before all our utter weakness, to our own sorrow. In God alone is the source of our strength ; we must lean on Him, and draw alone from Him. Not the smallest particle of true patience or long-suffering can we exhibit without Him. And as to joyfulness, it will be conspicuous by its absence. How often we meet Christians, daily tried and vexed in spirit and in their circumstances, exhibiting the very opposite of patience and long-suffering with joyfulness. Alas! how often we all have to mourn its lack. Why is it? We lose sight of God ; we forget His might ; we are not occupied with the power of His glory. Our hearts are not fully centred there. Hence impatience, seeking a little wider path to escape suffering, oft a bad conscience, and *no joy*. Beloved brethren, may we be alive to our privileges ; may we know our resources and how to use them ; may we draw strength from the only source ; may we bring God into all. Then shall we be found exhibiting the beautiful, patient spirit of Christ, that long-suffering that shone to perfection in the holy One of God,

## CHRIST'S ASCENSION GIFTS. 103

and be filled with that joy, which is the desire of His heart for His own till He come.

“O patient, spotless One !  
Our hearts in meekness train !”

“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,” &c. We will not dwell at length on these next familiar verses. Suffice it to call our readers' attention to the importance of *giving thanks* to the Father, who is the Author of the wondrous blessing unfolded therein, without the knowledge of which none can be found answering to that which we have been looking at. But when there is the honest pursuit of all these lovely traits of practical christian life, according to the line of things unfolded in this epistle, thankfulness will spring up spontaneously in the heart, and it will ascend to Him, our Father, who has so richly endowed us, and set our feet in such a blessed path, the narrow way, trodden to perfection by the feet of Him in whom was the whole delight of God—even *Jesus*. E. H. C.



## CHRIST'S ASCENSION GIFTS.

In a certain sense I would say that the apostle Paul even surpassed the gospel ; not the *spirit* of it (that was impossible) but the *mere conditions*

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of it. The Lord had ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel ; but he had not used this his power in the gospel. (1 Cor. ix. 12.) He might have been burdensome to the disciples as an apostle of Christ, but he was desirous to impart to them—not the gospel of God only, but his own soul, because they were dear to him. (1 Thess. ii. 9.) But what does this reflect but the unmeasured and untiring love of God, which has visited us in the gospel? So effectually had he learned Christ—so blessedly was he through grace enabled to exhibit the dispensation—and besides, so fully was he a pattern of that conversation to which the dispensation calls us, that he could say, “Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so, as ye have us for an ensample ; for our conversation is in heaven.” He lived on earth as a citizen of the heavenly city, and was (as the Spirit allowed him strikingly to express it) “unto God a sweet savour of Christ.”

But however honoured he might thus have been as the apostle of the Gentiles, and in his apostleship, person, ministry, and conduct, the witness of the dispensation ; yet he was not sent, as he tells us, to baptise, but to preach the gospel. For there was now to be no gathering point on earth. If any such, this apostle would have been it. But, no ! Christ was the centre

of all renewed souls, and He was in heaven. The Lord was not now setting up one visible point as he had once done at Jerusalem. The dispensation was heavenly: its source of power and its place of gathering was the upper sanctuary. It was "a citizenship in heaven" that was now enrolling, for not yet was it to be said *of Zion*, "this and that man was born in her." All that in every place called on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, were now recorded on high, as in the Lamb's book.

Such was our apostle: and far more might be added of the same character, but I will not further speak of them. I would now notice only one other thing that was peculiar to him also. I mean his rapture into paradise. In this he stands also as the representative of the dispensation, inasmuch as it was as "a man in Christ" that he was favoured with this rapture. In it he knows himself only as such, and therefore this paradise is the portion of all such. I judge it assuredly to have been *the place of the spirit of the saint while absent from the body*, and to which the pardoned thief went on the day of his crucifixion. Paul was *actually* caught up to it for a season, but no other man has ever had the same joy. He calls it "paradise"—"the third heaven," the place of abundant visions and revelations. Whether in or out of the body he knew not, but there he was. He has not been allowed to tell



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us much about it, and scripture is generally silent on the nature of it. But there he was, and in this rapture of our apostle, as by the teaching of scripture, it is witnessed to us that it is better to depart and be with Christ, and that the place of the delivered spirit is a place of abundant revelation, and a paradise of visions of Christ.

The actual being of such a place was opened fully to the faith of the church (though it might have been apprehended before), when the Head of the church said, "Father, into thy hands I commend *my spirit*." And again was it verified to our faith when Stephen, "a man in Christ," said, "Lord Jesus, receive *my spirit*." But still this is not the church's perfection. The spirit given to us of God is but the earnest of the house "eternal in the heavens." (2 Cor. v.) The throne of the Son of man is the inheritance of the saints, and the glory for which the church waits. But that place of glory is not yet prepared, as the place of the spirit of them that depart in the Lord is. There may have been visions of it, as on the holy mount, but it rests still only on vision; it is the hope still long deferred. Christ waits at the right hand for it, and the Spirit and the bride say, "Come." The whole creation groaneth for it. But it still tarries. However, beloved, the word is, wait for it; it will surely come, and will not tarry.

Many whom I love much in the Lord, may

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not judge with me in these things. And surely I know that we know now but in part, and therefore can but prophesy in part. But we may be helpers of each other's joy, and so has the Lord appointed it. Nevertheless, let us take heed, brethren, that we be not taught the fear of God by the commandment of men. Let us take heed of obedience in the flesh ; but watch that we do what we do in the power of communion with the Lord. And in whatever of enlarged knowledge we are instructed through others, let us have grace to try it all by a conscience exercised before our God, and inquire after truth as in His presence. Be it so with thy saints, blessed Lord, more and more. Amen.

J. G. B.



THE VEIL RENT, THE ROCKS RIVEN,  
THE GRAVES OPENED.

MATT. XXVII. 51, 52.

THESE verses relate what took place when the Lord Jesus yielded up the ghost. The blessed Lord died, laid down the life which He had, and which none had title or power to take from Him. "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself ; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Such are His own blessed words. The moment that was done, results followed which nothing else could accom-

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plish—which all His own blessed and beautiful life, as God incarnate, could never have produced. But the giving up of His life, His surrendering Himself as a willing victim to death, as the just judgment of God due to sin, as well as yielded by the power of Satan, is followed by the veil of the temple being rent in twain from the top to the bottom, by the earth quaking, the rocks rending, the graves opening, and many bodies of the saints which slept coming forth out of the graves *after His resurrection*. Heaven, earth, and hell felt a power they had never owned before.

“By weakness and defeat  
 He won the meed and crown ;  
 Trod all our foes beneath His feet  
 By being trodden down.  
 He hell in hell laid low,  
 Made sin, He sin o'erthrew ;  
 Bow'd to the grave, destroy'd it so,  
 And death, by dying, slew.”

\* \* \* \* \*

The “holy of holies” was separated from the rest of the temple by a veil, made of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen work ; it *signified* the distance of man as a sinner from God, and set forth the impossibility on the part of God of having any intercourse with man in his sins. The Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest : God could not come out, and man could not

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go in. But *now* all is reversed. The veil was rent—that veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, typifying the spotless humanity of the Lord Jesus. It must be rent before the full moral glory of God can come out, and before we can go in. The new and living way was consecrated for us “through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.”

It is most blessedly significant, too, the *manner* in which it was rent, namely, “from the top to the bottom ;” thus declaring that no hand but God’s could rend it. He declares that He does not wish the distance, which up to this moment existed, any longer to continue ; and not only so, but undertakes Himself to remove it, and in such a way as to display all the righteousness, holiness, truth, and love of His nature. The life of Jesus, beautiful, and perfect, and blessed, as it was, His services to man, His obedience to God, could never have rent the veil or opened the graves. If there were no Saviour who died, whose blessed body was given, and whose blood was shed, God were still concealed behind that veil. Man, even at his best, was still at a distance, hell still unconquered, and he that held the power of death still unsubdued. But, blessed be God, it is not so, now that Christ has died. All of God has come out, sin in its root has been judged, the way into the holiest has now been made manifest. The Christ who died is risen and glorified, and in His face

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shines the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.

Two facts of immense importance stand connected with the precious death of the Lord Jesus Christ—first, everything on God's side is manifested and declared ; secondly, everything on man's side is exposed and judged. By the rending of the veil not only is God set free to act in righteous love toward guilty rebels like us, but the affections of His nature, His heart, are disclosed in such a wondrous way, leaving us absolutely nothing to do in the presence of such favour but to adore and worship. Wonderful it is to think that there are no secrets in God's heart now ; the sorrows of the beloved Son have told the secrets of the Father's bosom. Jesus, who was the only-begotten Son, ever in His bosom, declared Him, and never more truly than when God forsook Him, when His heart was broken by reproach, when He looked for some to take pity, and there was none, and for comforters, and found none. It is very blessed to see that on God's side both His heart and the new place in which He would set us in His Christ, according to His heart, are both made known at the same time that everything on our side is exposed and judged. What tidings would this latter be to our hearts without the former? How could one ever face such a scene if the heart had not the knowledge of a home with Him who is the

“IT IS I ; BE NOT AFRAID.” III

“brightness of eternal glory ?” I am sure we are feeble in our apprehension of the terribleness of judgment, divine judgment, as expressed in the cross of Christ ; but (not to anticipate on that head) we are as feeble in apprehending the beauty of that divine circle now thrown wide open to us, that spot, that unique region on God’s side, where not only all His secrets are divulged, but where His heart finds its own satisfaction in disclosing its treasures to us ! The earliest moment in which the blessed God could do this He did it, and that was when His own Son, who came to do His will, accomplished it to the perfection of God’s own nature ; then it was “the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.”

W. T. T.



“IT IS I ; BE NOT AFRAID.”

The eye of Jesus watching  
 The toilers on the lake,  
 Where winds and waves are thwarting  
 Their efforts for His sake.  
 “Be not afraid.”

The ear of Jesus hearing  
 The strong and earnest cry—  
 “Lord, save us or we perish,”  
 Ascending to the sky.  
 “Be not afraid.”

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The heart of Jesus yearning  
And pleading in His might,  
Whilst their frail bark is tossing  
And struggling all the night.  
"Be not afraid."

The form of Jesus moving  
Across the troubled sea,  
To still its angry waters,  
To make them calm for thee.  
"Be not afraid."

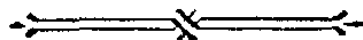
The feet of Jesus coming  
Through darkness of thy grief :  
To light thy desolation,  
To bring thy heart relief.  
"Be not afraid."

The hand of Jesus guiding,  
When waves of trouble roll,  
When billows of temptation  
Are surging round thy soul ;  
"Be not afraid."

The promises of Jesus—  
They're flashing round the tomb,  
Like signals from the mainland,  
To light thee through the gloom."  
"Be not afraid."

The morning watch is breaking,  
The darkness fleeth fast ;  
He comes ! and He is speaking !  
(It is Himself at last !)  
"'Tis I ; be not afraid."

—*W. P. Walsh, D.D., Bishop of Ossery.*



## ONE OBJECT.

(MARK X. 17-27 ; PSALM XXVII. 4-6.)

THE connection of these two scriptures is most interesting because of the repetition of the same words in them ; "one thing." Whilst in the young man in Mark x. there was one thing lacking, in the Psalmist there was on the contrary one thing that entirely absorbed his whole moral being.

In Mark the scripture is important to us, in that it comes in that part of the Lord's instructions in which He upholds that which had been set up at the beginning by God, and which the Lord Himself ever maintained ; He always upheld the original institutions of God—all that which has sometimes been said to belong to the old creation, it would be, I judge, more correct to say the *former* creation. Here observe how He upholds the marriage bond, as well as the place of little children.

But then observe how the cross is brought in as a test for the heart. Three things are distinctly grouped together in this chapter, namely, natural relationship, the law, and the word of Christ.

This young man has the desire to do some



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good thing; his natural mind desires it; and this desire is met first by the law, and then by the cross. It is very striking to see the effect of these things on the young man.

Now observe the law never tested his heart at all. *As far as man could see* he had kept it. No doubt it was but an exterior, outward obedience, still he had rendered this, and as a creature of God it was beautiful, and as such it was appreciated by the Lord Jesus Christ. But then the test comes in the cross. It is "Come take up the cross and follow me." He had that which in nature is beautiful and excellent, *but that will not go with Christ*. "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved." What a revelation of man's goodness and excellency!

The highest way to see the truth is to see it as a revelation from God. To see it manifested in the lives of people on earth is not the same thing. When it comes to us direct from God, His word carries all its weight and authority to our souls. We may then see the *effect* of it coming out in various instances, and in the lives of men upon earth, but we have already learned it from God Himself. You will often find that whilst there are many who accept Christ's work

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as securing them from judgment which is coming, yet if you press upon them the cross of Christ, they shrink from it in real dread.

I believe our God in many ways is just now calling His people back to Christ's path through this world. It is now a question of following Him in the way.

This young man came to ask the Lord what good thing he should do. He believed *man* was capable of doing a good thing. He saw in Christ all that was excellent, all that was good in the most excellent of men ; but he went no further, he did not recognise in Him the Christ of God. It was creature excellence that was filling his mind and I judge that the young man thought he himself possessed it. He was not like the jailor at Philippi, he did not want to be *saved*, he wanted to do some good thing. The reply of the blessed Lord is both solemn and searching—"one thing thou lackest." But to lack *that* was to lack *everything*.

Now this relates to us all. It is most blessed to find one who can turn the back calmly on all here—the *heart* already outside, drawn away by Himself, the *feet* follow in His steps. The young man here could not break with earth, he could not follow Christ outside all below, he had great *possessions*, and they clogged his heart. Let us think what a path was Christ's path on earth, "Follow me." Oh, what a path !—"follow

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me." Who? One cast out, scorned, hated, despised; who had but a manger at His birth, a cross between two thieves at His death, and nowhere to lay His blessed head in His life! Are we indeed in any sense followers of Him?

Let us learn that natural respectability, natural amiability, natural loveliness will not go the way of the cross. So the disciples are astonished out of measure, and ask, "Who then can be saved?" And He Himself answers, "With men it is impossible." Man would never be in heaven by-and-by, nor follow Christ now, if he were left to himself. Here is presented to us the very best sample that could be found of nature. He ran to Him, he kneeled to Him, he called Him "good master;" he shewed Him the most perfect respect and appreciation. Surely he was a wonderful specimen of man at his best. But he lacked this "one thing," and his heart was in his possessions and riches.

Now let us turn for a moment to the other scripture we have read. Here we find another "one thing;" and this is the bright side of it. Thank God there is a bright side to every picture, as well as a dark one. It is a great thing if any of us can say we have only *one* desire, *one* wish. It is wonderful, the power of one object, in a person's soul. It is surprising what a path of light it opens up before us. But we must not forget there is a kind of desire that

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never comes to anything—"The soul of the sluggard desireth and hath nothing." In that case there is no bottom, no foundation as it were, to the soul. If a man of the world means to have a future here, do you think he dreams his life away? In proportion to his earnestness of desire to attain his object, is the earnestness of his pursuit after it. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after."

Now let us look a little at details here. No doubt the psalm is cast, as it were, in a Jewish mould, as we find in the words, "That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." To "*dwell in the house of the Lord*" is the desire of the soul. Some are quite satisfied with the certainty that they will be in heaven by-and-by. But do we not want to be there *now*? Do we not want to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of our life? Do we not want to abide there *now*, and to have that as the spot from whence we can come out *now*?

Next observe the reason of this desire, namely, "That I may behold the beauty of the Lord." Oh, how blessed, to desire to be in heaven for the sake of being *with Christ*! It is not to be delivered out of this scene of trial and difficulty, this world of sin and sorrow. But being at home there now, you would be able to pass calmly

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through the storms here. How blessed to dwell there with Him and behold His beauty. Further, it is such a comfort that He delights we should dwell in spirit with Him. His word is, "Come and see." There is not a word said as to what the place was like, it is Himself that is *all*; alone with Him they wanted naught beside. It is wonderful what the *company* of one who is all to you is, in such a world as this.

Thank God, we have His company as we pass on. Next mark the words, "And to inquire in his temple." I believe the force of these words is given us in the word *meditation*. Oh, for more true real *contemplation*. Study has its own precious value, but it cannot supply the place of meditation. It is meditation that gives form to the affections of the heart.

Lastly, observe the very blessed word we have in verse 5, "For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion." Now what is there comparable with this? We desire to *dwell* in the Lord's house; trouble comes, and He *hides* you where you have *dwelt*!

Oh to know this experimentally, so that we are enabled by His grace to meet waves of trouble, not as *unfeeling*, yet *unruffled*, in the quiet of that repose where faith delights to set us.



## TRANSFORMATION.

(2 COR. III. 7-18.)

THE apostle is contrasting the christian position with that of being under law. The law was given in connection with glory ; we read the children of Israel could not look at the face of Moses, because his face shone, "for the glory of his countenance ;" but *this* glory is "done away, because of the glory that excelleth." *Now* there is a ministration of righteousness *from* the glory. This is brought in to correct the Corinthians, who were trusting in their own wisdom. Presenting Christ is the only true way of restoration, whatever the character of the departure may be. The great point here is that the flesh is displaced in the form it had worked in the Corinthians, they were boasting in their own wisdom. God's way of correcting is, not merely to point out the error ; that is man's way : the way of His grace is to set forth the right way, and then you see where you are wrong. If you learn how you yourself is displaced, you will never forget it—the true correction is that self is disallowed, and in abeyance. If you try to correct yourself, you are still there. There is no place for flesh in the glory of God. In verse 18 we read, "Beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord ;" but you will never really under-

## 120 HELPS IN THINGS CONCERNING HIMSELF.

stand this until you *try* it, and so prove the truth of it. To illustrate what I mean, if a man suffers from headache, and is told that electricity would cure it, he cannot know the good of it unless he tries it. "Beholding the glory of the Lord," you have come to a spot where flesh cannot be, for self is in abeyance. As the queen of Sheba was in the presence of Solomon, there was "no more spirit left in her." (2 Chron ix.) Have you ever been there? Would you like to taste the blessedness of it? The flesh must be in abeyance when you are beholding the Lord's glory, but you *must behold it*. You might hear about it continually, and you might admire it, and yet never know it for yourself. A person shut up in his own room may know more of it than one who has heard of it again and again. Scripture tells you what you are to get, the Spirit of God gives it to you. You never get anything without seeking it. The queen of Sheba went a long journey to see Solomon, and the effect of her coming was that she could say, "One half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me." "Looking on the glory of the Lord with unveiled face." We behold Him without a veil, as we see Him in the holiest, the antitype of the ark of the covenant greets me, and the result is, we are transformed into the same image as by the "Spirit of the Lord."

The two disciples going to Emmaus heard the

## TRANSFORMATION.

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Lord's exposition of the word, and "their heart burned within them," but they were not changed in their course till they knew Him, and then they rose up and went to Jerusalem. His interests were paramount to them, they were now so under His control, that they went the same road that He went. If we were in the holiest—the presence of the Lord—how clear our judgment would be as to everything for Him; *there* you see things as they relate to *His* interests, and *then* you get guidance. The great thing is to "behold the glory of the Lord." The nearer the prodigal got to the father, the better off he was; all fear was gone when he was in his house. You will be so entranced with the things there, that, like the queen of Sheba, there will be "no more spirit in you," yourself will be in abeyance.

An old divine was helped by a dream: he thought he came to the palace of a king, and was graciously received at the entrance, but the more he advanced, the more cordially he was received, and when he reached the presence of the sovereign, he was received with acclamation. The apostle was so set for it, it had such a hold on him, that he was always "bearing about in his body the dying of Jesus" (chap. iv. 10) lest he should lose it, for he had tasted the blessedness of it. The nearer you are to the Lord, the more assured you will be of your acceptance. Every blessing is centred there, and comes from



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Him, but you *must* taste of it in order to know it.

Christians in general do not know the Solomon aspect of Christ. The Corinthians had not known Christ as Wisdom of God ; they were boasting in their own wisdom. The queen of Sheba came from the uttermost part of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon.

We often *try* to get rid of self, but this is only effected by *displacement*. "Beholding the Lord's glory are transformed." If you had tasted the effect of it, you would long to enjoy it more ; it would not then be the fear of losing things here, you would be filled with your *gain*. Solomon and all his glory entranced the queen of Sheba. I can imagine how, when she returned to her own country, she would want to have everything up to Solomon !

Do you know what it is to go in and behold the Lord's glory without a veil ? What it is to sit before Him and contemplate Him, His glories, His beauties, His excellencies ?

See Psalm lxxiii. The Psalmist's judgment was changed when he went into the sanctuary, but here it is a far greater thing, the man himself is changed, he is "transformed." It is one thing to have returned like the prodigal from the far country, but quite another thing to have gone into the father's house. Christ is in glory : many a one looks to Christ on the cross, others

## TRANSFORMATION.

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as to their souls know that He is risen, but He is in glory. When the prodigal was in the father's house, he thought no more of the far country ; he was in a new scene altogether, in untold blessing.

How blessed to know that now, instead of God's claiming *from* you according to the law, righteousness is ministered *to* you from the glorified Man in heaven, and it is to this spot the Spirit of God would lead you. He comes from heaven to conduct you to the things there.

It is a great thing to get a sense of the blessedness of "beholding the glory of the Lord." Oh, the blessedness of having boldness to enter into the place where He is ! The line is open for each one of us. Stephen was the first who travelled that line ; it is opened by the Spirit of God.

The way I know I am walking "in the Spirit" is that Christ is before me, and the effect of having Christ only before me is marvellous ; all is simple then. "Exalt her, and she shall promote thee, she shall bring thee to honour when thou dost embrace her."

The mariner says he does not fear the storm if he can only see the sun ; he does not look for a star, but the sun. We may well be thankful for such a scripture as this, but let us each see to it that *we try it*.—*Notes of reading with J. B. S., Feb. 1893.*

## SUBSTANCE OF READINGS ON I CORINTHIANS.

(CHAPTER X.)

WE were noticing that in chapters i. and ii. of this epistle we have prominently brought out the intervention of God in the cross of Christ, and the reception of the Spirit as characterising the christian state ; and in the next chapters, the saints forming the temple of God (iii.), and the servants put into their place (iv.). The apostle has now, so to speak, to build up the wall of separation, for in the succeeding chapters (v. to x.) we have the intimation that there was coming in among them what is mentioned in Revelation ii., that is, the doctrine of Balaam and of Jezebel ; evidently the apostle sees the need of warning them to “flee fornication,” and also to “flee from idolatry.” They were in danger of being led into league with the world, and then to acknowledge the god of this world. It is ever so—if we are not in the line of true christian interests, we are in jeopardy of acknowledging Satan in some way as the god of this world.

In chapters viii. and ix. the apostle seeks to engage their hearts with proper christian interests, and in chapter x. warns them against trusting to an outward and sacramental connection with Christ (after the pattern of Israel),

without the communion of His death. The gracious consideration of others is prominent in chapter viii., and in order to carry this out, a willingness to sacrifice what one might regard as one's own right and liberty. In chapter ix. we see the right of those who are engaged in the Lord's work to be considered by the saints, though the apostle himself waived the right. This occupation of heart with the things of the Lord would greatly preserve saints from being ensnared with what is around in the world.

As Christians we are often forgetful of how liable we are to hinder or stumble others by what they may see in us. Every one of us has some object in view, and it is of great moment that a Christian should not be an aimless person, but that his interests should be in the proper christian circle. The danger to the Corinthians was lest they should be satisfied with their connection with an outward christian system, and lack that true fidelity of heart, which would shew itself by being occupied with Christ's interests.

It is instructive to notice that when God brought Israel out of Egypt as a redeemed people to Himself, He pitched the tabernacle in their midst, and gathered them round Himself; and that then their whole business was with the tabernacle.

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No doubt where there is true occupation with Christ, and with that which is dear to Him, the assembly will prosper. We may add, wherever there is divine affection working in souls, there will be solicitude and care for others who belong to Christ. The apostle made nothing of eating meats, as far as he was concerned ; but if his so doing was likely to be injurious to another, he would on no account eat. The Corinthians were evidently defective in this gracious consideration for others, and in true and proper recognition of the Lord's servants. In order that these things should be promoted in us, our souls must be in the power of the love of Christ. As to servants, we must not limit our interest in them to those who have given up their work and calling to go on with the Lord's work. It is well to see that business itself is not what we may call a christian sphere. There are two spheres proper to the Christian as such : the assembly, and his own house. We have to follow a calling to provide for our household, and to help others who may need. The word in Titus is, Let ours learn to follow honest trades for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful. If business were a recognised sphere in scripture, we should get instruction as to it ; but it is not the christian element.

It is a great thing, specially for those who are young amongst the saints, to see that there is a

sphere of interests into which they are called: that is, in self-denying service of their fellow saints, and furthering the work of the Lord. To cherish a care for others is the way to promote our own growth and blessing. We do not get the right flow of Christ's love in our souls apart from serving His saints. We must carry out divine affections in their proper circle, or they will soon wane. This flow of love towards others is induced by the constraining love of Christ, and all true service involves practical surrender of our own ease and comfort.

In chapter x. the apostle warns them that if they trusted merely in what was outward, without exercises which indicated the vitality of affection, they would drop down to the level of Israel, who perished in the wilderness. This dropping down is sorrowfully seen in the professing church, and some among them so use John vi. as to make life dependent on partaking of the sacraments. The apostle takes up warnings in Israel's history to bear upon the defects of the Corinthians, and as solemnly shewing how in the end they were destroyed by the destroyer. It is clear that if divine truth has not its power in the soul, leading to the exercise of pure affection, sooner or later, when the test comes, it will be given up. It is a great thing to be *going on*, because

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the more we go on, the more we are confirmed in the sense of divine revelation ; and as our souls get assured of divine purpose and counsel, the effect on us will be great.

It is only in Ephesians you get the truth of going out in conflict. It comes in in connection with the heavenly position, the Corinthians were not in a condition to enter into that line of things. Still, as we seek to go on with the truth, we find that it is confirmed to us. Many have failed to get into the good of what was brought out by J. N. D. It is not enough to have it in terms ; in order to go on with the truth we must have it in power.

The Spirit is the power to maintain separation from the world, and to keep us in the activity of christian affections and interests. He thus makes the truth good in us.

As to verse 13, no temptation had befallen them, which was unsupportable to them as men. God had placed a limit on the power of evil, so that they might be able to bear it. The "way of escape" might be in this way—martyrdom for instance—the prospect of death would come in such a way that it would be an outlet for the martyr. He would see the issue in his being taken to heaven, and so out of it all. There might be pressure of circumstances in the individual path or in the family circle ; but God will appear for us

and make an issue in some way. The faithfulness of God is a great thing to count upon, so that we should not be overawed by the presence or power of evil.

We do not find the meeting together of the saints in this epistle until we come to the subject of the Lord's *supper* in chapter xi. In the tenth chapter the point of the Lord's table is not their coming together, but their moral identification with the Lord's death. As it might be said of any one, "He eats at the King's table," that is, he is identified with it.

The bringing in the blood here first in order is probably in view of the order observed in the sacrifices of old, the blood was shed before they partook of the flesh of the victim. Our fellowship is in the death of Christ. In baptism we are committed to the death of Christ, in the Lord's supper we have communion with it. Many may have been baptised to it who do not enter into fellowship in it. A Christian rightly instructed would taste something of that fellowship, and when that is so, the question would arise with him, What have I to do with the world? Properly we should feel that everything in the world is incompatible with the Lord's death. We are cut off from the whole order of things here by His death; and we may ask, what can be of interest to us in this world in comparison with His death.



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In the Lord's supper we have the collective remembrance of Christ's death, while as to the Lord's table it is more that each and all are morally identified with it. We are always identified with it, and not merely when at the supper. Rightly, every Christian ought to be in the bond of the Lord's table ; but it is not so. Religious systems are great worldly systems, and so far, a practical denial of the death of Christ. In our participation in the Lord's supper we really begin the week with the Lord's death ; and we ought to be consistent with that through the week.

The Lordship of Christ applies to us individually. The apostle introduces the title of Lord in contrast with demons. He is Head to the assembly, and we do not get a true idea of that from the title Lord, it more bespeaks authority. As Head all flows from Him, and thus all necessarily partakes of the character and nature of the Head.

The solemnity of being identified with the Lord's table cannot be owned or pressed too much. If there is any compromise on the part of one, it not only affects that one but all others who are there. How little Christians are alive to the moral import of Christ's having died in this world. On no other ground would it be possible for rich and poor, Jew and Gentile to be brought together. To be consistent we must

## SUBSTANCE OF READINGS.

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refuse every other ground of association, because we are together on this one. It is, so to speak, our "Articles of Association." If we are true to the Lord we shall be to one another. The aim of popery is to rule the world. The Establishment is connected with the kingdoms of this world. Dissent is a great political power. In each case the death of Christ in its true import is left out.

"Ye are all partakers of that one loaf." The one loaf represents His body, and is also a witness to the "one body." The same idea is seen in the shewbread. The twelve loaves represented Israel, and yet without a question it was, so to speak, Christ the bread of God. The ground of our fellowship is the death of Christ.

As to receiving to fellowship, J. N. D. always objected to the term "receive," and said it was far better to say "take their place at the Lord's table." So it is "put away from among you." As to verse 29, it was not then forbidden to eat with an unbeliever unless he said, "this has been offered to idols." It would be better to eat with an unbeliever than with one "put away." To eat with such is to have complicity with the evil.—*Burford, December, 1892.*



## UNEXPECTED WAVES.

WHEN waves roll over us, and especially when they come, so to speak, unexpectedly, there is no hiding oneself from the God without whom they could not have come, and who makes both Himself and His voice known to us in the midst of them, and tests and tries *ourselves*, and our *standing*. Nature in us may throw up a thousand things, get the upper hand, and occupy our minds and souls ; and we only discover to ourselves and others thereby, that not God, but self and circumstances were in our hearts when the wave struck us. If such were the case with any of us, the lesson is good, and from the hand of God, though the discovery to us is, how much we wanted the purging, how little was God in all our thoughts. If, however, the Lord is at home in our hearts when the sorrow comes ; then however weak we may be, we find rest : " It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good," is our language. We may feel a consciousness of not understanding the Lord's why of the trial, and so may have disquietude within, even while bowing in the main to our God.

The great thing I would aim at is *reality*. To be before God just as I am, and to take heed that my practical walk and life, as He sees it, be owned by me, and be in conformity with His word.

## A TESTIMONY IN A DYING HOUR. 133

Experience, and feeling, and profession are beautiful things when the result of reality before God in one's secret hidden walk with Him. But in an hour of visitation, such as bereavement, I should be more anxious to be real before Him, than full of feelings. It is "a little while," a *very* little while, and the summit of the hill will be reached, and then the Lord Himself will be our fully satisfying portion; and yet in His large-hearted love, He lets us think, too, for our comfort of meeting those we have loved here.—  
*Extract from a letter from G. V. W.*



## A TESTIMONY IN A DYING HOUR.

"Oh! but I'm nae walking—I am *carried*, for since syne that day I've been carried."

Some time ago these were the words of one of God's elect in her dying hour. It was just the *point* between her and the Shepherd of souls, even that she was *carried*, and had been carried "since syne that day."

It was in a town in Scotland, and the visitor to whom these words were addressed had been used of God to bring this dying woman's two sons into the light of the gospel, and hence a very real bond existed between them.

But now she was dying, both of her sons having passed that way before their mother.

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She had a considerable time ago confessed the Lord Jesus ; but afterwards, through carelessness, had fallen into an old sin of hers, tippling with strong drink ; and, indeed, had gone so far back that her friend almost cared not to go near her till she felt sent of God. When in prayer one day for others, she was led to think of Mrs. D., and the impression forced itself on her that now was the time to go, which she immediately did. On entering, the following conversation took place, which gives the reader the "day" she referred to : "since syne that day."

The visitor said to her, "Tell me, Mrs. D., how is it that the Lord and you are not such friends now?"

This question quickly brought the tears, and the words, "Oh ! it is nae fault of His, it is mine ; but I know I am a sheep still."

"You know you are still one of His sheep, Mrs. D. ! Well, we will read what He has said about such," and she read : "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it ; and when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing." And she prayed.

In further conversation she asked Mrs. D., "Can we thank the Lord to-day for your restora-

## A TESTIMONY IN A DYING HOUR. 135

tion?" and again they knelt down: Mrs. D. herself giving thanks, and praying—"Lord Jesus, since you have put me on Thy shoulders, never put me down again till Thou putttest me down in glory. Oh! I'll walk no more, I'll let Him carry me!"

Time passed on, and Mrs. D. was dying. The same friend called, and on going forward to her bedside, began to read Psalm xxiii., and when verse 4 was being read: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me," Mrs. D. stopped her saying, "Oh! but I'm nae walking, I am *carried*—for since syne that day I've been *carried*."

How many testimonies to His grace, known and unknown, heard and unheard by us, go up daily and nightly from living and dying—and which form links between them and Himself for ever! The *point* or *points* at which we learn HIM in some fresh way can never be undone: these points where "no man, nor voice of man" is present. "Cause that every every man go out from me," said Joseph when he revealed himself to his brethren. The woman in John viii. will remember for ever the moment when He met her in her extremity. The thief will do so too; the woman of Samaria likewise. Mary also when she learned Him in the circumstances of John xi. The bereaved mother of

## 136 HELPS IN THINGS CONCERNING HIMSELF.

the city of Nain, and the man of John ix. will carry with them eternally the point at which He came in when help on man's side was gone. Do we covet these points? Are they much or are they little to us? Where are we with Him in these days, which speak loudly of man's ability to go on religiously without needing any such points? The "knock" comes to get admittance for Him to hearts He must have for Himself.

R.



"THOU HAST KNOWN MY SOUL IN  
ADVERSITIES."

(PSALM XXXI. 17.)

THIS is the expression of entire confidence in Jehovah—God known in our relationship with Him, in the most terrible circumstances of trial and distress, and that where sin has brought it on ; yet where faith is at work, the known name of God is counted on, and therefore His righteousness in making it good. It is not reckoning upon God with pride. It is Jehovah trusted in for what He is—His name, but with the fullest confession of failure, and that it is through sin that trouble has come upon him that cries to Him. It is not so much the confession of iniquity, but that the sorrow out of which the cry

“THOU HAST KNOWN MY SOUL,” ETC. 137

is sent up is due to iniquity ; but the extremity of pressure casts the soul in confidence on God according to His revelation of Himself.

The special character of the Psalm is trust, and from personal knowledge of Jehovah, the committing one's care to Him. This is a deep principle of piety—such a knowledge of the Lord, such faith in what He is, that the soul can trust Him, and cast all on Him, when distress and hostility come to an extremity. And it is a principle of utter righteousness, because the soul cannot look thus to God but in righteousness. Jehovah is known as having considered the distressed one's trouble. He has known his soul in adversities. The sufferings were not God's forgetting the sufferer. God has known, recognised, followed, His heart owned the sufferer's soul, and thought of it in the midst of adversities ; and the sufferer, as an owned soul (however faulty), looks through the suffering to Jehovah. It accepts the punishment of its iniquity, but in this righteous feeling trusts Jehovah, and in this spirit, in what is perfect in principle, commits itself entirely to Jehovah, and knows, and is content that it should be so, that all is in His hands. It looks hence for His face to shine on it ; but that through His appearing for it, it should not be finally ashamed, nor will any that trust in Him. He has laid up goodness for them that fear Him and trust in Him before the sons of men. His



## 138 HELPS IN THINGS CONCERNING HIMSELF.

presence is a sure unfailing sanctuary, which makes human malice vain in its attempts. He admits that, in the pressure of distress, he had for a moment spoken as cast out of God. Still faith was shewn in the cry to Jehovah, and he was heard. Jehovah preserves the faithful, so that the saints may love Him, and be of good courage whatever comes. It is not every one that has to pass through such sorrows as those referred to here; but when it is the portion of the saint, it gives great intimacy and confidence. What a known God is, is the ground of the psalm, and the cry founded on faith in it. I should not say that such is the brightest exercise of faith; this will be found, for example, more in the Epistle to the Philippians, the bright expression of normal christian experience. Nor is it the commonest; but God, in his rich mercy, has in His word met every need, and made provision in His word for every state, and the state of soul here is one of much exercised depth and intimacy of confidence in God, only learnt through needed distress.

J. N. D.



## "CHARITY."

THEY might speak with all tongues; they might have prophecy, the knowledge of mysteries, the faith which can remove mountains;

## “ CHARITY.”

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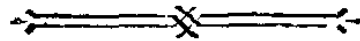
they might give all their possessions to feed the poor, and their bodies to be tortured: if they had not love it was nothing. Love was conformity to the nature of God, the living expression of what He was, the manifestation of having been partakers of His nature: it was the acting and feeling according to His likeness. This love is developed in reference to others; but others are not the motive, although they are the object. It has its source within; its strength is independent of the objects with which it is occupied. Thus it can act where circumstances might produce irritation or jealousy in the human heart. It acts according to its own nature in the circumstances; and by judging them according to that nature, they do not act upon the man who is full of love, except so far as they supply occasion for its activity and direct its form. Love is its own motive. In us participation in the divine nature is its only *source*. Communion with God Himself alone *sustains* it through all the difficulties it has to surmount in its path. This love is the opposite of selfishness and of self-seeking, and shuts it out, seeking the good of others, even (as to its principle) as God has sought us in grace. (See Eph. iv. 32; v. 1, 2.) What a power to avoid evil in oneself, to forget all in order to do good.

It is worthy of note that the qualities of

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divine love are almost entirely of a passive character. The first eight qualities pointed out by the Spirit are the expression of this renunciation of self. The three that follow mark that joy in good, *which sets the heart free also from that readiness to suppose evil which is so natural to human nature, on account of its own depth of evil, and that which it also experiences in the world.* The last four shew its positive energy, which—the source of every kind thought—by the powerful spring of its divine nature, presumes good when it does not see it, and bears with evil when it sees it, covering it by long-suffering and patience; not bringing it to light, but burying it in its own depth—a depth which is unfathomable because love never changes.

J. N. D



## “THINE ARE WE.”

(1 CHRON. XII. 18.)

THE intense applicability of the truth conveyed by these words at this time cannot be called in question. The supreme inquiry of the moment is, who are practically the Lord's, and who are on His side?

The order, too, is striking and significant, for it is first *whose we are*. The circumstances in which David was at this juncture are familiar to all who search the scriptures; he was in a rejected and outcast position, and this became of itself *the test*—his position manifested those who were true to his person and interests.

But it is not a little interesting that those who thus declare themselves through Amasai, chief of the captains, as true to the person and fortune, if we may so say, of the rejected and despised man of Ziklag, were men who “went over Jordan in the first month, when it had overflowed all his banks.” And further, it is said of them in this connection, that “they put to flight all them of the valleys, both towards the east and towards the west.” Now, it is blessed to ponder and meditate on that which is set forth in this, to see that all true

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power, true affection, and true devotedness, spring from *the other side of Jordan*; death is the door to Christ in heaven, or to follow Him with whole-heartedness on earth. It has ever been so, Elisha's newly acquired mantle of power, received from the one to whom he separated himself (2 Kings ii. 2-14), leads him, ere he uses it, to Jordan as well. Alas! how little such a solemn reality as this has set its mark upon us! Not only are carnal wisdom, earthly-mindedness, and worldliness allowed to pass unexposed and unrebuked, but it has been even attempted with disastrous effects to press them into the service and testimony of the Lord. Let us be well assured that we must leave behind in death, practically, self and its surroundings, ere we can follow the true David in His rejection, and be devoted to His Person and interests on earth: yes, that to us impassable river, until He made a road through it by going into it Himself, is the secret of all true heart following of Him, and is moreover the secret of all power by the Spirit in service for Him during the long weary night of His absence.

"Thine *are we*." Now this was as regards David more than words; first, it was with these Benjaminites *acts*, for they were *separated* men, who had *gone out* to David, in the despised place; these words, of such dreadful import to many in these days, demonstrated

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the reality of David's faithful followers; they might well say to David, "Thine are we," having proved it so clearly. Are we so acting and expressing to our rejected Lord and Master in these days? Have we acted and spoken in the spirit of "Thine are we"? Alas! how little, must be the truthful answer of every heart and conscience at all awake and exercised; but more than this, how little even do we measure, or judge, or weigh things *in relation to Christ!* Hence the insensibility that seems to have set in, the frosts and snows of the winter of the soul, the icy coldness that seems to have asserted its influence on so many hearts; oh! that we might, as a whole, be awakened out of this sleep, this death-like slumber, by His own voice saying to us in power, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead." But how little plain do we make it *appear* that we are Christ's, and yet we in language and speech own Him as our Lord; but where are the *proofs* that He is so really to us? Where, it may be asked, is our subjection to His authority, to His will, to His word? Self-importance, self-justification, self-assertion, self-exaltation in its most specious forms, is the sad crop occupying the ground where fruit for Him should have been found.

"Thine are we." Most searching words where reality and uprightness of heart are found, and

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the very contrast with, and the opposite to, the prevailing spirit of the hour, "With our *tongue* will we prevail; our *lips* are our own: who is Lord over us?" But further, observe, that to be really where we can take that place with Christ, and be, as well as say, "Thine are we," Jordan must not only be passed when it had overflowed all its banks, that is, death in faith *accepted* by us in all its extent, but it must be *carried* by us as well (2 Cor. iv. 10), and carried by us, not once or in a way, but "always." Oh, the reality of the "dying of Jesus;" that is the death we must always carry; but how unsparing it is; nothing of *man*, not to speak of nature or flesh, can be tolerated here. Why is it we see and hear so much of man? Is it not because this great reality is avoided by many, refused by others, and dreaded by all? Lord, help us always to bear about in our bodies the dying of Jesus!

"Thine are we." This, we may be assured, is the desire of the heart of our Lord Jesus Christ as to all that are His own; they are *in fact*, blessed be His name, His own; His own, too, whom He loves right on to the end, through everything and in spite of all! We may well say, what should we do if it were not so? But the fact underlies the great practical truth we seek to enforce, even that what is true of us in His amazing grace and love should be

*practically* recognised and acted upon by us. How blessed to see it in the apostle of the Gentiles, he who followed Christ as none before or since, and to see it declared in a moment of human suspense and emergency, even when in the shipwreck all hope of being saved was taken away ; what words of comfort from the mouth of a poor prisoner, as he opens it to comfort and cheer the despairing and the overwhelmed : "There stood by me this night, the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve." Mark those blessed words well, "whose I am ;" what dignity, what confidence, what affection these utterances breathe. Oh, that the beloved saints of God tasted the liberty of belonging to Christ ; exclusively and entirely to be to Him, "a garden *enclosed*, a spring *shut up*, a fountain *sealed*"—that is, fully, finally, and only for Him ! "Whose I am," "Thine are we ;" our happy confession to Himself and to all around us in *acts* and in *words*.

But we have also another mark of true devotedness in their further confession to the rejected David—"and on thy side ;" indeed, we might say this is the simple consequence of "Thine are we." How grateful to the heart of David this confession at this moment, hunted as he was, like a partridge on the mountains. It is just this that one sees the immense lack of at the present moment. "Who is on the Lord's



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side," who? may well be asked. Now, indeed, every side has its adherents and supporters ; but, alas ! how few take sides with Christ ; and, moreover, there is a lack of perception, a density of spiritual understanding, and blindness of spiritual vision as to His claims and rights. The profession (alas ! it is to be feared in many cases little more than profession) of His name and rejected place on earth is allied with earthly-mindedness and worldliness in its many phases ; "divine ground," is rudely grasped as a platform upon which man in the flesh is exalted, and the many appliances to further this end, such as ambition of various kinds, intense desire after money, with the pride and oppression that ever accompany it, are all here in full energy ; and if any are found with enough of conscience, not to say devotedness to Christ, even to make a stand against this growing tide, they are accounted persons to be slandered, maligned, avoided and shunned at all cost.

These are sad and sorrowful matters to be met and faced by us if we would be in truth and verity on the Lord's side, and loyal to His interests, who is our rejected Lord and Master. Is it to be wondered at, that the infidel, the free-thinker, the scoffer of the age, should all demand with a kind of triumphant sneer, "Where are the disciples, friends, and witnesses of the rejected Man, who had in the

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world but a manger at His birth, a gibbet between two thieves at His death, and no place where to lay His head in His life." May we take this to heart more really and truly than we have done—"on thy side." Oh, that the blessedness of it, the joy of being associated with Christ in His present sorrow and rejection, because devoted to Him in the power of His love, might be more ours in His grace; what a reality to find in Him *one worth losing all for*, if only to be in company with Him; this is the one desire and aim of the devoted heart, its single object to be only *with Him*, whether in heaven or on earth. "Thine are we, and on thy side"—the language of its loyalty and its love.

Another thought, and we have finished: the day of Christ's rejection by the world is fast drawing to a close; the opportunity for love to express itself in devotion to its object will soon be past. He who is the Man of *patience* now will soon return to become the Man of joy for ever and ever. All His own will make up the substance of His joy for ever and ever; but oh to meet His heart somewhat *now*; to walk with Him *now*; to be on His side *now*! May the Lord give purpose of heart for this, by endearing His blessed Son more to our affections, for His name's sake.

W. T. T.

30-2

## GOVERNING PRINCIPLES WITH REGARD TO THE LORD'S SUPPER, GATHERED FROM THE ORDINANCE OF THE PASSOVER.

(EXOD. XII. 42-51.)

SURELY no sober-minded Christian could read the closing verses of this chapter without being struck with the jealousy that the Lord shews in regard to the feast of the passover. How He guards it from every element not in harmony with its sanctity, whether with regard to individuals or the demeanour! Yet is there the most interesting care taken that not one who has the title should have anything put in his way to hinder him partaking of this precious feast.

Many years ago, I remember reading an article called "Grace the power, and separation from evil God's principle of unity," and I cannot fail to see these two important points in the law of the Lord as to the passover.

I need not revert to the early part of the chapter, save to say that the persons who had been under the shelter of the "*blood*" during that memorable night in Egypt, and who had in the eating of the roast lamb acquiesced in God's judgment which fell upon that lamb in their stead, were the fit persons to listen to the Lord's commands in respect to the feast, and to justify Him in what He enjoined. He alone had the

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right and competency to denote who were to be excluded and who admitted.

“And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover : there shall no stranger eat thereof.”

Why should the stranger head the list? What traits are wanting in him that he should be confronted with a flat denial? As to the import of the word stranger, there is no difficulty—it means one not at home. But when words are adopted in scripture they often lose their true force, because we are prone to exclude from our minds the one who is speaking, and instead of judging of the word, or words, in relation to Him, we are fettered by many other things in relation to ourselves or others, and thus the “*word*” is not to us what it should be. (Prov. viii. 9.)

Now the Lord was speaking to a people whom He had chosen to be a peculiar treasure to Himself above all nations of the earth ; they stood dispensationally nearer to the Lord than any other people on the whole earth (Deut. iv. 7), and He had made Himself KNOWN in a three-fold way, namely, as having chosen them in Abraham, and redeemed them by the blood of the lamb, and as having delivered them by the waters of the Red Sea, for this ordinance is here given in view of their deliverance. (See ver. 42.) They knew God not merely as Creator, or as the

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Supreme Being ; this all others knew in a certain way, and loved the distant place, but they knew Him as the One who had revealed Himself to their father Abraham as the Almighty, when such knowledge was most needful and blessed, they knew Him as Jehovah, the great "I AM," and they knew Him too as their "DELIVERER," by the hand of Moses and Aaron. Neither was this knowledge derived from report only ; they had witnessed it all—the tyrant who once held them had not the knowledge of Israel's God, and when God claimed them as His inheritance, and demanded their freedom, Pharaoh asks, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I *know not* the Lord, neither will I let Israel go."\* The supreme ruler in cultivated Egypt knew not the Lord. How solemnly he learned it ! Does my reader know the Lord as his deliverer, or does he resemble Pharaoh ? Oh may he find Him as his Saviour God in Christ Jesus, if he has not already found Him !

The destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts was liberation to Israel. They saw the almighty power of their God in the complete overthrow and utter destruction of Pharaoh and all his hosts, and were the recipients of a corresponding deliverance. Now the passover would recall all

\* This question is fully answered, and its results developed in Romans ix.

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this to the mind and heart of a grateful Israelite. But what would this past indicate to one who *knew* not the Lord in the way He had made Himself *known* to Israel? Nothing save an empty form. No; he who partook of that feast must be at *home* in the company—God's company; no strange element must darken that bright family feast, and what memories would fill the heart of every one at that board! and what a tale would the father, who knew most and best of God and His deliverance, have to tell to the child as he called to mind the marvellous work of God! and how acceptably would the story told in freshness fall upon the ear of the child! And though the outside stranger partook not of the roast lamb, he might sit and listen, and so a desire be awakened in his mind, and hunger be produced after the things of the Lord, and so find that the same Lord who had in holy jealousy excluded him, had also provided a way to admit him, and thus satisfy his desire according to the largeness of His own heart. (Ver. 48.)

The bought servant, when circumcised, has a clear title to the feast, while the foreigner and hired servant are both alike excluded, the slave has a priority over the hired servant; he is a part of the household and shares in its privileges; he was not his own, but the absolute property of another; he had no will of his own, his pleasure

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was to do his lord's will, neither had he any fear of dismissal, he was at rest about that, while the hired servant held himself free to go out, he had no surety that his lord would keep him, and therefore no settled rest, no certainty or knowledge of his lord's heart. This condition is excluded, he also who belonged not to Israel's country, and had his heart in another, must ever be going back to what was *native* to him as a foreigner, and rightly excluded from the pass-over. "A foreigner and a hired servant shall not partake of the passover." The principles contained respectively in these two are "going back" and "self-will," while the true spirit goes forward, and is subject to the will of another.

Then comes holy jealousy as to where and how they are to eat the roast lamb. In all we learn God's thoughts of "His Lamb." It may not be eaten just where they chose, or treated as *their feast*, it was the *Lord's feast*, and to be eaten in *one house*. Unity is in view ; it was not ordinary food, and so nought of it must be taken abroad out of the *one house*, neither was a bone of it to be broken, no rude hand to handle it as a thing of nature. The feast was to be approached with holy joy and godly fear, but not sinful fear.

Now that all the walls have been raised that would exclude every offensive element within, the gates are thrown widely open in grace to

admit all who have the simple title of children redeemed to God, by the same blood, no inferior or superior position is seen as a title, but one common right; the roast lamb included "all Israel," and more, the stream of grace rises over its banks, as it were, and reaches the stranger, extending means whereby he may be included within those walls of separation, and by circumcision exchanges the place of strangership for that of home-born son. This was in one aspect the mark of the family of faith (Rom. iv.); and no uncircumcised person was to eat thereof. Thus this part is protected from aught not in harmony with itself; the exclusive wall is raised by the Lord all around it. And who but a rebel would murmur against a "protecting wall?" Those inside praise God for it. (See Rev. xx.)

Let us now inquire how these points illustrate principles or persons in relation to the Lord's supper, bearing in mind one cardinal fact, that the passover partook of a legal character, while grace is the reigning principle of the Lord's supper. Therefore we will begin at the point where the passover ends—"the stranger." The Samaritan of Luke x. is a perfect stranger to the man who fell among thieves; but when he has been brought into the inn, and all has been righteously removed that could possibly cause unrest, the Samaritan is no longer a stranger, but a NEIGHBOUR confessed; the distance has



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been removed completely, and the man is at "home." The unknown becomes the *known friend*. So the exchange of names in Luke xvii., and a step in advance, the stranger is brought to the feet of the One who befriended him, and with a loud voice gives glory to God ; he makes acquaintance with the benefactor, he is in His company. Strangership is exchanged for friendship. This is one main feature to be looked for in the one who partakes at the Lord's supper. He knows the Lord's company, and is at home there ; all *distance* has been removed ; but it may be asked, How is this done ? How is the poor sinner to know all this, who feels himself like the leprous stranger of Luke xvii. ? If such a one should read these pages, I answer, look at the *death* of Christ ! God's word says that " Christ died, the just for the unjust, to bring us TO GOD." The death of Christ has embraced every inch of the *moral distance* that lay between the sinner and God, and he who believes, by that death is brought to God. Is it a question of my sins ? They are gone. (Col. i. 14.) Is it sin which troubles me ? I may reckon myself dead to it. (Rom. vi. 11.) Is it the " body of flesh ?" It has been cut off by the circumcision of Christ. (Col. ii. 11.) These are the things in fallen man which keep him in the distant place of strangership, and if either of these has a claim upon him he is unfit for the feast. He

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would not be at "home," but they are gone to faith on the authority of God's word by the "death of Christ," and so completely gone, that Christ risen can now come and impart new life. (John xx. 22 ; Rom. viii. 10.) So that he who has set to his seal that God is true can *know* that he is no longer *in the flesh* (Rom. vii. 5), but *in the Spirit*. (Rom. viii. 9.) He is free from the law of sin and death ; he is liberated from all that once bound him. This brings us to consider the bought slave and the hired servant, and, strange as the words may seem, I see in the bought "slave" a true portrait of the *free man*. (1 Cor. vii. 22, 23.) He illustrates the *condition* and the *relationship* pleasing to God.

The believer has been redeemed to God by the blood of Christ, and he is not his own. (1 Cor. vi. 20.) He is not ashamed of the slave's epithet, he glories in it, because the exchange of masters has made all the difference ; his old master was leading him into perdition and unutterable woe, blinding his eyes with the pleasures of sin, and left him at the moment of his deepest need with nothing but the terrors of an eternal hell before him. It was in this condition that the Lord Jesus found him, and imparted to him life and peace, and ministered to him nourishment that would sustain the life. (Compare soberly, 1 Sam. xxx. 11-15 ; Luke x. 30-35 ; John x. 28 ; Mark v. 43.) Jesus liberates the

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believer from Satan and all the consequences of his sins—"I lay down my life for the sheep," Jesus tells out His love in all the unbounded fulness of His heart, and is not satisfied until He has the objects of it in the same fulness of joy. (John xiv. 27 ; xvii. 24.) What an exchange ! Slavery for freedom ! Life for death ! Nearness for distance ! Friendship for alienation !

And so complete is this deliverance that no fear need take hold of the heart (1 Sam. xxx. 15), that after all he may be lost, for Paul answers it without fear. (Rom. viii. 37, 39.)

Suppose the case of a delivered one, like the young man of 1 Samuel xxx., being overtaken and tempted into an act of the old sort, taught him by his old master, does the "act" put him back under his old master ? No ; for though he has committed an offence unworthy of his new position, it does not in itself deliver over into the hands of the old master ; he is now David's servant, and the question must be between David and Amalek, not between him and the old master. The offence must be repaired in order to *enjoy* relationship ; but the offence does not destroy the relationship ; the relationship makes the offence felt, because the act is inconsistent with the relationship, therefore there is no rest until the breach is repaired. Therefore the true believer is unhappy if seduced into sin ;

but his unhappiness is because he is in the light, and sin is intolerant, but this does not touch the question as to whom he belongs? If Satan wants me, he must first overcome my *Master*, not me ; but my Master has overcome him, and that makes all the difference. I see three privileges enjoyed by the antitype of the slave : he is circumcised ; all that caused distance has been removed, and he is as one “ *homeborn* ;” he is part of the “household,” and he holds the Head, that is, he is governed by the Head, and I think these traits should be diligently looked for in those partaking at the Lord’s table. Now these are wanting in the hired servant, and the foreigner who aptly portrays many in these days, who never saw their *lost* condition by nature, and therefore can never understand salvation, who never felt the bondage of Satan, and therefore know not freedom through grace alone ; they are never sure of salvation, because they stand on their own merits ; like the hired servant, they work for hire, not from love, looking to the end of the period of life to know their acceptance ; such cannot have rest of heart, nor satisfaction in the love of the Master, and therefore unfit to sit at His table, or form part of the household. They are like foreigners, too, for many are earth-bound, cannot say heaven is their home, that is, the Master’s house is not their *house*. To the slave the master’s house is his house : he is as

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one homeborn. Oh what a portion for the poor sinner to inherit through grace, and grace alone:

“ And can we call our home  
Our Father’s house on high,  
The rest of God our rest to come,  
Our place of liberty ?

“ Yes, in that light unstained,  
Our stainless souls shall live ;  
Our heart’s deep longings more than gained,  
When God His rest shall give.”

“ All Israel shall eat thereof.” So every child of God has a place at the Lord’s table. The Lord’s death is his title, one common title for all there. John’s title is not superior to Mark’s. “ Drink ye all of it ” (Luke xxvi. 27) is the Lord’s own desire for all who share in the effects of His atoning death and blood-shedding. Love put the cup into their hands, and love instituted the feast.

But how can there be a true response unless the soul has grasped in some measure the effects of the death and bloodshedding of the Lord, of which the bread and the wine are the remembrance ? Could an Israelite eat of the roast lamb without thinking of the fire of God’s judgment, and thus taking home to himself that judgment ? In like manner, he who partakes of the Lord’s supper owns that he has part in that death, and judges *himself*. (1 Cor.

xi. 28-31.) That is, I take it, that my old self is gone in that death, not only my sins, but the self that did them ; and I remember Him in that death where every question was answered according to God's holy nature, and God glorified, so that the soul is conducted away from the old self into all that is of God, and according to His nature, and has communion in all that God Himself delights in—righteousness, holiness, goodness, joy, love—in fact, the new creation of which Christ as Man is the beginning the other side of death. There is much more undoubtedly in the Lord's supper, but I speak in connection only with the elements of it which may be seen in the scriptures quoted. If these elementary truths were fully seen, they would pave the way for a fuller understanding of the church as the body ; and if these important elements are wanting, whatever else may be known is but after all unfruitful, because the groundwork is wanting. Circumcision must not only be understood but applied in faith, and this is painful work ; but it is God's way : no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.

May the Lord help us into a fuller understanding and enjoyment of our true portion at His table !

F. H.



## SUBSTANCE OF READINGS ON I CORINTHIANS.

(CHAPTER XI. 20 ; XIV.)

IT is important to see that from chapter xi. 18 to the close of chapter xiv. we have the subject of the saints come together in the assembly.

The Lord's supper is brought in in connection with this subject. It presents to us the ground on which we are assembled, that is, the death of Christ ; we are there as His guests, and that is the only basis on which we could be so gathered here. In His death He laid a new ground of assembling His people together, and when this is seen and properly appreciated, it puts out all thought of one another after the flesh. No one can challenge the Lord's right to have what guests He pleases at His supper. To question it is to question the Lord's prerogative. It is a great thing to view each other at the supper as the guests of the Lord. The prominent point in chapter xi. is that it is the Lord's supper that we eat, we are guests there. In chapter xii. it is that by one Spirit we are all baptised into one body.

We have noticed previously that the apostle had been shewing the saints their privilege in being the temple of God ; and seeking to build them up in the truth of separation, because God's holy temple, of which they were

stones, could not be connected with the course of this world. In chapters xii. and xiv. he is dwelling on what is inside, the working and actings of the Spirit of God in the assembly, but it was needful before coming to that to instruct them in the truth of separation. With regard to any who seek fellowship we own their title, if Christians, as guests of the Lord ; but it is certainly proper to bring before them something of what is involved in their coming amongst us, that they must be consistent with the truth of God's holy temple.

The special revelation to the apostle of the Lord's supper was doubtless made to connect it with his testimony of the church as the body of Christ. In chapter xii. we get the statement, "Ye are the body of Christ." The breaking of bread is the "Dominical supper," that is, the supper of the Lord ; and as far as the assembly is concerned it shuts out every other supper.

If we think of the temple of old, the building was of material work ; but in the assembly saints have to be built up as living stones. Thus we have in Peter's epistle (chap. ii. 5), "Ye also as living stones are being built up." It is needful that the saints should be established in the sense of their privileges ; there is too much the idea that when a person is a Christian then all is complete. Of course there is completeness as to standing before God, but it is



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essential to have the things that belong to us made good in our souls. We all have to learn them, and it often takes us many years to do this. The difference between these two things is seen by comparing the statements in Romans and Ephesians. In the former we read, "*The Spirit* is life." In the latter *your soul*, as it were, has been brought into it—you are "quickened together with Christ." Thus Ephesians sets forth what has taken place in your soul through the power of God working in you.

New birth is no doubt involved in quickening. The point where Paul touches "new birth" is in this quickening work of God. But quickening goes beyond new birth, for it brings in an entirely new state out of death. (John v.) The Lord's supper is a very important introduction to the subject of our being gathered together, as bringing before us the only ground on which we can be there. Each one is there on the same ground, it rests on the one blessed fact, "He loved the church and gave Himself for it." Having this in view puts us into our proper place in the assembly, no one can take precedence. It really begins the assembly, and as to the moral condition and order of things, we are not in a position to understand, or be in our place in the assembly, if we do not see what the supper means.

No one person can take the Lord's supper

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alone, you must have a company for that. The assembly is presented in many forms in scripture. It is seen in a house ; in a town ; or in the assemblies in a district. Again as the house of God, and the body of Christ. In the last chapter of our epistle the church is said to be in the house of Aquila and Priscilla. At the institution of the supper by the Lord, we find it in connection with a company. Its very essence is collective remembrance.

In chapter xii. we have the subject of the manifestation of the Spirit, but there is also a deeper truth, that by one Spirit we are all baptised into one body, and all manifestations are subservient to that truth. The saints are integrally one in the Spirit. The point here is not union but unity, and that in the Spirit. Being an assembly of believers would not in itself make us one. As men on earth you cannot have union, that is by the Spirit uniting us to Christ in heaven ; and it is in the knowledge and enjoyment of union, that unity is reached and realised among the saints here.

Morally the Lord's death puts out the flesh : and the Spirit brings in what is contrary to it. Outside of the circle of the assembly there are relationships and duties which apply to us as individuals ; but in the assembly they lose their existence and application. So that even a slave sitting next his master in the meeting is not his

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slave there, but outside there should be the full recognition of such relationship.

The gifts are seen in Corinthians as the distribution of the Spirit, but they are in the assembly in responsibility to the Lord ; and then, as the source of all, it is God. It is here we come to the truth that the members are incorporated by one Spirit, and the loss of one member could not be incurred without damage to the whole body. The *body* in an organism, not an organisation ; what affects a single member affects the whole. There is one vital principle pervading all, and that is the Spirit. We have not only been baptised into one body, by one Spirit, but have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

There is probably an allusion to what are called the two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's supper, as having been baptised by one Spirit you are committed to the truth of the one body, and as made to drink into one Spirit, you are actually in the fellowship of the Spirit. A converted person now comes into the baptism of the Spirit when he receives the Spirit. Verse 13 is what was true of the saints at Corinth, and generally of saints as they are brought in. Spiritual affections are wrought in the believer ; he is made to drink into one Spirit, and is thus able to enter into the circle of the Spirit's operation in the assembly.

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We have seen these two great things brought out, "the Lord's supper" (chap. xi.), and "the Spirit" (chap. xii.) When these are rightly apprehended by the soul, then we are prepared for chapter xiii. Here we have the proper energising principle—love, and that flows from having been made to drink into one Spirit. But in order to learn what provokes love, we must turn back to chapter xi., where the Lord's supper is the start and basis of everything in the assembly. It is never said the Christian is love. It could not be so, because there is no spring in ourselves; we must have it from another source, hence we are turned to the Lord and His death. No Christian could be in spiritual affections unless he is in his soul in living connection with Christ. If not under the influence of the love of Christ you could not exercise love to the saints. Everything connected with the right working of things in the assembly must begin with the Lord's supper. We read of the upper springs and the nether springs. Love to the saints must flow from the sense of the love of Christ. Spiritual affection is more excellent than gift, and as it is realised and goes out to others, we shall edify each other. The heart must be right first, and then the mind, service and all else is kept right.

Chapter xiii. 8. The idea of knowledge assumes that there is something to learn;

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knowledge is never complete here. The expressions of any one seeking to minister the truth may be defective, for we read in verse 9, "we know in part." When the perfect is come, then we shall have the whole. Now we learn a little here and a little there, and perhaps you may dwell a little too exclusively on the part you are learning, so that the truth is not rightly balanced. But in verse 10 we come to that which is eternal, knowledge and prophecy will have passed away. We see now through a glass obscurely, but the things we do thus see are the same things we shall see by-and-by in all their fulness and perfectness.

In chapter xiv. it is not only a question of spiritual affections, but I must be in *intelligent* relationship to the company forming the assembly. One ministering should be in touch with the assembly, and the assembly with him. A man speaking in an unknown tongue would not be so. Persons may assume they have a gift and minister in the assembly, when really they are not in the least in touch with it. Where love fills the heart, the Spirit regulates the mind and puts the servant in intelligent relationship with the saints. The one object would then be to edify, and there would be no desire to shew off one's gift, or in any way to make oneself prominent.

As to worship and the Lord's supper, you are

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not exactly on the true platform of the worship of the assembly in the supper, but it flows from it.

The great object of the epistle seems to be to form the Corinthians in the truth of what they were. They were the temple of God, and had been baptised into one body, but evidently they were not under the formative power of these truths. They had abundant manifestations of the Spirit and gift, but they needed instruction as to all these subserving the truth of the body, so that there should be edification.

As to assembly meetings. A meeting for prayer where only, say a fourth part, are present could hardly be called an assembly meeting. If the assembly is summoned, and some do not come, then the responsibility rests with them. If there is a meeting which could not properly be called an assembly meeting, it has nevertheless to be regulated by assembly principles.—*Burford, December, 1892.*



“CAST THY BURDEN UPON THE LORD, AND  
HE SHALL SUSTAIN THEE.”

(Ps. LV. 22.)

CAN I cast my burden upon Him—  
This weary and heavy load?  
*I* am so weak and helpless,  
And *He*—the eternal God!

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Can I cast it in faith upon Him,  
The sorrow that He has given,  
And know He will stoop to the lowly heart  
From the highest heights of heaven ?

Can I cast my burden upon Him  
In daily and hourly care—  
Anxious fears and perplexing thoughts,  
*All* that is hard to bear ?  
Will the God of unerring wisdom,  
The God of almighty power—  
Will He think of *me* when my faith is weak,  
And sustain in the darkest hour ?

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“CASTING ALL YOUR CARE UPON HIM, FOR  
HE CARETH FOR YOU.”

(1 PETER V. 7.)

OH! sweet is the answer given,  
Straight from His heart above!  
Eternal wisdom—eternal might—  
Are linked with eternal *Love*.  
Cast *all* your burdens upon Him,  
Nor fear He will turn away—  
He *cares* for you as none other cares,  
He *cares* for each troubled day.  
He *cares* for the *little* trials,  
He *cares* for the deeper grief ;  
Only to lay them on Him  
With a trusting child's belief—  
Only to *leave* them with Him  
Safe in His hands above,  
And thus sustain'd by almighty strength,  
To *rest* in almighty *Love*.

E. J. F.

## PAUL'S THREE DESIRES.

(PHIL. III. 4-10 ; 1. 20-23.)

THERE are three express desires of the apostle here—what we might really call longings of his soul. First, he longed to be found in Christ, then to know Him, and lastly to be with Him.

Sometimes when those words are read in chapter iii., “What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ,” &c., they are spoken of as if the apostle referred to bad things; but they are all *good* things—things that gave him a religious status here before men in this world. “Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews;” there was not a drop of Gentile blood in his veins—no approach to the accursed race—as to the law, belonging to the straitest, strictest sect, for he was a Pharisee—“concerning zeal, persecuting the church.” These were all things that gave him a place here before men—those are the very things we find it so hard to be dissociated from. They were connected with earth. We may not have those things literally, but we all of us know how many things we have which tie us down to earth. I am far more afraid of the earth than of the world. The ways of the world may get into our hearts, but by



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earth I mean a comfortable state of things here—things which are not wrong in themselves, but which come in and clog our souls. When the Philistines stopped up the wells of Abraham, they stopped them *with earth*. I believe it is exactly the same kind of thing in principle which happens to our souls. When the springing well that refreshes our souls is stopped, it is earth that stops it. Many of us through God's grace can judge what is of the world and refuse it, but something that is not in itself wrong may so clog our souls as to stop up the inlet of heavenly light. In the supper in Luke, not one of the things the people plead is wrong—all those things were connected with earth, and they choked the affections—when they became supreme there, not one would have God's supper. We are too apt to say what harm is there in that? do you see any wrong in it? The wrong is, the heart gets clogged, the affections become set on something else that is not Christ. After the apostle goes through all that wonderful unfolding in the Epistle of John, he ends up with "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." What is an idol? It is something that likes you, not merely that you like, something that will minister to you, that will captivate you—something that will get hold of our hearts, that will meet us in the part which is most susceptible. I simply

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allude to all this in connection with Saul of Tarsus. He says, as it were, "I gloried in those things, I got some value out of them." What was it that changed the whole thing for him? The dawn in his soul of a heavenly Christ, a heavenly Saviour, a Saviour in glory. The Saviour in glory rose in revelation *in* him just like the rising sun, the beams of which nothing can withstand. The Saviour was revealed not *to* him but *in* him.

There is no such thing in this world as an *intrinsic* value being attached to anything—things in this world have a relative value—we value them in relation to something else. Money is valued because of what we get by it. Now we say, Christ, this heavenly Saviour, who dawned by the Holy Ghost on his soul, turned all the value out of everything—the shine went out of the things here. It is a different thing from the stripping principle. You cannot strip a person's heart, a person's affections; but you can by God's grace so have a brighter, more blessed Object and Person that other things go. That is the principle of Christianity. If I were asked what the two principles of Christianity, in contrast to everything else, were, I should say a heavenly object and heavenly power to pursue that Object.

That is what made the change in the apostle :  
 "What things were gain to me, those I *counted*

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loss for Christ." The Saviour in glory revealed in the heart of that persecutor altered everything—everything was changed—as we sang just now :

" Heavenly light makes all things bright,  
Seen in that blissful gaze."

It was the heavenly light that shone in here.

"What things were gain to me, those I counted loss *for Christ*." It was not a question of what a loss they were to him, but of the gain he had got. The gain so filled his soul that it turned other things into loss. There (ver. 7) he brings you back to this heavenly illumination : it was the start.

Verse 8. There is a long distance between those two verses. He who writes this epistle is a prisoner—he is writing in Nero's dungeon—there was nothing external for him, all here was gloomy and dark, he was the prisoner of Nero, one of the most relentless of Roman emperors. He says, I have not changed my mind one bit, no pressure, no external sorrows, no loss all the way down has changed my heart one atom—the light that shone into my soul at the first is the same now.

What a blessed thing when that Sun that has shone into our souls does not wane in our hearts. The Lord keep us in the rays of that Sun. At first when the light streamed

into our hearts, how little everything seemed ; but the rub is, that as we go along we pick up something here, the wretched things of this scene.

It is not by effort but as we walk in the Spirit, and the Holy Ghost really keeps that scene of glory and the One in glory before our souls, that all is fresh. Paul not only counted things here loss but dung. Once things become refuse and good-for-nothing, there is not much difficulty in getting them out of our house. Oh to have the value taken out of them ! Now the sun is shining in all its strength, the stars are still in the heavens, they are not gone but they are eclipsed. One is glad to have the stars if we have not the sun, but how much more blessed to have the sun that rules the day—to have the One that rules the day of our souls, that heavenly Saviour, “to be found in him”—found in Him on His side. All He has acquired and won is ours in association with Him. Oh to be found in Him !

Two things characterise and form the Christian, he is out of man and out of earth. I do not want any here to misunderstand me, for a person might turn round and say, are you not on the earth ? Yes, painfully conscious of it ; but I am out of earth as before God, as to His thoughts, I do not belong to it.

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I am out of man, and out of earth. Earth is where man was placed in responsibility, now I am dead, and I have got a new status and standing—a completely, totally new position and standing in Christ before God. I have a standing before God outside all the ruin and wretchedness that Adam brought in, and that is the meaning of the title of the Lord as “last Adam.” No other order of man before God can ever be recognised than He. That is the new order by grace to which we belong.

“That I may know him.” It is hard to speak of such a subject as that—“that I may know him.” In reading, some years ago, Hewitson’s *Life*, where he says, in speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, that he knew the Lord Jesus Christ better than he knew any living man; I thought to myself, I would give anything to be like that. Why not? Whoever has placed himself at my disposal so that I might know him as He has done? What creature on earth has ever come so near to you as Christ has done? Knowing a person is not merely casually meeting him: knowing a person brings before the heart intimacy, personal contact with a person in his surroundings: as people say, you must live with a person to know him. Oh to know Christ in that way, to go and live with Him in heaven! Our life must be where He is that we may know

Him. There is that beautiful verse in John x. : "I am the good Shepherd ; and I know those that are mine, and am known of those that are mine, as the Father knows me and I know the Father." (New Trans.) Is not that wonderful? The character of the intimacy between the Shepherd and the sheep is after the pattern of the intimacy between the Father and the Son. What an intimacy that is! What a knowledge of Him that is! We must go where He is, we must go to His side to know Him. He is not here. It is perfectly true that when He was here, and the disciples of John wanted to see where He dwelt, He said, "Come and see ;" but there is no Christ on earth now. There was a suffering, lowly Christ in this world, and men in their various needs came in contact with Him ; but He is not here now, and that is why I press that we must go to His side to know Him. The Holy Ghost is here to lead your affections to Christ where He is.

I want this intimacy—I want to be on terms of personal knowledge and intimacy with Him. Supposing you were shipwrecked, and an island rose up in the midst of the sea, and the lifeboat landed you upon it, what would you do? You would say, I should like to know something of this place, I owe my safety to this spot, I should like to know this spot. May the Lord help us

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to know Christ. That is what Paul says in Colossians: "Seek those things which are above," and then set your mind on them. It is the object that is before us—there is power in an object. We never set our mind on them if we do not first seek them.

"The power of his resurrection." What is the difference between "the power of his resurrection" and the power of Jehovah? I leave it with you to think of, I will not answer it now. The power of resurrection carries us into a new sphere. What do you mean by the word "sphere"? It carries you outside of everything down here in this world. Many many years ago this passage was before my mind, and I only got from it that it was the power by which Christ was raised. It is not that at all. The power of God raised Christ up and set Him as Man in glory; it is not that here, but "the power of his resurrection." That is what the apostle longed for, and that carried him into fellowship with His sufferings. The power of His resurrection leads to identification with Him in His path of suffering.

The third desire—I long to be with Him: "Having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is FAR BETTER." Where the love of Christ has really laid hold of our hearts, really constrains our affections; where the love of Christ really fills us—the love of

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a Person—the love of Christ, that devoted Himself for us, “To know the love of Christ that passes knowledge”—that timeless, changeless, everlasting love of Christ—the effect of it will be, I want to be with that One.

When that love has come in mighty power before your soul, and earth's vanities have disappeared for a little time, then you want to be with Him. I cannot understand a love that can be satisfied with absence from the object of its affection. How could you understand a man who leaves his home-circle, and goes on business to New Zealand, saying, I am quite satisfied to be here, when he has left those he loves in England? There is not much affection there. No; he would say, I long to be back at home. This should be a great deal more true with us. If the love of Christ really enveloped us round, we should say, I long to be with Him. This tests us more than the coming of the Lord. There is nothing that more tests our affections as to whether the Sun is in power in our hearts, than that we can say, I desire to depart, to go through what men call gloom, I desire to be with Him, to be unloosed from everything here, like a vessel unloosed from her moorings. Oh the cords that bind us to moorings here!

It is Christ on His own side in heaven that causes this spring of affection and desire to

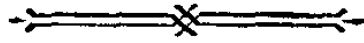


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rise up in the apostle's soul. Oh may He be so before us! We have the Holy Ghost for this—this heavenly power in us. We have an invisible Object and an invisible power.

May God give our hearts to be living so engrossed with that blessed One, that other things may drop out of our hearts, things that are so important to us now.

W. T. T.



“WATCH YE, STAND FAST IN THE  
FAITH, QUIT YOU LIKE MEN, BE  
STRONG.”

(1 COR. XIV. 13, 14.)

TREMENDOUS moral issues are at stake in the world, not merely from the human standpoint, but in relation to God in His ways of grace and government with men. These have been going on now for thousands of years, since man, in God's image and likeness, first trod the earth. The cross is the great central pivot upon which all turns. There the greatest of conflicts was fought and won by means which were a stumbling-block to the Jew, and folly to the Gentile, but in whose very weakness the infinite greatness and goodness of God shone to perfection. *Christ died.* Angels wonder, saints adore, sinners mock, and demons tremble!

Who can fully trace or fathom the moral

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issues of that wondrous fact Godward—or, in heaven, earth, or hell in relation to His creatures? The death of Christ is an unfathomable mystery, but an everlasting witness that God is light and love. Though Jewish prejudice and unbelief, haughty Roman indifference, and the worldly wisdom of the outwardly polished Greek, treated Christ as a deceiver, and they rejoiced in ridiculing themselves of His presence on the earth, utterly blind to the import of their own act, Satan knew full well the consequence of his (apparent) victory rested incomplete. Hence, when he who had the power of death was overcome, and an infinitely greater than he rose triumphant with the keys of death and hades in His possession, Satan used his subtlest wits to rob men of its fruit.

Grace wrought mightily far and wide through God's chosen vessels, and Paul, in the course of his service, was led to the idolatrous and lascivious city of Corinth, where many were saved and gathered in the name of the Lord. But the immoral state of that wicked city sadly leavened the assembly which God had called unto holiness. And a low moral state and a dulled conscience made them a ready prey to the machinations of the foe through false teachers. Satan brought his powers into play, and made a deadly thrust at the great foundation truth of the *resurrection*. He knew full well that the whole fabric

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of Christianity, and the establishment of the kingdom, and the whole carrying out of God's ways in heaven and in earth rested on this key-stone. If the resurrection were denied, all that God would build upon it would fall ; just as, to employ a figure, if the foundation stone of a mighty column could be removed, the whole fabric would totter and fall to the ground. Paul, in communion with God, saw the danger, and hence the magnificent unfolding and confirmation of this blessed truth in 1 Corinthians xv.

The enemy's work was fully exposed in the light, the saints warned, encouraged, and preserved, and ere closing his faithful epistle, he exhorts them with the warning words, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong," &c.

Now the dangers at Corinth have in no way diminished in the church of God. The same surround the assemblies to-day. In a certain sphere, Christian formalism, it is true, has taken the place of idolatry ; but we pass through a world which lieth in the wicked one. (1 John v. 19.) The exaltation of man and gift, schisms and divisions, immorality and wickedness, evil teachers and evil doctrines abound. Hence the necessity of *our* paying heed to this word of exhortation. It is a day of war, when every Christian needs to be at his post and on the alert. It is no time to be taking it easy in

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barracks, so to speak. The enemy is in full array against us, and the stake is *Christianity*. The conflict is no mean one. It is the good fight of faith, and the only fight that can be called good. “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.” The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. In our Lord’s day, at the critical moment, His disciples slumbered. *He watched, and they slept*. And the foe came, and the Son of man was delivered into the hands of sinful men. Beloved brethren, our Lord’s glory is being trampled in the dust. Are we alive to it? Are we awake? Are we watching? The night may appear long, but it is already long since it was said to be *far spent*. (Rom. xiii. 12.) The dawn appears. Christ is coming. The bright and Morning Star is in the heavens. The wakeful soul fixes his gaze upon that bright Object above, and waiting the coming day, *watches* diligently against the whole power of the enemy. The unwatchful are constantly being entangled, and fall before the enemy’s power, and bring reproach and dishonour upon His name. Through infinite grace, their *salvation* is secure. But instead of overcoming the evil with good, they are overcome; how can they meet with His approval and reward in that day? No Christian can read the word attentively without remarking how oft we are exhorted to *watch*. The Lord Himself says to His loved

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ones on earth, "What I say unto you, I say *unto all*, Watch." (Mark xiii. 37.)

And, "stand fast in the faith." This was a deeply needed admonition to the saints in Corinth, where the fundamental truth of the resurrection was assailed by the foe. To-day, the whole range of truth—the faith—Christianity, is assailed. Satan's efforts are concentrated to destroy the faith. Infidels, mockers, sceptics, rationalists, Unitarians, moralists, and religionists on all hands are helping on the destructive work. The forces of the enemy increase, the serried ranks are daily gathering strength; the tide of infidelity and indifference widens and deepens; the elements of the apostasy are developing in a thousand and one fresh forms; outward Christianity is tottering before socialism and daring unbelief; the false bride of Christ is relaxing her grasp of the reins through the restive power of the spirit of Antichrist; the beast will in the end throw its rider, the false woman will be destroyed. The power of Satan will eventually triumph, but only for a short moment. Man will bitterly rue the fruits of his awful self-will and wickedness in swift judgment at the hand of the Lord. Satan will be bound. (2 Thess. i.; Rev. xix.; xxi. 1-3.)

But in the world's dark hours, God has a people. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Ps. xi. 3.) Blessed be

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His name, “the foundation of God standeth sure.” (2 Tim. ii. 19.) He is faithful and His word is sure. The Lord knows His own. (2 Tim. ii. 19.) And if we walk with Him, and keep clear of evil, we shall know His power for us to the end. “Stand fast in the faith.” Never was there a day when the word was more needed. “*Hold that fast* which thou hast.” (Rev. iii. 11.) Satan will leave no stone unturned to loosen our grasp. When the pressure is great, the temptation only too often succeeds, and saints yield to escape suffering, and to find a little wider pathway. This means present dishonour to the Lord, and loss at that day. We cannot afford to let one iota of the truth go, cost what it may. Christ was “the faithful and true witness.” He met all Satan’s power with “it is written,” lived by every word of God, and suffered. He has left us an example, that we should “follow his steps.” (1 Pet. ii. 21.) Fellow saints, let us follow Him. The faith is at stake, “*stand fast* in the faith.”

“Quit you like men.” There is nothing men more admire, and readily follow in this world, than force of character. A strong personality always makes itself felt, in whatever sphere it may be, whether great or small. Weakness among men, especially in critical circumstances, is despised. Beloved reader, it is a critical moment to-day in the history of the church on

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earth. The Lord is about to come, and His church is a wreck. But He is unchanged, and His truth is unchanged. And He looks for faithfulness on the part of His saints, and it grieves His heart when it is lacking. He is not looking for heroes of the human type, but He is looking for *faithful and true* hearts, whose one aim is to glorify Him. He is looking for saints to be *men*. When the destinies of nations are at stake, their rulers look for their subjects to quit themselves like men. To yield and flee in a moment of testing is unmanly. We may not be able to do much, and our sphere may be very unobtrusive, but let us each and all seek to quit ourselves as men in *what* we do. If we stand with God, His power working in us must be felt; it must have an influence on all who come in contact with us. And if we stand with Him, we shall stand together, heart to heart, and shoulder to shoulder in the ranks of truth, against the whole power of the enemy, until He come. (Rev. ii. 25.)

“Be strong.” This surely does not mean that we are to be strong in our own strength. Nay, the more conscious we are of our own utter weakness, and the more fully we mistrust ourselves, the stronger we shall be. Our strength lies elsewhere. Its source is in another. The whole strength of God, who is *Omnipotent*, is for us. Let us lean on His mighty arm, and there

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alone. Our foes are strong, far stronger than we are, but He is stronger. Satan is mighty, but God is Almighty. When, in the full consciousness of our weakness, we lean in child-like faith upon Him, we realise His power, and fearlessly stand for Him in the evil day. To be strong, there must be self-judgment, and an exercised conscience, void of offence. God cannot have fellowship with evil. He cannot shew His strength on our behalf if unjudged evil is hindering our confidence in Him, or we are keeping a reserve in our hearts, instead of yielding ourselves wholly to Him. But in communion with Him, and dependent, we are *strong*. The power of God works in us, and that power is irresistible. “*Be strong.*”

“Let all your things be done in charity.” This is a beautiful link with the previous verse. Whilst standing true and unmoved in the midst of evil, there is the danger of being harsh and distant, and yielding to a spirit of condemnation of others, &c. So this verse comes in as a beautiful guard. We are God’s men as Christians, and those who stand for Him, should display His character. When the head of a large state in this world is noted for his beneficent government, &c., this should be the moral characteristic of all who are in the state employ. It will be more or less where there is subjection to authority. So with the saints of God. God is love, and He also



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wants His own nature to shine out in His saints. He has fitted us for it. We have a new nature, and the Holy Ghost. There is power and qualification to represent Him, and to exhibit His character in our ways with others. Hence the exhortation, "Let all your things be done with charity" (or *love*). And thus shall we commend ourselves, as did the apostles, to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

E. H. C.



## BENJAMIN'S BLESSING.

(DEUT. XXXIII. 12.)

"THE beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him," was said of Rachel's younger son. Beloved in a special degree by his father, he is here spoken of as "beloved of the Lord."

He was the son of his mother's sorrow, and she would therefore have called him *Benoni*; but, although she died at his birth, and Jacob thus lost a treasure for which he had laboured long, and a wife and friend whom he dearly loved, yet, in a faith that surmounted his bereavement, he named him *Benjamin*, son of his right hand. Jacob's weeping was thus to endure for a night, and his joy to come in the morning. He wept as though he wept not, and the son of sorrow became the son of power and of victory.

*Benjamin* represents to us Christ in suffering, as Joseph does Christ in glory. The two form

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the complete picture of the suffering and the glorified Christ ; but, whilst in Joseph's blessing (see vers. 13-17) we find a superabundance of "*precious things*," and a table well supplied, we have in Benjamin the deeper and richer blessing of a covert beneath Jehovah's wings and a place between His mighty shoulders. This is the place of solace for the *sufferer*. "Nowhere to lay the head," there was yet the comfort of Jehovah's bosom ; and if the table were not groaning with earthly wealth, still there was the assurance, amid the trial of being the Beloved of the Lord, and of a safe dwelling with Him. And this, as we are told in the end of Proverbs i., is the sign of the ear that listens to the heavenly voice : "He that hearkeneth unto me," we read, "shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from the fear of evil." For in order thus to hearken, the ear must be close to the lips of the speaker, must dwell, so to say, between His shoulders, and then in that nearness, that intimacy of communion, that place of love, the soul not only reposes safely, but is quiet from the fear of evil. What a portion !

How true of Christ as the sufferer, the Beloved One, who abode in the Father's love ! Shorn of all earthly glory, despised, rejected of men, He enjoyed in all its infinite fulness that place of deep and unruffled communion with the Father ; so that out of that conscious storehouse He

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could say to the weary around Him, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

Could Joseph have done more? Shall the glory of the coming kingdom proffer a sweeter rest or furnish a wealthier place? Nay! There is no glory like the glory of His grace, no dwelling-place like that of His bosom.

And Benjamin's blessing may be enjoyed by us. We, too, may nestle in that bosom, and share the calm security of that safe dwelling. We, too, may know the power of these shoulders, and bask in the beams of that eternal love.

J. W. S.



### NOTES OF AN ADDRESS ON I CORINTHIANS XV. 47-58.

IN reading this portion I hope to shew how it forms the climax of the epistle. To apprehend the force of it we must bear in mind what is stated in the first chapter. There the apostle says, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

Between these two points in the epistle we get the assembly brought in; the saints as forming the temple of God; and then the working of the Spirit in the assembly. There is a

wide contrast between the beginning and the end of the epistle. In the beginning the Holy Spirit tells us that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." Outwardly the cross was the expression of perfect weakness, but with God it was both His wisdom and power. We there have what is insisted upon in this epistle, the contrast between the spiritual and the natural, and the inability of the natural mind in God's things. To the natural mind Christ crucified was weakness and folly. The spiritual mind views it in God's light. All that took place at the cross was contrary to the mind, wisdom, and philosophy of man. That the supreme and eternal God should, in the Person of His Son, become man, and as such go down to a shameful death, was to his mind foolishness ; but it was God's resource, His own way of accomplishing His blessed purposes of grace and glory.

But what is brought out prominently at the close of the epistle, in the verses I have read, is the Lord Jesus Christ, no longer looked at as crucified in weakness, but in the power of resurrection, as the "last Adam" and the "second Man." And in connection with Him in these characters comes out in result the wonderful victory over the grave here spoken of. It is well worthy of attention that the

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victory is in the very place where the foolishness has been. Here, where the weakness has been displayed, the victory is displayed also. We are first told that then (when the living saints have been changed) will be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death has been swallowed up in victory." It is the accomplishment of the prophecy of Isaiah xxv. 8, and refers there, I imagine, to what will be actually effected by the power of God on earth, preparatory to the reproach of His people being taken away from all the earth. Then follows, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth *us* the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." The victory is now given to the saints here. God in His divine wisdom and sovereignty has ordered that this mighty victory is to be looked for, not in heaven, but on earth, the scene of the weakness and foolishness.

There is great importance in the terms "last Adam" and "second Man." In them Christ is presented to us in the power of resurrection as the One who has annulled death and quickens out of it. As "last Adam" He is a quickening Spirit, and in that character He acts in contrast to the first Adam, who could not go beyond his own responsibility--He puts life in the place of death. It is *as man* that He acts in divine power on those who are under the power of death. "For since by man came death, by man

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came also the resurrection of the dead." In the place where the weakness was, there is the quickening power of the last Adam. All who are His now await His wonderful and final touch, then we shall be quickened in the full sense of the word, "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be quickened." The first Adam, as head, stood alone, he himself came under death, and could quicken no one. The last Adam, as Head, quickens whom He will.

The term "second Man" brings in the pattern and character of the family. "The second man is out of heaven," as the first man is out of earth. And the family is heavenly, as the family connected with the first man is earthy. It is their respective constituted state, and in the case of the heavenly involves our bearing the image of the heavenly.

The power of Christ in quickening is to be put in exercise in the very place where the weakness has been. There appear to me three steps in the exercise of this power. First, the dead shall be raised ; second, we (the living) shall be changed ; third, death is swallowed up in victory. All pass under the touch of His power, and its effects are brought out upon earth, if it be but for an instant the risen saints will stand upon the earth, and the living will be changed. What a moment to look forward to ! It is a blessed thing to get into the region of faith and see

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things there, to have faith as to the exercise of the power that Christ will put forth when He comes. Then will be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death has been swallowed up in victory. The power of the grave is broken, and we see the three steps accomplished here. The triumph will be complete.

But though we await the final touch of His power, the power of death is taken already out of the hand of the enemy. All is in the hand of Christ, so that we can say, "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." We are debtors to God for this great and wondrous gift, and we rightly yield Him our thanks.

Death is in itself a terrible thing ; it not only places the sinner hopelessly at an irremediable distance from God, and mars every enjoyment here, but it breaks up every natural tie, and severs all the near and dear relationships that subsist in this scene ; but we, through grace, are placed in Christ in a new scene, and in the enjoyment of affections altogether outside the range of death. We are passed out of death into life. In this scene natural relationships have their place, and if we had not proper affections in the maintenance of them, we should be very bad Christians. What we want as saints is to enter into and enjoy those spiritual affections in which life really consists, that if death does come in

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and interfere with natural ties, we can rejoice that there are ties that death cannot touch, relationships and affections which are beyond its power.

The victory is realised where the weakness was, and what then is to be the effect upon us whilst here? Does not this closing word of the apostle supply the answer, "Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." And further if, as I have said, we have entered by the Spirit of God into a sphere of spiritual relationships which death cannot touch, and we are led by the word, we shall put the spiritual before the natural, not that it will weaken the latter, but it is well for our faith to be taking us out of the reach of that which death can touch into the region where death does not enter.

During the little while we wait here we need to be encouraged and strengthened by the blessed sense in our souls that God *has given* us the victory, and that therefore we should be steadfast and always abounding in the work of the Lord.

May it be so with each one of us, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

F. E. R.

*Burford, December, 1892.*



## JOHN XVII.

THE Lord ceases to speak to His disciples ; He looks beyond the cross, and empties His heart into the Father's bosom about His disciples. Listen to me, He says. He says it to us in a way He could not have said to His disciples. They were Jews, not Christians. This communion He reveals to us that we may enjoy the same communion as Himself. We are Christians—anoointed ones. The testimony of the Holy Ghost is that Christ has taken the place of our badness before God. The "Lord's Prayer" was suited to the people it was given to. In verse 26, there is the past "I have" and "I will" future revelation in redemption—disciples were in the middle between these two, and we are after both. The first was the revelation of the Father in testimony. Legal people put the first part of this chapter last—from vers. 1–13 the Lord puts us in His place before God—then He puts us in His place before men. His work is our title to His place before God. If Satan could have got Him to use His Godhead He would have left the place of a dependent man.

Verse 3: Eternal life is not connected with "almighty God," "Jehovah," but connected with the present capacity to know God and to become acquainted with His nature. Man thinks to know God by His brains. By my

wants I have found out God. Conscience only is the entrance of God into my soul. I must have a revelation from God to know Him.

The Son takes an official place—gives up glory—becomes voluntary servant—"I love my Master," God—is made Lord and Christ—still official place. Then the Holy Ghost takes the subject place as servant of Christ to make you feel that Christ dwells in your heart by faith. Was there ever the smallest discrepancy between the Father's counsels and the revelation of Him in the Son? God meets you in grace without contradicting righteousness. The doctrine of non-eternity is an attack on the cross.

The Lord Jesus wishes His people to be brought into the same intimacies with His Father down here, that He had. His work is our title to His place. 2 Timothy i. 9 is purpose ; verse 10 is fact.

He created a condition of humanity for us by entering into it Himself. "I have glorified," &c., is our title to the place. Good resolutions, reforms, &c., are but dead flies that spoil the ointment. He is now returned to the glory in a condition of humanity never known before. "As he *is*, so *are* we"—judgment behind Him, and as far behind us. There is nothing so hard as to make people believe grace.

Secondly, revelation in last verse is unfolded in the middle of the chapter. "I have glorified."

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You are as fit to be in the presence of God through the finished work of Christ as He is. A Christian, speaking of Christ's love to him, is witnessing for Him. "They have kept thy *word*." "Word" revelation of Himself they treasured in their hearts. The activities of God's nature in the midst of evil is grace. Grace is more than love. He loves the angels. You like grace because there is nothing good in you, and everything good in Christ for you.

"I have given them thy words." "Words" were the communication of God's heart to Him. There is not a thing you do in Christ's thoughts that He does not magnify to the Father. When the disciples slept in the garden He said of them, "These are they that have continued with me in my temptations."

Martha treated the Lord as if He had come down from heaven to receive her hospitality. Mary consulted the tastes of His heart, and in the end her service comes out in emptying a box of ointment on Him. We are first qualified for heaven, and then sent into the world to give faithful testimony to what we believe—to walk according to what we *are*, not what we *are* not. What a place we have! It comes through the conscience to the affections—His joy, our joy: not a thing He has acquired, that He does not wish to share with us *now*.

(*Unrevised notes of a Lecture by J. N. D.*)

## THE RISEN ONE.

(JOHN XX. 19-23.)

I WANT to speak a little about this part specially of the chapter, but before I do so, in order to connect it, I refer to the previous part and what is exactly brought before us in it.

First of all we have the Risen One Himself on His resurrection platform in the magnificence of an unsurpassed triumph. I often wonder how little we are detained by such a sight as that. He has left everything behind—the grave, Satan's power—He went down beneath everything, He has risen up above everything. It is most wonderful to see Him on that morning, the brightest morn that ever dawned on the earth. We have the history of the second garden here: the first garden opened with a man and a woman in innocence, it closed with them driven out from the presence of God. The locality of Eden cannot be discovered. God has prevented the site being found where innocence was.

Now we come to the second garden, and the first Object that meets us is a risen Man, much more than a man. "God over all, blessed for ever." Yet He became Man. He went down underneath all the judgment and bore

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it, and now He is risen. Here we have a risen Man and a redeemed woman. In the first garden it was a fallen man and a fallen woman. I see Him now risen. I believe there is some one here to-night that has never seen Him, never known Him *as risen*. I know how many a day it was before some of us beheld Him risen. We might all subscribe to the articles of the truest creed, but it is another thing when the soul sees Him as risen out of all the wreck, ruin, and judgment of the first man.

I believe there are a great many who have never seen Him risen, and a great many whose relations are not with Him risen.

“ . . . . Now we see Thee risen,  
 Who once for us hast died,  
 Seated above the highest heaven,  
 The Father's glorified.”

I believe it would have a most wonderful effect upon our souls if we really in our hearts, affections came in contact with a risen Christ—to see all the wreck and ruin that came in by the first man left behind by another Man who has borne the judgment and is out of death. That is the way John xx. opens. The next object is the woman. She was the subject of perfect Satanic power on the one hand, and the subject of Christ's perfect power on the other. He cast seven devils out of her.

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Seven is the perfect number either in good or evil. She was under the power of Satan in its malignity, and the Lord freed her from it. She is attached to Him. Are we? She passed from the sense of the favour to the preciousness of the One who conferred it. Have we passed from the sense of the favour we have received to the value and preciousness of the One who has bestowed it on us? Joseph's brethren lived on his bounty, but they never knew his heart. There may be many here like them. He has relieved us, has brought us into untold blessings—how much are our hearts attached to the One that has done it, so that like Mary we have no home in the place where He is not? She cannot find His body—she is ignorant. Would to God there were more of that kind of affection that cannot do without Him! In my inmost soul I believe what we want is more heart affection for Christ. Mary cannot find His body, she does not know where He is; the disciples contented themselves that He was not in the sepulchre, and they went away to their own home. How like you and me! They were satisfied that He was not in death; they had a right creed, but they had not Jesus, and they could not tell where He was. "Then the disciples went away again to their own home." Mary had no home. She stays at the sepulchre. I almost think I hear

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her say, "Where Thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried. Home in this world without You? No; here I stay: here You were laid, and even though You are not in the sepulchre my heart is linked with the spot where last I saw You." There is another proof of her affection, and a very striking one. Jesus speaks to her, but she does not know Him, and "supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and *I will take him away.*" She could not have done it, she had not the *power*: but she had the *love*. There is no prudent, long-headed calculation about affection. It is wonderful what the heart will do. Take a hen with her chickens round her, and an overwhelming danger threatens: she puts herself in an attitude of the greatest defiance as if she had all power, it is affection for her brood that makes her do it. That is what we want. How constantly we hear, What harm is there in this? Why should I not go there? There is not the least bit of genuine affection for Christ in that.

You find here that He is everything to Mary—she would go and take Him away. It was exactly at that moment Jesus makes Himself known to her. It is the moment of recognition between the Lord and her soul. I wonder

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how many of us have really travelled into that moment.

In the case of Joseph and his brethren, at the moment of recognition he says, as it were, I must be alone with you. "Cause every man to go out from me." (Gen. xlv. 1.) I must clear the scene. I have something to communicate to you alone. There is a solitude about it. It was the purpose of God in John xx. that every one should go from that garden but Mary. With Joseph it was the manifestation of his person. Here the Lord turns to her and says, "Mary." He owns her as His. "When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him : for they know his voice."

Mary thought she had got Him back for earth : that is exactly where people are to-day. I know, in my soul naturally, I would like to have Jesus on earth. The moment Mary recognised Him, she bounded forward to embrace Him : she would resume the old associations she had with Him this side of the cross. She says to Him, "Rabboni"—my Master. In the exuberance of her love she wanted to have Him here. What is so blessed about that is, He says, as it were, "Mary, I will never give you up, you are just the same to me as ever ; but, Mary, there is a new order of things now, there are new associations. Mary, death has come in. I have risen out of



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all that is old. He is educating her in the most gentle way. He says, as it were, "Mary, I cannot resume with you the old order of things here. I am going to My Father. There is an entirely new order of things—new relationships." What a wonderful thing to be connected with heaven in that way—to have the Lord coming and taking our hearts out of this scene, and connecting them with Himself in that scene where He is with the Father! That is the meaning of going to *His side*. Our thought is to have Christ *here*. He says, I want to have you there. It would alter your whole life if God gave you to enter into it by His Spirit, that your objects, your relationships are connected with Christ in the scene where He is. Your heart has found a home there. What a sweet word that is—home. Here on earth, oh, the desolations of it!—the withered leaves and disappointed hopes strewed around what we call home—the heart aches over vacant spots in the homes here—there are none of them there. The Lord grant that none of us may think of home anywhere but in the place where Christ is.

The Lord says to Mary, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." Mary goes at once, there is not a complaint. He educates her there and then.

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She was inconsolable till she heard His voice: the moment she had got Him, she is ready to do His will. The disciples in Luke xxiv. were inconsolable till He made Himself known to them in the breaking of bread—then “they rose up the same hour and returned to Jerusalem.”

How our chapter opens with the Risen One and with the woman whose heart's affections are entwined round Him. The Lord leads her off the human side on to His own ground.

Verse 19. All the disciples found here are those really who turned their backs on the Lord. “They all forsook him and fled.” There was not a single one detained by Him; they had not affection enough for Christ to keep them when He was in the presence of His enemies. Here they are all together—in another gospel it says they had partaken of a meal—but there is another thing: they were in the most terrible fear, they were afraid of the Jews, afraid of a hostile power outside of them. There they were, and Jesus comes into their midst. In spite of the closed doors and all their fears—their hearts were like birds that had been shot at, terrified and frightened—Jesus Himself comes into their midst. It is the risen One now. That was an out-of-the-world scene. The very moment the Lord came into that scene, I believe He brought everything of the glory and victory of redemption and of Himself into it. He

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certainly did not find anything there; but He brought everything in with Him. Have we learnt, in our souls, to appreciate the spot where He is—the fact that Christ is there? People are constantly talking about right meetings, right principles. I believe the only way to find the thing suitable to Christ is to find where Christ Himself is. I believe it must be a question of intimacy between the soul and Christ; not a question of long-headed doctrine, but one of intimacy of heart with the Person, so that you know the scene where the Person would be. The knowledge of a person gives you the knowledge of the things that surround that person.

Jesus Himself “stood in the midst.” It is His presence, the presence of a Person. I assure you I dread a mere historical Christ before us. I dread our hearts, our minds only having known of a historical Christ. What I mean by that is, we have not come in contact for our hearts with the Person of Christ. It is a Christ you have read of, not a Christ you know. I am not speaking of anything material, but what faith brings home to us. If you ever reached it, you could never forget the moment. I have heard *Him*. Do you think Saul of Tarsus would ever forget the moment when he saw the Lord? Never. You say, that was a miracle. It is nothing more than what happens

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every day to the soul that is in contact with Christ in heaven. The Holy Ghost brings the soul into contact with Him there.

Verse 19. First you have His presence ; that is beyond everything—He was there. Next His peace. His very first word must have carried their hearts over all His victory. There is not a hostile power that has not met its doom. Everything has been disposed of from God's side down to you.

Then "he shewed unto them his hands and his side." He connects Himself, as risen, with the One who died. He says, as it were, Do not have any question that I am the very same One. What a moment that is! The risen One shewing Himself as the One who has died, and has left death behind for ever. He is the second Man and the last Adam, and He has closed the history of the first man, there will never be any other man after Him.

Here He identifies Himself as risen with the very One who died. "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." Would your heart and mine be glad if we saw Him? If once that sight dawned upon your eyes—the eyes of your soul—not a single thing on earth could have any attraction for you. The more these heavenly things come before our hearts, the more we feel that nothing in this world is good enough for

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us. It is not that I am tearing myself away from what is attractive, but it has all lost its brilliancy, the brightness has gone out of it. Nothing in this world is good enough for me if once I come in contact with a risen, glorified Christ. A risen, glorified Christ is the alone divine elevator out of earth—we leave it behind.

Then He communicates His own risen life. He gives them peace in connection with their mission and breathes on them, saying, "Receive ye Holy Spirit." What the Lord communicates there as the last Adam, breathing on them, is His own risen life in the power of the Spirit.

With regard to the Lord's coming into the midst of the disciples here there is a sort of practical comfort for our hearts. They were in fear (ungrounded fear, I believe), the barred doors were a proof of it; they had shut themselves in. We might put ourselves in those circumstances through the fear and folly of our hearts; but no barred doors keep the Lord out. He passes through every kind of hindrance and comes in. Our fears and the thousand and one things that rise up down here cannot keep Him out—He comes through all.

The great point is, that the risen One connects you with the scene where He is. In His education of them He leads them to His side by giving them the sense, I come to your side, and nothing will hinder me; but I come to

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take you to My side. That is exactly what the comfort and sustainment of the Lord is to us. He comes to our side, as has been said, like a great strong brother with a little one. He says, as it were, "I will stretch out my strong hand to help and succour you ; but it is that I may draw you to where I am."

All our new associations, all our life is connected with Christ where He is. The Lord give us to know it more for His name's sake.

W. T. T.

(Notes of an Address.)



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(2 COR. IV.)

SCRIPTURE speaks of man in his natural state in *two* ways. *Alive* in sins, as in Romans ; and *dead* in sins, as in Ephesians. As to sins, and as having sinful lusts, man is alive enough. Plenty of activity and energy for self-pleasing, and for sin, but nothing for God. Every vanity, amusement, dress, or what not, preferred to God. For sin, he is alive ; for God, *dead*. "Dead in trespasses and sins." It is the same condition, only looked at in different aspects, and in order to deliverance from this condition two things are needed. As *dead* in sins, he must be quickened : it is a "new creation" that is necessary. As *alive*

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in sins, death must come in ; he must die. There is no other remedy or way of deliverance before God, but death. This side of the truth we get in Romans, where the death of Christ is presented as meeting man's *guilt*, and death *with* Christ, as the deliverance from our state.

Chapter vi. 2-11. When a man is dead you cannot say he has evil lusts and passions, or a will of his own. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin," &c. There is no remedy for being alive in sins but death. Ephesians gives us the other side of the truth : there we are seen as "*dead* in trespasses and sins," and God quickens, and raises us up together with Christ. (Chap. ii.) It is an entirely new creation. Colossians gives both aspects. (Chap. ii. 11, 13.) As *alive* in sins we have died with Christ, and are buried with Him, as in Romans ; thus getting clear of the *state* we were in, for we have died out of it, and are brought into a new place in righteousness, by virtue of Christ's resurrection. As *dead* in sins we are quickened together with Him, as also taught in Ephesians. Thus the Epistle to the Colossians goes, as it were, between the two. We are taken farther than in Romans ; because in chapter iii. we are spoken of as being *raised* with Him, which Romans does not teach. But it does not present us as *seated* with Christ in the heavenly places, as Ephesians does. It directs us to

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Christ as there, and tells us to seek those things which are above, "where *Christ* sitteth."

Now all this, and more, was revealed to Paul, and declared by Him in the gospel he preached. There was no veil on the glory of God, as in Moses' case: if hid, it was in the minds of unbelievers; the effort and work of Satan to blind men's minds to it. In verse 4, "blinded the minds of them that believe not." This is the action of the "god of this world," and he does it by means of man's evil lusts, &c.

The gospel is, "the gospel of the glory of Christ," (not the "glorious gospel of Christ," but) the revelation of *His glory*, who had been on the cross bearing sins, but is now glorified at God's right hand. The glory of God shines in His face, and there is no veil on this. All about God has come out: He no longer hides Himself as formerly He did; dwelling in "the thick darkness." So that if God is not seen and known, the veil is on man's heart, not on God's face. The blinding of Satan is not exactly *because* of the rejection of the gospel, but rather in leading man *to* reject it. The point is, that there is no veil now, except on the human heart, and it is in contrast with Moses, who put a veil over his face. When he came out to the people from the presence of God he put it on, because they could not bear the "glory of his countenance;" not even that little reflection of the glory of God



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which shone in his face. Man “came short of the glory of God ;” and when only its reflection was brought before him, he could not endure it, connected as it was with the law, or God’s claim on him. But now the glory shines “in the face of Jesus Christ,” and there is no veil upon it. Moreover there is not, nor do we need, a veil upon our face, but we are like Moses, in Exodus xxxiv. 34, who had no veil on when he went in before the Lord. He turned to the Lord, and took the veil away. Israel’s heart shall turn to the Lord, and then the veil shall be taken away from them. (2 Cor. iii. 16.) But we do not wait for that day, but even now, “with open [or unveiled] face,” behold the glory of the Lord. And not only are we free to do this, but we love to do it, for it shines in the face of Him who died for us, and put away all our sins! Every ray of it tells how completely the work was done, for, though He was once on the cross, and our sins “were laid on Him,” He is now in the glory, and certainly has not got our sins there. In Moses the glory connected itself with the law—requirement from man, and therefore man could not bear it ; but in the gospel it shines in the face of Him who died for us. Christ has been “made sin” for us. He is now in the glory ; and we, beholding with affection and intelligence the glory in Him, and taking delight in it, are “changed into the same image, from glory to

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glory." We see this in Stephen, when being stoned. He was steadfastly looking up into heaven, and saw "the glory of God, and Jesus standing." Christ filled his vision, and see how like he is to his Lord. He is not thinking of the stones, but calmly prays the Lord Jesus to receive his spirit, as Jesus committed His spirit to His Father, and prays for his murderers, as Jesus did.

Israel "could not look to the end of that which is abolished." (Chap. iii. 13.) They could not understand even the glory which was in the ordinances, as a figure of that which was better and permanent. The whole system ordained by the hand of Moses was veiled to their eyes, and the people fell under the letter that "killeth," even in that part which was a testimony of things to be spoken afterwards. Occupied with "the letter" of the covenant under which they were, they did not see that all the types and shadows—the legal ordinances, pointed to One yet to come. "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." (Ver. 6.) "Now the Lord is that spirit" (not Spirit, ver. 17), and this they did not apprehend. The institutions under the law looked on to Christ, though even in the *grace* part of them there was the veil, a standing witness that God had not revealed *Himself*, and there was no way for *man* to approach His immediate presence. Under the law God did not come out, and *man*

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could not go in. The law came out, and the prophets came out; but God Himself was hidden behind the veil. In Christ, of course, God *had come out*, as He says in John xii. 46, "I am come a light into the world." There God had come out, but man could not yet go in. Faith could say, "We beheld his glory," but redemption must be accomplished in order to enable man to go in before God. This having now been done, we see a *Man* in the glory, "crowned with glory," and God's glory in His face. Now all is out: God is fully revealed, and man enters the glory. The veil is rent "from the top to the bottom." God has come out, and man is gone, and can go in.

Chapter iv. 2. Paul gave *out* the things of the gospel as pure as he received them *in*. He didn't corrupt the doctrine, but manifested it in all the purity and brightness in which he had received it. Not only was the glory of God fully revealed with open face in Christ, but it was also manifested without a veil in the pure preaching of the apostle. This ministry, which was the power of the Spirit of God acting in the chosen instrument, made man responsible for submission to this glorious Christ; and when Christ was thus proclaimed, there was either submission of heart, or the blinding of Satan. *We* cannot take this ground as to the *power* of our preaching—as to the *subject* of it we ought

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to be able to do so. I may preach the gospel in a place without effect, and another may come and present it with greater power, and the people be saved. Still I might, in a general way, say, If you do not receive the gospel I preach, you will be lost for ever.

In 1 Corinthians ii., we see (ver. 12) the apostle received these things *in* by the Spirit: verse 13, he told them *out* by the Spirit, so that we get them as pure as he received them, both being by the Spirit. And then (ver. 14) it is also by means of the Spirit that the things are received by those to whom they are addressed. "*Comparing* spiritual things," is not the thought: it should be "communicating spiritual things by spiritual means."

God has shined *into* our hearts, in order to the "shining out" of the knowledge of His glory. This is the meaning of "give the light," in verse 6 of the chapter before us. (2 Cor. iv.) It is something like lighting a candle *in* a lantern, that the light of it may shine *out* through the glass; and what Paul could say was, that the light shone out as clear and pure as God had caused it to shine in. The treasure was in an earthen vessel, and the only way for the light of the lamp to be seen, was by the pitcher being broken, and Paul did not mind the vessel being knocked about, and hardly pressed, so that the light shone out all the more. In chapter i. 8, he

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had been "pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that he despaired even of life," but what of that? He had the sentence of death already in himself. It was realised already in his mind, and its coming outwardly only gave the consciousness of its greater vividness. He could fully say, as in this chapter, "Death worketh in us." Hence Paul as a mere man had ceased to exist in his service. He was a vessel. For the Corinthians it was only the power of life in Christ, which worked in him. Their gain was in all his trouble, as he says, "but life in you."

"Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." (Ver. 10.) This is practically reckoning myself dead continually, in order that the body may be simply a vessel, through which the life of Jesus manifests itself. If the body is anything but a vessel, it is *sin*. When I walk as one dead with Christ, the flesh is not allowed a place. A person may even *cultivate* the flesh, making provision for it (Rom. xiii. 14), but that is bad indeed! He is a bad gardener that cultivates the weeds!

He says (ver. 11), "always delivered unto death." (See also chap. i. 8-10). Here the circumstances Paul was in helped him the more completely to realise himself as dead with Christ. God makes Paul realise these things by the very circumstances he has to pass through, in order

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that the life also of Jesus might be manifested in his mortal body. Thus death wrought in the apostle: what was merely of man and natural life disappeared, in order that life in Christ, developing itself in him on the part of God, and by the power of God, should work in the Corinthians by his means. The flesh must be kept down, and not allowed to move or act, and when one is in earnest the Lord passes him through circumstances which help him in it. Paul learns in an honourable way, for if the circumstances were trying, they came upon him for Christ's sake. With us the Lord has often to send discipline because we have been *allowing* the flesh.

"All things are for your sakes." (Ver. 15.) What a wonderful thing for Paul to say! How much like his Master here, as also in what he says in 2 Timothy ii. 10, and other places.

Christ in glory is my righteousness: Paul had no better, and no one has any other; and it is Him I am following after, to be with Him, and like Him. My life ought to be like a man in a long passage, going towards a bright lamp at the other end of it. I do not get the lamp till the *end*, but I have the light of it all the way, and the nearer I get to it, the more brightly it shines upon me, and in that sense I get more of the lamp every step I take. The nearer I get in my spirit to the "far more exceeding and eternal

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weight of glory," the more really I am looking at eternal things. Positive persecution I find to be less hard to bear when it actually comes, than it seems in looking forward to it. When it is before me I look *at it*—when I am in it, I look *out of it* at Christ, and find relief in God. And thus we do not faint.

J. N. D



“FOR ME AND THEE.”

(MATT. XVII. 25-27.)

THIS chapter, when the connection is clearly seen, is of profound and touching interest. The transfiguration spoken of in the earlier part of the chapter was a turning point in the life and ministry of the blessed Lord.

After the character of those who were suited to the kingdom had been unfolded, the divinity of His Person and character of His ministry are brought before us. His disciples are then sent out with the ministry of the kingdom to the Jews, at least the poor of His flock, in His lifetime, and then till He came as the Son of man. Then we have the record of the rejection of John the Baptist's ministry, and that of His own, as come in grace and standing on the edge, so to speak, of the world.

He is witness that no dealings of God could reach where His grace found, like Noah's dove, no place there for the sole of her foot; and declares that the world has been tried, and He could find no entrance for divine goodness, and they must come to Him if they would know the Father, and have rest (for the Son revealed Him in grace), and learn of Him as the man meek and lowly of heart, and find rest to their souls in a world where evil ruled, and no rest could be found, as He knew.

In chapter xii. the Jews, as a nation, are finally rejected, under Satan's power as a people in the last days, and the Lord disowns association with them according to the flesh; relationship with Him was by the word He preached. He leaves the house, goes to the seaside, not any longer seeking fruit in His vineyard, which bore none but bad, sowing that from which fruit was to come. The kingdom of heaven in its mystery, with an absent king, takes the place of Messiah on earth.

In chapter xiv. we have the whole scene ripening historically. John the Baptist is actually put to death, and the sovereign grace of Christ continues while the coming scene is opened. He satisfies, according to Psalm cxxxii., the "poor with bread," but there, I believe, according to the Messiah order. Then He dismisses the mass of Israel, and sends His



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disciples off, and goes up on high (a priest on high), and the disciples are tossed on the sea. Peter goes on the sea to meet Him, as soon as He is entered into the ship the wind ceases, and He is gladly received where once He had been rejected.

In chapter xv. the hollow and false religion of the Pharisees is rejected, while fully owning Israel's privileges, and sovereign grace goes out to awaken and meet faith in the rejected race of the Gentiles—according to Jewish standing, the accursed race. He was a minister of the circumcision for the faith of God, but God would not be Himself only the God of the Jews, and the Gentiles were to glorify God for His mercy.

We have then the five thousand fed, the same general principle only now, I believe, the sovereign patience of God.

In chapter xvi. the church, as built by Himself, takes the place of Jewish Messiahship, and chapter xvii. the kingdom in glory. Thus we have the kingdom, as it at present is, the church, as built by Christ, and the heavenly glory of the kingdom, taking the place of the earthly Messiah. This is the point I desired to reach, which, indeed, characterises all that follows—the revelation of the heavenly glory on earth, what will be in the world to come, and was now revealed to

establish the faith of the disciples; though the Father's house is yet a better portion. It is found in the description of this scene in Luke ix., where they\* enter into the cloud from which the Father's voice came. For the scene itself see 2 Peter i. 16-19, reading “the word of prophecy confirmed.” I have gone through the previous chapters because they lead up to the rejection of the Jews, and the new character in which Christ's Person and work were to be displayed. Here (chap. xvi. 20), they are forbidden to say to any one that He was the Christ. We find the same injunction in Luke xi. 21; that ministry was over. Here He tells them the *Son of man* must suffer and rise again. The Son of man was about to come in the glory of His Father with His angels. So Luke ix. 22-27.

In a word, the suffering Son of man and the glory that should follow, take the place of Messiah on earth, now disowned there, and even forbidden to be any more preached. Thus the beginning of Psalm ii. was now before Him, bringing about in another way the purposes there spoken of, and Psalm viii. in part accomplished, as spoken of in Hebrews ii. But the old things of Messiah on earth were

\* I suppose Moses and Elias, but the truth expressed remains the same. The cloud was the dwelling-place of God in Israel.

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over, redemption was about to be accomplished, and the new things of a glorified man introduced. In Matthew xvii. 22, 23 this rejection is pressed on the disciples, and then comes the blessed and touching way in which He shews them their association with Himself, as Son of God in the *new* place into which He is introducing His people.

The tribute here spoken of is not tribute to the civil power, but the didrachma which every grown-up Jew paid for the temple service, and which they had voluntarily imposed upon themselves in Ezra's time—a tribute to Jehovah. The question which the collectors put to Peter was really whether his master was a good Jew according to the earthly system now passing away ; Peter, with the zeal so often there, yet in ignorance, at once answers "Yes." The Lord then shews divine knowledge of what had been passing by anticipating Peter, to introduce in touching grace the new place He was giving to Peter and those with him. "Of whom," says the Lord, "do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute, of their own children, or of strangers?" Peter replies, "Of strangers." "Then," says the Lord, "are the children free." We are the children, you and I, of the great king of the temple, and as such, free from the tribute. "Nevertheless that we offend not," bringing in Peter, as one of the children of the great king

with Himself free, but not willing to offend, and then shews, not divine knowledge, but divine power over creation. "Go thou to the sea, and take up the fish that first cometh up, and when thou hast opened his mouth thou shalt find a stater [two didrachmas], that take, and give unto them for me and thee;" shewing His divine power over creation, making the fish bring just what was wanted. And then again He puts Peter with Himself in the place of sonship by the overwhelming, but unspeakably gracious words, "Give unto them for me and thee."

Do our hearts echo these words, moved to their foundations? If Christ said "me and thee" to us, how should we feel it? Yet He does say it. It is when a rejected Messiah, His Person and the effect of His work too, but the expression of His boundless grace in it, come forth to give us our place in the purposes of God, but as His heart delights to see it and make us to see it too. Oh! for the Son of God to say to such an one as me, "Me and thee." I know it is the effect of redemption, but of a redemption He has accomplished, and a redemption which gives us a place where He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied—in seeing us in a blessing which only His heart, which answers to the Father's counsels, could have thought of for us. But what a comment of Christ's heart

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on the ways of God unfolded in the foregoing chapter! Thinking *first* of us to apply it.

J. N. D.



### “I WILL COME AGAIN.”

WHEN Christ comes to fetch His people, His power will be put forth. They cannot step into the cloud save by His power. Many do not disallow things of the flesh which they ought to disallow. They get happy in the thought of the Lord's coming, and then something inconsistent with it hinders joy. You may judge everything in self that is inconsistent, but even then you will feel that you must be dependent on Christ to light up the hope in the heart, and to keep it burning brightly. There must be the crippling of all self-confidence.

The Lord gave a promise that He will fulfil: “I will come again, and receive you unto myself.” He has not forgotten it. All in connection with it has got its measure from Christ having laid down His life and having taken it again. He goes up to heaven and says, “I go to prepare a place in my Father's house, I will come again and fetch you.” He had got a place of His own, and these adopted ones are to be in it with Him. Directly the Son is at

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home He must have a place prepared for us to be with Him there. If I think of heaven only my ideas about it are vague ; but when I think of Him in heaven, it makes a home for my heart in a place where all His glory can flow forth—where the Father's will is ever being done. When we look up now, we know He is there, and quite at home. He left heaven to die for His people ; He will leave heaven again, to come and fetch His people up there. When we see Him we shall feel that all that we have learnt about Him is a very feeble expression of His beauty. We shall see Him as the centre of all the glory of heaven, but the beauty of Himself will surpass all.

G. V. W.



## THE LORD'S TABLE.

LORD JESUS, now as gather'd  
 Unto Thy precious name,  
 Fulfilment of Thy promise,  
 With confidence we claim ;  
 Thy presence, Lord, amongst us  
 Shall fill each waiting heart ;  
 Thy piercèd hands beholding,  
 Shall jey to us impart.

These wounds, which were inflicted  
 The house of " friends " within,  
 Who, moved by deepest hatred,  
 Did culminate their sin ;

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The throne of God exacting  
Its holy, just demand,  
Pour'd on Thee wrath unmingled  
From God's uplifted hand.

It was Thy love unfailing,  
Which brought Thee to such woe,  
Which led Thee for the guilty  
Such wrath to undergo ;  
Thyself, Lord, we remember—  
The knee before Thee bend—  
Who loved Thine own so truly,  
And loves them to the end.

Until that day of brightness,  
When we shall see Thy face,  
And with Thee, Lord, in glory  
Shall fill our destined place.  
We gather round Thy Person—  
Adore Thy precious name—  
With chasten'd hearts remember  
Thy suff'ring and Thy shame.

G. W. F.



## THE KING AND THE APOSTLE.

(ISA. XXXVIII. 9-19 ; ACTS XX. 22-24 ; PHIL. I. 20-23.)

THE king of Judah and the great apostle of the Gentiles were saints of God. Hezekiah was a saint and servant of God as well as Paul. I do not say that he was in the same position, but he was a real saint of God in old days, and as much a saint in that sense as Paul. You could hardly find the experiences of two men so strikingly and so vividly in contrast as these two, and that is what I desire to look at, wherein the contrast was, so that what one chose and desired the other shrank back from.

Now first of all observe what marked Hezekiah's position: he was really, although a saint and servant of God in that sense, an *earthly* saint. His hopes, prospects, and blessings were in connection with earth, therefore to sever him from earth, the scene and sphere of his blessing, by death, to remove him out of the place where he received these things from God was to cut away every single hope from under his feet.

The apostle on the other hand was a heavenly man—all his prospects, all his blessings were the other side of death, therefore anything that would



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come and remove him to where his Saviour was, was his greatest possible blessing. You cannot *compare* these two experiences. Man tries to put together what God has put in *contrast*, and Christianity is made the continuation of Judaism. Christianity is the contrast to Judaism. There is hardly one point in the one that is not the direct contrast to the other. You do not get Christianity fully brought out until Judaism, as a system in its essential features and elements, was closed. That system received its death-blow in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. No sooner did He give up His blessed life on the cross than synchronising with it was the veil rent from the top to the bottom. The hidden God is then revealed. He can come out in all the blessedness of His own nature.

I take these two men this evening to set before us in a striking way what the nature of these two positions really is. (Isaiah xxxviii. 17.) I believe what was in the mind of the king of Judah in his recovery from sickness was the governmental forgiveness of his sins by God. According to that system, death, removing people from the scene of their blessings, was God's governmental dealing with them. He says, You have recovered me from going down into the grave, and you have governmentally forgiven my sins. The governmental dealings of God with His people of old in taking them out of the scene of

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their blessing is a totally different thing from God having cleared us from our sins by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 19 I have often heard quoted incorrectly, as if it were *moral* truth; it is *literal* truth.

All the chains round Hezekiah's heart bound him down here to *earth*—it was not the world at all. The world is a moral order of things which has grown up since the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. The earth is what He gave to the children of men. I would ask any Christian to shew that he has any title-deeds to it. In Luke xvi. we get things here spoken of as "unrighteous mammon." Why does the Lord call it that? Because it is not yours at all as a Christian. You find yourself in possession of another's things, and God says, If you make a right use of them, I will reward you. If you do not make a right use of them, "if ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" that is, heavenly things. It is very solemn and searching. I do believe if we let the force and power of those passages into our souls it will affect us very much as to how we shall use what we find ourselves in possession of. It will not be what you can afford but it belongs to another, and how would He like you to use it.

The Jews had basket and store, they had

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riches, &c., and I am afraid oftentimes that we would like to have them. The tendency of us all is to be an earthly people — not so much worldly ; all would shun the concert and ball-room—though the world is much more than that. You can get the *spirit* of the world into your hearts even when you shun the gross things. We have to take care lest we get the principles and maxims of the world into our hearts. I long to feel more contaminated and soiled in looking at worldly things. I speak of this because it helps to bring out the striking contrast of this position. Nothing here is my true position. You find as a matter of fact that what stops the wells in your souls is earth ; that is what the Philistines stopped the wells with, that were dug in the days of Abraham.

You can now see very well Hezekiah's misery in having to leave the place of his blessings. He calls up creation to make known the misery of his soul. (Ver. 14.) He had not a link with heaven, and he was about to bid farewell to all that enchained his heart here. It was the same thing in principle in the history of those two disciples in Luke xxiv., after the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. They never really looked for His death. It was the death of the heir to them. Every prospect was broken in that golden bowl for them, every hope they had was gone. It was an immense trial to Abraham

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when God said, "Take now thy son, thine only Isaac, whom thou lovest . . . . and offer him . . . . for a burnt offering." He was to take the one in whom all the promises centred that had been made to him. That is what it was to the disciples, "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." It was all over for them, but not for God—"to-day is the third day since these things were done." They had not a single thought of His death. None of the Old Testament saints or disciples looked for Christ's death. "Abraham rejoiced to see my day," that is, the day of Christ's glory. Everything they had was here—all their links were with this world. Their blessings were in basket and store, long life, &c. Therefore for a man to die, as Hezekiah was called upon to do, was to take him out of the scene of his blessings.

There are a few moral thoughts here which shew us that, though the saints of God were in a very different position to us, His moral dealings with our souls are very similar. Hezekiah goes through exercise, trial, death impending on him. There are two things he is brought to which were the greatest alleviation to him. The first is, He has done it Himself—"He hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it." I speak to some who are in pressure known only to themselves and God. You may be passing through deep waters. What a wonderful thing

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if you can look past all means, all human instrumentality, and say, "*Himself hath done it*"—that takes the bitterness out of it. We suffer from an idolatry of instrumentality ; we think nothing can be done without an instrument. It is the greatest mistake that can be made. It is a great favour of the Lord to use an instrument, but He can accomplish anything without one. Not one thing could happen to anyone of us if He did not permit it. I know in sorrow, in bereavement, when the dark cloud of death is cast over our dwelling and the objects of our affections are no longer with us, we are apt to say, They got a chill here, or a cold there—ah, but "*HIMSELF hath done it*," that silences everything. That is the expression of an earthly man. It was He that caused this sickness to come into my house, "*Himself hath done it*." I have got to do with *Him*.

The second thing is, "By these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." We can say this more truly, more really than Hezekiah. If he could say with earthly hopes before him, the prospect that he was to be removed from things here quickened the life, how much more can we, whose life is in another sphere, and hid with the One who is there. All the frosts and storms of winter really pulverise those things of earth which feed upon the buds in our hearts. The moment you come to

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the point that He has done it, you can say, "by these things men live."

Now two or three words in connection with Acts xx. You can see the difference. Not only are all Paul's blessings on high, but he belongs to the place where Christ is; all my links are there, and if you snap my life on earth you only set me free to go to my own place.

But first of all let us look at it in connection with the ministry. The ministry he was engaged in put him in danger every day. He says, I do not go to Jerusalem to find basket and store there, I have nothing to expect in this world but storm, nothing but the dungeon of Nero, but "none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might *finish my course with joy.*" There is nothing we should more long for than this, like a ship after a long tempestuous voyage coming into harbour in full sail and not a single spar gone. The air of heaven fills the apostle's soul here. How few one sees finishing their course with joy! How many one has loved have gone home with broken spars! Oh, to go right on to the end the heart having come from that scene to finish the course here with joy, glad to have finished here to get home! Paul left his heart in heaven, he came from heaven, he is going back there. A Christian is a man from heaven. We are going back there. Paul had come from heaven,

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that is what marked him ; hence at the beginning it is, "taking thee out from the people and the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee." It removes you from every earthly nationality ; christians are not Englishmen, Irishmen, or anything else—they are men from heaven altogether. The Lord says to Paul, I take you out and send you back, "to open their eyes," &c. That was his mission.

He says now, as it were, Nothing here moves me—no affliction, no persecution, no hatred—nothing moves me. All I desire is to finish my course with joy. It was in the power of heaven all that was accomplished.

In Philippians you get what his course as a Christian is ; in Acts he is the servant. In Philippians it is the normal life of a Christian, life in the power of the Holy Ghost. The apostle is taken up as the pattern of it. It is life in the power and energy of the Holy Ghost, deriving all its power from the Object. "According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body whether it be by life or by death." The force of "earnest expectation" is that I am stretching out my neck after it (like the eagle stretching out its neck after its object) that all that Christ is should come out in my body, not making Christ greater than

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He is, but that all that He is should come out in my body.

“I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ which is far better.” It is not that I am resigned to die, but I long to go. I am resigned to stay here, that is where he puts resignation. “Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith.” I give up my own personal desire.

What could produce all this in us? Nothing but heaven brought in the living power of the Holy Ghost into our hearts. We are all pretty tightly held here in one way or another. There are natural links which hold us all. It is a wonderful thing to have the heavenly links stronger in our souls than those. Oh to cultivate heavenly links, heavenly affections. May we not be entangled by earthly things. It is entanglements we have to beware of, those are cords, silken cords, but they bind very tightly.

I often think of the Lord's words to His disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” We can go to the “other side” now in heart, and by the Holy Ghost we can cultivate, foster in our souls, the desire to go to the other side, only we must see first that it is our own place, our own country, our Canaan. Canaan is beyond Jordan



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to-day. Nothing this side Jordan's wave can ever be Canaan. That is our country, and all our blessings are there. Our blessings come from the place of Christ's exaltation, and our place is the place of Christ's exaltation, our associations in this world are to be with Himself in rejection. We are "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." The place where He is exalted at the right hand of God is our home. Here in this world I am connected with Him in His rejection, to walk with Him in the scene where He is not. Alas, how little one is in the truth of it!

May we insist upon this—I belong to the place where Christ is, and all my blessings are there, and I set my heart on the things there, and by His grace I seek to cultivate everything that would make that place more precious to me.

W. T. T.

(Notes of an Address.)



## TYPICAL MEANING OF THE STONES IN JORDAN AND GILGAL.

BUT if we are introduced into a life which is *on the other side* of death, by the power of the Spirit of God, as being dead and risen in Christ, there must be the remembrance of that death, by which we have been delivered from that

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which is *on this side of it*, of the ruin of man as he now is, and of the fallen creation to which he belongs. Twelve men, one out of each tribe, were to bring stones from the midst of Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet stood firm with the ark, while all Israel passed over on dry ground. The Holy Ghost brings with Him, so to speak, the touching memorial of the death of Jesus, by the mighty power of which He has turned all the effect of the enemy's strength into life, and deliverance from what could not enter into heavenly things, and has laid the basis for our having part in them. Death comes with us from the grave of Jesus, no longer now as death ; it is become life unto us, and subjectively for faith, the absence of that which cannot have part in what is heavenly. This memorial was to be set up at Gilgal. The twelve stones, for the twelve tribes, represented the tribes of God as a whole. This number is the symbol of perfection in human agency, in connection here, as elsewhere, with Christ, as in the case of the shewbread.

Here also the Spirit sets us—Christians—in a more advanced position. There were twelve loaves of the shewbread, and we form but one in our life of union by the Holy Ghost with Christ our head, which is the life we speak of here. Now it is His death that is recalled to us in the memorial left us by the loving-kindness of our

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Lord, who condescends to value our remembrance of his love.

I only speak here of this memorial as the sign of that which should always be a reality. We eat His flesh, we drink His life given for us. Being one now in the power of our union with Christ risen and glorified, for here I speak of our whole place, dead to the world and to sin, it is from the bottom of the river into which He went down to make it the way of life—heavenly life—for us, that we bring back the precious memorial of His love, and of the place in which He fulfilled His work. It is a body whose life by blood is closed,\* which we eat, a *poured out* blood which we drink; and this is the reason why blood was entirely prohibited to Israel after the flesh; for how can death be drunk by those that are mortal? But we drink it, because alive with Him, through the death of Christ we live, and it is in realising the death of that which is mortal that we live with Him. The remembrance of Jordan, of death when Christ was in it, is the remembrance of that power which secured our salvation in the last stronghold of him who had the power of death. It is the remembrance

\* The word “broken” is wrongly introduced in the common text. It was after He had given up His spirit to the Father in full strength, that the blood was shed through the soldier’s spear. He laid down His life of Himself.

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of that love which went down into death, in order that, as to us, it should lose all its power, except that of doing us good, and being a witness unto us of infinite and unchangeable love.

The stones set up in Gilgal were taken out of the midst of Jordan, and Jordan was already crossed before Israel was circumcised. The memorial of grace and of death, as the witness to us of a love which wrought out our salvation, by taking up our sins in grace, and dying to sin once, stood in the place where death to sin was to be effected. In that He died, He died unto sin once; and we reckon ourselves dead to sin. Christ dying for sins, in perfect love, in unfailing efficacy, and His death to sin, give us peace through His blood as to both, but also enable us through grace to reckon ourselves dead to sin, and to mortify our members which are on earth.

In every circumstance, then, we must remember that we are dead, and say to ourselves, If through grace I am dead, what have I to do with sin, which supposes me to be alive? Christ is in this death in the beauty and in the power of His grace; it is deliverance itself, and introduction morally into the condition in which we are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. As to the glory, as running the race down here, the apostle says, "I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." But that is

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another subject. Thus, in being dead, and only thus, will the reproach of Egypt be taken away.

Every mark of the world is a reproach to him who is heavenly. It is only the heavenly man who has died with Christ, that disentangles himself from all that is of Egypt. The life of the flesh always cleaves to Egypt; but the principle of worldliness is uprooted in him who is dead and risen with Christ and leading a heavenly life. There is in the life of man, alive as such in this world (Col. ii. 20), a necessary link with the world as God sees it, that is, corrupt and sinful; with a dead man there is no such link. The life of a risen man is not of this world; it has no connection with it. He who possesses this life may pass through the world and do many things that others do. He eats, works, suffers; but, as to his life and his objects, he is not of the world. Christ, risen and ascended up on high, is his life. He subdues his flesh, he mortifies it, for in point of fact he is down here, but he does not live in it. The camp was *always* at Gilgal. The people—the army of Jehovah—returned thither after their victories and their conquests. If we do not do the same, we shall be feeble: the flesh will betray us. We shall fall before the enemy in the hour of conflict, even though it may be honestly entered into in the service of God. It is at Gilgal the monument of the stones from

## TYPICAL MEANING OF THE STONES, ETC. 239

Jordan is set up ; for if the consciousness of being dead with Jesus is necessary to enable us to mortify the flesh, it is through this mortification that we attain to the practical knowledge of what it is to be thus dead.

We do not realise the inward communion (I am not speaking now of justification), the sweet and divine enjoyment of the death of Jesus for us, if the flesh is unmortified. It is impossible. But if we return to Gilgal, to the blessed mortification of our own flesh, we find there all the sweetness (and it is infinite), all the powerful efficacy of this communion with the death of Jesus, with the love manifested in it. "Always bearing about in the body," says the apostle, "the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifested in our mortal body." Thus we do not remain in Jordan ; but there remains in the heart all the preciousness of this glorious work, a work which the angels desire to look into, which is for us, and which Christ, in His love, appropriates to us. We find Him with us at Gilgal—a place of no outward show or victory to attract the eyes of men ; but where He, who is the source of all victory, is found in the power and the communion which enable us to overcome.

But there were also twelve stones set up in the midst of Jordan ; and indeed, if we apply the power of the death of Christ to mortify the

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flesh, the heart—exercised in, and fully enjoying heavenly things—loves to turn again to Jordan, to the place where Jesus went down in the power of life and obedience, and to gaze upon that Ark of the Covenant, which stood there, and stayed those impetuous waters till all the people had passed over. One loves, now that He is risen, while viewing the power of death in all its extent, to behold Jesus there, who went down into it, but who destroyed its power for us. In the overflowing of the nations, Christ will be the security and the salvation of Israel; but He has been our security and our salvation with respect to much more terrible enemies. The heart loves to stand on the banks of that river—already crossed—and to realise, while studying what Jesus was, the work and the wondrous love of Him who went down into it *alone*, until all was accomplished. But in one sense we were there. The twelve stones shew that the people had to do with this work, although the ark was there alone when the waters were to be restrained.

In the Psalms we can especially there contemplate the Lord, now that we are in peace the other side of the stream. Oh, that the Christian—each one in the assembly—knew how to seat himself there, and there meditate on Jesus gone down into death alone, and death when it overflowed all its banks, bearing its sting and the power of divine judgment with it! In doctrine

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the Psalms set forth also the connection between the death of Jesus and the residue of Israel passing through the waters of tribulation in the last days.

J. N. D.

(*Syn.*, Vol. I., pp. 345-347, 350-353.)



GOD'S FAMILY UPON EARTH.

(I JOHN II. 12-28.)

IT is well known that the "children" of verses 12 and 28 comprise the whole family of God upon earth.

Then comes a distinct classification of the whole family: fathers, young men, and little children.

I suppose that no one will deny that *maturity* is the characteristic of the fathers, and that they have learned by experience that Christ is everything; that they know what the world is worth (all its treasure to them has not the value even of a farthing), and that to them the knowledge of the Father and the Son, by the Holy Spirit, is alone of infinite worth.

If it be said, "Shew us a father;" the reply might be made, "Here is one, John, the writer of the Apocalypse, the Epistles, and the Gospel." The best examples are to be found in the Book of books.



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No purple, scarlet, precious stones, or fine linen would have tempted the apostle ; for him Patmos was a more congenial spot than the prætorium ; and, full of the Father's love, he speaks of it to all the children of the thrice happy family. He would not have cared even for a Sabine villa. Here is a father ; he has done with the world for ever, and the Holy Spirit makes us feel it as he (the inspired writer) declares to us his joy.

The young men are a numerous class ; but I do not think that all of them come to the ripe state of fathers. The very passage implies a danger of being caught by the world, or the things in it ; and happy the man who goes through this protracted vanity fair without being ensnared !

The evil one has been overcome, the word of God abiding in them, but the course is not yet finished ; and the world, and the things in the world still surround us. Those who began their course with almost monkish severity, have sometimes given way at the very moment when true faithfulness to Christ was called for.

But it is question here of going into a Carthusian priory, or trying in an external way to be "out of the world." The children of God are morally out of the world, for they belong to that family which is not of it ; and the warning here is to beware of that which morally constitutes the *kosmos*, that ornate system which is antagonistic to the Father.

No ; we must not set up a monastery ; there are enough orders of ascetics, and in many cases "the pride of life" is but too clearly seen through the sackcloth and horsehair. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life ; the wilful desire to satisfy self, and to acquire a name—these things have been the order of the day ever since Cain built his city without God, and the eastern engineers began the foundations of the great tower in the fatal plain of Shinar. We need to beware of these things, and may the warning not be in vain ! No immured monk can escape self, any more than any exile from his land can be banished from his own lust.

What then ? Obedience. He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. It is not merely that towers of Babel prove to be a failure, but the world and its lust passeth away, and we are called to obey the God of grace, whom we know as the Father. May His love preserve our hearts !

The third class, that of the little children, is a happy one ; though evidently they grow out of it. There is the first knowledge ; they have known and know the Father, and there is the blessed security, the safe position in the family, though antichrists be swarming, and *the* Antichrist be at hand. The unction (the Holy Ghost) has been given to them by the holy God, and shall lead them into all truth.

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They know the truth already, and no lie is of the truth. The father of lies will consummate his false policy, by developing the anti-christian denial of all true relationship with God ; but the order for the little children is, " Let that which is from the beginning abide in you. If that which is from the beginning abide in you, ye also shall abide in the Son and in the Father."

The start is a divine one, and of the very highest blessing, for the " beginning " is the one of the first verse of the first chapter. The Son had been present upon earth declaring the Father to our souls, and this is the well-known starting point. Glorified now, Jesus has fulfilled His promise to send the Comforter : and the gift of God, eternal life (ver. 25), is the portion of the whole divine family.

It is an immense thing to abide in the Father and the Son, and to be going on to maturity, even whilst here upon earth.

Thus a little child does not need the teaching of the world, or antichrist school ; the unction he has received abides (it is no passing thing), it is true, and is no lie (there is no mixture here), and by it the believer knows the glorified Christ at the right hand of the Father.

May those who have begun to taste these things know more and more of them daily !

Then the whole family is exhorted to abide in Him ; so that those who had brought the blessed

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truths of the Father's love known in the Son (that is the apostles) might not be ashamed of their work at His (Christ's) coming. May we answer to the appeal !

E. L. B.



## CONFIDENCE.

"CAST not away therefore your confidence which hath great recompense."

The very first act of the enemy, at the fall of man, was to cause diffidence in our common mother, as to the supreme goodness of God, by an insinuation.

In the case of the Hebrews, there had been a distinct call to heavenly blessings and glory ; they had received the true Messiah, not as actually reigning in Zion, but as rejected and crucified upon earth, recognised as supreme in a new order of things in heaven. Associated with Him, all their riches had been transferred to the heavens ; their citizenship, their worship, their hopes were on high. Thus they had accepted the spoliation of their earthly goods, knowing that they had *for themselves* (compare Luke xvi. 12) better and permanent treasure in heaven.

They had started well, they had shewn sympathy with the suffering followers of Jesus, and given up everything with joy, in the certain

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knowledge of possessing an infinitely higher and celestial portion.

And now comes the exhortation to confidence ; the way was rough, the opposition great, old religious associations were strong, and they were growing faint in the course ; possibly the golden city above appeared to them to be further off than at the beginning, when they had so generously sacrificed all to a heavenly Christ.

Cast not away your *confidence*. The word implies liberty and happy freedom (not the freedom of the nineteenth century, which is a mere throwing-off of restraint); the same word is found in 2 Corinthians iii. 12, and may well be compared with this passage, for it accompanies assurance in the service of God, confidence in *Him*, the God of grace and glory.

It was pointed out to me, not long ago, that many a servant of God had failed, and had turned away from the true path of testimony, through casting away confidence.

This confidence is the very reverse of bravado and carnal security. It rests in the certain fact of God's accomplishing His glorious counsels ; we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour, we shall soon see all things put under Him, and the very virtues that accompany confidence here are faith and patience. Yet a very little while and "the coming One" will come,

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and will not tarry, and then? Oh, the immense and universal change! The Nazarene manifested in all His heavenly splendour, and the whole host of Christians, Nazarenes no longer, at the very apex of the glory of the realm; the bringing-in of the First-born into the inhabited world.

Confidence may be seen in David, when he modestly gave his answer to diffident Saul; he had no trust in brass, iron, or steel, but the living God of Israel was with him, and the proud Philistine, who had defied *His* hosts, should most certainly bite the dust.

Ezra was ashamed to ask for a guard, after having expressed confidence in Jehovah, to the great king of Persia; and the Lord honoured his servant's trust.

But we have a higher and a more blessed service and a heavenly calling; and whilst patiently doing the will of God, the exhortation before us will apply to the very end of the course, so that nothing be listened to, for an instant, which would cause mistrust in His full grace, succour, and power to sustain a heavenly people in a difficult testimony.

We must put ourselves in the place of the Hebrews. What must it have been for a Jew to break all his old religious associations? To see the imminent downfall of Jerusalem, to have no stay or support on earth? The enemy no

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doubt tried in every way to obscure the glories of that scene on high, where all in heaven is grouped round Jesus, set down at the right hand of the Majesty. Thoughts such as these: "It would be more prudent to avoid extremes;" "One may be a good Jew and Christian at the same time" (Acts xxi. 20); would no doubt be presented to the mind.

But no! Confidence in the God who has already glorified Jesus, and who shall shortly fully accomplish all His counsel in glorifying His many sons with Him; this is what is needed. The Hebrews must come out of the camp (the whole Jewish system), and stand out boldly as seeking the city to come; God would sustain them to the end.

And is it not a word for us at the present moment? May God keep us from all self-sufficiency, pride, and pretension; but at the same time keep us from casting away that confidence in Him, by which we shall serve Him, more than conquerors, to the very last moment of the severe and testing course upon earth!

E. L. B.



## NEAR TO CHRIST.

(LUKE VII. 36-50.)

THERE are two remarkable features in the action of this poor woman of the city who was a sinner, and it would be very blessed for every one of us if we possessed them a little more ; the one is an entire abstractedness from herself, so that she surmounted every difficulty in order to be near Christ. Now there is nothing more common and largely common amongst saints than in the first instance thoughts of themselves with reference to Christ ; it is not the getting near to Christ for His own sake, it is not the glory of the Person of Christ attracting the heart, so that we say we want to get near Him. It is not a question of what we get from Him. It is blessed to know we get everything from Him ; this woman had received what she did not know she had received until this time. The point with her was the grace of His Person : it was an object outside of herself which drew her heart away from every thought which would naturally present itself ; because there was no place where she was less likely to be welcomed than in the house of a Pharisee ; but she is not thinking of the reproach that will be heaped upon her, or how she would expose herself : her one great controlling thought was, " I want to get near Christ, I must get near



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Him." Now, alas! how little there is of that amongst us! I find nearly all are occupied with themselves some way or other, either with their sorrows, or their progress; and the one is as bad as the other. We do progress as we have to do with Christ: just in the same proportion. I am progressing exactly as I have to do with Him, and no more. The more I have to do with Him, the more things are distanced to me, and the more I find I am lifted out of myself.

Oh what a wonderful thing it is to find a person in this world who has been so commanded by the grace and beauty of the Person of Christ, as to be indifferent to all but Himself. Is it not an encouragement to one's heart to think that we may get near Him? Luke vii. is different to John xii. Mary stands on a higher elevation than the poor woman of Luke vii.; but I am speaking as to the thing practically. Let me ask now, Are we near to Him? Have we got the conscious sense in our souls that we are near Christ? What a wonderful moment in a person's history, when he has got the sense that he is near Him! Take even the lowest thing, viz. to come behind Him, and touch Him. The Lord by His Spirit give our hearts a little deeper sense, not only that He wants us to be near Him, but the consciousness of what a real thing it is to be near Him. How little it makes of everything, how small everything would seem!

The second thing in Luke vii. is, she makes the most of Him, because of what He is Himself. I find the tendency (and I believe it is a thing we need to watch against) to be entirely occupied with our getting blessing for ourselves, because you are blest if you are near Christ, how blest! Who could measure, who could fathom either the depths or heights of the blessedness that drops like fatness into the soul as we get near Christ. Oh what a real thing it is to get near Him! There is a certain atmosphere about one who is there; it is not the stiff hardness that one finds on the one hand, nor the dissatisfaction that one finds on the other; but there is a blessedness, a wonderful ease and gracious repose about one who is near Christ.

May the Lord by His Spirit give each of us to know what a blessed thing it is to get near that blessed One, and as we get near Him, to make much of Him, with all that delicacy and reverence that love can devote to its object. It is a wonderful favour to get near Christ, and as we get near Him to expend all we have upon Him.

W. T. T.



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BE STILL.

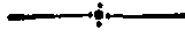
BE still, O heart ! Why fear and tremble ?  
What harm, what evil can betide ?  
Though foes in mighty hosts assemble,  
*Fear not, for God is on thy side.*

Be still, O heart ! The Lord of glory  
Was once a man acquaint with grief ;  
He bends to hear—tell all thy story—  
*He loves, He cares, He'll send relief.*

Be still, O heart ! *Cease fearing, fretting*  
*About the future, all unknown.*  
Ne'er think the Master is forgetting  
About His own—His purchased own

Be still, O heart ! Thy God will send thee  
The clouds or sunshine as is best ;  
His own right hand shall e'er defend thee—  
Then *trust His love, and know His rest.*

*Extracted.*



“THE MAN THAT IS MY FELLOW,  
SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS.”

(ZECH. XIII. 7.)

THESE are the solemn and touching words of Jehovah Himself respecting the Lord Jesus Christ in His sorrows and sufferings; the words reveal the true character of *His Person* and *His sufferings*.

It has been very blessedly remarked that when Christ is looked at in His humiliation as man, He is treated by the Spirit as the equal of Jehovah in His rights.

We are living in a day when the malignity of Satan against Christ has well-nigh reached its height.

The moral atmosphere of the professing church is charged with irreverence and blasphemy: in order to discredit the written word, it is found necessary now to dishonour the incarnate Word; and this is resorted to with an audacity and profanity peculiar to the age. As an instance of this, I would adduce the attempt of what is called higher criticism to prove spurious the predictions of the prophet Isaiah; when it is urged, if this be so, the

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Lord Jesus Christ cited what was spurious in order to make good a claim to which He had no right, it is retorted by a slur upon His Person involving the knowledge and fallibility of Him, who although He became man, was never less than God, "God over all, blessed for evermore." It is thus, I may say, at the present moment that the blessed One is degraded at the hands of His *foes*, and this will surprise no one who sees clearly the tactics of Satan; but there is another aspect of this solemn question, which fills the heart with pain and anguish, and brings to mind His own blessed, sorrowing words: "One of you shall betray me."

It is very solemn to reflect on how the moral character of the age at any time acts upon the church of God; at the present moment it is very evident that the irreverence of the day, like a polluted atmosphere, is spreading all around, expressions are used about sacred things which are revolting to a spiritual mind, the things of God are treated with a cold, mental analysis which forbode disaster and sorrow ere long if persisted in; the holy mystery of His blessed Person is attempted to be unravelled and explained, after a fashion that one's whole soul shrinks from, and the end must be that adoration and worship will be superseded by reason and speculation. May God in His great

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grace and goodness avert such a consummation as this, is one's constant, earnest cry. Standing, as we are, upon the eve of His coming, with the thick darkness of the far-spent night hanging around us, in the very loyalty and fervour of our devotion, is it wonderful we should dread the mists and clouds which threaten to veil His blessed face, if not to hide altogether His eternal and imperishable glory from our poor eyes? How well it is said that “we must take care not to pretend to know all that concerns the union of humanity and divinity in the Person of the Lord. This union is inscrutable. “No man knoweth the Son but the Father.” Jesus grew in wisdom. What has made some Christians fall into such errors is, that they have wished to distinguish and explain the condition of Christ as man. We know that He was and is God; we know that He became man, and the witness to His true divinity is maintained in that state of humiliation by the inscrutability of the union. One may shew that certain views detract from His glory, and from the truth of His Person; but I earnestly desire that brethren should not set to work to dogmatise as to His Person, they would assuredly fall into some error. I never saw any one do it without falling into some unintentional heresy. To shew that an explanation is false, in order to preserve souls from the evil consequences of the

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error, and to pretend to explain the Person of the Lord, are two different things."

Again, the same writer says, "I dread dissecting, if I may venture so to speak, Christ; it is not the way to honour Him. Very few will speak so as not to commit themselves; 'No man knoweth the Son but the Father.' We may know many precious things of Him which enable us to condemn error, but nice definitions of what He was, and how He was it, human language and human thoughts are not competent to, I judge. . . . I recommend you with all my heart to avoid discussing and defining the Person of our blessed Saviour, you will lose the savour of Christ in your thoughts, and you will only find in their room the barrenness of man's spirit in the things of God and in the affections which pertain to them. It is a labyrinth for man, because he labours there at his own charge. It is as if one dissected the body of his friend, instead of nourishing himself with his affections and character." Oh! that our *hearts* may be more filled with adoring wonder and worship as we gaze on Him by faith, Him of whom it is said so blessedly—"I find a centre where my mind reposes, which is Itself, always Itself, and nothing like it."

W. T. T.



## THE MANNER OF THE LOVE OF JESUS.

(MATT. IX. ; MARK II. ; LUKE V.)

GOD was shewing His rich and various mercy in the old times ; but this was done after a peculiar manner. He forgave sin, He healed disease, He fed His people. But all this was done after a peculiar manner. There was a certain distance and reserve, as it were, a remaining still in His own sanctuary, still in the heavens, though He was thus gracious. He met the need of a sinner ; but He was in the temple, withdrawn to the holiest place, and the sinner had to come through a consecrated path to get the virtue of the mercy-seat. He met the need of His camp in the desert ; but it was by remaining still in heaven, and sending from thence the angels' food, the mighty's meat, and giving them water after His mystic rod had opened the rock. He met the disease of a poor leper ; but it was after such a leper had been separated outside the camp, every eye and hand—all interference and inspection of man—withdrawn and removed. There He was God acting in His own due love and power ; but there was a style in the action that bespoke distance from the object of His love and goodness. Whether He pardoned, fed, or healed, this manner was preserved.



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The Lord Jesus, God manifest in the flesh, is seen doing the same works of divine love and power. He pardons, feeds, and heals, and He does so in full assertion of His divine right or glory, thinking it no robbery to be equal with God. But there is altogether another style in those same actions when in His hand. The reserve, the distance, is gone. It is God we see, not withdrawn into the holiest, but abroad in the prisons, the hospitals, and the poorhouses of this ruined world. He pardons, but He stands beside the sinner to do this, saying, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or, Neither do I condemn thee. He feeds, but He is at the very table with the fed. He heals ; but He puts forth His hands in the crowd on as many as were diseased, or stands at their sick beds. He then comes down to the needy ones, with pardon, food, and healing. He goes among them, letting them know and see that He is supplied with various virtue to be used by them without reserve. And there is in this a glory that excelleth ; so that the former has no glory by reason of it.

How should we bless Him for this display of Himself ! It is the same God of love and power in both ; but He has increased in the brightness of His manifestations.

The religious rulers found this way of Jesus to interfere with them. Their interest was to keep God and the people separate ; for then they had

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hopes of being used themselves. Thus they were angry when the Lord said to the man, Thy sins be forgiven thee. It was a great interference with them. It trespassed on their places. "Who can forgive sins but God only?" and God was in heaven. The Son of man forgiving sins *on earth* was a sad disturbance of that by which they lived in credit and plenty in the world. But whether they received it or not, this was the way of the Son on earth. He dwelt with our necessities in such wise as encouraged the happy, near, and confident approach of all needy ones to Him. He did all to shew that He was a cheerful giver, nay more, that He gave Himself with His gift. For with His own hand, we have seen, He brought the blessing home to every man's door.

It was therefore only the happy confidence of faith which fully met and refreshed His Spirit, that faith which knew the title of a needy one to come right up to Him, the faith of a Bartimæus, which was not to be silenced by the mistaken scrupulousness even of disciples. And little children are to be in His arms, though the same mistake would forbid them.

This was His mind: He came into the world to be used by sick and needy sinners; and the faith that understood and loved Him accordingly was its due answer. Such answers we see recorded by the evangelists here in the action of

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the faithful little band, who breaking up the roof, let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay "into the midst before Jesus." There was no ceremoniousness in this, nothing of the ancient reserve of the Temple, no waiting for introduction. This little company felt their necessity, knew the virtues of the Son of God, and believed that these suited each other—nay, that the Lord carried the one, because necessitous sinners were bearing the other. It was a strong expression of faith, and I believe the strength of it was according to the mind of Jesus; so that on seeing their faith, as we read, without further to do or more words, His heart and the grace that it carried uttered itself in an expression as full and strong: "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee."

Here was sympathy. Jesus was rending all veils between God and sinners; and so was the faith of this happy little company. His blood was soon to rend from top to bottom the veil of the temple, which kept God from poor sinners; and now their faith was rending that which kept them from Jesus. This surely was meeting and entertaining the Son of God in character; and His Spirit deeply owns it: "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee."

Happy faith which can thus break down partition walls! O this faith which takes knowledge of Jesus, the Saviour of the world, as the

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mighty render of all veils! "Join thou, my soul, for thou canst tell," &c. In the lively, happy impression of this truth through the Spirit the soul tastes something of heaven. What blessedness to know that this is the way of God our Saviour! Grace and glory are both brought to us: we have not to ascend to heaven to seek them there, nor descend to the depths to search after them there. "Behold I come: and my reward is with me," will Jesus say when He brings the glory; as we have already seen Him with His grace standing at the door, or by the bedside, or in the crowd of needy sinners.

This is of God indeed. It is only divine love that can account for it. But the rulers did not like it. Their interest and credit in the world would keep the forgiveness of sins still in the hand of Him who was in heaven; for then, as the consecrated path, they hoped and judged that they themselves would still be used.

And so it is to this day. Forgiveness is brought near and sure to the soul, the word of faith to the heart and to the mouth. This shortens the path; but it does not suit those who transact (as themselves and others judge) the interests of the soul.

Nothing appears more simple than all this on the principles of nature. The Pharisees, in our Lord's time, represented it. They were the religious rulers; nay, the more God was kept in

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the distance, reserve being thus maintained between Him and the people, the more they were likely to be venerated, used, and enriched. Jesus, God in flesh, the Son of man forgiving sins *on the earth*, was a sad trespasser on their place and plan of action. How, alas! is this principle still alive, still dominant, and the "people love to have it so;" it suits the religiousness of man's nature too well to be lightly refused. The simplicity that is in Christ is sadly thus "corrupted;" and our souls, beloved, should be grieved, deeply grieved, because of it.

But we may also say that much occasion, in our day, has been given for this principle to live and act as vigorously as it seems to be doing. For there has not been the meeting of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, this pardoning, feeding, healing, love and power of Him who has come down to walk amid our ruins, in the spirit which alone was due to it. There has been the assertion of grace, and the denial that God in this dispensation is to be sought for as at a distance, under the hiding of ceremonies or within the cloisters of temples. There has been the producing of the blessed Saviour, and giving Him to walk abroad among our necessities according to the place He has Himself taken in the gospels. There has been the presenting of the marvellous condescending grace of the dispensation; but those who have asserted it have not carried

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themselves towards it, and in the presence of it, with that reverence, that holiness of confidence, which alone became them. And this has given man's religiousness (which would keep God still in heaven) occasion to revive, and be listened to, and learned again.

But is this religiousness the due corrective of abused grace? Is this the divine remedy? Is this God's way of rectifying evil? Or is it not simple human reaction? Many are doing what they can to withdraw the Lord to that place which He has most advisedly and for ever abandoned. They are making Him appear to build again the things which He had destroyed. They are putting Him back into the holiest place, there to be sought unto by the old aisles and vistas of the "worldly sanctuary," to cover Him with veils and cast up the long consecrated path by which of old the sinner came to Him. It were well to be righteously angry at Jesus and His grace being treated with so indelicate and untender a hand; but these correct the error by a worse. While they would protect the holiness of Christ, they obscure His grace. They are seeking to do a service for Him that grieves Him the most deeply. They are teaching man that He is an austere Master; they withdraw Him to the place where it is felt to be a fearful thing to plant one's foot.

Indeed this is a service He did not ask for.

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“Who hath required this at your hands?” is, I am assured in my soul, the voice of the Son of God to those who withdraw Him from the nearest and most assured approach of the poor sinner. They have been doing what they could to change *His* place and attitudes, instead of MAN’S. Correction was needed surely. It is ever needed. Man will be spoiling or abusing everything. There has been an intellectual arrogance and carnal freedom with Christ and His truth, which may well have grieved the righteous. But it was man that ought to have been challenged to change his place and bearing, and not the Lord. He has not repented of having come on earth to forgive sins, of having visited the poor Samaritan at the well, or Levi, or Zacchæus in their houses, or Peter’s wife’s mother on her bed of sickness. He is still the same Lord, and He purposes to be so. He has not retired within the veil again, nor bound up that which was rent from top to bottom. He has not built again that which He had destroyed. It is not a worldly sanctuary that He fills and furnishes again, nor ceremonies nor observances, and rites, and practices, under which He is again concealing Himself. He has descended from heaven to earth ; He is abroad among men, in the ministry of His precious gospel and by His Spirit, beseeching sinners to be reconciled.

What then, alas ! is the character of that effort

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that would force Him back to the thick darkness? (2 Chron. vi. 43.) It is an attempt made in the strength and with the subtilty of the devil upon the Son of God, as of old. It is a taking Him, as it were, to the pinnacle of the temple, to some withdrawn and proud elevation, where the multitude may gaze at Him. But His purpose is, blessed be His name, to stand in the midst of them, that they may use Him.

We should change our place; that is equally true. We should learn to pass and repass with the unshod foot before this gracious, blessed Son of man. It is for us to change our attitude, and not to seek to make Him change His.

We have still to see Him in all the grace of this dispensation; we have to read "the gospel of the blessed God" (1 Tim. i.), as they read it of old who knew and felt that the Son of man had power on earth to forgive sins. But we have to read all this more in their spirit also. We are to wonder at the strange sight, as they did—to tell Jesus, with the centurion, that we are not worthy that He should come under our roof, while we still use His immediate presence and grace—to stand before Him like Zacchæus, and call Him "Lord," though, like Him, receiving Him to our house; and to follow Him in the way with adoring thankful gaze, though having refused, as Bartimæus, to be put at a



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distance by the vain religious scruples of even His own disciples.

Ah! this is what should have been done. This would have been the divine corrective of the mischief that has come in. But this was not so easy; for this would have been spiritual: the thing that has been done is carnal. Elements of the world are revived and multiplied. Jesus has been forced back at a distance from the sinner. He has been put into "the thick darkness," under cover of fleshly observances and rites, and at the end of a long path through the aisles of a sanctuary, where He waits to receive the homage of a fearing and bondaged people. This is the place and attitude which many teachers (who are daily rising in the esteem of the people) make the blessed Saviour to fill and take.

The Lord Jesus is kept at a distance; religious observances are brought near: and the people (for they have ever been so minded) like the feelings that come from all that which is acted before them. Their eye and ear are engaged, a certain sacred sense of God is awakened; but the precious immediate confidence of the heart and conscience is refused. Ah! shall any one who loves the Lord thus sink down again into man, when the Spirit would have him up with Christ?

"O foolish Galatians; who hath bewitched

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you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? . . . . Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? . . . . Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." (Gal. iii, iv.)

Thus speaks the aggrieved Spirit in the apostle over those who once had been eminently his joy but were now his sorrow, because they were turning again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto they were desiring again to be in bondage. Indeed they were deserting faith for religiousness, "the simplicity that is in Christ," and in which the "virgin" or "uncorrupted" mind ever walks, for the ceremonies and observances of "a worldly sanctuary."

But religiousness is neither faith nor righteousness. With the Pharisees it was adopted as a relief for a bad conscience, or a cover for evil ; in them it was, therefore, opposed to faith. The Galatians cannot properly be said to have been Pharisees, it is true ; but the Spirit of God had a serious question with both. And I may just further observe, that in our passages (Matt. ix. 6 ; Mark ii. 2 ; Luke v. 24) the Lord seeks to lead man away from his own reasonings and calculations to Himself and His works. He perceived that the scribes were "reasoning

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among themselves," and then proposed to them what He was doing, "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he said unto the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, arise and take up thy couch, and go into thine house."

How simple, how precious! And on this hangs the grand distinction between faith and religiousness, of which I have just been speaking. Religiousness, or man's religion, gives the soul many a serious thought about itself, and many a devout thought about God. But faith, or God's religion, gives the soul Jesus, and the works and words of Jesus.

And yet it is faith, and faith only, secures the end which is valued of God. Faith "worketh by love;" faith "overcometh the world;" faith "purifies the heart." By faith "the elders obtained a good report." Religiousness does not this. It ever "works" by fear, not by love. It does not "overcome the world," but oftentimes takes it within to some recess or hiding-place. It does not "purify the heart" by giving it an object to detach it from self, but keeps self in a religious attire ever before it, and leaves the conscience unpurged. And in God's record it gets no "good report." From the beginning to the end of that record, it is the people of religion, the devout observers of carnal ceremonies, those who would not "defile themselves" with a judg-

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ment-hall, that have stood most cruel in the resistance of the truth. But it is the men of faith, the lovers of the truth, the poor broken-hearted believers, who have found their relief in Jesus "forgiving sins," who have stood and laboured and conquered; and they have their happy memorial with Him, and in the records of Him whom they trusted, in whom by faith they found eternal life and their sure and full salvation.

J. G. B.

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 MOSES' CHOICE.

(HEB. XI. 24-27.)

IN Hebrews xi. we have many remarkable instances of faith, which are full of instruction for the Christian at the present hour. Moses, amongst others, was a bright example. His faith shone out in a very decided manner at a most testing moment. Had he been governed by sight or circumstances, and the tendency of his natural heart, he never could have trodden the path he did, and we should never have read and profited by the short but blessed commentary contained in Hebrews xi. 24-27.

It was a dark day in the history of God's earthly people, when Moses in His mysterious providence was transferred as a babe from a

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Hebrew's cottage in Egypt to the stately palace of Egypt's king. (Ex. ii. 1-10.) God is behind all the scenes of this world, and moves all the scenes He is behind. Moses was a chosen vessel to carry out His inscrutable purposes. His early training at Pharaoh's court would doubtless help to qualify him as a leader of men. Enjoying the position of the son of Pharaoh's daughter, if there were no other heir, he might eventually have succeeded to the throne and kingdom of the Pharaohs. Such a brilliant position and prospect was a rare lot in life, and one would not have been surprised if the eyes of Moses had been dazzled by it. But the short and remarkable story is, that "by faith Moses, *when he was come to years*, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter."

We know but little of Moses' early life, but one remarkable event, which was a turning-point in his history, is recorded in Exodus ii. 11-15, where he slew an Egyptian who was smiting a Hebrew, and had to flee. It shews where his true interests were. His heart was with the interests of God and His people. The record of the Spirit of God is that he acted by faith, when come to years, and refused his position of privilege in the family of the king. *He knew what to refuse.* It was no light matter. He knew full well the consequences. But

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nothing deterred him, for his heart was with God, and he was governed by faith, not by sight. To step down from his princely rank, the prospect of a throne, and all the privileges of his high position, are a witness to the wonderful power of faith. If reason had come in, he might have argued, but what can I do better than remain where Providence has placed me, and seek to benefit the people of God through the power that I shall wield, on account of this high position. But no; though Providence put him in the position, faith took him out of it. He refused all, because it was not of God. By faith he apprehended what was suited to Him, and without hesitation acted upon it. He could trust God for the rest.

Now many Christians find themselves in certain positions to-day, which are not according to God, but who remain in them on the plea of a wider sphere of usefulness. But "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (1 Sam. xv. 22.) To be a vessel fit for the Master's use, I must be clean, separated from all evil, according to His word. (2 Tim. ii. 21.) If I am in a position or calling approved by the word of God, I am instructed therein to abide with Him. (2 Cor. vii. 20-24.) But if Moses had remained at Pharaoh's court, he would have been enjoying *the pleasures of sin*. (Ver. 20.) And every

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saint of God is called to abstain from sin. Christ did no sin, and we are called to follow His steps. And hence we must refuse unhesitatingly to be linked with evil, whatever may be the cost.

Now had not Moses been the man of faith that he was, he might have stopped there. If as a Hebrew he could not happily retain his position in the palace of the idolatrous king, he might have represented the case to him, and been permitted to retire into a more private sphere, with surroundings suitable to his position. But the faith of Moses went far beyond the negative. He was not content with refusing evil, in circumstances where he was surrounded with all that the natural heart would value ; but he chose a new pathway, and that a pathway of suffering and trial. Mere flesh could not walk that road, nothing but faith could possibly rise up to it. We read, "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." The Hebrews were suffering. They were God's people and Moses' people. He knew their history and their sorrows. He would identify himself with them. He set a right value on the pleasures of sin, forsaking them all, with his position and privileges, and he chose an entirely new path, God's path. It was the very last that a man would choose

naturally. We all shrink from suffering and affliction. But to be faithful to God, and to truly aid His people, it was impossible to avoid it. Moses, come to years, chose it without hesitation, and the Holy Ghost has left it as a noble record of faith, and an example to all God's saints. Moses found more joy in sharing the afflictions of the people of God, than in the pleasures of sin with the people of the world.

Which path are we choosing? Many refuse manifest evil, and yet pursue a path of ease and self-pleasing. It is no day to be settling on our lees. Christ wants *disciples*. "If any man serve me, let him *follow me*," &c. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and *follow me*." (Matt. xvi. 24.) Christ pleased not Himself. If I live to please myself, what is that but my own will, and my will is sin. It is very pleasant to do one's own will; the flesh loves it dearly. Sin brings many pleasures to the natural heart, without grovelling in wickedness. But the pleasures of sin are only *for a season*. At God's right hand there are *pleasures for evermore*. (Ps. xvi. 11.) Moses looked on to the end. He had respect unto the recompence. (Ver. 26.) He let go the present for the future, things seen for things unseen; he chose and trod the true pathway of faith. His is



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a noble example for us. If we are living in the present, and are governed by the sight of our eyes, even though we may forsake the pleasures of sin in this Egypt world, we shall find ourselves more or less sinking down to a path of ease in some quiet corner of a modern Goshen, instead of rising up in faith and in the power of the Holy Ghost, to *follow* Christ as pilgrims and strangers to a better land, content with wilderness fare by the road.

We are poor things at best, and our faith oft very weak. But if true to the call of God, His and His people's interests will so absorb us, that things which are gain after the flesh will be accounted loss, and we shall be pressing on to the goal, seeking to bear with patience all afflictions we may be called to meet on our way. May we each be found following Moses' example, and know what to choose as well as what to refuse.

"Esteeming the reproach of Christ," continues the apostle, "greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward." (Ver. 26.) There were other things besides those which we have looked at, that but few would not weigh in Moses' circumstances. There were *possessions*, the treasures of Egypt. It would be easy to many to forsake position, privileges, and pleasures, as long as *treasures* were retained. But the test

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to which Moses was exposed, involved the forsaking of wealth also. How did he overcome this seduction? By simply placing Egypt's treasures in one scale, and Christ's reproach in the other; and on the principle of faith he discovered the latter infinitely outweighed the former, and *esteemed* it accordingly. It was entirely outside the region of nature. It was the estimate of faith. Does any one think that Moses regrets that to-day, or will ever regret it? What was the value of Egypt's treasures to Moses, when he appeared in the glory cloud with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration? He forsook Egypt's treasures, and as he led the people of God in the wilderness enjoyed heaven's treasures instead. He also suffered with them, and bore the badge of the reproach of Christ. Blessed pathway!

We all shrink naturally from the reproach of Christ, and cleave to the treasures of the world. To follow in any little measure in the wonderful path of God's faithful servant Moses, involves deep exercise of soul before Him. What this world ministers to the Christian will be only properly valued and used, as we yield ourselves wholly, without reserve to please Him. If our hearts are cleaving to present things, the world, with its position, privileges, pleasures, possessions, or anything else, we shall have no taste for the reproach of Christ.

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But if Christ is not merely the theme of our lips, but the one Object of our heart's affections, we shall find a joy in Him, which the world can neither give nor take away, and we shall bear His reproach with patience, and learn to esteem it. And what else are we down here for? As Christians we are saved, saved out of the world, and belong to heaven, but left a little moment to walk as pilgrims here, *following Christ* till He come.

"By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible." (Ver. 27.) When Moses did that, he finally cut himself off from everything. Every prospect of being reinstated in Pharaoh's favour was completely forsaken. One can easily imagine how ungrateful he must have appeared in the eyes of the king and his daughter. But the call of God is imperative. We ought to obey God rather than men. (Acts v. 29.) Pharaoh, in his darkness and blind self-will, was wroth at Moses' departure, and the loss of 600,000 slaves with their families, &c., and in the hardness of his heart would avenge himself. But though the leader of an unarmed and unprotected people, chased by a powerful, armed, and trained foe, Moses was calm in the presence of God. He feared not. God was their protector, and would fight for them. That was enough. "He endured, as seeing him who is

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invisible." The invisible God was more than a match for all foes, and so the sequel proved.

And this is enough for the Christian to-day. Have we forsaken Egypt? The enemy of our souls will do his utmost to prevent us, and he is more than a match for us. Our only shield is faith. Have to do with God. That is enough. Satan is powerless against Him. To forsake the world, and to journey to the heavenly Canaan, is no pathway of ease. It exposes to the whole power of the enemy in various ways. But faith in God suffices for every exigency. No foe can harm us if we depend simply on Him. He is faithful, His love eternal, His care unchangeable. Faith brings God into everything, and then the heart is kept free from all fear, and in the secret of His presence we can endure.

Moses' was a wonderful choice. Satan and man offered him position, privileges, pleasures, possessions, prospects. God offered him the reproach of Christ now, and a reward hereafter. Moses, so to speak, said unhesitatingly, Christ for me. Now all of us get offers of some kind or other from this poor world; Satan has a varied display of wares, and such as are highly valued by the flesh. God says, Will you have my Son? Is there one heart that ponders these lines, that refuses or hesitates to respond, Christ for me? If Christ is your acknowledged por-

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tion, *let it be Christ, and follow Him.* It is a poor thing indeed to take His peerless name upon our lips if there is not a true response in our hearts and a firm resolve, by God's grace, to follow Him from this Egypt world to His everlasting glory. May every believing reader know more of the power of the apostle's heartfelt utterance, "*To me to live is Christ.*"

E. H. C.



"THE HOLY ONE OF GOD."

THAT Christ was made sin for us, and that we having died with Him are reckoned dead to sin, in that He was there for sin, for so scripture expresses it, is quite true; but it is not said He took a place outside the presence of God, as to the extent of the suffering in His soul. It is said He was forsaken of God, but that is a different thing from His taking a place outside, which does not appear to me scriptural. God made Him to be sin for us, and He made His soul an offering for sin. Nor is He ever spoken of consequently as taking it as leprous and unclean, but suffering, the Just for the unjust. Scripture is careful when it speaks of Him as made sin, to set up His sinlessness, not to represent Him as leprous by reason of our leprosy. "Who knew

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no sin”—“the just”—“as a lamb without blemish.”

There is a sense of the value of the work which hangs on the spotless perfectness of His Person, which would hinder such expressions.

Leprosy is a disease and a foul one, a state, not imputed guilt—a nature can hardly be said to be imputed. I might understand what a person meant; but just reverence and a just estimate of His holy grace would, I think, hinder such an expression; and scripture does not sanction it, but on the contrary brings out not merely the holiness of His nature, but the spotlessness of the victim. Taking upon Him the sin of our nature even on the cross, can hardly be justified either by scripture, because it confounds nature and imputed guilt, though the terms be not so objectionable. God condemned sin in the flesh when He died and was for sin, yet it is our dying with Him that is made the deliverance here.

J. N. D.



“CHIEFEST AMONG TEN THOUSAND.”

O LIVING, blessed Saviour,  
 Thou dearest Friend to me,  
 Eternal is Thy favour,  
 Blest light that shines from Thee.

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While all on earth is passing,  
A fleeting, fading day,  
The heart delights to ponder  
Thy changeless love and way.

As each new day is breaking,  
Thyself my heart would seek,  
Would own Thy royal title,  
O'er me, Thy blood-bought sheep.  
Then when the dewy even  
My weary eyelids close,  
It resteth in its portion,  
Enjoys its sweet repose.

Lord Jesus Christ, my Saviour,  
I know Thou'rt ever near ;  
Still keep me in Thy favour,  
And walking in Thy fear.  
Tender in true affection,  
In wisdom lowly meek,  
The joys of heaven presenting  
To all with whom I meet.

O ! hasten, Lord, the dawning  
Of that bright promised day,  
That glorious, blessed morning  
When grief shall pass away.  
When round Thyself in glory  
Thine own Thy praise shall swell,  
And chant the heavenly story,  
Which none but they can tell.

W. T. T.



## “HE COULD NOT BE HID.”

(JOHN IV.; MARK VII.)

THE manifestation of God in Christ comes very blessedly before us in both these cases, let us by His gracious help trace it a little with adoring and worshipping spirits. In the first instance He was weary with His journey, and sat alone in the world He Himself had created, and into which in His blessed love He had come: as a weary man He feels the rejection of His love, His heart pressed by the rejection of the people He loved, and as to the lowly blessed place He had in grace taken among men, dependent on a poor, sin-weary, lonely woman for a drink of water. Oh what blessed grace shines forth in every line of the record, and how was not God most blessedly revealed in what He was in a lowly man, *by His being a lowly man*.

It is so blessedly expressed in the beautiful words of another, which run thus: “He acts in divine grace. Here therefore where grace, free grace, works, we find Him fully man—a weary, rejected man, bound in Spirit on a way He must needs take, and waiting on the



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kindness of another for a drink of water. Grace is in the humbled and obedient man—there it is that what God is shines out. It is not ‘before Abraham was I am,’ but ‘if thou knewest the gift of God,’ that is, grace; ‘and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink.’ It is not the supreme God forced, so to speak, to say He is so to heartless adversaries without conscience, but God revealed in what He was in a lowly man, and surely if grace is, that is grace.

“What heart is in the words! What a need to win the confidence of a weary soul! Yet the simple expression of what His own heart was full of, of God as goodness. . . .

“There is no feeling like that of the perception of the Person of Christ, and His words and He are one. He was what He said always. Yet it is thoroughly in human nature I look at Him here, yea, that is the way, and here I learn it. With adversaries He is simply God, in grace He is a man yet God; and only precious as man, because He is, and as a man, dependent. Yet we have seen the Father in Him.”

How blessed to thus contemplate Him in all His grace, and to have the affections of the heart nourished and fed as He is thus before us. Further, observe how that in His grace He made this poor weary heart to know that He loved her, and oh what delight to her heart

it must have been to be loved of Himself *after* He had in her own words told her all that ever she did. What a secret treasure had she not found to bear henceforth with her through this weary scene!

Then observe *His joy* here. He had in precious grace made a path for Himself right into her poor desolate heart, and when the disciples came and found Him talking with the woman, and pressed upon Him the fruit of their anxiety for the need of His blessed body, His *lips* uttered to them what His *heart* had said to her, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me."

He revealed Himself to her as the Messiah, and in that revelation she found an object that henceforth was to govern her whole life. It has been so truly and sweetly remarked by another that with adversaries He is simply God—in grace He is a man yet God, and only precious as a man because He is, and as a man, dependent.

So far we have been meditating on the Samaritan, not her state in any wise, but how He Himself had in His blessed grace come where she was, and caused His pressed heart to flow out to the sorrow and need that were there.

Let us now meditate on the Syro-Phœnician. The Lord leaves the confines of the region of

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His mission; this was, as we know, to Israel. He was Jehovah's Servant in the midst of that people, according to prophecy and the purpose of God. He is not seen here as among the Samaritans rejected by His own, but going forth to the borders of the accursed region, Tyre and Sidon. Here we see the blessed One seeking retirement, seeking to be alone, that is out of His *sphere* of labour, not in anywise as giving up His *mission*; then it is said of Him, "He could not be hid." Oh what a sentence! full of the deepest grace and blessing, as well as full of most precious meaning to the heart that longs to be filled more and more with Himself.

Further, this beautiful word as to Him lets us into the secret of the types and shadows of olden days; it accounts for promise and prophecy as well; oh what a charm to the heart that knows His love that sentence is, "He could not be hid"—the multiplied witnesses to His glory in this great reality, add to this charm, and give its measureless value to this great impossibility—"He could not be hid."

But observe how suited to the heart of the blessed Lord was this place of hard-heartedness of the people on which the curse of Jehovah rested, as compared with Israel, for here He met *want*, *need*, which sought goodness in power—this need and misery expressed in this poor woman here draws out what is

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above all promise, appealing to a riches in goodness able and willing to reach in mercy to *vileness, misery, and wretchedness without title.*

How blessed, then, to see the glories of the Person of Jesus Himself shining out in the various cases of want and misery that met Him in His lowly, blessed path on earth, each varied place and case serving to elicit His own worth and beauty. How well it is said that "Grace is the secret of the divine mind, love to sinners is the affection of the divine bosom, and out of a heart so stored there has been a constant utterance."

W. T. T.



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"FINALLY, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Read Eph. vi. 10-20)

The Epistle to the Ephesians unfolds to us the eternal counsels of God in Christ, and the heavenly place and portion of the Christian, &c.

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We are not here viewed as going to heaven, but as there already, blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Eph. i. 3), and made to sit together in heavenly places in Him. (Chap. ii. 6.) It is not a question of trying to reach up to the place, or of attaining a heavenly experience ; we are *viewed there of God*. Christ is at God's right hand, and the saints are in the heavenly places in Him. But Satan, with all his hosts, still ranges this same sphere. Soon they will be hurled from it. (Rev. xii. 9.) But at present he brings all his power to bear against God's heavenly saints, who in faith and in the power of the Spirit accept this wondrous position, and seek to enjoy it. As Israel in Canaan had to contend with the seven nations there, so we have to contend with the powers of spiritual wickedness to-day.

Now the conflict is very severe, and unless we avail ourselves of God's provision for us, we shall only sustain defeat. Many succumb before the enemy's power in one way or another, through the neglect of it, and bring reproach upon the Name of Christ. To be successful, we must put on the whole armour (or panoply) of God, and meet it in dependence on Him

Four things are presented in this solemn passage with which we have to contend in this terrible conflict, namely, the wiles of the devil, spiritual wickedness (or the universal lords of

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this darkness), the evil day, and the fiery darts of the wicked one. (Eph. vi. 11-16.) And we are exhorted to put on the *whole* armour of God and *to stand*. There is no thought of destroying our foes, or of overcoming them in such a way that the conflict ceases. It will continue until we leave this scene altogether. But we are exhorted to stand. "That ye may be *able to stand*." "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able *to withstand* in the evil day, and having done all things, *to stand*. *Stand therefore*," &c. To withstand in the evil day, and to stand fast against the whole power of Satan, and the ever-increasing tide of evil, is an immense thing in the sight of God.

Many confound this conflict with their own personal experience, and apply it to themselves or to others in the undelivered state of Romans vii. This is a great mistake. Taking Israel as a figure, in the latter part of Romans vii. a soul is not yet across the Red Sea; but here in Ephesians, Egypt, the Red Sea, the wilderness, Jordan—all are behind us. We are viewed as outside this scene altogether, seated in heavenly places, surrounded with the powers of evil, and called to stand against them. "We wrestle *not against flesh and blood*, but *against* principalities, *against* powers, *against* the rulers of the darkness of this world, *against* spiritual wickedness in *high* (or *heavenly*) *places*."

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As we have already seen, we need the panoply of God. It is included under six heads—the girdle, the breastplate, the shoes, the shield, the helmet, and the sword. And the Spirit of God brings forward a seventh thing, the attitude needful when armed, dependence in prayer, &c. Five are more of a defensive character, the sixth, the sword, offensive. Let us view them somewhat in detail.

1. *The girdle of truth.*—"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth." If a man is going to contend with a foe, the first thing is to brace himself up well for the conflict. He needs a girdle for his loins. Now the spiritual girdle which the Christian needs for the heavenly conflict is the girdle of truth. We can do nothing without the truth. If we gird our loins with aught else to contend with the devil, we shall find him more than a match for us. With a girdle of mixed truth and error, so to speak, our weakness will soon be exposed in the hour of conflict. But with truth governing our souls, and all our ways ordered thereby under the eye of God, we can contend fearlessly, standing firm and immovable against all the enemy's wiles, and preserved from the corruption all around us in this evil day.

2. *The breastplate of righteousness.*—"Having on the breastplate of righteousness." It is not enough to accept that we are righteous before

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God in Christ to meet the foe ; there must be *practical righteousness*. This is the only breastplate with which we can face the devil. The conscience *must* be good. As has often been remarked, there is no backplate. There is no provision for cowards and runaways. War is raging, and whoever receives Christ, and enters into the precious, heavenly truths of Christianity, must be prepared to contend. He must buckle on tightly the breastplate of righteousness. Thus armed, he is invulnerable ; the breast is protected, the conscience is good, the breastplate of righteousness is impervious, and the foe is over-matched. We are able to resist the devil.

3. *The shoes of peace*.—"And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." With a good conscience, we can walk in peace. Our hearts are at peace with God ; peace reigns in the soul ; we are happy and we walk peacefully in all our ways, and in relation to others. We have received the glad tidings of peace ourselves, and our ways correspond. Our feet being shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, we walk calmly and evenly in all circumstances. In the midst of conflict, we do not falter, but are at peace, though surrounded with evil, and called constantly to war. We walk in the steps of Him who said, "Peace I leave with you ; *my peace* I give unto you." It is only as we know



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His peace, and walk in communion with God, that we shall be kept in the path of peace, in the midst of the conflict with our restless and active foes.

4. *The shield of faith.*—"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked," &c. No armed warrior of old would go forth to encounter the foe without a shield. And the shield of faith to-day is absolutely necessary in the heavenly conflict. We need full trust and confidence in God Himself. If we go forth in our own strength, we shall quail before the enemy's attacks. But with faith's trusty shield we are invulnerable. Satan will do all he can to create mistrust in our hearts, but holding fast to God's own word, we shall trust Him, and know and enjoy His power and faithful love. And with a sense that He is for us, in unchanging goodness, every inflamed dart will be plied utterly in vain, and will fall from the shield quenched and harmless at our feet.

5. *The helmet of salvation.*—"And take the helmet of salvation." It is a dangerous thing to expose the head in conflict. Without a helmet, we should naturally shrink from the blow that the enemy would be sure to aim at our heads. But, capped with salvation, we fear not. With the knowledge and assurance of salvation, that God is for us, that we are His, and that we are

## HEAVENLY CONFLICT.

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saved to contend for His truth and glory, forgetful of ourselves, we shall fight with all boldness. Knowing that the battle is His, the victory secure, and that we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us, let us hold up our heads in full confidence, and with spiritual courage, till the fight is over.

6. *The sword of the Spirit.*—"And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." This is the only offensive weapon we are exhorted to take, and the only one we need. Nothing else will serve in the hour of conflict to meet the foe, and he is powerless against it. If we attempt to meet Satan with our own words, the thoughts of our own minds, according to our own wisdom, or with mere human traditions, we shall soon manifest our weakness, and find that he is more than a match for us, armed with such weapons. But wielding the Spirit's sword, the word, in His power in communion with God, the foe is powerless. It was thus that the Lord as a dependent Man met his attack, and the tempter was compelled to retreat, utterly foiled. But we need to learn from God how to wield the sword of the Spirit, how to use His word in *His power*. It is sharper than any two-edged sword. (Heb. iv. 12.)

And we need at the same time to be dependent, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto

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with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." (Eph. vi. 18.) We may be perfectly equipped, but if we meet the foe in our own strength, he will still secure the victory. Dependence on God is absolutely necessary to stand against Satan's power with success. Self-confidence is the secret of the fall of hundreds. We need to live habitually in the atmosphere of prayerful dependence on God. Satan is an active and restless foe, and it behoves us to be always on the alert, "praying at *all* seasons with *all* prayer," "and *supplication*," earnest entreaty, "*in the Spirit*." There must be entire dependence, complete clinging to God alone, with the consciousness that the battle and the victory are His, and that He alone can supply the strength necessary to sustain the one, and to secure the other.

And, moreover, let us bear in mind, it is not merely an individual matter here. It is a conflict that all the heavenly saints are called to sustain. We need to stand heart to heart and shoulder to shoulder in the army of God, and conflict together against the power of darkness. Hence the importance of the exhortation added, "watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." We must embrace all the Lord's people in our thoughts and in our prayers.

The apostle closes with desiring the prayers of

the saints that he may also boldly tell out the truth to others. "And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds ; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." (Vers. 19, 20.)

The truth is not only defensive, but also aggressive. We are called to stand for the truth in the evil day against the whole power of the enemy ; and to make known, according to the measure of our gift and ability, in dependence on God, the wondrous *mystery* of the gospel, that marvellous unfolding of the heavenly calling and character of the church of God, which comprehends the fullest blessing of the gospel that God in grace has revealed. Paul lost his liberty, and was oft in danger of his life for it, but did not cease to preach it, even when in chains. We shall not find it a path of roses even to-day, though God has given an opened door, if we seek to follow him in his faithful testimony.

E. H. C.



## THE HIDDEN MANNA AND THE WHITE STONE.

IT is with hesitation that I attempt to say a few words as to the promise made to the overcomer in Pergamos. Much has been said already, and it is only in the hope that this promise, which is of the highest blessing, may be more simply understood, that I venture to make one or two remarks.

The change of circumstances at the cessation of the Roman persecutions is well known. I think it is important to know that He who hath the two-edged sword, begins with: "I know where thou dwellest." I suppose all who read this have noticed that "thy works" is not in the text.

The point is that Pergamos is dwelling in the place where Satan's seat is. The language is not equivocal, for Satan's seat is in the world, and that company, whose calling is heavenly and who should have watched outside, had now accepted a worldly position. It was a serious thing to be dwelling in Egypt, having gone down there without the Lord's permission; still more serious for the church to be found dwelling where Satan's seat is.

I merely wish to notice this before going on at once to the overcomer in verse 17. Surely nothing did more harm morally to

Christians than the edict of Milan. The world then promised to protect them and to be friendly. Save us from our friends !

This great change, that is, the world's friendship instead of persecution, then took place, and characterises the remaining phases of the seven churches. The world began to patronise Christianity, and in the same measure as its gifts were received by the church did the true joy of a heavenly calling evaporate.

In the same ratio as the purple and fine linen appeared upon the bishops' persons, did the real knowledge of the communion with the Father and Son and the fidelity to a rejected Christ disappear from their hearts !

I do not mean that there were not many Christians ; but worldly power was received, and true Christianity given up. Unhappy change !

The promise to the faithful overcomer is in keeping with the exercise he would have to pass through, for I suppose that none will deny the hidden manna to be the antitype of that which was placed in the golden vessel, and hidden in the ark. (Ex. xvi. ; Heb. ix. 3.)

The manna which fell round the camp represents Christ humbled upon earth : the blessed Jesus, meek and lowly in heart ; but the manna preserved in the golden cruse before Jehovah in the most holy place, represents Christ "once

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humbled here," but now in heaven, having left the world for ever. I think we may see the gold brightly enough in John xvi. 10: "Of righteousness, because I go unto my Father, and the world seeth me no more."

Our thoughts, too, have often been directed to the blessed fact, that in the glory we shall actually see the Christ who was humbled here for the glory of God and for our sakes, who became poor that we might be enriched by His poverty. O most blessed of all prospects!

The faithful Christian, then, is identified with Him who suffered here, "who came to visit us in great humility;" but whose glory is seen in the very sanctuary of God on high. There is God's appreciation in heaven of the humbled Christ, and the true remedy for worldliness.

I have no doubt that those who understood this did *not* burn incense to the gods under Julian the apostate.

But there is also the white stone with the new name written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it.

The crown will be very splendid, especially beautiful as received from the gracious hand of our Lord; but here the white stone is not the outward and public reward, but that intimate recognition and appreciation of service, which He, the blessed Master, alone can give.

## “PRESENT,” “PROVE.”

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At a time when Christianity was becoming a popular thing and recognised in the empire, the faithful overcomer was called to continue in a humble and despised path, and there to carry out his service under the Master's eye. The Lord Jesus Christ alone would know his trials, his exercises, and his true desire to serve, and would give him the token of freedom and favour at the end, with the name written which His servant alone should understand.

It is the end of the blessed private history of the faithful saint with Christ.

Such blessed rewards have no doubt animated the faithful for centuries. May the thought of so soon seeing Him, who bore every humiliation for us, and that of having His own approbation in all true service, nay, in all true *desire* to serve Him, give us courage to be faithful to Him in this heartless nineteenth century!

E. L. B.



## “PRESENT,” “PROVE.”

ROMANS XII. 1, 2.

“PRESENT a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.” “Prove what is that acceptable and perfect will of God.” We are to present the one, then we shall prove the other. How remarkable is the tone of the apostle! “I beseech



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you." The disciples of the Lord never command, only beseech. Let us take that example. The imperative mood is, alas! not only in word, but also in manner.

Go back, my brethren, to your preaching beseeching rather than commanding. "I beseech you by the mercies of God." What are these mercies? They are to be found in the whole epistle prior to this chapter. He piles up the magnificence of the mercies of God, and then upon the ground of these beseeches. There is much need for thinking over the mercies of God! What have we rendered back to Him for these? Have we not to make confession that self has been very uppermost with us. We mar our work by not dropping self-assertiveness. God wants you to take of His mercies, then give of yourself. His order is not as men, "give and take," but "take and give." Then life becomes subject to a great "must." I must give self and all. God, however, is no man's debtor, and some shall find that God's will is acceptable to us. God will pay us back if our sacrifice is complete. The will of God will be our ineffable delight, but we must begin at the right end, the first step, which is self-sacrifice. God's wish will be ours then. We shall have proved it acceptable.

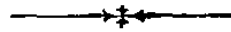
(*Extracted*).

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## “QUICKEN THOU ME ACCORDING TO THY WORD.”

IF not pressed onward and upward by fresh life, we must be going back, standing still is the first step in retrogression. It is a solemn thought that there is no growth, no fruitfulness, without this “quickenings.” Without it we become *crystallised and fossilised*. The moment a Christian stands still, a new process begins. You have seen a fossil retaining in every lineament the *form* which once was living, but instead of life there is nothing but stone. This is what is happening to souls who depend upon past experience, and do not follow on to know the Lord.

C. P.



## THE PERSON OF THE LORD.

How beyond all our wonder and praise is the Person of the blessed Lord! As an Apostle could say, and more because He knew it better, “great is the mystery.” But in one respect He was one with us all, great as His revelations were. No man knows the Son, yet He lets us see that He is that which no man knows. Who could say but there “God is known in death”? Is it not there God’s love is known, never known really till known there? Yet it is weakness, and as to His place as man, the very end of man. But in Himself God is known in love by

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His being down here with sinful men—by that love reaching even to us. He made Himself of no reputation, emptied Himself—not that He could be other than God—there is the mystery—but as to the form of God He did. Hence having taken the form of a servant, He is always such—receives all. Even when He takes the kingdom, He goes a long journey to receive a kingdom, and, when by His perfection in power He has subdued all, He gives it up to God even the Father. He gives up His own Spirit when the time comes, but commends it to His Father—raises up the temple of His body, but is raised by the glory of the Father—grows in wisdom, speaks what He knows, but He is the wisdom of God ; He can do nothing of Himself—is obedient, but He *is* the power of God, and quickens too whom He will ; created all things and upholds them by the word of His power. And this was His perfection with the whole power of evil against Him, never to go out of the path of dependence and obedience—never to use power by His will. Thus He bound the strong man as in the wilderness—in death how much more even—He could have had even in dependence, more than twelve legions of angels, but it would not have been obedience fulfilling the scriptures.

But what an emptying that was when He who was God could come into death, though suffer-

ing, though obeying, bring all that God was in His moral perfection into death, and then when it was needed, in man's extremity through sin, in man's weakness, in the place of Satan's power, there glorify it—love, righteousness, majesty, truth, all found glorified there. God is glorified in Him, yet it was in death, and because it was death in all it meant for God ; but it was all the power of love to God in the emptying. I do not turn to John's writings here, already elsewhere spoken of, where the divine nature of the Lord is so distinct (John v. gives plainly this position of the Lord ; chap. vi. is more distinctly as man, still He comes and goes up again) where He comes out as God—not genealogic form, takes the place of receiving everything. It is contemplation of the wondrous and unsearchable fact I seek, not Adam, or Abraham, or David—and yet as made flesh, always proofs which are everywhere where He is.

But I would weigh some facts in the gospels as to the manifestation of God in Him. When the blessed Lord had to do with unbelievers whom He knew and had to treat as adversaries, though His being God comes out—save His knowing all men, as yet not judging—what God is does not come out at all ; it is only when driven by the wilful blindness and hostility of the human heart, to speak of things as they are, that forced and driven to the necessity of it, so

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to speak, the fact of being God comes out. "Before Abraham was I am. Then took they up stones to cast at him, but Jesus hid himself."

There is no revelation of Himself in John viii. He does not come to judge, and the woman is not condemned—she is to go and sin no more. He gives divine power to the law, or rather He is by His word divine power in the conscience—no grace is in question, and they all go away one by one. Divine power in the Word awakes the conscience. He is the light of the world, and He who follows Him does not walk in darkness. But here there are none such ; it is simply the light shining in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.

But Christ is divine. He can bear witness of Himself, yet He says, "As the Father hath taught me," as ever in John receiving all. Nothing inconsistent with grace, but the simple absence of all contrary to it. He could not contradict Himself, but He is only light in darkness. As man He hardly appears here, for that is grace ; other cases present themselves where grace is at work.

We may first take the woman of Samaria—but here away from Jerusalem, where with the Jews (not *the* people) He is always in judgment—where the great change of leaving them and having to do with the world,

## THE PERSON OF THE LORD. 303

and bringing men to have to do with the Father and with God spiritually, and that by life in the power of the Spirit, are brought out, and where Christ is the rejected man and feels it, but is thereby thrown into the consciousness that He is the divine Giver of eternal life in the power of the Spirit.

But here we have the Lord fully as a man ; the Jachin and Boaz of christian truth had been set up in chapter iii.—man or Jew was naught, must be born again, and the Son of man must be lifted up. God had loved and had given. Christ was a rejected Christ—He left Judæa where the Pharisees were jealous and would have none of Him. Christ must be a rejected Christ for us to have part with Him—sad thing to say, but so it is—if it die not, it abides alone. No doubt He could always quicken whom He would, but without His death we could not righteously see God ; and if a man received a new nature without His death, there would be no putting away of the old, we must be risen as well as quickened—a *new place*, as a *new life*—and this is only by His death.

But He was rejected, felt it, afterwards wept over the city, felt it deeply as none of us could feel—we see Him comforted, as rejected by His own to whom He came, by fields white to harvest.

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He was weary with His journey, and sat alone in the world. O wondrous place! The world He had created, but more into which He was come in love: and here only a weary man feeling the rejection of His love; but, as to the place He had taken, dependent for a drink of water—He who had made it—upon a poor, sin-wearied woman. . . . He submits to human circumstances and conditions—His own words were, “If thou knewest the gift of God,” and what heart is in the words! What a need to win the confidence of a weary soul! Yet the simple expression of what His own heart was full of, of God as goodness and brought out, as to circumstances, by the pressure on that heart of the rejection by His beloved people which He was suffering under! How wonderful to hear Him saying just then, “Salvation is of the Jews”! Perfect owning of God’s counsels and ways! But in His rejection in them, grace flowing freely out—the natural expression of what He was full of, but as that was love, love which seeks to bring a weary soul to confidence in God by bringing that love down to lay its wants at the feet of such an one, to win confidence in a love that could do it. “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith”—there He was—“Give me to drink”—come even there—“thou wouldst have asked”—He would have given, for He was the giver. What a scene

Such a lowly place ! And to learn what God is in it ! Yea, what He is by it !

There is no feeling like that of the perception of the Person of Christ, and His words and He are one—He was what He said, always.

Yet it is thoroughly in human nature—I look at Him here, yea that is the way, and here I learn it.

J. N. D.



## MODERN INFIDELITY AND THE WORD OF GOD.

WHEN any one loves, confides in, and is indebted to another (and in this case the debt is infinite), he will seek to defend, if he has any heart, the beloved object when it is attacked, without perhaps exactly measuring his power to be fully successful in its defence. One qualification (none is of any value if God be not with us) I may boast of—profound, unfeigned (I believe divinely given) faith in the Bible. I have through grace, been by it converted, enlightened, quickened, saved. I have received the knowledge of God by it to adore His perfections—of Jesus, the Saviour, joy, strength, comfort of my soul.

Many have been indebted to others as the means of their being brought to God, to



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ministers of that gospel which the Bible contains, or to friends who delight in it. This was not my case. That work, which is ever God's, was wrought in me through the means of the written word. He who knows what the value of Jesus is will know what the Bible will be to such a one. If I have, alas ! failed it in nearly thirty years' arduous and varied life and labour, at least such, as far as the service of an unknown and feeble individual usually leads, I have never found it fail me ; if it has not for the poor and needy circumstances of time through which we feebly pass, I am assured it never will for eternity. "The word of the Lord endureth for ever." If it reaches down even to my low estate, it reaches up to God's height, because it comes thence : as the love that can reach even to me, and apply to every detail of my feebleness and failure, proves itself divine in doing so : none but God could, and hence it leads me up to Him. If received, it has brought the soul to God, for He has revealed Himself in it.

Its positive proofs are all in itself. The sun needs no light to see it by. . . . . The man of intellect produces human infidelity. The man of imagination will give us human superstition, coloured over with the haze of antiquity, for fear what it really is should be too clearly seen. Both give me man. The scriptures alone give me God.

## "IT MATTERS LITTLE."

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Hence the peculiar form of modern infidelity is, attack on the written word—the scriptures. Superstition takes exactly the same ground. The cry of "Bibliolatry" sounds alike from the intellectual and from the superstitious infidel. Both have the same object of attack, both are infidels—one an intellectual, the other an imaginative one. Both would persuade me that the Bible cannot itself command my conscience and oblige me to faith as coming from God. Do they not both seek this? Is it not infidelity?

J. N. D.



## "IT MATTERS LITTLE."

"Therefore we are always confident."—2 COR. v. 6.

It matters little whence this spirit life  
 Departeth unto God—  
 Whether from seas "Profound" it takes its flight,  
 Or from earth's beaten sod.

'Tis unimportant, if the shell it leaves  
 As dust, be swept away ;  
 Or if each atom, sunder'd far from each,  
 In ocean's depths decay.

No change for me—whether or light or shade  
 Come upon earth or go ;  
 Whether the tale, that once I lived a man,  
 Time doth efface or no.

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Vain strife of tongues ! Ye rise not where on high  
    "Graven,"\* my record stands  
Imperishable—howe'er described  
    Below by human hands.

And there for me God's "MAN OF COUNSEL" stands,  
    My name upon His breast—  
The Advocate, who knew each failure here,  
    Whose work secures my rest.

There ruleth He—while faith and hope and love,  
    These are my portion here,  
Upborne by them I taste the "things above,"  
    My spirit's proper sphere.

Mid this wild rush and clang of "earthly things,"  
    Whose waves around me roll,  
His Spirit, Pilot sits and steers my bark  
    Calmly towards its Goal.

H. C. A.

\* Exodus xxviii. 11, 21 ; Luke x. 20.



## “WHAT OF THE NIGHT?”

(ISA. XXI. 11, 12.)

ANOTHER shadow is nearly gone down on the great dial of time, another year will soon be numbered with the past, verily, “We bring our years to an end as a tale that is told,” how soon they are fled as a watch in the night! How well it is said that “we take no note of time but from its loss”!

Standing, then, as we do just now upon the confines of the dying year, it becomes us solemnly and earnestly to ask the question: Where are we? “What of the night?”

Now observe the person addressed here is entitled a “watchman,” a sentry keeping watch with wakeful eyes and measured step, through the long dreary hours of the night; open to be challenged as the only one who can give a true and accurate account of how things really are. It is the *absence* of our precious Lord and Master from this world which makes it night, and happy would it be if all His own so felt it, as to maintain in *affection* and *heart loyalty* that *outside position* which suits the friends and followers of a despised and rejected Christ; and along with it that *ex-*

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*pectant position* which asserts the fact that nothing but His own personal coming for them can turn the gloom of the night into the joy of the morning.

There is something very blessed in "keeping watch," it is the only safe condition of the servant in such a night as now hangs around us.

Let us also note here how fully alive and awake the watchman in our scripture is: he answers *at once*, there is no delay in the reply, it is a direct, decided rejoinder immediately. But the reply itself is most significant, and points in a very striking way to what is immediately in our front, as we stand upon the threshold of 1894.

First note, "The *morning* cometh." Let us challenge our hearts as to whether this expresses the real affectionate longing of our breasts. It was on this the watchman's fixed and steady gaze was set; it was this beyond all else that he longed for, with this his mind was engrossed and filled.

Reader, is it so with us? Are our hopes and longings "the day-break and morning star"? "The morning cometh." How welcome its coming! Have we not known what it is to keep vigil by the bedside of a loved one, during the long dreary hours of night, and how eagerly greeted were the first streaks of light betokening the approach of day dawn,

## "WHAT OF THE NIGHT?"

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and how welcomed they were as well. Oh may it be so, only in fuller, deeper measure, as we wait for and see by faith the speedy coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But there is another reply of the watchman, which is very solemn, namely, "also the night." It is night now, but there is a darker, drearier one at hand. At the present moment the dark shadows of the "ebon night" are thickly flung around us. True, the present "far-spent night" is very dark, very gloomy, unrelieved by one spark of light save what comes from above; but it is as nothing to that which is coming, a real night that will be to the world which will be *left down* in the night, *behind* in the night, to be *overtaken* by a thief in the night. Think of the world's outlook at this moment; a kind of universal dread wraps it around, men's hearts are failing them for fear, general insecurity and mistrust prevail on all sides. Men are dreading every moment some fearful outbreak of violence and bloodshed, dreading the bursting forth of national convulsions which will ruin the commerce and prosperity of the kingdoms of Europe, and therefore they would give any price for fixed and settled peace.

Now, amid all this dismal foreboding, the dreary, sullen silence is at times broken by the despairing question, What is this to end

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in? What is this world coming to? Is there any hope? What is to happen to us? These are the sounds which reach our ears amid the closing hours of the dying year. Alas! how few are more than half awake to the true and real state of both the church and the world?

- \* The *departure* in the church from the truth is simply appalling, the *settling down* of the world for coming judgment simply terrible to contemplate. The increase of knowledge, the tremendous stride science has taken of late, the rapid growth of philosophy are all marks of the moment, keeping pace with these is a refinement of iniquity as dark as it is daring, a blasphemous determination to degrade the Son of God down even to the level of Confucius, Buddha, and Mohammed, with the avowed object of benefitting the great "Brotherhood of Humanity."

This has actually taken place in the so-called "Parliament of Religions" at Chicago.

One leading morning paper presents its readers with a description of the scene given by an eye-witness, himself a so called minister of religion. He says: "The spectacle of Christians, Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics, met together for a few brief days in fellowship, if not in unity, 'gives,' as the French say, 'to reflect.' The experiment, endorsed by the pope, discountenanced by the Arch-

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bishop of Canterbury, embraced by the heathen Chinee, welcomed by Hindu, Parsee, Cingalese, and the chiefs of almost every acknowledged religion of the world, has resulted in a demonstration, the like of which has perhaps not been seen since the days of Constantine, Arius, and Athanasius."

Then in the close of his account this writer, expressing what the effects produced on himself by all he had heard and seen, boldly asserts that "It is time to proclaim the essential unity of all religions—they conflict only in their accidents"—and "Henceforth to accept Christ, the rejection of all the teachers that went before Him is not necessary, and to receive Christianity need not carry with it the dogma that all other religions are in all parts false."

With all this profanity crushing in upon us we may well say, "What of the night?" what of its blasphemy? of its rebel will to dishonour and degrade the blessed Son of God? We reply, a darker, blacker night of judgment awaits it, and rapidly approaches.

Oh, that His own stood out more distinctly and separately for Him, waiting to hear His own blessed voice, and to be caught up to meet Him in the air!

W. T. T.





## BREAKING OF BREAD, &amp;c.

I REGARD all pretence in any to priesthood, save that which can be attributed and which in scripture is attributed to all saints, as the principle of the apostasy in its present form of development and the denial of Christianity. Judaism had priests, because the people could not themselves go directly to God where He revealed Himself; Christianity has none between God's people and Himself in their worship, because Christians are brought to God and have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. To set a priest to go for them as one nearer to God is to deny the effect of Christianity. Besides, priesthood has essentially to do with intercession, or sacrifice and offerings: and in the Lord's supper there is no sacrifice, nor is it intercession. The whole idea of priesthood on earth is to be rejected, therefore, as utterly contradictory both to Christianity and the act of breaking the bread.

But, on the other hand, it is a mistake to think we partake by breaking the bread or that we break it. The whole force of the thing consists (as to this point) in our partaking of already broken bread. It is His body broken for us that we take and eat. We are not the breakers of His body, properly speaking. So that, I apprehend, the true partaking of the Lord's supper is

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after the bread is broken. The breaking of the bread now, is of course a necessary accident to such participation, but is no part of the communion at all. And every one acquainted with scripture on the point knows that "blessing" means simply giving thanks, and not consecrating the bread. See 1 Corinthians xi. 24, and compare Matthew xxvi. 26, 27; Mark xiv. 22; and Luke xxii. 19. So in Luke ix. 16, the miracle of the loaves and not the Eucharist, He blessed them and brake; in John vi. 11, 23; Mark viii. 6, 7 (also Mark vi. 41), the terms are united; in Matthew xiv. 19 He blessed, and in chapter xv. 36 gave thanks. In 1 Corinthians xiv. 16 we find incontestable proof of what indeed the previous passages can leave no doubt on a reasonable mind. "Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned, say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?" Blessing is blessing God, a giving of thanks. So the apostle says in chapter xi., "the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks," and in 1 Corinthians x., "the cup of blessing which we bless." Matthew and Mark, speaking of the bread, say, He blessed; and speaking of the cup, say, He gave thanks. In Luke it is simply, He gave thanks. Thus, the blessing which precedes the breaking of bread is

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a giving of thanks ; and in this, of course, all join, as in every thanksgiving, though one may utter it. Every saint is essentially competent, though in a large congregation godly order of mind may leave it to such as may have justly earned the respect of the body ; yet, as the feeling of priesthood is readily slipped into, I should think it desirable that it were not always one. The breaking of the bread is in itself no religious act ; it represents the putting of Christ to death, and, as an outward act, it was consummated by wicked men. But the Lord did break it in the last supper, shewing it was a dead Christ they had to feed on ; and hence he who gives thanks breaks the bread. The communion comes after and is on a broken body. The breaking is the killing of Christ, and, though absolutely necessary as a figure, because His death was absolutely necessary and is the very point shewn forth, yet the act of doing it is no religious part of the thing which one has a privilege in doing. And as to pouring out the wine, it is done no doubt often, but is no part of the Lord's supper at all. The wine is, in the institution, supposed to be already in the cup, still pointing to the great fact, that the communion refers to an already dead Saviour. The blood is out of the body—"my blood which is shed for you." The act of pouring out would not represent death, because the body is not thus represented, and

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hence it is not referred to at all. The already shed blood is given thanks for or blessed, as already poured out: "the cup which we bless," &c. There is the breaking of the bread as significative of the breaking of His body; but this is preparatory to communion.

It is this consideration which shews the terrible import of the Roman Catholic doctrine as to the Eucharist, and how Satan has taken them in their own wisdom, and, so to speak, mocked them. The laity are deprived of the cup and are consoled by what is called the doctrine of concomitancy; namely, that the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus are in the bread (indeed in both species). But if the blood be in the body, and not shed and separate, there is no redemption. It is *shed* blood, not blood in the body which is the power of redemption; without shedding of blood there is none. This confirms the view, taken above, that it is a body already broken, and blood already shed, of which we partake. Thus, though the bread must be broken, as it was by Christ, by him who gives thanks, this is but preparatory, and forms, strictly, no part of the communion; and, as representing the putting Christ to death, it is no part of the holy service itself, though needed to shew that it is of a dead Christ we partake. It is of no living existing Christ, but of a dead Christ, and there is none such.

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Remark further, how this sets aside transubstantiation and consubstantiation ; for no such Christ exists as that celebrated in the Eucharist. As in the Passover a slain lamb, so a dead Christ is represented there and shed blood ; but there is no dead Christ now. He is alive again for evermore. As risen with Him, we remember the sorrows and sufferings which gave us a place there. That atoning death is accomplished and passed, and sin is put away for us, and we are alive with Him for evermore. I would just add that the expression in 1 Corinthians x. 16 has no reference to one or to many, but to what Christians do in contrast with Jews and Gentiles. The apostle is treating the question of idolatry. Jews were partakers of the altar, Gentiles drank the cup of demons. What we (Christians) partake of is communion with the sacrifice of Christ. We are identified with the sacrifice, we cannot be with the cup of demons too. J. N. D.



## A JOURNEY WITH THREE FEASTS.

(EX. XII. ; NUM. IX. 5 ; JOSH. V. 10.)

HAVING in a former paper pointed out some of the leading features in the feast of the Passover, and divine principles contained therein, I desire briefly in this to look at it in connection with the journey Israel took.

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The three places mentioned in the texts depict the progress of a soul as to its apprehension of the salvation and calling of God.

The distance from the Red Sea to Jordan was not more than could have been traversed in six months with ease by the way the Lord led them, and they took forty years to accomplish it: so the moral distance bears no similarity to the physical.

They reached the mount of God in three months after their departure out of Egypt, which is about half the journey. This was taken under grace, the other half under creature responsibility, which receives its true character in Kadesh-barnea (Deut. i. 43), and results in total failure, and not a man of this order enters the land. (Num. xxvi.) Grace brings to God (Exod. xix. 4), creature responsibility shuts out God. (Deut. i. 42.)

The first text defines the starting point; the second the middle of the journey; the third, the end. As Israel's state was in concert with each place respectively, so that place is an illustration of souls in their moral progress to-day. A year expired between the first and second part mentioned, while thirty-nine years had passed away before the mention of the third. Let us now consider these points a little more closely.

Exodus xii. describes the state of those who know the efficacy of the blood of the slain Lamb,

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and who have appropriated it to their need, and who feed upon the Victim who died in their stead, and who have also a righteous sense of the judgment which is coming upon the world, which rejected and killed the Lord of life and glory, but do not yet know deliverance: there can be no song raised in truth in this state and position, because liberty is not yet known, and judgment past and future engages the mind. Verse 11 gives us four deeply important traits which we shall do well to weigh in the sight of God. Did Israel furnish a picture of our moral attitude when they literally carried out these injunctions, or are we, as each first day of the week comes round, partaking of the Lord's supper as a matter of form? garments loose! no journey before us! no departure at hand!

These traits are often seen in a young convert; but too many surrender to one temptation after another of an earthly nature until they settle down in a formal kind of way, and the wilderness becomes a conventional term with no power.

Sure I am that if we announce what is involved in verse 9, and our attitude be what is depicted in verse 11, we shall soon find ourselves thrust out into the wilderness (see vers. 31, 32, 33), and there we shall learn the value of these injunctions, and haste to exchange the wilderness for Canaan.

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Israel partook of the passover but once in Egypt, they were thrust out of it (a rebuke to many of us in this day), and we will now consider them at the feast again, but in a different *state* and *place*. They are now clear of both Pharaoh and his territory. The reader will know that twelve months have passed away between these two occasions, three months in the journey from Rameses to the mount of God, and nine months at the mount where they receive the oracles of God, and are engaged in making the tabernacle and its furniture. This finished, they are about to start again, but before taking a step onward, God, as it were, says to them, The passover was the ground of your escape from judgment; it must also be the ground of your every hope while on the way.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season . . . . according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it.” (Num. ix. 1-3.)

The reader will see that in the keeping of the feast at this place must have been associated with thoughts which could not have arisen when in Egypt, because their position is altered. They are midway between Canaan and Egypt.



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Retrospectively they could survey the marvels of God's power in redeeming them from the house of bondage, and God's interposition throughout that period. Prospectively they could look onward that the same hand which had delivered from Egypt would bring them into Canaan. They are now a *delivered* people as before they were a *sheltered* people. They have changed *places*. They have another *Master* and are in a different *place*. They are brought to God. (Exod. xix. 4; Deut. i. 31.) How great and glorious is their position!

These people had stood on the eastern side of the Red Sea, the subjects of a glorious deliverance while the combined forces of Pharaoh, and all his glory were turned into the humiliating spectacle of death. They had been emancipated, and had raised a song of triumph in regard to all that God had done *for* them. All this and much more would be mingled in the breast of a godly Israelite at the feast in this stage.

But let it be carefully observed that they are neither in Egypt nor Canaan at this stage, but in the *wilderness*, the journey is not over, as we shall see.

But what condition do they illustrate at this juncture? Is it not that of souls who can appropriate Romans iv. 25? As the transition from the oppressors' land to the mount of God took but three months to accomplish, so the

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moral distance from Romans iii. to v. 1 is often reached in a like period—that is from pardon to peace and divine favour, and at this point songs of praise like Exodus xv. are raised, and here the joy is so great that the soul thinks that it will never have an unhappy moment again ; and here souls would like to stop and sing and praise, happy in the knowledge of what has been done *for* them ; but great as the blessing enjoyed at this point is, it is not the point where God would have them rest. Perfection is not known here. (Heb. vi. 1.) They are not established in grace, and unless this is so, there is sure to be unevenness in the peace enjoyed.

Now there was one most dreadfully treacherous and corrupt foe which Israel did not discover among the dead on the day they stood emancipated the other side of the Red Sea, and this foe harassed them all the way from Sinai to Hormah, at which place he was discovered figuratively condemned upon a pole and ended before God. This enemy has several names in scripture—self, sin, flesh, the old man. And it may take thirty-nine years for a soul to pass from Romans v. 1 to Romans vii. 18, from mount Horeb to mount Hor. I speak of conscious knowledge, not of doctrinal intelligence, two widely different things. When a soul has reached Hormah, he is prepared to say with Abraham, Genesis xxiii. 4, and readily appro-

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priates the truth of Colossians ii. 11. I mean the moral distance between mount Hor and the Jordan (Gilgal rather) is short compared to the distance between mount Horeb and mount Hor, that is, it takes longer to learn that there is no good thing *in me*, than when it is found out to part company with it. I believe Saul learned it in three days. (Acts ix.)

The first lesson in regard to this enemy in relation to our subject is seen in Numbers ix. 7. It often happens that a soul who has reached Romans iv. 25 is overtaken by the motions of sin from within, such as evil thoughts, bad tempers, lusts, because it is when the enemies outside are gone that the one within begins to be discovered. This creates unrest, and peace is not enjoyed, and often, as in the instance of the men of our chapter, when the soul would most desire to be free, and thus to announce the Lord's death upon the first day of the week, this enemy will intrude, and some dead bone is touched (through unwatchfulness sometimes), because though Israel had got beyond the abominations of the Egyptians (Exod. viii. 26 ; 2 Pct. i. 4), they had not got beyond defilement. The coming into contact with a dead bone rendered a man unclean and unfit to offer an offering unto the Lord. So the apostle Peter names five that must be put away (1 Pet. ii. 1) before coming with an offering. And the honest

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tender heart of a young believer desires to know how this enemy so often troubling him is to be subdued? You must believe what God has done with it in the cross of Christ. Not only sins but sin has been dealt with there and condemned. In reality the distance from mount Horeb to mount Hor must be treated morally, whether the soul takes thirty-nine years or but three days, like Paul. For the flesh must be crippled to render it inoperative. The men who left mount Horeb never entered the land. (Num. xxvi. 64; Deut. i. 35.) In the brazen serpent too that generation who went in passed out of sight, for those who looked "lived." That is, figuratively, another order of men went into the land. The Red Sea and the paschal lamb both are figures of what has been done *for* us; but the brazen serpent determines what has been done *with* us as children of Adam.

It may be argued that we in our day are in a very different state of things, and that these are but figures. This is true, but John iii. and 1 Corinthians x. clearly prove that what was a temporal admonition to them applies in a spiritual sense to us, and is the most accurate picture of the spiritual state of believers after Christ, as it was of God's people temporally before Christ, because written with the pen of inspiration.

No soul can be in the enjoyment of Romans

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viii., who has not passed through Romans vi. and vii., and no one will destroy a thing he has not condemned : it is not enough to say the word says the flesh is condemned. One must be brought into such a position as to justify God for condemning it, and the difference is great—one is a kind of relief, the other humbling. (Gal. ii. 20 ; vi. 14.) If you cannot look upon that up-lifted serpent as the just sentence upon yourself you cannot go over Jordan any more than the rebels of Numbers xxvi. 64, and you must wander about the wilderness until you have learned that in you dwelleth no good thing. You then justify God for what he has done with it (Rom. viii. 3), and you pass into what that chapter teaches, “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.” Note the bearing of Romans vii. 5 and viii. 9, which answers to the state of Israel between the brazen serpent and the Jordan. Might it not be truly said a “state” suited to the land?

Now the root of the low tone in our meetings sometimes might be traced to the fact that the moral distance from mount Horeb to mount Hor has never been traversed by the greater number of God’s people. In other language, passing out of creature responsibility to God’s sovereign grace—“gift.”

It will be seen from Numbers xxi. 16 that now that an end is made to all that is of creature

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responsibility, God is free to act from His own heart just as when the Lord had announced the necessity in John iii.; He could disclose God's gift in John iv. Everything is changed. God gives, man receives, and the effect is wondrous, for a new song is raised, not now of victory over foes, and how they sank into the depths, but of God's gift. They are striking another note upward, and the march onward is in harmony with that keynote. God gives them a double witness to his grace in bringing them into the land in the destruction of the two kings who would not let them pass their borders peaceably. The whole path is now clear. Moses has finished his work, and gives place to Joshua, who is magnified in the eyes of the people, type of Christ in His new position bringing the people to the other side. And here another object fills the vision. The ark was touchingly brought before them in Numbers x. 33. God there says, as it were, All responsibility to guide you is within that ark. They failed to discern it, they had not eyes to see it (Deut. xxix. 4), and the figurative three days is protracted to thirty-nine years (a humiliating fact), after which it again assumes its rightful place. It is supreme, and its pure heavenly blue and glory, like the rays of the sun, imparts its own beauty upon every object surrounding it.

In figure we have parted company with self to

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have Christ "all things" and "in all." He had traversed the whole way with us, and we had not discerned Him so pre-occupied. Now He joins us. Not as a man upon earth again coming into our circumstances ; as such he "vanished out of their sight" (Luke xxiv.), but in a new order—resurrection life (John xx.), leading us into His circumstances, if I might so say. Resurrection is the great teaching of the Jordan as death was that of the Red Sea. This delivered *from*, that brought into. Not a single life is lost in the Jordan, and its shores only spoke of *life*: if Israel looked into it they saw the spot where the ark was ; if they looked forward its beauty engaged them. Nothing but the ark was seen backward or forward ; its glories tinged everything and every one. The pure heavenly blue was where it could be seen (Josh. iii. 4), and they are in the power of it. It was more than life in a look at the up-lifted serpent—life communicated through His *death*, but oneness of life as risen out of *death* (John xx. 22), and a heavenly object filling the eye. The Lord Jesus in this aspect has in the power of life gone down into death, which stood like an impregnable fort against us, and has taken possession of it and delivered it over into the hands of His ransomed ones (1 Cor. iii. 22), so that in His victory they are invulnerable, and every dart may be quenched. (Eph. vi. 16.)

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Let the reader ponder Joshua iii. and iv. If I may so say, the ark is in its own native element, and the richest blue clothes are in the brightest spot. And who engaged the eye of Stephen and made his face to shine as the face of an angel, but acquaintance with Christ where *He is*. Man had rent the veil of His flesh to put out the light; this gave but the occasion for the light to shine with all its native brilliancy in the brightest spot where every eye could see it. Had Jesus remained on the earth only a few could have seen Him; but now the language of John xiv. 19; Hebrews ii. 9; 2 Corinthians iii. 18 is for every believer, no matter where he is physically.

With the foregoing remarks let the reader contemplate Israel partaking the passover outside the massive walls of Jericho in perfect composure, surveying all that was theirs according to the sure purpose of God, and it will be patent that thoughts of gratitude and praise are produced which could never have arisen in the wilderness, much less in Egypt. The soil could produce nothing of the kind, no corn grew in the wilderness. And this is what they passed on to immediately after celebrating the passover in the land, that is, in figure they celebrate Christ's death as the basis of *every* blessing (the pass-over), and pass on to where He now is (the old corn of the land—Christ in glory).

I do not think that scripture speaks of Israel



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having celebrated it in the wilderness more than once (a rebuke to many of us). Indeed from Joshua v. I should judge they were not in a state to have kept it, and it was not until the reproach of Egypt was rolled off them (they had carried Egypt all along the wilderness with them) that they partook of it in the land. It is a sad condition that would turn the Lord's supper into a kind of relief or sacrament instead of a feast of remembrance.

Celebrating the passover in the land would surely depict that position and state where Christ is seen supreme, and the whole range of God's purposes unfolded by the Spirit, the basis is not abandoned, but the person who laid it has the pre-eminence. This is where the Spirit would conduct us all. The question is, will we permit Him to conduct us to the place, or rather the person, before we get there?

E. H.



## REBEKAH.

"Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go." (Gen. xxiv.)

(DEERHURST.)

THINE the beauty and the glory, Heir of all  
things, Son of God,  
Shining round me and before me, lighting  
all the desert road.

## REBEKAH.

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Camels girded for the journey, kneeling,  
 laden, set for home ;  
 Ah ! my heart is gone already—centred there  
 no more to roam.

Roll afar, thou proud Euphrates ! nought shall hold  
 me from my bourne,  
 Where my mighty Guardian came from, there, with  
 me, will He return.

Buried in Chaldæa's city, I had perish'd  
 with my race ;  
 But the Steward, sent to save me, met me in  
 his Master's grace.

Asked me for a little water, let me quench  
 his camels' thirst ;  
 Saw in me, " Bethuel's daughter," her He  
 prayed for at the first.

Oh the " Errand " that He told me, of the  
 Living One who died,  
 Of the Father's love and counsel, taking unto  
 Him a Bride.

Nothing I remember, nothing but that  
 Sacrifice and Choice ;  
 Never music filled my spirit like that  
 penetrating voice.

Could I hear Him—" Eliezer "—and for  
 Isaac not be won ?  
 Oh the *Father* loved and sought me, sent and claimed  
 me for His Son.

Let the token on my forehead, let the  
 bracelets on my hands,  
 Prove me chosen, now the daughter of the  
 Lord of all the lands.

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I will go, I would not tarry,—Object  
of that heart's delight—

He was *unto death* obedient : I would walk  
with Him in white.

Jewels, raiment, gifts, the Servant brought for me  
from Isaac's hand—

Precious things that else had never shone in  
any foreign land.

I shall see Him in His beauty, He Himself  
His bride will greet.

I shall be with Him for ever, in  
companionship complete.

Thoughts of Him are strength and gladness, Ah ! who meet  
us on the way ?

'Tis Himself—" Behold the Bridegroom ! " veiled—the  
Bride is caught away.

Thine the beauty and the glory, Lord of  
all things, sent of God,

Thou Thyself the Covering o'er me, Thine the Name  
shed forth abroad.

And the Servant telleth Isaac all things He  
Himself hath done ;

And Rebekah dwells in Hebron, wife of  
the once Offer'd One.

For He loves her, as His comfort ; sorrow,  
toil and death are o'er ;

She is with Him, He hath brought her to His  
home for evermore.

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H. K. B.



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