

SIMPLE TESTIMONY.

A Monthly Magazine.

“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the **Word**, that ye may grow thereby.”—1 PETER ii. 2.

“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the **Word** with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. **Therefore** many of them believed.”—Acts xvii. 11, 12.

“The **Word** of the Lord endureth for ever.”—1 PETER i. 25.

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SIMPLE TESTIMONY.



ETERNAL LIFE.

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”

1 JOHN v. 11, 12.

IT is deeply interesting to observe with what extreme simplicity the various writers of the New Testament Scriptures set forth, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, the most profound truths—set them forth in their innate beauty without the smallest effort at adornment or aiming at effect. How this stamps the book as divine!

At one time or another most of us may have heard Christian men discussing in a multitude of words some great truth till our minds have grown weary of listening. Their explanations, their definitions, their distinctions, have only darkened the truth instead of helping us to understand it. What a relief it has been to turn away from these well-meaning but bewildering expositors, and betake ourselves afresh to the simple Word.

VII.

It is as though we had passed out of a dense fog into the clear, pure atmosphere, where everything could be plainly seen.

Whatever new truths God may teach us from His Word—new, I mean, to us—they are not intended to supplant what we have already learnt from Him. A child is taught the letters of the alphabet before he is set to read. He may grow up and become a very learned man, but the letters of his childhood are never forgotten, and he will need them to the very end.

No doubt in divine things the truths we first learned to value and love because they met our need, acquire in our eyes a beauty of their own quite apart from the blessing they bring to us. As days roll by we see them more in their true magnitude, and perceive in them a depth and fulness which we had not noticed a while ago. We then value the truth for the truth's sake, and are led to adore Him whom the truth makes known.

One of the first things set before us in the heavenly school is, that God has given eternal life to those who believe on His Son. I say, not *the* first, but one of the first. Forgiveness alone would not have met our case. The old Adam life God has condemned. It is enmity in its mind against Him, is not subject to His law, neither indeed can be. (Rom. viii. 7.) Therefore if we are to walk with Him here, and be with

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Him by-and-by, He must give us another life, a new principle of being altogether. This is what He has done.

In setting down this blessed fact in the Holy Scriptures God has graciously used words easy to be understood, and were all believers acquainted with what God has said, and as unreasoning and receptive as a little child, there would not be one among them who does not know that he has eternal life. He would know it because God has said it, and would rejoice in Him who has given so great a gift.

When speaking of eternal life as being now imparted to the believer, we have been sometimes met with the observation that this is "high truth" and "strong meat." But it is not so; for however profound the truth, yet it is also very simple. We may liken it to the mysterious waters of Ezekiel's vision, which were first to the ankles, then to the knees, then to the loins, then waters to swim in, then a river that could not be passed over. The youngest believer may understand it, and the most advanced will have something yet to learn.

If any Christian reader is in doubt as to whether eternal life is bestowed upon the believer, let him read and ponder these true sayings of God. "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life." (John iii. 36.) "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me *hath*

everlasting life." (John vi. 47.) "Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, *hath* eternal life." (John vi. 54.) "And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that *every one* which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life." (John vi. 40.) "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." (John x. 28.) "And this is the record, that God *hath* given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son *hath* life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye *have* eternal life." (1 John v. 11-13.) Could any fact be stated in simpler terms?

"Do you know how far the earth is from the sun?" enquired a child of us one day.

"How far is it, dear boy?" we replied.

"Ninety-six million miles," said he, with such a look of assurance.

"How do you know that?" we asked.

"Father told me so," said he, and father's word settled the matter for him.

Ah! older heads than his might learn a lesson here. That child believed what was told him concerning the earth's distance from the sun, and passed it on to others on the authority of his father's word. He could not have reasoned about it, nor explained how the fact had been ascertained, but his father's word gave certainty. And shall

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not our Father's word give certainty to us? Shall we not believe Him?

Our natural life we inherit from our first parents; it has descended to us through successive generations from Adam "the first man." Eternal life comes to us in and through the second man, the Lord from heaven. He is the "*last* Adam"—last, because there is none to succeed Him, and all of His race share in His life.

How wonderful it is that the life of Him who is "the Life" should be given to us now; yea, Christ Himself is our life. (Col. iii. 4.)

But more, the life thus given unto us has been manifested in all its perfection, without one earth-born cloud to dim its lustre, in the person of a Man on earth, and that Man the only begotten Son of God. He was that Eternal Life, heard, seen, contemplated, handled, here below. Eternal life, then, has been expressed, not in a spirit, not in a phantom, but in a Man, and in those conditions that attach themselves to human life—sin apart.

This is very precious. Would I learn what eternal life is? I look at Jesus, and as I behold Him here on earth in the varied scenes in which He is presented by the inspired evangelists—as I observe His lowliness, His gentleness, His obedience, His devotedness to His God and Father, His forgetfulness of self, His gracious care and thought for others, His holiness, His grace, His

pity, His compassion, I see eternal life displayed, and can say, with adoring gratitude, That is *my* life.

And this being so, I own to the full my responsibility to let that life shine out in all my ways, Christ living in me—obscured, alas! by a thousand things. But if Christ is my life, if it is His own very life I share, if God has given to me eternal life, and this life is in His Son, then that is the life I have to display, always and everywhere. (2 Cor. iv. 10, 11.)

And if it is the reception of life—eternal life—that distinguishes the believer from him who is spiritually dead, yet this is not all. As possessing that life, and, moreover, indwelt by the Holy Ghost, we are set in new, heavenly, and eternal relationships, which are made known to us in the Word, and in harmony with which the Holy Spirit develops and strengthens the affections of this life.

To know these relationships, and to walk in them in the power of the Spirit, this is life indeed. For now that the Father's name has been declared to us by "the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father," we are privileged to take the place of children—to take it definitely and intelligently (John i. 12); the indwelling Spirit enabling us to cry, "Abba, Father." (Gal. iv. 6.) "*Our* fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." (1 John i. 3.) Of old

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Enoch walked with God ; Abraham was called the friend of God, and to Moses Jehovah spake face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend ; but fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ was a thing unknown to them. The life they lived as saints on earth, however blessed, differs from ours, inasmuch as they had not the revelation of the Father and the Son. To know God thus, to walk with Him as thus revealed, is the peculiar privilege of His children now, and this is life eternal ; less than this is not. (John xvii. 3.) But lest we should be misunderstood, let the reader here remark that we are now speaking of life as one speaks of daily life spent in the home or business circle ; not of life imparted. Without the latter it would be impossible to enjoy the former, for how could a dead man enjoy family life ?

But with the most advanced believers, even the "fathers" in the family of God, how much there is to hinder this life of fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened," and burdened we shall be until mortality is swallowed up of life. (2 Cor. v. 4.) However deep and intimate our communion, however great our growth in the knowledge of Him who is from the beginning, we cannot but feel the burden of this cumbrous clay. Eternal life in its full blessedness can only be known in another sphere,

where hindrances shall have no place. We therefore look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life—mercy all along the road, and eternal life at the end. (Jude 21.) When the Lord shall come, and we go to be with Him for ever, then, and not till then, shall we fully, unhinderedly, and eternally “enter into life.” Still, if eternal life in its widest meaning is what we hope for, if in narrower measure it is what we are now privileged to enjoy, a life that deepens in its blessedness as the soul grows in the knowledge of the Father and the Son, let us not be slow to maintain that eternal life is the present possessed portion of the feeblest saint. “He that hath the Son *hath* life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” Having Christ, eternal life is ours; and if any have Him not, then are they dead before God.

“*HIS* DESIRE FOR THEE.”

EPHESIANS iii. 17-19.

THAT Christ within thy heart may dwell,
 Its every void to fill;
 That thou, with all the saints, may know
 The mystery of God's will:
 The length and breadth, the depth and height
 Of all that vast domain,
 Where Christ alone the centre is,
 God's glory to sustain.
 And know *His* wondrous, boundless love
 Which thou canst ne'er explore;
 Thus into all God's fulness filled,
 Thy vessel shall run o'er.

L. W.

THE OFFENCE OF THE CROSS.

JOHN the Baptist, greatest of all the prophets, herald of the King, and preacher of the kingdom, was cast by Herod into prison, and his bold and faithful testimony was rudely stopped.

The effect of this sudden arrest seems for the moment to have shaken his faith as to the Messiahship of Jesus.

Accordingly he sends two of his disciples to ask Him if He were the actual Messiah, or if another were to be looked for. Does not such a question indicate a degree of uncertainty? No doubt it does; but then we must remember that there never was a true servant of God whose faith was not put to the test, or who was not in some way exercised as to the testimony he held. Indeed the higher the testimony the severer the test.

Nor did John escape. His testimony was high indeed; for he was the immediate forerunner of the Lord, and was sent to prepare His ways. His preaching was distinct, his call for reformation loud, his life beautifully separate, and his faithfulness most brilliant. He lived in full expectation of the immediate establishment of the kingdom.

Yet he was imprisoned; he had to suffer; and he was apparently taken by surprise. Why should the herald of the King thus be silenced? Why should the announcement of the kingdom thus

be arrested? In his difficulty he sends to Jesus, and receives from Him an answer to his question, as exquisite in its simplicity, complete in its explanation, and solemn in its import, as his shaken faith could have wished. "Go," said the Lord, "and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me." (Matt. xi. 4-6.)

A beautiful answer indeed to the difficulties of His poor suffering witness. The Lord does not allude to His own personal glory, does not bid these two disciples carry back to their master statements of His Deity or Messiahship. He merely draws their attention to public and well-known facts connected with His gracious ministry. He can call on a Bartimæus to tell how he received sight; or a cripple, who had lain for years at the pool of Bethesda, wholly cured by one brief sentence; or a leper touched by His health-giving hand; or a deaf man whose long-closed ears opened to His magic "*Ephphatha*"; or a Lazarus raised from the tomb; and on multitudes of the poor who had heard tidings of mercy. He can call on such witnesses to attest His mission, and confirm His claims. How effective! How conclusive! But, further, He does not fail to

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instruct John in the truth of the suffering path on which he had entered. "Blessed," He said, "is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me."

"*Offence*" was quite as much a part of His mission as the giving of life or health to the needy.

Was John *offended* by his imprisonment? He had now to learn that his truest honour as his Lord's forerunner lay in suffering for Him. A special blessing attaches to his sharing the sufferings of Christ—"Blessed is he"! Oh, how this word must have calmed the troubled mind of John! How it would explain his situation as a prisoner, and add lustre to his chain. In it the Lord predicted His own cross, and stamped the nature of all true Christian testimony.

It were an easy service had we only to preach the gospel to the poor, and witness the benevolent acts of a gracious Saviour; but whilst this is our privilege, we are connected with One who was crucified. He esteems the cross His highest glory, and He values the heart that follows in the same path.

Paul broke in upon luxurious Corinth with the gospel; but his motto was, that he should know nothing among them but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. This steadied his soul, and kept him clear of Corinthian folly. He sought to know a crucified Christ.

And in the luxury—the religious luxury—of this 19th century how this searching truth is

needed. The day of glory will come; but meanwhile we are called on to learn the *offence of the cross*. That *offence* has not yet ceased; and the cross is, on the one hand, as ever, the badge of man's enmity to God, as it is, on the other hand, at once the proof of God's love and of His judgment.

God tests everything by the cross of Christ. What savours most of it is dearest to Him, and the religion that refuses it is held in abomination by Him.

How much of this "offence" is to be found in the popularized Christianity of the day? Nay, the one effort seems to be to avoid the cross, both in its atoning and world-condemning characters. It is despised as of old; and therefore this popularization of the truth has brought about the most fearful anomaly possible. What could be a greater travesty of the Christianity of the apostles than the sad counterfeit we see around us? There is no resemblance between that which is presented to us in the Acts and the money-loving, pleasure-seeking, world-hunting Christianity of to-day. Infidelity is largely the child of this abortion. It is, as a system, the negation of Christianity, and for the general decay we have to bear the shame. If then one testimony brighter than another could be rendered, it consists in *not being offended* in Jesus.

Outward success in His work is deprived of the greater part of its glory if that be lacking.

PERSONAL INTIMACY WITH THE LORD JESUS. 13

"Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me" had its deep and significant meaning to the imprisoned John, just as much as the fact that the blind, the lame, the deaf, the leper, were cured, or the dead raised. It was, and is, an integral and essential part of the one divine testimony.

J. W. S.

PERSONAL INTIMACY WITH THE LORD JESUS.

"I AM often amazed at how little there appears to be of that blessed, simple, personal intimacy with that blessed One; that personal knowledge of Christ which delights in Him as a *person*, not in a mere doctrine about Him. Very little more is known of Him than if He were a mere doctrine. There is no sense that He is a living Man upon the throne of God in heaven—a living Person, who can fill every desire of the heart, and whom I know as God in a *Man*; that is the wonderful part of it. I know God in Jesus. How else can I know God? I can only know God in that blessed One. True Man, very Man, really Man, yet the mighty God; but it is God in man. 'This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.' It is the only way in which I can know God. I see God in Christ. I know God in that Man, and I am brought to God in Him. What a blessed thing it is! That alone secures me, and nothing but that *can* secure me. I say it to you affectionately, You are not safe, you are not secure, there is no garrison in your heart until Christ is the alone simple commanding One that occupies its throne. When He does, and He is there personally, then you have the true motive, and the real spring, and the real power for walk and testimony for Him here on earth."

SELECTED.

THE GOSPEL IN THE PSALMS.

IT is no uncommon thing, especially in country districts, to see some aged inmate of a cottage sitting with the Bible opened at the Psalms. Often has the writer's heart been cheered by such a sight. Poring over the sacred page the aged reader has doubtless found there what could be found nowhere else. Yet what ignorance, alas! there often is even with such, touching the gospel of the grace of God, which in its fulness and blessedness is unfolded in the New Testament.

Now, the gospel is not the subject of the Psalms. Still, in the Psalms we do find what constitutes the gospel; that is, we find *Christ*—"The sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Peter i. 11); and it is with the thought of presenting Christ that we desire to take up certain Psalms in a gospel way.

Let us suppose the reader to open the Book of Psalms for the first time. He shall begin with Psalm i.: "Blessed is the man." How sweetly the first word falls on the ear—"Blessed"! It is what God pronounces him to be who answers to the description given in this psalm. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he

meditate day and night." What a beautiful life this is both in its negative and its positive side! My reader, can you claim blessing from God on the ground of answering to the description here? Have you *never* walked "in the counsel of the ungodly"? Have you *never* stood "in the way of sinners"? Have you *never* sat "in the seat of the scornful"? Have you delighted in the law of the Lord, and in His law meditated day and night? Let such questions be answered by you in the presence of God. No, your life and mine have been far otherwise. One Man, and one alone, could claim blessing from God on the ground of what He was. It is *Jesus* who fully answers to the picture—that unique and beautiful Man over whom God could open the heavens and say, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Surely *He* was that "tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." It is Jesus, who was all that a man should be. His beautiful life should convince us of sin.

We have all, like lost sheep, gone astray—*He* never; and He could perfectly say, "By the word of Thy lips I have kept Me from the paths of the destroyer." *We* have found pleasure in doing our own will; *He* could say, "I always do the things that please My Father."

But let us look now at Psalm xiv. 2: "The

Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God." What did He see? "They are *all* gone aside, they are altogether become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." How emphatic and sweeping is this verse—"all," "altogether," "none." No exception among all the children of men. Bow thine heart here and say, "O God, I own that Thou hast in this scripture given me my moral photograph." This is repentance. God would convince thee of sin, in order that thou mayest take the place of self-judgment, and we know that He will never condemn those who condemn themselves. Psalm i. then is Jesus, not I; Psalm xiv. is I, not Jesus.

Now we come to Psalm xxii: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? why art Thou so far from helping Me, and from the words of My roaring? O My God, I cry in the daytime, but Thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent." Well do we know Who it is that was thus abandoned of God. "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour *Jesus* cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" The forsaken Man of Psalm xxii. is Jesus the Son of God; the blessed, perfect Man of Psalm i. Dear reader, ponder these words: "why," "Thou,"

“forsaken,” “Me.” And when no answer came, then from out of that awful solitude, and from that heart—that broken heart which was a shrine for God’s glory—came the answer which vindicated God in that forsaking: “*But Thou art holy.*” In 2 Cor. v. 21 we read: “For He hath made Him to be *sin* for us.” “Made Him sin,” is the answer to “forsaken Me.” A holy God forsakes Him because He was made *sin*. But this same scripture testifies, “He knew no sin,” for He was the perfect Man of Psalm i. But here in Psalm xxii. He, blessed be His name, takes the place of the “filthy” men of Psalm xiv. None may know what it cost Him, and none can fathom that ocean of sorrow. There are other sorrows in this wonderful psalm—sorrows resulting from man’s hatred; for poor, wretched man is there. “For dogs have compassed Me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed Me: they pierced My hands and My feet.” They can even gamble for His garments. (v. 18.) But the sorrows of verses 1, 2 are atoning sorrows—it was what He endured at the hand of God as in Isaiah li. 10, “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; *He* hath put Him to grief.” Oh, wondrous love to give His Son! oh, infinite holiness that put Him to grief when made sin! Can we wonder at the streams of blessing flowing out from verse 22 right on to millennial scenes to all who trust Him? The bitter “night of weeping” is over in verse 21,

inasmuch as He was heard and taken from the lowest point of death—"the horns of the unicorns"—after having met all the righteous claims of God, and Satan's power. (Hebrews ii. 14, 15.) All—all was met there; and now joy, eternal joy, comes in the morning. It is the resurrection morning. All our blessings are secured in resurrection—"I will declare Thy name unto My brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee." "Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God." (John xx. 17.)

How beautifully the psalm ends. Mark the closing sentence, "He hath done this." Let your eye rest upon it—"He hath done this." Now put believably two other words—"for me;" or write your name in full at the bottom of that psalm—

"For me, Lord Jesus, Thou hast died,
And I have died with Thee;
Thou'rt risen! my bands are all untied,
And now Thou liv'st in me.
The Father's face of radiant grace
Shines now in light on me."

Yes, you say, "for me"—for the "me" of Psalm xiv.

Now turn to Psalm xxxii. Again are we greeted by that precious word "*Blessed*." "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord

imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Now this is true of thee, dear reader, if thou hast written thy name at the foot of Psalm xxii. Thou art without doubt the blessed man of Psalm xxxii. God accounts thee righteous—the God “who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. (Rom. iv. 24, 25.) It is not what we think, feel, or realize; but it is what God *says* in His word. (Acts xiii. 38, 39; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14.) So the sinless man of Psalm i. dies in Psalm xxii. for the sinful men of Psalm xiv., in order that the sinful men of Psalm xiv. may be in the blessing of the man of Psalm xxxii.

It is interesting to note also that this is the first “*Maschil*” Psalm. “Maschil” means “giving instruction.” It is the first instruction God gives to men. May you, my reader, be thus instructed and blessed.

Another word. The man who is thus blessed and instructed can now go back to Psalm i., and seek to walk in the footsteps of this blessed One. He hath left us an example, that we should walk in His steps. (1 Peter ii. 21.) Who are the people of whom this is said? In chapter i. 9 we are told they had already received “the end of their faith,” the salvation of their souls. And again in chapter ii. 24, “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead

to sins, should live unto righteousness." It is because they were forgiven, justified, saved, that thus they were exhorted. So in 1 John ii. 6, "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." But note a little lower down, in verse 12, he says, "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake." They were in the blessing of Psalm xxxii. We must know Him as *Saviour* before we can have Him as an example. We must be *instructed* and *blessed* before we can be exhorted to walk in His footsteps. May it be our joy and blessing thus to walk

"Till travelling days are done."

W. J.

SPIRITUAL DIPLOMACY.

"And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

1 COR. ix. 20-22.

HERE is the ruling law of the apostle Paul's life. It was not spun like a mental web out of his head; but it issued with burning earnestness from a heart thoroughly devoted to God's glory, Christ's interests, and the blessing of his fellow-men, whether Jews or Gentiles.

Would to God we pondered these precious words, written, by the great spiritual diplomatist, to the Corinthian saints, proud of their spiritual gifts, till we were, so to speak, imbued with the same consuming zeal, and willing to be anything, and do anything, for God's glory, and to gain souls.

In reading through the Pauline epistles we can see what argumentative skill, what power of language, what a wonderful scope of truth was given by God to this man who was caught up to the third heavens. Yet with all this, his warmth of heart, his earnestness of prayer, tell of one who used not his great gifts to exalt himself, but consecrated them for others. How many of us, who possess not a tithe of Paul's knowledge in the things of God, and know nothing of the journeyings, often in perils of water, robbers, countrymen, heathen, city, wilderness, sea, false brethren, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness, &c., yet strut about in spiritual pride, looking down upon our fellow-Christians entangled in the meshes of error, or drawn aside by the glamour of the world! How prone our hearts are to this! The greatest servant the Lord ever had, suited and adapted himself to circumstances and to people, so as to be of the greatest possible service to those he came in contact with. He never gave up a tittle of the truth, nor lowered the dignity of the gospel, nor took away the power and force

of that which was divine. His care for God's glory forbade that; yet, so far as he could, he studied those with whom he was brought in contact, and with rare skill ministered to them that which benefited them most.

When he entered a Jewish synagogue, his address would be very different from his preaching on Mars-hill. No doubt he spoke differently to Lydia at the river's bank, whose heart was ready to receive the truth, than he did to the money-loving Felix. To Agrippa he spoke as one knowing Jewish customs.

How strongly he addresses the Corinthian saints about the sin in their midst! In the second epistle he rejoices, and gives them every possible credit for the zeal his first had awakened in them. Many more instances might be brought forward. Truth is truth; yet truth, ministered at the wrong time and place, may do injury to souls. Meat given to a babe might choke it. May we all have spiritual wisdom to help and not hinder those around us. We remember one, who has gone to be with the Lord, saying, "The great thing is to help souls *where they are*." Christians with knowledge and not wisdom do a great deal of harm. A wise person without much knowledge, on the other hand, can be of wonderful service.

Paul tells the shrinking Timothy that "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (2 Tim. i. 7.)

The power without the love might lead me to be overbearing, and seek to rule my brother's conscience. The love might degenerate into that which is merely human, and lead me only to give out that which would tickle the ears and please the fancy. But the sound mind keeps everything in its place.

To turn from the servant to his Master, what wonderful lessons we learn! How graciously He gained the confidence of the woman at the well! How He opens up the Scriptures concerning Himself to the two disciples on their road to Emmaus, preparing them thus for the manifestation of Himself in the breaking of bread. Divine adaptability was His, which drew the publicans and the sinners to the side of Him who was the Light of the world. Precious Saviour! And Paul got his adaptability from his Master. The way for us to acquire it is not to set our minds to manufacture it by the power of will, but so to be occupied with the Lord Jesus Christ, so to be in communion with Him, that insensibly to ourselves we drink in more of His spirit and learn His ways. Oh, to be more like Him! Then, instead of hindering and offending others by giving them that which is beyond their measure and capacity, we shall be able by His grace to help and draw them into closer bonds of fellowship with the Lord and with ourselves, and to know more of the truth.

A. J. P.

CHRIST THE CENTRE.

“ WHERE	marks the place where the Lord Jesus Christ is present.
TWO OR THREE	shows that He owns by His presence the very smallest company of believers gathered together to His name.
ARE GATHERED	implies a power that gathers. The Holy Ghost is that power. He uses the word of God to gather believers together to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.
TOGETHER	speaks of the fellowship of those thus gathered.
IN MY NAME	gives the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ for being thus gathered together, owning His name alone.
THERE AM I	speaks of the Person present in the midst of the gathered saints—the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Precious fact!
IN THE MIDST OF THEM.”	points to the Lord Jesus Christ as the Centre of those thus gathered to His precious name.
(Matt. xviii. 20.)	

THERE IS ONE BODY.

The word of God teaches (1 Cor. xii. 12-27; Acts ii. 1-4, 32, 33, 42-47; Ephesians iv. 4, and elsewhere) that on the day of Pentecost the Holy Ghost was sent down from heaven, to form believers

into one body on earth. The Church, or Assembly of God was thus formed by the Holy Ghost uniting believers to Christ, and to each other as members of His body, owning His name alone.

To-day, as at the first, the Church of God is formed by the same divine power—the Holy Ghost.

To-day, as at the first, it includes all who are saved through faith in Christ and sealed by the Holy Ghost.

To-day, as at the first, it is the privilege and the responsibility of all such to be gathered together as members of the body of Christ, confessing His name alone.

To be thus gathered together as members of His body to-day, in obedience to the word of God, is not forming or joining a new sect. It is a return to the divine ground on which believers were gathered together at the beginning. This happy, holy fellowship is not limited by party names, doctrines, or regulations. It is broad enough to include every converted soul on earth. It only excludes those connected with evil, whether in doctrine (2 Tim. ii. 19) or behaviour. (2 Cor. v. 13.) It owns no name but that of the Lord Jesus Christ, and no authority but the incorruptible word of God.

Is the Lord Jesus Christ your Saviour, dear reader? Are you through grace a member of His body? If so, are you gathered to His blessed name? It brings glory to His name and joy to His heart to have His own thus gathered around Himself, not in form, but in faith in the power of the Holy Ghost. May each converted reader know the blessedness of giving Him this joy.

ANON.

ONE SOUL.

ONLY one soul ! We crave and cry
 For great and lofty things,
 And in our weakness calmly claim
 The wealth and power of kings.

Only one soul ! When thousands die
 We must do mighty deeds,
 And gather millions to the cross
 And throne, for mercy pleads !

Only one soul ! But drop by drop
 The rain falls, till the flood
 Sweeps with a mighty surging tide
 Through valley, field, and wood.

Only one soul ! The coral reef
 In giant strength unfolds
 A mystery ; and the weak and base
 Are in the Hand that holds.

Speak to the one as though none else
 Stood on the sinking sand ;
 One sinful woman at a well
 Heard words so sweet and grand
 That thousands rest within their power,
 And will until the face
 Of Him who uttered them is seen
 In all its wondrous grace.

Pray for the one as though thy life
 Were for that prayer alone.
 Moses prevailed for many. Why
 Not open heaven for one ?
 Follow the one ; for "Jesus would
 Go forth to Galilee,
And findeth Philip." Launch the one
 Upon life's Christ-trod sea.

Work for the one. To Philip comes
 The word, "Arise and go."
 And two rejoice ; for Christ thus met
 The heart which longed to know.
 And by-and-by, when seeing face to face,
 The wondrous song will be,
 From millions gathered—"one by one"—
 "He lived and died for *ME*." A. S.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. A. W. (Joshua iv.)—Yes ; the twelve stones taken out of Jordan certainly carry the meaning you attach to them. They are also an expressive figure of our having been quickened together with Christ, raised up, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Him, according to Ephesians ii. As to your reading, of course the Scriptures should have the chief place, and the humble, diligent soul will be greatly helped by the Spirit of God in the study of the sacred oracles. Aids there are, for God has given gifts to His Church ; only we should be quite sure that the aids we use are aids indeed. But the word of God alone has authority over the conscience, and everything we read should be tested by it, so that our faith may stand in the power of God.

J. H.—It is distinctly stated in 1 Cor. i. 30 that Christ is made unto us “wisdom, and *righteousness*, and sanctification, and redemption.” Surely, then, Christ is our righteousness ; for what righteousness have we, apart from Him, in which we can stand before God ? Christ risen and glorified is the expression of the righteousness which the believer now is viewed as in Him. (See 2 Cor. v. 21.) In the Epistle to the Romans the great subject of divine righteousness is fully dealt with, and there we learn that God is now *just*, and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus ; righteous in reckoning him righteous who believes in Him. He is and can be this through the blood of Christ.

E. R. D.—It is not only possible, but, we fear, very common, for sins of ignorance to be committed. Under the law, those who had erred in not observing all that the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses were not held blameless, though they failed ignorantly. (Num. xv. 22, 28.) What deviations from the word of the Lord are now to be seen everywhere! In many instances we would fain believe unwittingly; yet to concur in any departure from the revealed will of God is a grave sin, though the unenlightened conscience take no notice of it. In circumstances such as you mention it is easy to go wrong, and not be alive to it till it is over. The divine and only safeguard is to walk in the Spirit. (Gal. v. 16.) The impulses of the flesh are then held in check.

S. B.—An answer to your enquiries will be found in the article on “Eternal Life” in our present issue.

W. C.—We cannot reply to your questions without knowing in what sense the words “hear” and “receive” were used. Anyone might earnestly plead with God to hear his prayer, and betray no lack of confidence in so doing. “To hear” in this case would mean *to graciously answer*. So in Psalm cxiv.: “I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice.” Likewise were anyone “to beseech” God to receive our thanksgiving and praise, we should understand him to mean “*graciously accept*.” Now, we know, from 1 Peter ii. 5, that the spiritual sacrifices of His people are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, and anything contrary to that gracious truth should be avoided. Still, for ourselves, we would shun the habit of making a man an offender for a word. No good ever comes of it, and charity will discover a more excellent way to correct the faulty phrases of our brethren. Very often their meaning is right, and we can say “Amen” to what they mean, if not to what they say. When tempted to be censorious we have found 1 Cor. xiii. an admirable corrective.

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ROMANS viii.

THE epistle to the Romans unfolds *the gospel of God*. The first chapters show us the condition of man, Jew and Gentile, before God. In the end of chapter iii. to chapter v. 11 we learn how a guilty sinner is pardoned, justified, and reconciled to God. From chapter v. 12 to the end of chapter vii. how we are delivered from the power of indwelling sin, and the principle and condemnation of law. In chapter viii. we get the new standing, condition, and relationship of the believer. He is presented as *in Christ* (verse 1), a child and heir of God (verses 16, 17), marked out for this wonderful blessing in the inscrutable purposes of God before the world was (verses 29, 30).

After bringing out these precious truths the apostle exclaims in verse 31, "What shall we then say to these things?" Then follows the response in the shape of four pertinent questions, "*If God be for us,*"

1. "Who can be against us?"
2. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"
3. "Who is he that condemneth?"
4. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

VII.

Let us dwell for a few moments upon these momentous queries.

1. "*If God be for us, who can be against us?*" Ah! who indeed? If the whole world were for us, and God against us, verily ours would be a pitiable case. But, blessed be God, He is for us. The world, the flesh, and the devil were (and are still) against us, and we were as helpless dwarfs in the hands of these mighty giants. But God is greater than all. He *was* and *is* for us; His precious gospel is the proof. The title, "the gospel of God," shows that it emanated from Him. The whole plan, carrying out, and result, is His blessed handiwork. He it is who counselled in His Son; He it was who sent Him, judged Him on the cross, raised Him, glorified Him, sent down the Holy Ghost to testify of Him; and who has already waited more than eighteen hundred years that we might hear and receive His testimony concerning Him. All this shows *God is for us*, who then can be against us?

The answer to this question is the precious truth, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God," but He spared not His own Son in order to save us, and give us a sure title to His glory in His precious blood. God delivered Him up for us all. Through His finished work every believer has

peace *with God* (Rom. v. 1); is reconciled *to God* (Rom. v. 10); can joy *in God* (Rom. v. 11); and rejoice in hope of the glory *of God*. (Rom. v. 2.)

And having delivered up His Son for us, His Beloved, His delight and joy, the dearest and most precious Object of His heart, how shall He not *with Him* also freely give us all things? How can the love that gave the greatest and best withhold the least? He who in His great, great love to us spared not His Son, His *only* Son, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things, every possible blessing that is for our good, both now and for ever?

Yes, God is for us, and "if God be for us, who can be against us?" Not a single protest. Every adverse voice is effectually silenced. There is *no protestation* against the one whom God has made His.

2. "*Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?*" Here we have God's challenge, so to speak. But where is there one who will accept it? Surely Satan and all his hosts would if they could or dared. We stand (to use a figure) in God's court *free of charge*. He is Judge Himself. We had sinned against Him grievously. We deserved His sternest and eternal condemnation. But He Himself was *for us*. Endless charges lay at our door. But God Himself, our Saviour-God, cleared us from every one through the precious blood of Christ. We stand before Him

now *in Christ*, His own elect ones. The voice of the living God gives forth the universal challenge, "*Who* shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Silence again reigns. Many have said and sung—

"Every charge our God refuseth."

It is a mistake. Blessed be God, there is no charge, no accuser. Every mouth that would utter a word against the elect ones of God is closed. There is *no accusation* against us.

Then follows God's own answer. The voice of Him that is for us answers His own challenge. "*It is God that justifieth.*" Yes, beloved reader, *God Himself*. The innumerable company of angels together could not justify a sinner before God. Michael, Gabriel, and all the principalities and powers of the whole heaven together are powerless to justify one soul. All men on earth are powerless. The highest prelate to the humblest preacher, alone or together are powerless. "*It is God that justifieth*" — *God alone*. And whom He justifieth, Satan, the great adversary, and all his demon hosts, are utterly powerless to lay a single charge against. Every believer is justified now, and set for ever in Christ by God Himself.

3. "*Who is he that condemneth?*" This follows upon the precious truth that we are justified by God. The enemy *remains* silent; himself condemned, but without any power whatever to

condemn the feeblest of the justified ones. "He that believeth on Him is *not condemned*." (John iii. 18.) "There is *no condemnation* to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. viii. 1.) "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and *shall not come into condemnation*, but is passed from death unto life." (John v. 24.)

Again God breaks the silence; *God who is for us*. Will He condemn us? How is it possible? It is He that justifieth. No, God answers, and brings out in few, plain, and powerful words, the whole provision of His grace, that none should condemn us. "It is Christ that died, *yea, rather* that is risen again, *who is even* at the right hand of God, *who also* maketh intercession for us." Four precious truths: His death, His resurrection, His glorification, His intercession. He died for us, and bore all our condemnation once and for ever. But not only so, He is risen. We see thousands of pictures and images of a crucified Saviour from one end of Christendom to the other, but what is their worth? If Christ were still on the cross, or in the grave, all were in vain, and we have no gospel. (1 Cor. xv. 12-19.) But the apostle adds triumphantly, "*Yea rather, that is risen again*." "*Yea rather*." Yes, He is a *risen Christ*. He died for our sins; He bore our condemnation; but *He was raised for our justification*. His death and blood-shedding are

the sole ground of our salvation, it is true. He cried, "*It is finished,*" on the cross. But now He is the risen Christ. The resurrection is the proof of the infinite worth of His sacrifice before God.

And not only so, but, "*who is even* at the right hand of God." Think of that. The Man Christ Jesus is at the right hand of God, the victorious, triumphant Saviour. There He lives to intercede for us, and to bring us safely through the whole power of evil until He comes again, and calls us up to share His glory. Now, doubting soul, will you rest? Will you go on another moment dishonouring God with your doubts and fears, when He has taken such pains to make all clear *for us* through His Son's finished work, and *to us* through His own eternal Word? God justifieth every believer, now and for ever, and none, yes, none can condemn. There is "*no condemnation.*"

4. "*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?*" Here is one more opportunity for Satan; *the last*. Surely he would use it if he could. Oh no, impossible! He can neither come against us, nor lay ought to our charge, nor condemn us, *nor separate us from Christ's love*. There is *no protestation, no accusation, no condemnation, and no separation*. The love of Christ brought Him from the glory to the cross for us. He loved us, and gave Himself for us. (Eph. v. 2.) He has set His love upon us. He loves His own, and

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loves them unto the end. (John xiii. 1.) His love is perfect, unchanging, eternal. And His love will never be satisfied until He has us with and like Himself in the glory. Now He would have us enjoy it on the road. There is no love like it, and it is utterly beyond the power of Satan to interrupt its flow for a single moment. The heart of Christ, now in heavenly glory, triumphant over the whole power of the foe, is its blessed source.

Now those who know and enjoy the love of Christ must be prepared to suffer here. The apostle answers the question, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" saying, "Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." (Rom. viii. 35-37.)

Such was the path that he and other fellow-labourers trod, one we know little about. But this sevenfold fiery trial was powerless to daunt his spirit, or to hinder his enjoyment of the love of Christ. It served to cast him more and more upon it. And although his path was a kind of living death; that is, to speak after the manner of men, he, and others, carried their life in their hand; and were as sheep among wolves; he could rise above it all, and in triumph utter words

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which have encouraged tens of thousands till this day: "Nay in *all these things*" (mark it, "*all*") we are not merely conquerors, but "*more than conquerors.*" How? "*Through Him that loved us.*" This path was more than that of an ordinary conqueror. Taken as a whole, his was a complete triumph from the start to the finish. What an example for us! May all our petty difficulties drive us closer to the Master's side, and lead us more and more to search and fathom the infinite fulness of the unalterable and everlasting love of Christ.

And then, to crown it all, led of the Spirit of God, his thoughts range the whole universe, and he adds the conviction of his inmost soul. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. viii. 38, 39.) What a blessed ending to this soul-encouraging and establishing portion of God's abiding Word! Throughout creation, seen or unseen, heaven or earth, height or depth, there is no created intelligence or thing that has power to separate the Christian from God's eternal love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Such was the firm persuasion of his heart.

Reader, what will *you* say to these things? Do you believe them? Do you enjoy them? Have

you believed God's testimony to the Person and work of His Son? If so, it is your portion and privilege to know and enjoy these precious truths. God wants you to be happy. Thousands are languishing, so to speak, in the dungeons of Doubting Castle; many in the grip of Giant Despair. God wants you to enjoy the liberty of grace, and to enter daily more and more into the fulness of the sure and eternal portion He has given all His own in Christ. He wants us to know we are justified in Christ, His children, His heirs, eternally saved from all that was against us, so that the foe can neither protest against us, accuse us, condemn us, nor separate us; the objects of His perfect and fathomless love to all eternity.

The following chapters of the epistle bring out further purposes and ways of God, &c., and in chapter xii. commence the exhortations to practice, &c., down to the close. Space will not permit us to add further, beyond closing with the first word of exhortation to all who are in the enjoyment of the above truths. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Rom. xii. 1, 2.)

E. H. C.

“IN EVERY THING GIVE THANKS.”

1 THESS. v. 18.

“IN every thing give thanks.” Is this Thy word to me,
O blessèd God? Then let my heart e’en now respond
to Thee ;

I am Thine own belovèd child, and in Thy love I’d rest,
For Thou art ordering all for me, and so it *must be best*.

“In every thing give thanks,” whatever may befall,
Thy purpose is to bless me, Thy hand is in it all.
“Thy way is in the sanctuary,” as well as in the sea,
Oh, teach me now the blessedness of resting there with Thee !

“In every thing give thanks ;” yea, in Thy wondrous light
I *can* give thanks for all that seems most contrary to sight ;
For every pang that rends the heart, for every sigh and tear,
For all that turns me to Thyself, to find Thee ever near.

“In every thing give thanks”—this is Thy blessèd will ;
All my desire Thou knowest, and Thou wilt all fulfil.
For every thing I thank Thee which doth my heart lay bare :
’Tis sweet to prove Thy changeless grace, and roll on Thee
the care.

“In every thing give thanks”—for all that cripples me,
For all that shows how worthless the flesh must ever be.
Thy workmanship, O blessèd God, Thou puttest to the test,
That there may be some precious fruit on which Thine eye
can rest.

“In every thing give thanks.” I would Thy word obey,
My heart with joy o’erfloweth, so *perfect is Thy way*.
’Tis strength unto the upright ; yea, in Thy ways I’ll sing,
And ever new thanksgivings to Thee, my God, would bring.

“In everything give thanks.” Lord, Thine abounding grace
Doth cause my heart to triumph as all Thy ways I trace ;
Thou’rt working out Thy purpose, and I would just be still,
And let Thee have Thy blessèd way, and work out all Thy
will.

L. W.

BIGOTRY AND FAITHFULNESS.

THESE are days when things are breaking up. Infidelity is rising like a surging flood on every hand, and that which is affecting the world is affecting the Church. Old landmarks are being rapidly swept away, and those of yesterday are not those of to-day. The plenary inspiration of Scripture, the doctrine of the atonement, the divinity of Christ's person, eternity of punishment, are all held by many as exploded theories of an unenlightened past.

Young Christians are more or less influenced by all this, and if they stand up boldly and faithfully for the very words and authority of the Scriptures, they are often dubbed "*bigots*" for their pains. No, dear young Christians, do not allow terms such as these to close your mouths for Christ, but pray God to give you strength to be faithful to Him and His word.

Paul knew that after his departure grievous wolves would enter in among the saints, not sparing the flock, and from among themselves should men arise speaking perverse things, drawing disciples after them. But what does the front-rank man of Christianity do? Does he give them some well-worded creed to stand by, or some powerful arguments of his to meet the

evil teachers with? No; he commends them to God, and the word of His grace. (Acts xx. 29-32.) Our strength lies in dependence upon God, and cleaving closely to His word. We may not be able to understand it all, but we can exercise faith in God and His word, and we shall thus be led on. For instance, how many doubt the first chapter of Genesis, and tell us what science has brought to bear on the question, and how the earth has only evolved after almost interminable ages into its present condition. But what saith the Scriptures. "Through FAITH we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." (Heb. xi. 3.) Faith in the word of God leads us triumphantly through no end of difficulties. Then these enlightened (?) individuals turn round and call us bigots. Bigotry is *blindly* adhering to a creed. Bigotry leads to illogical positions, to a hard, dry, unfeeling line of action. But faithfulness to God does just the opposite. However, faith is outside the province of these doubters. The joy of the Holy Ghost is unknown by them. The power of conversion has not affected them or their lives. The outgoings of hearts to our brethren in Christ form no part of their experience.

They may admire, as they do, the terse, forcible language of the Scriptures, its poetry, its history, its moral grandeur, but they know not its power when applied to the heart and conscience by the

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Spirit of God. All these facts and experiences are foreign, and unknown to them.

We asked a young man, converted a few weeks ago, "if he understood the Bible better since he was converted." He answered in the affirmative, and agreed that before he was saved it was like a dead man coming to a living Book, and now (through the grace of God) it was a living man coming to a living Book, and a stream of blessing passing from it to him. Those who are seeking to undermine the authority of the Scriptures, and the wondrous truths of Christianity, have no conception of their own utter badness and God's inflexible righteousness. They have never got into His presence, and so they can talk, talk, talk.

The young men in 1 John ii. 14 are strong, because the word of God abideth in them. What a secret of power! May we be kept thus proof against all the assaults of the enemy, whether as a roaring lion or clothed as an angel of light.

May bigotry never be ours, but unflinching faithfulness in these last and perilous days. May the hope of the Lord's near coming quicken our weary and lagging feet. The sight of His face—never to be withdrawn—will soon gladden our eyes, and fill our hearts with untold joy.

A. J. P.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

WHAT a triumph for God is this, that He should take advantage of our deep need to display His own nature! Our sin and wretchedness serve but to bring out in all its noontide splendour the love of God. "God is love."

In the Old Testament we seek in vain for this. Those long years of man's history of which it treats were but the testing-time for man, in which his condition was fully made manifest. It closed with the final test, the sending of God's Son. As it is written, "And last of all He sent unto them His Son, saying, They will reverence My Son." In the rejection of God's Son man proved how irremediably bad he was. The Old Testament times were characterized by the words which ended the solemn events connected with the giving of the law at Sinai—"The thick darkness where God was." (Exodus xx. 21; Ps. xviii. 11.) What a contrast to John i. 18, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." We get gleams of light in such expressions as these, "Thy lovingkindness is better than life," "He crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies," and kindred passages. Both light and love are rather pro-

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spective here. As in the eastern sky at early morn the horns of light do but herald the rising of the sun, "which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber" (Ps. xix. 5-7), so we must wait for the advent of the Son of God into this world before we can get such blessed words as these, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) Familiar words, yet so beyond us; for here the depths of God's heart are told out. And in this Scripture we find the Son of God calling attention to that which is before Him—the lifting up of the Son of man, His own death as a sacrifice—this a proof of God's love. Mark that little word "*for*." If we look at the lifting up of the Son of man as man's act (see Acts ii. 23), his hatred to God was shown thereby. But God's love was shown also; for what brought out the sin and hatred of man's nature proved the light and love of God's. The Son of man *must* be lifted up. Our sins and God's holiness demand it. But love provided what the holiness demanded.

It may be helpful to the reader if we turn to some passages which speak of this wonderful love of God.

We shall look at it in five different ways or connections—its Manifestation, Commendation, Perfection, Manner, and Measure.

I. THE MANIFESTATION OF THE LOVE.

We will turn to 1 John iv. 9, 10. I quote the passage in full. "In this was *manifested* the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Now mark, in verses 7, 8 the apostle exhorts the children of God "to love one another." It has been said by another, "God never needed to be exhorted to love; we do." But in order to produce the manifestation of love towards each other, he calls their attention to the manifestation of God's love towards them. So before God's love can be manifested in us it must be manifested towards us. Now see how the love is manifested toward us in the sending of His only begotten Son into the world that we might *live* through Him. As children of Adam we needed a new life. "Ye must be born again," were the words of Jesus to one of the fairest specimens of the children of men. You, Nicodemus, need a new life. The love of God is *manifested* in connection with this need. He gave the Son that we may have life. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

But not only do we need a new life, but we need, as *guilty* sinners, the remission of our sins.

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This too the love of God has provided. "He sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." So in these two precious verses we find the manifestation of God's love is connected with our twofold need. We need a new life, and we need the remission of our sins. Thank God, we have both in Him who is God's love gift.

II. THE COMMENDATION OF THE LOVE.

"But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.) Note here too, in verse 5, where the love of God is spoken of as shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us, that we are immediately directed to *when* and *how* the love was displayed. We are turned from the realization of the love *in us* to the display of the love *toward us*. How many are looking for the love of God in their own hearts, instead of looking away to when and how the love was displayed. It was when we were "without strength," "ungodly," "yet sinners," and "enemies," Christ died for us; and herein does God *commend* His love. It was when we had nothing of good to commend us to His love that God, by that very fact, commends His love towards us.

"Inscribed upon the cross we see,
In shining letters, God is love.
The Lamb who died upon the tree
Has brought us mercy from above."

It was when the high tide of our evil rose at that cross that the love of God, in overwhelming volume, rose to its greatest height. That love is written legibly there in the fathomless sorrows of Him who came to make it known.

III. THE PERFECTION OF THE LOVE.

If we again turn to 1 John iv. 17 we read, "Herein is love with us made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because *as He is, so are we* in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." * Now mark again, in this passage there is no thought of *our love*. No, it is God's love with us made perfect. It is a love that has given us the same place that Christ has. I beg your attention to that precious sentence at the end of verse 17. Linger over it. Remember Who it is that says it. Turn not to your poor wretched self, but let your thoughts rest on Christ, where He is, and what He is. A Man in the glory of God, let the eye of faith rest upon Him; and while you gaze, let these words, the words of God, sweep out of your poor trembling heart every cobweb of fear. "Boldness in the day of judgment: because *as He is, so are we in this world.*" Who is the He? It is Christ. Who are the we? All believers in Him. So that even the weakest may say, "*As Christ is, so are we.*"

* See marginal reading.

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So the perfection of the love is seen in giving us the same place Christ has, "that we may have boldness in the day of judgment." It is this perfect love that casts out fear. There can be no fear if we remember that the love of God has given us the same place Christ has.

Where He is and what He is is the answer to where He was and what He was for us.

We were under our sins; so was He. He is clear from our sins; so *are we*. We were *sin*; He was made it. He is God's righteousness; so *are we* in Him. (2 Cor. v. 22.) We deserved the judgment of God. He bore it, and is clear from it; so *are we*. We were in death; so was He. He is now in life; so *are we*.

May you, dear reader, thus know what it is to be without fear. "Perfect love casteth out fear." We can now say, as in verse 19, "We love Him because He first loved us."

We now come to

IV. THE MANNER OF THE LOVE.

"Behold, what *manner* of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not." (1 John iii. 1.)

Here we find the manner of God's love is to have us in His family *as children*. It is children here as (note verse 29 of previous chapter) "born of Him." It is thus we are children. This is

the blessed relationship in which we stand to God. He is our Father; we are His children, as begotten of Him. (Chap. v. 1.) The consequence of this blessed relationship is, that the world knoweth us not, because it knew *Him* not. Who is the *Him* here? It is Christ, that blessed One who could say, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee."

So that the *manner* of the love is, that God has given us the same relationship and place that Christ had when here on this earth. May it be ours to enjoy this relationship more, and thus be found in *separation* from all that is not of the Father, remembering what is said in the previous chapter, verse 15, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

We come now to our last point—

THE MEASURE OF THE LOVE.

For this we must turn to John xvii. 23. In this marvellous chapter we get the outpourings and tender solicitude of that heart which "having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the end." His desires for us as to the present and the future are here expressed. And in this verse 23 He is looking forward to that bright and blessed day when the whole family will be seen in its perfection in that glory. "I in them, and Thou in Me . . . that the world *may know* that Thou hast sent Me, and *hast loved*

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them, as Thou hast loved Me." Oh, precious sentence! Let us hang upon it, beloved child of God. It fell from His blessed lips in this world, and is here in God's unchanging Word for our present comfort and blessing. If we can measure that love, the love of the Father for Him, then we can measure His love for us. And remember this is true *now*.

Oh, what a thought, our Father loves us as He loves the Son! And not better shall we be loved in that glory than now. We shall be in its sphere—the Father's house without a cloud—and shall enjoy it to the full, and in the glory of it the world shall know it; but it will not be more true *then* than *now*.

So here in these precious words, "Hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me," we see the measure of the Father's love.

I have thus endeavoured to bring before you the love of God in its Manifestation, Commendation, Perfection, Manner, and Measure.

May you, dear reader, knowing and believing this love, be enabled to say in holy triumph, "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

W. J.

“THY SPEECH BEWRAYETH THEE.”

MATTHEW xxvi. 73.

UNCONSCIOUSLY did Peter testify by his speech that he was a follower of that blessed, but despised, Jesus of Nazareth. The writer was greatly struck by those words. Before, they had been often heedlessly read and re-read; now, they seemed fraught with new meaning—arresting one’s attention, and applying themselves to one’s own soul. Were I to ask myself, Does my speech betray me? sorrowfully should I have to answer, “Thy speech betrayeth thee not” oftener than aught else. Sorrowfully do I confess to my Lord that often by my very silence have I denied Him whom I love so much. Dear reader, ponder these simple words with me. Let us not be found, as Peter, warming ourselves at the world’s fire, but in going in and out in our daily and necessary dealings with the world and worldlings *let* our speech betray that we are not of the world, as He is not. We can imagine—and do not our hearts grieve as we think of it?—how often must our precious Lord look sadly on us as He did on Peter, when by some little action, or word, or may be our silence, we have denied Him, or missed an opportunity of speaking for Him, owning Him as our Guide in all matters, our Light, our Strength, our Comforter. It is so easy to go with the tide, make remarks about the weather, &c., nothing

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really wrong, but is it not a very searching word to our souls, “*Let* your speech be *always* with grace, seasoned with salt”? *always* a *little* salt in all our speech. Shall we not gladden our Lord so? He feels keenly every slight, every silent denial; and then there is that encouraging word to those that honour Him—it is so cheering.

It is very easy, and very sweet, for those that fear the Lord to speak often one to another about Him; but oh, let us speak often too to those who do *not* fear Him, that they too may desire to know Him whom to know is life eternal! ANON.

Christian Character.—The courage, patience, firmness, and zeal of a Christian are a perfectly distinct order of character from the courage, firmness, patience, and zeal of a natural man—self-confidence, self-glory, self-preservation, self-exaltation, are the essential principles of one; confidence in God, self-renunciation, subjection to God, glory to God, abasement of self, being essential principles of the other. So that the essential principles that formed the character of Paul as a natural man were destroyed through the cross, in order that his soul should imbibe the life of Christ, which was the principle that formed his character as a Christian, “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Though Christ was a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered. In any instance that we give up our own will, without sacrificing conscience, we are gainers. If but my dog exercises my patience, and makes me yield my will, he is a blessing to me. Christ never willed anything but what was good and holy; yet how often was His will thwarted, how often hindered in designs of good! J. N. D.

“REVIVE THY WORK, O LORD!”

THE subjoined letter was not penned for publication. Written by one of our junior brethren, it was intended to be circulated only among the younger brethren of his acquaintance, in the hope that it might stimulate them to increased prayerful activity in connection with the gospel. We gladly give it space in our pages, trusting it may serve a larger end than the writer had in view.

“LONDON, *December*, 1889.

“It becomes us, surely, to enquire as to why there is so little apparent blessing on the preaching of the gospel amongst us. But let it be understood, in starting, that the following words are not addressed so much to the preachers as to the Christian hearers of the Word—the brethren and sisters who from week to week are found, and rightly so, at the gospel meetings, ostensibly for the purpose of showing fellowship in the work.

“The question proposed above cannot find its answer in any lack of gift in the preachers, for we have had, and have, most able and gifted evangelists labouring with us. Nor can the problem be solved by imputing a lack of faith, dependence, or earnestness on their part, for we all recognize them as devoted, faithful men of God. Far rather let us charge *ourselves* with faithlessness, and lukewarmness, and lack of dependence.

“Yet I venture to think we have hardly arrived at

the solution of our difficulty in saying this, for certainly our prayer-meetings in most cases express much dependence on the Lord, and the words used in prayer often manifest a good deal of earnestness. Yes, we may express great interest in the gospel, but *are we taking, practically, a position in accordance with our prayers?*

“Over and over again we find in Scripture the principle laid down, that prayer to be effectual must be accompanied by a corresponding course on earth.

“Thus 1 John iii. 22 shows us that our receiving an answer is dependent upon our keeping the commandments of God, and from verse 21 of the same chapter we learn that it is no good expressing confidence in Him unless we are right in *heart*. See also John xv. 7.

“Again, the Lord taught His disciples not to expect that God would hear their petitions if their actions on earth did not correspond. (Matthew vi. 15.) So also Paul, in Hebrews xiii. 18, gives as a ground for requesting the prayers of the saints on his own behalf, his possession of a good conscience, and his desire to do right in all things.

“Now it appears to me that here we are to blame. Let me put it simply.

“We pray that souls may be brought under the sound of the Word, but are we doing our *UTMOST*, and leaving no stone unturned to fill the halls and rooms with the unsaved?

“We pray that Christ may be presented to the souls of sinners, but are we, by our words and ways, presenting Him to all that we can?

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"We pray that we may see more blessing on the gospel, but are we exercised, individually, as to how far *we* are helping or hindering the work ?

"We pray God to send His servants into our midst to preach ; but when they come, are we found helping them by fervent, *real*, believing prayer ?

"And do our public prayers find an echo in our private ones ?

"In short, do we *want* what we pray for ? And do we, when gathered for united supplication, speak always from the heart, and for the ear of God alone ?

"To sum up then, let us seek greater reality in prayer ; let us use greater diligence in inviting and bringing all we can to hear the gospel, and watching for their souls ; and, above all, let us live in the power of what we know.

"If we were doing all this, I am persuaded that our God would send a great wave of blessing on the evangelistic labours of His servants in this dreadfully dead and deaf city. Evangelists from the country complain, and with good cause, that when they visit London to proclaim the good news their audiences, though considerable in point of numbers, are composed mostly of saints from neighbouring gatherings. Oh, if each of those saints were to bring but *one* unsaved person, and bring that one in faith, what blessing we might expect !

"May God arouse us to our responsibilities as to this, and give us ever to bear in mind how He has expressed *His* earnestness in saving the lost, even by the gift of His own Son.

* * *."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. S. A.—We believe that at the coming of the Lord all who have died in faith, from Abel downwards, will be raised and caught up. Our warrant for believing this is found in 1 Cor. xv. 23; for surely the saints of Old Testament days are included in the term, "They that are Christ's," though forming no part of the Church.

W. M.—The great, broad principle of the unequal yoke is plainly marked on every part of Scripture, and the saints of God in all ages have been solemnly warned against it. But in applying it to the numberless details of every-day life one needs divine wisdom, so as to distinguish between things that differ. Moreover, in many matters the conscience is involved; and though conscience is not our guide, but the word of God, yet we must not sin against our conscience, nor judge others who are free before God to do what we could not. Consider what Paul says in Romans xiv. 4-6. Two men, he supposes, act differently in respect of a certain thing, yet each has the Lord before him, and acts in His fear. Where God's will is distinctly made known in the Scriptures, then it is ours to yield implicit obedience; and in other matters He will guide, if we humbly wait on Him.

W. E. E.—We are not aware of any reason for supposing that the serpent of Genesis iii. was aught else than a serpent, only it was used by the devil as an instrument of mischief. The sentence pronounced upon it in verse 14 expresses the utter humiliation to which the "old serpent, called the devil," of Rev. xii. 9,

is finally and eternally doomed. Prostrate and eating dust is significant of that, as any one familiar with Scripture very well knows, in proof of which see Isaiah xlix. 23. Genesis iii. 15 finds its answer in Hebrews ii. 14. Some interesting observations in connection with this subject may be seen in Mr. J. N. Darby's "*Irrationalism of Infidelity*," pp. 111, 116.

G. C.—Is not the Lord showing in Matthew v. 20, vii. 21, xviii. 3, what characterizes those who have part in the kingdom of heaven *in reality* and not professedly so merely? Practical righteousness having its spring within, true obedience to the Lord's word, and the absence of self-importance as seen in a little child, these are the marks that should distinguish those who "enter into" the kingdom of heaven. 2. When the kingdom of heaven comes in public manifestation and glory, as in Daniel ii. 44, will it not then be known in its widest aspect as the kingdom of the Son of man? As such it extends over all. Satan shall be bound, and under the beneficent and righteous rule of God's King all the living nations shall enjoy such blessing as no earthly people have ever known before. 3. But though this be so, yet it is evident that all who are under His rule—that is, all living upon the earth—are not born again and saved. Israel will be. "*All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.*" (Isaiah liv. 13.) And so Jeremiah xxxi. 34. Of the Gentile nations there will be those whose obedience is feigned—not from the heart. Hence when Satan is loosed from his prison (Rev. xx. 7) at the end of the millennium they fall a victim to his deceptions, rise against the authority of Christ, and share Satan's last and final overthrow.

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ARE you, dear reader, resting for salvation upon Christ alone? Is the question of your sins a settled one? Do you know that His precious blood has atoned for them, and thus put them away for ever, so that you have peace with God?

“Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. iii. 11.) There is salvation in no other; “for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts iv. 12.) Christ is the only Saviour, and His precious atoning blood the only shelter from the judgment due to our many sins.

In the Scriptures these things are sometimes unfolded in few and plain words, as in the passages referred to in the preceding paragraph. At other times they are presented in simple, striking figures, such as may be found in Exodus xii.

Every Sunday-school scholar knows the story of the Passover as related there. It has been often told, and so it should be; for the truths it teaches are of endless worth. Christ Himself, the necessity of His death, and the perfect shelter which His blood affords—these are the things of which it sweetly speaks.

VII.

Chosen out of the flock on the tenth day, and kept up until the fourteenth day of the same month, the paschal lamb must then be killed, and its blood sprinkled on the lintel and door-post of each house. This is what God bade them do, and He told them that when He saw the blood He would pass over that dwelling, and would not suffer the destroyer to enter to smite them. *But the blood must be there.*

Although they were God's chosen people, and He was about to set them free from Egypt by the judgment of those that oppressed them, yet they could no more stand before Him as Judge than could their foes. The lamb must die in their stead; just as the ram caught in the thicket died in Isaac's stead when Abraham was about to slay him on the top of Mount Moriah. (Gen. xxii.) Of course it was not possible for the blood of a lamb to take away sin, but it was a type of Him who is called the Lamb of God, even Christ our passover who is slain for us. (1 Cor. v. 7.)

Some have wondered why we could not have been saved without Christ's dying for us as a sacrifice for sin. They imagine that inasmuch as God is supreme, and can do anything, therefore He could have saved us apart from the sufferings and death of His beloved Son. But there are things that God cannot do without being untrue to Himself. For instance, God cannot lie; it is a moral impossibility that He

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should do so. His character would be gone, and we should be desolate indeed, having no one in whom we could fearlessly trust. It is equally impossible for God to save at the expense of His righteousness. Were He to do this it would be placing a premium upon sin, and the moral government of the universe would have received a mortal blow. It is happy for us that such a thing could never be. Therefore Jesus suffered and died that God might be *just, and yet the Justifier* (Rom. iii. 26)—the One who speaks in *righteousness*, yet mighty to save.

It is this great truth that God would teach us by the Passover. For it availed not that the lamb was chosen and kept—it *must* be killed. In the same way the Lord Jesus said, "The Son of man *must* be lifted up." (John iii. 14.) We cannot emphasize that "must" too much. The more that sin is seen in its true nature, and the righteousness of God understood, the more emphatic will that "must" appear. And surely if it is God's righteousness that has to be satisfied, inasmuch as it is against Him that we have sinned, then it is for Him to say what will suffice for that. His right to do so cannot be questioned, and who would think of questioning it when it is known that what His righteousness required He in His love has found? Therefore, following the emphatic "must" of John iii. 14, comes the overwhelming fact that "God so *loved* the world, that

He *gave* His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

It is against the *atoning* aspect of the death of Christ that the devil is turning some of his heaviest artillery. Be content to regard it only as a martyr's death, and he will help you to encircle it with a halo of glory. You may laud it to the skies, and speak of it from the pulpit and the platform, in fervid, eloquent terms as the most exalted type of self-sacrifice the world has ever seen; and were the devil incarnate, and among your hearers, he would clap his hands the loudest, and approve your utterances to their very echo. But the sufferings of Jesus were atoning sufferings; His death was an atoning death. In doctrine and type is this declared from cover to cover of the Bible; it is woven into every part of the Holy Scriptures, and it cannot be torn out without reducing the fabric to a handful of shreds. God's gracious desire is indeed to save and bless, and it is because He is what He is, inflexible in righteousness as well as infinite in love, that He cannot consent to save other than righteously. Hence the need of atonement.

But further, the blood had to be sprinkled on lintel and door-post. Not so much for the Israelite to look upon; for when inside his dwelling he might not be able to see it, though knowing it was there. The blood was for the eye of God.

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“When *I* see the blood I will pass over,” Jehovah had said. And the blood outside would tell not only of death accomplished, but of *the obedience of faith* on the part of him who had sprinkled it there. Yes, the blood must be sprinkled. What answers to it with us is simple reliance on the precious blood of Christ as the sole means of forgiveness and peace with God. We say “the *sole* means;” for how much is often mixed up with it in the minds of men, even when the needs be of the blood is frankly acknowledged.

May we venture to ask again whether you are under the cover of the precious blood of Christ? Can you say,

“Precious, precious blood of Jesus,
Shed on Calvary;
Shed for rebels, shed for sinners—
Shed for *me*”?

Is it your only plea? Can you thankfully confess that your sins are covered by the blood? I do not ask whether you always feel alike. Of course you do not. But have you had to do with God? and in having to do with Him, have you by faith put that blood between you and your sins?

It was not the blood and something else that so effectually sheltered the Israelites, however excellent in its way that “something else” might have been. The sprinkled blood stood alone, the simple but all-sufficient means of safety. Beautiful figure

of the blood shed on Calvary, in which none shall ever trust in vain.

There are, alas! *religious* despisers of the atoning blood of Christ. Are you one of them? Do you think that in seeking to follow His example, and striving to do what good you can, that all will be well at the end? Beware! for it is written, "Without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. ix. 22.) And what about your sins and God's righteousness?

Had an Israelite in that day stood up and warned his brethren against a "stupid trust" in the blood sprinkled on their houses, and called upon them to redouble their exertions to make themselves and the world better, as a means of meeting God when He should pass through the land, what would have been the result? Had any followed his counsel, and failed to sprinkle the blood, the destroyer would surely have entered their dwellings. To have acted thus would have been to despise God, and to deny the solemn truth that all deserved to die. Yet there are men bold and bad enough to do worse than this to-day.*

* A popular preacher, preaching before a special and crowded congregation in the north of England, lately warned his hearers against a "stupid trust in something done in Palestine 1850 years ago, and," continued the same reverend gentleman, "Jesus Christ is saying to us, 'Come, and have fellowship with Me in My work, and suffering, and sacrifice. Together let us help and redeem the world.'"

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Walk in thought through the streets of Goshen on that memorable evening. See! there is a man busily engaged in scrubbing the front of his house. "Friend, why are you doing this?" He replies, "I want my house to be clean when the angel of God passes through at midnight." "Very good, but what about the blood?" "Ah! that does not matter. If we do our best it will be all right." Poor man!

Move on a little. There is another with a piece of writing in his hand. He is about to fix it to the post of his door. It is a list of his good deeds and many virtues. According to his account he had been a dutiful son, an affectionate husband, a wise and an indulgent parent, and had ever sought to do his duty, and he hoped that both he and his would be spared. But there was no sprinkled blood. Poor man! Yet he must have known that God had said, "Thou shalt strike the blood . . . and when I see the blood I will pass over."

Let us speak to a third. "Friend, how is it that the blood is not yet on your lintel and doorpost? Do you not know that God has commanded it to be sprinkled, and that your household will not be safe until the blood is there?" "Yes," rejoins the man, "I know it, and believe it too, and I hope to have the blood outside in time, but I have many urgent things to see to first, and I must attend to them." Having said this he turns away, as if he wishes to have no further

questions asked. Poor man! The most important thing left till the last, and he seemed unconscious of the fact that the night was far gone, and the solemn hour of judgment was about to strike.

Reader, where are you as to all this? The Judge is at the door. Have you sprinkled the blood outside your dwelling?

THE FASTING PERIOD AND THE FEASTING-PLACE.

THE experience of the Christian is mingled with joy and sorrow. It is the absence of the Lord Jesus which accounts for his sorrow, and the presence of the Holy Ghost which produces the joy; whilst the word of assurance contained in John xvi. 22, "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you," constrains us to say—

"Lord Jesus, come!
Nor let us longer roam
Afar from Thee, and that bright place
Where we shall see Thee face to face.
Come, Saviour, come!"

Both the attractiveness of Christ's person and the authority of His word may be seen in what took place by the sea of Galilee when the two disciples, Simon and Andrew, heard Him say, "Come ye after Me." (Mark i. 17.) They were casting their nets into the sea at the time, and without waiting to make another haul, with fixed

hearts and willing feet they straightway left their trawl-nets and followed Him.

It was in this way the blessed Lord surrounded Himself with devoted followers, between whose hearts and Himself had been formed a divine link which could never be severed. Some there were who saw no beauty in Him; others followed Him for a time, and then went back; but these could say, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." (John vi. 68.) For Him they had left all they possessed, and all their joy was connected with His presence here on earth. And when He announced His departure, saying He was going to the Father, their hearts were so full of sorrow that they could not even say, "Whither goest Thou?" (John xvi.)

These disciples of Jesus soon became the objects of dislike; and the Pharisees and others came to Him, saying, "Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Thy disciples fast not?" The Lord Jesus speaks for His disciples, and begins to answer the Pharisees' question by asking them another, "Can the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days." (Mark ii. 18-21.) He had brought the light of brighter days in His own person into the midst of His

people, and congratulated them on the joy they had found in Himself, saying, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see." How then could it be expected they should leave the light of His presence for the darkness of Judaism, or sacrifice the joys they had in communion with Him for the sake of "fasting"? It would be like "sewing a piece of new cloth to an old garment." The presence of the Bridegroom afforded the children of the bridechamber pleasures which banished pain. They were happy; they were supremely blest. It would be time enough for them to fast when He was no longer with them. They *feasted* whilst He was present, and would *fast* when He was absent.

At last the time came when the Lord's words were fulfilled; and the first chapter of the Acts presents us with the scene of His departure. "He was taken up into heaven." Undesirable as this was to His disciples, as they thought, they were made quite equal to the occasion when the time came; for it is even said, they "returned to Jerusalem with great joy." (Luke xxiv. 52.)

Since redemption's work is accomplished and Jesus glorified, the personal presence of the Holy Ghost on earth is the consequence; and He is the strength and joy of our hearts during the absence of the Lord Jesus Christ. The disciples seem to have had a foretaste of this joy on the occasion referred to above.

Nevertheless, the Lord's absence still leaves a blank in the hearts of His own, which can never be filled till they see Him. Therefore they hail with joy the words which fell from the lips of the two heavenly witnesses, who assured these "men of Galilee," who "stood looking up into heaven," that this same Jesus, who had been taken up from them into heaven, should so come in like manner as they had seen Him go into heaven. (Acts i. 11.)

"'Tis the treasure we've found in His love
That has made us now pilgrims below."

And when the *Treasure* was taken to heaven the *hearts* of them that were set *upon* it were taken there too; "for *where* the treasure is, there will the heart be also."

Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, was greatly attached to king David. His heart had been won by acts of kindness; and when the king became an exile Mephibosheth became *a mourner*. He refused to "make himself at home" where the king was, not only without a throne, but without honour and without a resting-place. True it is, that Mephibosheth must have been more an object of pity than of envy, if we judge by appearance, after the description given of him on the king's return in 2 Samuel xix. 24. But God looks on the heart. And here was one whose joys were so wrapped up in the person of David that he found no rest apart from him, and knew

nothing but joy when the king had returned to Jerusalem in peace.

Dear Christian reader, let us each ask ourselves the question, Am I in the habit of fasting after this fashion? It may be needful to fast OCCASIONALLY, according to Mark ix. 29; but do we know what it is, in another sense, like Mephibosheth, to fast CONTINUALLY? The former *afflicts the body*, when it is called for, for the glory of God. The latter *affects the heart*, because of the absence of the One we love; and in this sense the Christian fast commenced when the Lord Jesus was taken up into heaven, and will terminate when He comes again. His coming will end "the fasting period;" and His Father's house in heaven will be His people's "feasting-place" for ever. (John xiv. 1.) They have *fasted* here during His absence; they will *feast* there in His presence for ever. Reader, do you fast? *When and why?*

"Lord Jesus, come!
Thine absence here we mourn;
No joy we know apart from Thee,
No sorrow in Thy presence see.
Come, Saviour, come!"

H. H.

GOD IN EVERYTHING.

NOTHING so helps the Christian to endure the trials of his path as the habit of seeing God in everything.

There is no circumstance, be it ever so trivial, or ever so commonplace, which may not be

regarded as a messenger from God, if only the ear be circumcised to hear, and the mind spiritual to understand the message. If we lose sight of this valuable truth, life, in many instances at least, will be but a dull monotony, presenting nothing beyond the most ordinary circumstances of every-day life. On the other hand, if we could but remember, as we start each day on our course, that the hand of our Father can be traced in every scene; if we could see, in the smallest as well as in the most weighty circumstances, traces of the divine presence, how full of deep interest would each day's history be found!

The book of Jonah illustrates this truth in a very marked way. There we learn what we need so much to remember, namely, that there is nothing ordinary to the Christian; everything is extraordinary. The most commonplace things, the simplest circumstances, exhibit in the history of Jonah the evidences of special interference. To see this instructive feature, it is not needful to enter upon the detailed exposition of the book; we only require to notice one expression which occurs in it again and again, namely, "*The Lord prepared.*" In chapter i. the Lord sends out a great wind into the sea, and this wind had a solemn voice in it for the prophet's ear, had he been wakeful to hear it. Jonah was the one who needed to be taught; for him the messenger was sent forth. The poor pagan mariners, no doubt,

had often before encountered a storm ; to them it was nothing new, nothing special, nothing but what fell to the common lot of seamen ; yet it was special and extraordinary for one individual on board, though that one was asleep in the sides of the ship. In vain did the sailors seek to counteract the storm ; nothing would avail until the Lord's message had reached the ears of him to whom it was sent.

Following Jonah a little further, we perceive another instance of what we may term, God in everything. He is brought into new circumstances, yet not beyond the reach of the messengers of God.

The Christian can never find himself in a position in which his Father's voice cannot reach his ear, or his Father's hand meet his view ; for His voice can be heard, His hand seen, in everything.

Thus, when Jonah had been cast forth into the sea, "*the Lord had prepared a great fish.*" Here, too, we see that there is nothing ordinary to the child of God. A great fish was nothing uncommon ; there were many such in the sea ; yet did the Lord prepare one for Jonah, in order that it might be the messenger of God to his soul.

Again, in chapter iv., we find the prophet sitting on the east side of the city of Nineveh, in sullenness and impatience, grieved because the city had not been overthrown, and entreating the Lord to

take away his life. He would seem to have forgotten the lesson learned during his three days' sojourn in the deep, and he therefore needed a fresh message from God: "*And the Lord God prepared a gourd.*" This is very instructive. There was surely nothing uncommon in the mere circumstance of a gourd; other men might see a thousand gourds, and, moreover, might sit beneath their shade, and yet see nothing extraordinary in them. But Jonah's gourd exhibited traces of the hand of God, and formed a link, an important link, in the train of circumstances through which, according to the design of God, the prophet was passing. The gourd now, like the great fish before, though very different in its kind, was the messenger of God to his soul. "So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd." He had before longed to depart, but his longing was more the result of impatience and ill-humour, than of a holy desire to depart and be at rest for ever. It was the painfulness of the present, rather than the happiness of the future, that made him wish to be gone. This is often the case. We are frequently anxious to get away from present pressure; but if the pressure were removed, the longing would cease. If we longed for the coming of Jesus, and the glory of His blessed presence, circumstances would make no difference, we should then long as ardently to get away from circumstances of ease and sunshine as from those of

pressure and sorrow. Jonah, while he sat beneath the shadow of the gourd, thought not of departing ; and the very fact of his being “exceeding glad of the gourd,” proved how much he needed that special messenger from the Lord ; it served to make manifest the true condition of his soul when he uttered the words, “Take, I beseech Thee, my life from me ; for it is better for me to die than to live.” The Lord can make even a gourd the instrument for developing the secrets of the human heart. Truly the Christian can say, *God is in everything*. The tempest roars, and the voice of God is heard—a gourd springs up in silence, and the hand of God is seen.

Yet the gourd was but a link in the chain ; for “*God prepared a worm*,” and this worm, trifling as it was when viewed in the light of an instrument, was, nevertheless, as much the divine agent as was the “great wind” or the “great fish.”

A worm, when used by God, can do wonders ; it withered Jonah’s gourd, and taught him, as it teaches us, a solemn lesson. True, it was only an insignificant agent, the efficacy of which depended upon its conjunction with others ; but this only illustrates the more strikingly the greatness of our Father’s mind. He can prepare a worm, and He can prepare a vehement east wind, and make them both, though so unlike, conducive to His great designs. In a word, the spiritual mind sees God in everything. The worm, the fish, and the

GOD IN EVERYTHING.

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tempest, all are instruments in His hand. The most insignificant, as well as the most splendid agents, further His ends. The east wind would not have proved effectual, though it had been ever so vehement, had not the worm first done its appointed work. How striking is all this !

Who would have thought that a worm and an east wind could be joint agents in doing a work of God ? Yet so it was. Great and small are only terms in use among men, and cannot apply to Him who "humbleth himself to behold the things that are on earth." They are all alike to Him "who sitteth on the circle of the earth." Jehovah can tell the number of the stars, and while He does so He can take knowledge of a falling sparrow.

He can make the whirlwind His chariot, and a broken heart His dwelling-place. Nothing is great or small with God. The believer, therefore, must not look upon anything as ordinary, for God is in everything. True, he may have to pass through the same circumstances, to meet the same trials, to encounter the same reverses as other men ; but he must not meet them in the same way, nor interpret them on the same principle. Nor do they convey the same report to his ear. He should hear the voice of God, and heed His message in the most trifling as well as in the most momentous occurrence of the day. The disobedience of a child, or the loss of means ; the

crookedness of a servant, or the death of a friend, should all be regarded as divine messengers to his soul.

So also, when we look around us in the world, God is in everything; the overturning of thrones, the crushing of empires, the famine, the pestilence, and every event that occurs amongst the nations, exhibit traces of the hand of God, and utter a voice for the ear of man. (Eccles. v. 8.) The devil will seek to rob the Christian of the real sweetness of this thought; he will tempt him to think that, at least, the commonplace circumstances of every-day life exhibit nothing extraordinary, but only such as happen to other men. But we must not yield to him in this. We must start on our course every morning with this truth vividly impressed on our mind—*God is in everything.*

I would just observe, in conclusion, that the only one who walked in the abiding remembrance of the above precious and important truth was our blessed Master. He saw the Father's hand and heard the Father's voice in everything.

This appears pre-eminently in the season of the deepest sorrow. He came forth from the garden of Gethsemane with those memorable words, "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" thus recognizing in the fullest manner that God is in everything.

SELECTED.

WHAT CHRIST IS FOR HIS PEOPLE.

JOHN i. 28-x. 40.

THE earthly mission of the Son of God, as unfolded by the apostle John, begins at Bethabara with the revelation of Him as the Lamb of God; and we find it recorded, at the end of chapter x., that “He went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there He abode.” He began at Bethabara, and thither He returns.

If we examine the scriptures that come within this wondrous circle, we shall see that they open out in a blessed way something of what the Son of God is for His people. In chapter i. He is brought before us in many varied glories. First of all as the Word and the Light, both of which titles express what He was in His own divine person, and what He always had been in the eternity of the past. Then He is seen as *Lamb of God* (vv. 29, 36), *Son of God* (vv. 34, 49), *the Messiah or Christ* (v. 41), *King of Israel* (v. 49), and the one name He gives Himself—*Son of man*. (v. 51.) The glory of His person is here unfolded. In chapter ii. we get in miserable contrast what man was—*wanting* in both his social and religious connections, and thus known

and exposed to the all-searching gaze of the One who had come amongst men.

The presence of the Light but serves to show the ruin wrought by sin, and that, if there is to be any deliverance, God must come in according to His own Light and Love. This brings us to chapter iii. Here the door is entirely closed on man as he is by nature. “Ye *must* be born again,” (or from above, *v.* 7); but God’s door is opened. The Son of man *must* be lifted up. Man had brought sin into the creation of God, so He that knew no sin must be made *sin* for us. The Son of man must be lifted up to meet all the claims of the Light (*v.* 14), in order that the love of God might flow out abundantly according to His own heart. (*v.* 16.) The love of God could not flow out unhindered until His righteousness was entirely satisfied. Then in chapter iv. we find the same One that was to be lifted up on the cross taking His seat as a lowly man by the well-side, that He might “speak a word in season to him that is weary” (Isaiah l. 4), and He tells of a giving God who can now give freely and righteously. (*v.* 10.) But chapter v. shows us the humbling truth, that though blessing is thus brought down and provided, there is no response in the heart of man until the voice of the Son of God rouses those who are dead—morally dead. (*v.* 25.) Like the man in the early part of the same chapter, we cannot reach blessing ourselves,

nor can we find any help from one another; it must all be done by Him whom God hath sent. Chapter vi. tells how this newly awakened soul is to be nourished. We remember the Lord's first thought for Jairus's daughter when He had raised her. "He commanded to give her meat." (Luke viii. 55.) We cannot do without food spiritually, and He is the Bread of Life. (v. 48.) And just as there can be no life at all except we have eaten the flesh of the Son of man, and drunk His blood (v. 53), so "he that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him." (v. 56.) We need the daily feeding on the Son of man to nourish the life that He has given in communion with Himself. We can only get the very words of that life from Him. (v. 68.) In chapter vii. 38 we find there can be no going out to others unless we first drink in from Himself. "He that believeth on Me . . . out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Here the Holy Ghost is presented as the One coming down from the glorified Christ, by whom alone anything can go out from us in blessing to others.

In chapter viii. 12 we have the Lord speaking of Himself as "the Light of the world," and "he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of life." Further on He presents Himself as the One that sets at liberty. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (v. 36.) The

Lord Himself is the Light and the Liberator; and we enter into liberty by the power of the Holy Ghost; we are set free in the light to follow Him who is the Light.

Then in chapter ix. we find that as those who are thus blessed and set free, not only that there is no place for us in that which refuses Christ, and put out of the synagogue any that confessed Him (*v.* 22); but also that that exclusion sets us in the very neighbourhood of the rejected Son of God. "Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" (*v.* 35.) The rejected Saviour and His excluded follower meet outside, "and he worshipped Him." (*v.* 38.) Shut out and refused here by that which is not of God, but entering into light, liberty, and worship by the power of the Holy Ghost, we are introduced in chapter x. to the path out of this world, and the Shepherd's care of the One who "calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." (*v.* 3.) In two ways He is "the Good Shepherd." First, in verse 11, "the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." This is His work for us in the past. But this is not all; for in verse 14 we read, "I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of mine; as the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father." (R.V.) He has not only died for us, but in resurrection life His shepherd care still

goes on, that we may be with Him in the same intimacy of communion that there is between His Father and Himself.

His path is ours. The end of it is assured, through grace, to every one of His sheep. "They shall never perish," and every step of the path He has marked out, and would have us go through with Him. What has He not done for us?

1. He has laid the ground on which God can righteously bless and give everlasting life. (Chap. iii.)

2. He Himself seeks to speak the "word in season," revealing this "giving God" to the weary. (Chap. iv.)

3. It is His own voice which alone wakes the morally dead. (Chap. v.)

4. He Himself is the Bread of Life for the daily sustainment of that life He has given. (Chap. vi.)

5. Drinking into Him, we shall be able to give out to others in the power of the Holy Ghost. (Chap. vii.)

6. He brings us into light and liberty. (Chap. viii.)

7. He is Himself the Object that draws forth our worship. (Chap. ix.)

8. He is the Good Shepherd whose tender care we prove every step of the way in the path in which He goes before us. (Chap. x.)

May we enter more into these realities, of what He is for us, in the power of an ungrieved Holy Ghost.

J. R. B.

THE VOICE OF NATURE.

“ALL these things will be burnt up” is a reply I have sometimes met with when speaking of the beauty of created things. And yet they are God’s workmanship, and as such command our attention. “They show traces of the curse pronounced upon the ground,” I am told. Too true indeed; but also they evidence what divine mercy has spared for man’s delight. The silent testimony of nature tells of the goodness of God, as well as His eternal power and Godhead; and the varied beauty of inanimate creation appeals to all who enjoy it on behalf of its Creator. “He hath made every thing beautiful in his time.” (Eccles. iii. 11.)

If we have an earthly friend whom we greatly respect and value, we usually feel some interest in anything which is his workmanship; yet there are some who think the works of God are not worth their while to study. (See Job xxxviii., xxxix.) God never repeats Himself; and the lessons we may learn from natural things we are not likely to find elsewhere.

Though planning yet greater wonders in the moral universe, the eternal God could condescend to design and fashion the flowers and trees, whose wonderful perfections are unnoticed because so familiar. And the same mind, out of the simplest

elements, could form the most rudimentary and the most complex organisms, showing the same perfection of detail in the most minute as in the greatest, and implant in each the mysterious vital principle which no human wisdom can define or human skill create.*

I was once travelling some seventy miles through the country towards London. It was early summer; and looking from the carriage window at the changing landscape around, I was struck by the great variety and beauty of nature. Without noise or notice, the seeming deadness of winter had been clothed with the choicest tints; and the impression was enhanced by the thought that these beautiful effects were produced by one or at most two colours, green and brown, neither of which finds much place in man's decorations.

Arriving in town on the evening of the Queen's jubilee, I was in the midst of the decoration and display in honour of the event; yet to me the many lights and coloured flags, however tastefully arranged, could not compare with the quieter beauty of the country-side in summer.

To look at another part of God's workmanship. Can we conceive anything more wonderful than the structure of the human body? As a machine it is simply perfection, a model which man can admire but never imitate. The most

* It is true some leading scientists are endeavouring to manufacture a living organism. "Life," say they, "is a combination of chemical elements." It may be, but they have forgotten one ingredient no formula can supply—they have left God out.

striking proof of the perfection of this, as of any other of God's works, is that no suggestion could possibly be made for its improvement.

Then consider the wonderful harmony of nature, the indestructibility of matter, the inter-dependence of created things. To illustrate, take the growth of a plant. The thawing snow slowly percolates through the soil, the succeeding frost pulverizes the hardened ground, the seed germinates through the action of heat and moisture, life springing out of death and decay; the roots feed on the surrounding soil, and search for the moisture which, as rain, has fallen from clouds formed by the heat and carried by the wind. Thus we find winter and summer, frost and sunshine, wind and rain combining to bring one seed to fruition. (Job xxxviii. 26.)

Well may we learn our littleness from the book of nature, and yet feel assured that in God's purposes there is a niche for each to fill. Look through the grass on a country hill-side, and maybe you see some little insect, busied with the small concerns of its short life. Perhaps your eye alone has seen it—your eye and God's; yet that feeble thing is wanted there to live its unnoticed life, and place its unnoticed mite in the treasury of nature's temple.

They speak of sermons in stones, but all nature bears eloquent testimony to its Creator. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handywork." (Ps. xix. 1.)

Let us briefly glance at the most wondrous scene of all. Can our finite minds take in the immensity of the universe, peopled with countless worlds even greater than our own? We can write the words, but cannot grasp the idea. And each world, with awful swiftness, is swinging through space in its determined path. No sound heralds its approach, no trail marks its path. Who made these worlds? Who gives them motion, and guides their course? GOD!

S. E. Mc N.

Eternal Punishment.—I often recall a good saying of the quondam infidel, Thomas Cooper: “When the belief of eternal punishment is given up, then the eternal demerit of sin has faded from a man’s conscience; and what consistency can he see in the doctrine of Christ’s atonement?”

That is, I think, a most pregnant statement. He connects sin, atonement, and punishment, and views them in the eternity of their co-relations, so that what is true of one is true of all. If sin be a trifle, then so is atonement, and therefore also punishment. But if sin be what Scripture says, and to which a groaning creation of 6000 years of sorrow bears awful witness, then punishment is infinite, as also the value of the atoning sacrifice. Sin and the sin-offering are necessary antitheses of one another, and the offering must balance the sin. Thank God He has done so! Oh, may we humbly, but firmly, hold the eternal worth of that sacrifice, and measure all else by Him! “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

J. W. S.

WITHOUT THEE, LORD !

WITHOUT Thee, Lord ! Oh, fearful thought !
 Can Thine own child to this be brought,
 Without Thyself to roam ?
 How awful such a lonesome way !
 Oh, keep my pilgrim soul, I pray,
 In secret home with Thee ?

Without Thee, Lord, earth's fairest glade
 Is darkened by death's hideous shade—
 A lonesome, darksome night !
 But with Thee, with Thee, stony hills,
 And desert rocks, and waveless rills,
 Are wrapped in heavenly light.

Without Thee, Lord, o'er strength, o'er health,
 O'er all the joys of earthly wealth,
 Want holds her sceptre up !
 But with Thee, with Thee, grief and care
 Do glorious crowns of plenty wear,
 Drawn out from Love's full cup.

Oh, wondrous change ! Who else but Thee
 Could work such strange reality
 From out earth's fleeting shades—
 Change thundering clouds to fields of gold,
 And storms of want to wealth untold,
 And cares to fruitful glades ?

Oh, keep me then in that blest place
 Where Thine own light a path doth trace
 Across this alien sod !

Where all things seen shall be the dream,
 And all unseen most real shall seem,
 In secret home with God.

J. J. J.

SALVATION ;

OR, THE PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA.

"Fear ye not, stand still, and see the SALVATION of the Lord, which He will show to you to-day."—EXODUS xiv. 13.

"Thus the Lord SAVED Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians."—EXODUS xiv. 30.

ONLY a few days ago you might have seen these descendants of Israel in their houses in Egypt with the blood of the slain lamb sprinkled outside. They were then a sheltered people—securely, blessedly sheltered—but now we see them saved. *Sheltered* then, *saved* now.

The sprinkled blood had reference to God's holiness and the people's sin. Everything connected with the soul's blessing is based upon the blood. However much God might yearn in compassionate love over those who have sinned, it is impossible that He should bless other than righteously. God must be *just* in justifying men if they are to be justified at all. The blood of Christ, infinite in value, has made this gloriously possible. The Passover is a picture of it. Every believer is now sheltered by the blood. Do we think of the demands of divine justice in respect of our sins? The blood has met them all. Justice lays down her uplifted sword and declares that she is satisfied. Blessed news for a conscience-burdened sinner!

Still the sheltered people of Exodus xii. had

VII.

yet to be saved. Saved from what ? from judgment ? from the just wrath of a sin-hating God ? Nay, *the blood had settled that question*, settled it for ever. Saved from what then ? we once more ask. Saved from the foe, saved from hard and cruel bondage, saved out of the iron furnace, saved from slavery, saved by the intervention of divine power which, in effecting their deliverance, should overthrow the enemy, and bury his battalions at the bottom of the sea.

But between the hour of leaving their old homes and their crossing the Red Sea the children of Israel had to pass through a night of terrible anguish. Little did they suspect that when Pharaoh and his servants, and all the Egyptians, urged them to depart, and gave them jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, that they would ere long pursue them with chariots and horsemen to bring them back again. But so it was. Encamped at Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, all unconscious of what was coming, they “lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them ; and they were sore afraid.” Disheartened and cowed by long years of servitude no one dreamt of resistance. Nor would it have succeeded ; for what could they do against the flower of Egypt’s soldiery ? Deep indeed was their distress. “And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness ?

wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness." (Exodus xiv. 11, 12.) Thus bitterly did they cry in their dejection and despair.

The counterpart of all this is found in the experience of many a soul, especially among the newly converted. With gladness of heart they quitted their former haunts. They rejoiced in the shelter they had found in the sprinkled blood, and thought not of the restless foe. Not many days pass ere sin and Satan threaten them on every side. Evil thoughts afflict them sore. Horrible temptations assail them. They are incited to things that never entered the mind before. Hell seems to have opened her mouth and belched out fire and brimstone. Fiends pursue them. They wish they had never been converted, or at least that they had never said a word about it to anybody. They feel their powerlessness, and are ready to give all up, and own themselves vanquished. They know not that God is for them. "I knew I could never be a Christian. I was sure I could never stand." It is thus they speak. If the eye of such a one rests on this page let him ponder well the scene set before us in Exodus xiv.

“Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you to-day : for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.” Such were the words—bold, brave words of faith—that Moses spake in answer to their piteous, despairing cry.

Whose shall these people be ? is the question that now ripens for decision. Two masters claim them. Shall Pharaoh capture and drive them back to toil afresh in his brickfields ? Shall they be ground down again beneath his iron heel, or shall Jehovah save them out of his hand that they may serve Him ? Ask the people whose they are, and whose they will be, and the answer shall come, as with the voice of one man, “We are the Lord’s, and Him would we serve.” But the contest lies between Pharaoh and the living God.

It was the hour of Israel’s extremity. Cope with the advancing foe they could not. He was more than a match for them. But now was God’s opportunity. They should “stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.” The battle was not theirs, but God’s. He should fight for them, and they should hold their peace. Was God for Israel ? Then the proud banners of Egypt should assuredly be humbled to the dust. If Israel was feeble, Israel’s God was not. Victory and deliverance were assured.

Beautiful and full of meaning was the first step Jehovah took. "The angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light to these." Jehovah was their light and shield. As a hen covers her chickens with her wing, so the Lord covered them. He would comfort and encourage their timid hearts by telling them that He stood between them and their adversaries, and that before a spear could touch them God Himself must be overcome.

And, dear believer, is it less true in our day that God is for His people—for *you*? Certainly not. Oh, let your heart receive this blessed fact in all its strengthening power! Be not afraid. Were there ten thousand devils instead of one they should not be able to lead you captive again. God is for you. Your salvation is His work. Stand still and see it and rejoice.

Returning for a moment to the Passover, God is seen there in the character of a holy and righteous Judge, who finds in the blood that which meets every claim of divine justice. But on the shores of the Red Sea He is to be known by Israel as a Saviour-God. They shall see His power displayed for their redemption. The raging

waters shall be a wall on their right hand and on their left, but their foes shall find in them a grave. And so it came to pass. "Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians ; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore." No wonder that the people sang, the timbrels sounded, and the women danced for very joy and gladness. They were out of Egypt now—saved—and their eyes should see no more the land where they had wept and groaned, where they had sighed and suffered. Jehovah had borne them on eagles' wings, and brought them unto Himself. (Exodus xix. 4.)

And in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus there is more than shelter—there is *salvation*. For at the cross the power of darkness was overthrown. Death, and he that had the power of it, are conquered. Christ has triumphed, and in His triumph all His people share. Every possible thing that could have furnished a weapon for Satan to scare and terrify is gone. Not only have our sins been put away, but we are brought to God ; and this of necessity involves the annulling of Satan's power, and our deliverance from his hand. Stand forth then, dear believer, as Christ's free man. He has broken your chains. The enemy may rage, but you are out of his reach. Delivered from the power of darkness, God has translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love ; in whom we have redemption. (Col. i. 13.)

It is yours to know this. Can you think that Jesus died for you and rose again to leave you in Egypt? Never! He gave Himself for us that He might deliver us from this present evil world (Gal. i. 3); and if Christ has suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God, then we should know that unto God we have been brought.

So when standing on the wilderness side of the Red Sea Moses and the children of Israel could sing in exalted strains of Jehovah's triumph, and of what He had done for them. "Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed: Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation." (Exodus xv. 13.) They were out of Egypt and brought to God.

Surely our salvation is greater than theirs. That was earthly and temporal; ours is spiritual and eternal. And if they could celebrate God's victory, and the sinking of their enemy like lead in the mighty waters, we too, as standing where Christ's death and resurrection place us, can chant in joyous strains the song of our redemption.

And not only did they sing of what the Lord had done, but they could sing in simple confidence of what He would yet do. "Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established." (Ex. xv. 17.) As surely as He had led them *out*, so

would He bring them *in*. The hand that had delivered them from Egypt should carry them into Canaan. So with us. We may have the wilderness to go through, with its trials and difficulties; but God is for us, and Christ is risen, and is at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. Sustained by His all-prevailing intercession, hourly supplied with needed grace, and receiving seasonable help, the redeemed of the Lord shall safely reach the heavenly land. Under the leadership of the great Captain of their salvation they shall be more than conquerors, and in glory they shall be the everlasting witnesses that He who had led them out was able to bring them into His own eternal rest.

Reader, are you in the enjoyment of this great salvation? Sheltered by the blood, do you know that God is for you? Are you consciously out of Egypt and brought to God? Do you see that by the death and resurrection of Christ the last link that bound you to Egypt has been broken? It is your privilege to know this and more besides. You will know it in power if you receive in faith the testimony of Scripture as to these things. Thus delivered, and called with a heavenly calling, may your affections be set on Christ in glory. Press forward to the Canaan above, and when you stand among its hills and valleys you shall remember all the way the Lord your God has led you, and shall see how wise and strong was His hand.

“NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE, BE DONE.”

CALM these tumultuous waters, O my God!
 And hush them into rest;
 Or let each surging billow, as it heaves,
 But toss me to Thy breast.

I trust Thee, oh! I trust Thee—but I'm weak,
 And tears unbidden start,
 As, face to face with Thee, I find Thy will
 Demands a broken heart.

Wounded, and lacerated to its core,
 With every fibre rent,
 And all its energy of buoyant life
 Withered and well-nigh spent.

And this is *Love*! I own it, O my God!
 Yet sometimes marvel much
 That Love should sweep away its own best gifts
 With such unsparing touch.

Sweep them away—and then expect the heart,
 Robbed of its choicest store,
 To give Thee all its wealth of confidence,
 And praise Thee more and more.

'Twere a strange venture, Lord, for Love to make,
 But that Thou knowest well
 The vast resources of Thy mighty grace,
 And Thine own power to heal.

Yes, Thou ART “ABLE,” and I lay me down
 To trust and to endure;
 To kiss the Hand that either gives or takes,
 Enriches, or makes poor.

A piercèd Hand! I see the deep-set scar;
 It bled on Calvary's tree.
 The Heart that deigns to ask for my poor love
 Was broken once for me.

94 "NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE, BE DONE."

Broken beneath a crushing load of sin,
 Laid on the Righteous One,
 When hell's defeated legions heard the cry,
 "Thy will, not Mine, be done."

That will! It meant salvation for the lost,
 E'en at the price of blood;
 Anguish and ignominy, shame and death,
 Borne by the Son of God.

All borne for me; and shall my coward heart
 Refuse its best to Thee?
 Lord Jesus, take me to Thy fellowship,
 Whate'er the cost may be!

A fellowship of suffering—but no curse;
That cup was drained by Thee—
 A fellowship of resurrection joy,
 And life and liberty!

A blessed heritage of perfect peace,
 A calm of quiet rest,
 That stills each throbbing pulse of grief or pain
 Upon the Shepherd's breast.

Do all Thy will with me, my loving Lord,
 And I am satisfied,
 While nestling 'neath the shadow of Thy wing,
 Thy weary child may hide.

Weary with longings to behold Thy face,
 But not with thorn-clad brow;
 The Head that once was bowed on Calvary's cross
 Is crowned with glory now.

And I *shall* see Thee! when the strife is o'er,
 The latest victory won,
 And praise Thee, that amid earth's changeable days,
 Thy will, not mine, was done.

SELECTED.

“LET ALONE.”

IN FOUR ASPECTS.

“Let her alone : against the day of My burying hath she kept this.”—JOHN xii. 7.

MARY of Bethany, who had ere this found her happy place at the Master’s feet, came to the supper prepared for Him just six days before His death, and poured upon them her very costly ointment of spikenard, the odour of which filled the house.

Her act of devotedness was directed toward the Lord Himself. It was in the nature of intelligent worship, but it provoked the hostility of the disciples. To them it was a “waste.” They said that it should have been sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor. To them worship so pure and elevated seemed superfluous.

But the blessed Master viewed it otherwise, and placed upon it His own gracious interpretation. What they called a “waste” He recognized as heartfelt worship. What they considered as so much loss to “the poor,” in that He saw an apprehension on her part of His coming death—an appreciation of His sufferings—which marked her as being in possession of the truth in a way unknown to them. “*Against the day of My burying hath she kept this,*” were His words ; just

as though He gave her credit for anticipating and preparing for His burial; just as though it had been the leading thought in her mind, whilst His kingdom and glory had occupied those of the disciples. But the glory is reached through death. She was right, and they were wrong; and, therefore, He gently screens her from their cruel censures. He will not allow her to suffer under their aspersion. He spreads His sheltering wing around her, and firmly says, "*Let her alone.*" If none can value her devotedness, He can, and does; and that is enough for Mary. Her Master's smile suffices. The sense of giving Him pleasure compensates for the misunderstanding of man. Blessed experience!

"*Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.*" (Luke xiii. 8, 9.) "Let it alone this year also" was the prayer of the dresser of the vineyard on behalf of the fruitless fig-tree. The Lord of the vineyard had come and looked for fruit for three years; and being utterly disappointed, He gave commandment that it should be cut down. The tree cumbered the ground. It was occupying space that could be planted with profit. It was not only fruitless, but it was doing mischief. Such a fate became it. But the dresser, knowing that his Lord was not a "hard man," and divining his thoughts of mercy, prayed that

another year of grace might be shown, during which time he would do all in the way of pruning and culture that could be done; then, if fruit were still wanting, the blow should fall.

His prayer was granted, and the tree was “*let alone*” for one year more. But the fruitless fig-tree fell. Israel, illustrated thus, yielded no fruit for the three years of Christ’s sojourn on earth. He came seeking for fruit, and found none. Judgment called loudly for the death of the fruitless tree, but mercy interposed, and another year of grace (protracted, indeed, until the death of Stephen; that is, until the definite rejection of the Holy Ghost) was allowed. Then the stroke fell, and the fruitless, mischievous nation was cut down as a nation. But how mercy lingered! How judgment delayed! How the voice of patient grace was heard saying, “*Let it alone.*”

¶ If that be true in the case of a nation, is it not likewise true in the case of the individual? “This year also”—and also, and also—until, alas! spite of great longsuffering, no fruit can be found; and then, “*after that,*” judgment, long suspended, overtakes the sinner, and he is “*cut down*”!

“*Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.*” (Matthew xv. 12.) A solemn verdict this—awfully solemn! It was spoken by Christ in reference to the false teachers of that day—the teachers who placed tradition above

Scripture, and who taught for doctrines the commandments of men. Of religion (such as it was) they had plenty, for they drew nigh with their mouth, but their heart was far from God. Oh, what a difference ! Mouth-religion may be musical, eloquent, attractive, imposing, but most delusive. It may consist of prayer and chant and oratory, but never affect either the throne of God or the conscience of man. It may present the most splendid appearance outwardly, but withal leave the soul barren and unsatisfied.

It may appeal to history, to language, to learning, or to fathers, but pass over the plain, palpable facts of Scripture. The light of truth, its liberty, its moral power, all is unknown. It dwells in the unspiritual darkness of human thoughts and reasonings. Its teachers are blind, and by them the blind are led. What a condition ! And they glory in it.

True of the first century, it is true of the nineteenth. The disease is chronic. Moreover, rebuke is unbearable. “*They were offended after they heard this saying.*” They are offended still. Nothing offends more quickly or deeply or unpardonably than the exposure of a false religion ; and, strange contradiction, the more false and foolish the greater the tenacity with which it is held !

Thank God, the written Word, when received by lowly faith, makes all plain ; but as to the proud teachers of a tradition that is contra-

scriptural, “*Let them alone*,” says the Lord. They have made their bed; they must lie in the same.

“*Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.*” (Hosea iv. 17.) “*Joined to idols*,” not merely idolatrous, bad as that may be, but definitely joined to them in a fearful and daring unity. Recovery appears hopeless. A long course of tampering with evil has not only blunted the conscience, but turned the evil into a pleasure, and every sense of what is due to God is dulled, so that the idols assert their authority, and God is forsaken. Alas, that the heart should thus become entrapped, Satan so easily conquer, and man fall so completely! Yet so it is; and when Ephraim is thus joined hopelessly and willingly to idols, the only, but terrible, sentence is, “*Let him alone.*” He must be left to the governmental ways of God. The ministry of man must not now interfere. He has chosen his course, and selected his path, and he must rue his folly. A man’s way is his reward. What he sows he reaps. The object of his worship gives form to his life and character—to his future. Such is the nature of God’s government, and therefore He said, as to idol-ruined Ephraim, “*Let him alone.*”

To be “*let alone*” by God is the most awful condition in which man can find himself. Ten thousand times better to be emptied from vessel to vessel, like Job, than allowed to drift down the stream, like Ephraim. Better to feel the weight

of God's hand in chastening—for it is a Father's hand—than exist under a sense of His averted countenance.

Thank God there is grace as well as government, and His desire is that His people should “continue in the grace of God.”

What a wide difference between the “*let alone*” that was passed on the conduct of Mary and that passed on Ephraim; between the “*let her alone*” of divine approval and the “*let him alone*” of divine displeasure; between the shield of heavenly shelter and the sentence of holy condemnation.

Dear reader, may you know and enjoy the first for your own comfort, and for the joy and glory of the blessed Lord who died and rose in order to give us a place at His feet, as the happy, blood-bought worshippers of a Saviour who knows how to appreciate the smallest oblation that love can bring.

J. W. S.

Prayer.—What a comfort to the soul is prayer with God's people! And this, through God's mercy, is not confined to one particular place, but is to be, as Paul says, “everywhere”—“I will therefore that men pray everywhere;” and that too, “lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” It is really a wonderful thing how a little company may gather together for prayer, and affect a whole community. It is getting into the line of God's thoughts and God's things, and getting the ear of God in supplication. If there be a little praying company in a place, people generally know where to go when they are in real trouble and real want. (1 Tim. ii. 8.)

N. O. A.

ALWAYS.

THERE are at least five things treated of in the epistles that should *always* characterize every believer, as long as he is down here in the world.

First, he should be *always confident*. (2 Cor. v. 6.) In the opening verses of this chapter the apostle speaks of the knowledge that the Christian has of eternal blessing after this life, in a body suited to the heavenly condition, &c., and then adds, "Now He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are *always confident, knowing* that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (for we walk by faith, not by sight:) *we are confident, I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." (vv. 5-8.)

What blest assurance it gives the heart to know that all is the work of God Himself. He it is that has already wrought us for the future glory, already given us the earnest of that which He has prepared for us in heaven, even the Spirit. Therefore we are *always confident*. The Spirit's presence in us gives confidence. It is through Him we know what is freely given to us of God. The world is always living in uncertainty. Tens

of thousands of souls, whose conversion we should be sorry to doubt, are more or less uncertain of the blessing God has given to them. Through self-occupation, unsound teaching, and the like, they are uncertain whether after all they will arrive in the glory. The word of God is sure and abiding; and, through the Spirit, we may and should know certainly both what we have, and what we are shortly about to enjoy with Christ for ever. "Therefore we are *always confident, knowing* that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord . . . *we are confident, I say.*" (vv. 6-8.) Faith grasps the unseen, *is confident*, and *knows* that if the Lord returns for His own, we shall be found among them (1 John iii. 2); or, if we should pass out of the body into the unclothed state, it is to be in His blessed presence.

Secondly, we should be *always praying*. In the Epistle to the Ephesians the believer is looked at as blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ, according to the eternal counsels of God. This is our present and eternal portion in Him, through God's abounding grace. All who know, and seek to hold to and enjoy this blessed place now, find themselves exposed to the wiles and fiery darts of the wicked one, and the terrible assaults of wicked spirits. But God has made a provision for us in this awful conflict. We are exhorted to put on the panoply of God, detailed in Ephesians vi. Space

will not permit us to dwell upon the different parts, but our readers would do well to consider the passage. It is all for defence, except the all-powerful weapon, "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." We are called to stand fast in an evil day, and we can only withstand our mighty foes, as we face them fully armed, and wield the word of God, in the Spirit's power, in every assault of the enemy. This we cannot do in our own strength. Hence it adds, "*Praying always* with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints," &c. (v. 18.) We must be dependent, *always dependent*. It is the Lord's battle, and it is only in being strong in Him, and in the power of His might, that we can stand fast. Our foes are mightier than we are, but the Lord is almighty. To fight without Him, is but to expose our own utter weakness; but, *praying always*, &c., we have One active for us, who has already overcome all Satan's power at the cross.

We learn, too, from the same passage, that we should also persevere in prayer, for all the saints of God, as having part in the wondrous blessing that we have spoken of, and as exposed in the same war, to the same assaults.

Thirdly, we should be *always rejoicing*. (Phil. iv. 4.) We have seen in the foregoing that Christians have a heavenly position in Christ;

and in the Epistle to the Philippians we get what another has called the practical walk of a heavenly man upon the earth. There are four things amongst others that prominently characterize this epistle. There is no mention of *sin* throughout; showing that a Christian, saved from it, should have nothing more to do with it. *The flesh* is mentioned, but only to warn us to have no confidence in it; our path must be a path of *suffering* through this world, if we follow Christ; and *joy* and *rejoicing* should characterize us all the way through. Paul, with Christ before his soul as his life, pattern, object, and strength, presents himself as an example in chapter iii. He was pursuing this path with indomitable spiritual energy, and had already trodden it some thirty years. With the Lord as his object and goal in glory, he rejoiced in Him, and exhorts all believers to do the same. "Finally, my brethren, *rejoice in the Lord.*" (Phil. iii. 1.) "*Rejoice in the Lord alway*: and again I say, *Rejoice.*" (Phil. iv. 4.)

If we get occupied with ourselves, or with others, or the world, or the trials, sorrows, and difficulties of the way, Satan will surely rob our souls of this joy. It is only as we gaze by faith on the Lord Himself where He is, who has triumphed over the whole power of the foe, and sits exalted as Man at God's right hand, that we can rejoice at all. And it is only as our souls are

engaged with Him continually in the power of the Holy Ghost, who dwells in us, that we can answer to the exhortation practically, "Rejoice in the Lord *always*." This is our blessed privilege, even down here. May we know more and more of it. What will the fulness of that joy be when we see Him as He is, face to face for ever!

Fourthly, we should be "*always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus*," &c. (2 Cor. iv. 10.) In verse 4 of this chapter the apostle shows that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds" of unbelievers, &c.; and in verse 6 that "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Then he adds, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency [or surpassingness] of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh," &c. (vv. 7-11.)

This brings before us very plainly from another point of view the character of the pathway that

Paul and others were called to tread in following the Lord Jesus through this world. But, nothing daunted by the power of Satan and the opposition and wickedness of men, they went on in God's power, *always bearing about* in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that *the life also of Jesus* might be made manifest in their body. This was the only life they, and we who are also Christians through grace, are called to live. To serve Christ is to follow Him (John xii. 26), hating our own old life, and living out in a practical way day by day the life of Jesus. He walked ever in the midst of foes, who were thirsting to take His life, and who at last did so. It is the same world still, and the heart of man unchanged, filled with hatred against God, and Christ, and His saints. To follow Christ faithfully exposed His servants continually in the early days of Christianity to trouble, perplexity, persecution, death. But light from the glory had shone into their hearts (and has shone into ours also) to give the light (or for the shining forth) of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And with this constraint, faith, in God's power, faces all, and lives out practically the life of Jesus in this body till the end of our sojourn here. The apostle adds, "For we which live are *alway delivered* unto death for Jesu's sake." (2 Cor. iv. 11.) As it is elsewhere written, "For Thy sake we are killed *all the day long*; we are accounted as sheep for the

slaughter," &c. (Rom. viii. 36.) The apostles always carried their lives in their hands, so to speak, being ever exposed to the injustice of time-serving men invested with authority, the bitter hatred of jealous religionists, and the violence of the lawless mob.

Through grace we live in the day of "an open door, which no man can shut," and the character of the evil to which we are more immediately exposed is different, but the same deadly hatred oft exhibits itself, and, but for governmental restraint, would surely break loose in persecution, as in a later day it will against others, even unto death. (Rev. vi. 9, 10; xiii. 15-17.)

Fifthly, we should be *always abounding* in the work of the Lord. In that wonderful chapter, 1 Cor. xv., after bringing out so blessedly the resurrection of Christ, and of His people when He comes, the apostle closes with the triumphant language, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," and then exhorts the saints: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. xv. 58.) The Corinthians were in danger of being led away by false doctrine as to the resurrection. We are surrounded with all kinds from one side of Christendom to the other; and also in danger of

the still deeper subtlety of the enemy coming as an angel of light, and seeking to palm off much precious truth as evil. The apostle meets it firmly, uses the occasion to develop the truth more and more, and closes that section of the epistle by exhorting the saints to be *steadfast, unmovable*, notwithstanding the enemy's efforts; and, instead of slackening their spiritual energies, to be *always abounding in the work of the Lord*, cheering their hearts with the word of encouragement, "forasmuch as *ye know* that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

Satan would be very glad to see God's people give up their work and labour in despair, and settle down upon their lees. Many a one has been foolish enough to listen to his lie, when face to face with the power of evil, and has lost heart, and sought to weaken the heart and hands of others, crying, "All is gone." What is this but helping Satan's work? Is Christ gone? Is the Holy Ghost gone? Is the word of God gone? Are God's people gone? Ah! dear Christian reader, we have the same Christ on high in glory for us as ever, the same Holy Ghost to sustain us here below, the same word of God as our sure guide through all; and the saints of God are as dear as ever to Christ; and a world still around us full of perishing sinners, over whom grace lingers to the very last moment.

Let us then bestir ourselves. Satan is in earnest, and the world is in earnest. Let us then

be earnest too, for surely God is, and *He is for us*. May we be found steadfast, holding to the whole truth of God, unmovable as a rock surrounded by the raging waves, and *always abounding* in the Lord's blessed work. Let us see to it that we are in communion with *Him*; going forth day by day at His bidding and in His strength, to help and edify His people, and to sound out the glad tidings of His grace, as He giveth ability, until He come. We shall surely find His promise true at that day, for we know it already from His abiding Word, that our labour is not in vain in Him.

May each believer be found always confident, always praying, always rejoicing, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, &c., and always abounding in the work of the Lord.

E. H. C.

Jesus, the Great Physician.—Art thou lame? Jesus can cause the lame to walk. Art thou blind? Jesus can cause the scales to fall from thine eyes. Art thou dumb? Jesus can loose thy tongue. Art thou wounded? Jesus can make thee whole. If thou art thirsty, Jesus can give thee living water. If thou art hungry, Jesus is the bread of life. If thou art dead, Jesus can give thee life. No matter what may be thy need, Christ can meet it. If my tongue is tied, it is Christ who loosens it; if my eye is closed, it is Christ who gives me sight; if my ear is shut, it is Christ who opens it. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Great Physician.

“I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad;
I found in Him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad.”

J. H.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. B.—2 Cor. v. 3, 11, 19, 20. The third verse of this chapter is a solemn, searching word addressed to the conscience of those who composed the assembly at Corinth. For there were some of whose salvation the apostle was not quite sure. Their conduct provoked distrust, and he therefore spoke thus that if any mistook knowledge for faith, or profession of Christ for confession of Jesus as Lord, they might be aware of the fact ere it was too late. Verse 11 shows that the judgment-seat of Christ has terror for the unsaved, and Paul knowing this, and feeling it deeply, persuaded men. “The terror of the Lord” on the one hand, and “the love of Christ” on the other, gave fervour to his ministry, and made him no idle and cold preacher of the gospel. Verses 19, 20 refer to the past and present ministry of reconciliation—past as regards Christ Himself, for this blessed ministry was carried on when He was here below. Interrupted for the moment by His death, He in resurrection committed it to others who should be His ambassadors, pleading with men in Christ’s place to be reconciled to God. This ministry still goes on, based now as then on the amazing fact that God hath made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

THETA.—Oneness of views on the question you mention could never be the true ground of communion with the Lord’s people, and those who would make it so are decidedly sectarian in their thoughts. Nor do we believe it to be of God that you should be led to doubt whether the Lord is in the midst of His

gathered saints owing to divergence of views on such a subject. Christianity is not a system of ordinances. But in our intercourse with our fellow-members of the body of Christ great wisdom is needed, and guidance from God. If any have clearer light on certain points than some others have, they might do great mischief and bring in much sorrow by unduly pressing their thoughts. "A faithful and *wise* servant" gives meat in due season. This, we are sorry to say, is too frequently forgotten, and the consequence often is that souls are troubled and burdened instead of being edified and blessed. The following lines which we extract from *Ministry of G. V. Wigram*, vol. ii. page 90, may help you in your present difficulty. "As every man in sound mind intuitively feels it to be his duty to take care of human life, so every Christian is responsible to guard against heresy. Of course, in doing this, great watchfulness must be kept over our own spirit. A man may be very positive in holding, and ready in pressing fancies; such for instance, as that 'the world' in John iii. means 'the elect world,' or that all men are pardoned, though believers only are saved; or that the temple in Rev. xi. means the literal temple; or the overweening bias, the crotchet, might be devotedness; the great tribulation, the sudden rapture, &c. His manner of holding and pressing his views might be as bad as his doctrine was defective, and yet grace might see that there was no sanction of evil—bitter herbs are not leaven—and the thing after all may be kept in a subordinate place."

W. B.—Rev. xii. 10; Romans viii. 33. You will find it helpful to interpret a passage of Scripture with due regard to its context and to the subject in hand.

In Romans viii. 33, 34, it is the complete justification of the believer that is evidently in view. Who shall lay anything to the charge of those whom God justifies, and for whom Christ died, is risen, and is at the right hand of God? Clearly no one can. But does this mean that the person thus justified can never be charged with inconsistency of walk or with failure in a thousand ways? By no means. When it is a question of how God views His people in relation to their justification, the answer is, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel." (Numbers xxiii. 21.) Yet as regards their practical ways here on earth God takes notice of everything. So Satan levels his accusations not against our justification but rather against ourselves, and on account of our inconsistencies. As to the former there is no charge, as to the latter, alas, how many!

The Love of the World.—Even if Christians in more than name, there can be no real happiness nor peace of mind while the love of the world or of self is ministered to. (1 John ii. 15, 16.) Until we *break* with the world as to our affections and desires, and learn to live, not to ourselves, but to Him who died for us and rose again, how can there be any real rest and happiness? If our wishes and desires are according to the flesh and the world, no wonder we get sorrow and disappointment even now; but how much more will this be so when our life here draws to a close, and we look back to find that this world, where Satan is the god and prince, and which is made up of "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," has possessed our hearts instead of the One whom we profess to love and own as our Saviour. I would call your earnest attention to John xii. 24–26 in connection with this, and also the latter part of Matthew xvi.

S. M. A.

ABEL'S OFFERING ;

OR, THE TRUE GROUND OF ACCEPTANCE WITH GOD.

HEBREWS xi. 3-7.

THE order in which the Spirit of God introduces the persons mentioned in this portion of Scripture is very beautiful and instructive, because it furnishes us, in a connected way, with examples of various characters and actions of faith. As this order may never have been noticed by some of our readers, I will, for the sake of such, just point it out.

Verse 3 refers to God's work in creation: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." All things were called into existence by His mighty word, a fact which the believer has the intelligent assurance of "through faith."

Then, man having fallen from the state of innocence, Abel (*v.* 4) shows how a sinner can be accepted of God in righteousness on the ground of sacrifice. That is the foundation of everything. It is of the last importance that believers should know that they are accepted before God in all the value of the work of Christ. Unless a soul really understands that, it can never have settled peace with God.

In Enoch (*v.* 5) we see a man who was taken

VII.

right up into heaven without dying, and before he was translated he had the testimony that he pleased God. He also testified that judgment was coming upon the world, but was himself taken out of the world before that judgment was executed. That is exactly what will happen to the Church. Every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ will be taken up to heaven before the judgments are poured out upon the world.

Noah (*v.* 7) may be taken as a type of the remnant of Israel which will be on the earth after the Church is gone. As he passed through the waters of judgment, and was brought into blessing again on the earth, so, after the Church is gone, those whom Scripture calls the "remnant"—that is, the faithful ones in Israel in that day—will pass through terrible earthly judgments, and be brought into blessing when they are over.

Abraham (*v.* 8) presents quite another character of faith. He was called to go out of the country where he was dwelling, to sojourn in a strange land, just as all believers now are called by the gospel out of this world to obtain heavenly glory with the Lord Jesus Christ. But we shall not be able in this paper to go beyond verse 5.

Now let us return to Abel, who represents a sinner righteously accepted with God. There are many believers in the Lord Jesus who never get on in the truth because they have not settled peace with God. The question frequently arises in their

souls, "Well, after all, am I truly converted or not?" And when they go to a meeting, and hear many precious truths brought out, the question comes up, "Well, after all, are they for me?"

Now, what you want is to get settled peace with God. For, although you may long have passed amongst your friends as a Christian, you often say to yourself, "I have still doubts and fears about my salvation," and Satan is ready to whisper to you, "You have been deceiving yourself; you are not a Christian at all."

Is it not remarkable that after getting the account of the Fall in Genesis iii., we read in the very next chapter how a sinner can be accepted before God on the ground of sacrifice?

I may say here that this is a very good illustration of that verse in Romans iii.: "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." (v. 21.) Here was a testimony that God had a way of reckoning sinners righteous apart altogether from the law.

There is no mention here as to what these two fallen sons of Adam, Cain and Abel, had done. It does not say that Cain was a far greater sinner than Abel. Both were sinners by nature, and on that account death was their portion. It is very important to notice that it was not a question of their actions, but of their state by nature; in other words, it was not what they had done, but

what they were. I say this, because it is just what troubles a great many people. "It is not my sins that trouble me so much," many say, "but what I am."

The question is sometimes asked, "How are you getting on with the Lord?" "Oh," the answer is, "I find so much failure in myself, and I see so much inconsistency in my ways, that I sometimes think, 'Can such a one as I am be really and truly converted, and fit to go into the presence of God?'"

It is, then, not so much a question of what you have done as of what you are. It is simply said of these two brothers that they brought their respective offerings. "In process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof." (Gen. iv. 3, 4.)

Now, do you see that the question here is as to the value of the offering each had brought, and that whether either was accepted or not depended upon the offering? In the case of Cain it really showed that he utterly ignored his fallen state as a sinner in the sight of God; for he brought of the fruit of the earth which God had cursed; in other words, he ignored the Fall.

I need not say that, like Cain, there are numbers who have never seen that they are utterly lost sinners. But in Abel I find one who brings

a true offering, one who owns, so to speak, that "the wages of sin is death," that he is a lost sinner before God, and that it needed the death of another to come in between him and God. It does not say of Cain that "by faith" he brought *his* offering. Where there is true faith a person always takes the ground of being a lost sinner; but where there is only an outward profession of Christianity we do not find that. Men in general act as if there were no need of a Saviour.

If you will turn again to Hebrews xi., you will see that it was "*by faith*" that "Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts." What does that mean? Well, "gift" is only another word for offering or sacrifice, as in chapter v. 1, "That he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins." God, in testifying of the gifts, bore witness—to what? why, to the value of the sacrifice. It does not say that God bore witness to Abel's *faith* even. No, God bore witness to Abel's *sacrifice*; not to Abel's appreciation of it, nor to the feeling that Abel had on the subject. Nothing of the sort. God bore witness to the value of the sacrifice, and Abel was accepted accordingly.

Now, that is a most important truth for every believer to see. Have you ever been troubled, dear reader, because you think you do not sufficiently appreciate the work of Christ? Many a

soul, I am afraid, is troubled on that account. "I do not love the Lord enough. I wish I loved Him more!" Ah! it is not a question whether you sufficiently appreciate the work of Christ, or whether you love Him enough. No; what you want to see is this, that your salvation has nothing whatever to do with your appreciation of the work of Christ. The real question is as to the value that God sets upon that work. We need something solid when we are about to die, and I do not know anything more peace-giving than to rest our souls upon the infinite value that God attaches to the work of His own beloved Son.

Now, then, Abel is a type of this. He brought of the firstlings of the flock. In the same way we can come to God just as we are. We can say, "God, Thou knowest the worst of me; I do not want to make an excuse for anything that I have done." And we can trust in that precious sacrifice, that wondrous work of the Lord Jesus Christ. We draw near as those who believe in God's beloved Son, who came into this world for poor sinners like you and me. And then it ceases to be a question of what *we* are; but the point now is, What is the value before God of the work of Christ? How are we to know the value that God attaches to the work of His Son? What has He done with that blessed One, who offered Himself without spot upon that cross? The apostle Peter says that He has done two

things. I will ask you to look at what Peter says. "Raised Him up from the dead." That is one thing. "Gave Him glory." That is the second thing. (1 Peter i. 21.)

What do these two things show? That God is perfectly satisfied with, and glorified by, the work of Christ done on the cross for you and for me.

What was the work of Christ for? Why, to save us, and make us fit for that very glory into which He has entered. God is going to show us the value of the work of Christ. How is He going to do it? Supposing a person had invented something very good, a powder, say, which cleanses linen. In order to show the value of his powder he would not take a clean piece of linen to experiment on, but would find the dirtiest piece possible. He applies his powder to the material; and then, if it cleanses it perfectly, what does it show? Why, it shows, not the value of the piece of linen, but the efficacy of the powder.

You see God has made us, through the work of His Son, fit for His presence; and that shows the value of the work done on the cross. We come to God on the ground of that work, and God bears witness to the value of that sacrifice, saying to you and me, "I can now put you in that very glory without spot." Oh, how it shows the value of that precious blood! So it is a wrong thing altogether to think that you have got to appreciate the work

of Christ aright, and love Him more, in order to be saved. That would be, after all, the ground of law over again.

You find the same thing in the burnt-offering in Leviticus, which I merely refer to now. But I will turn for a moment to Gen. viii. 20, 21. You see here burnt-offerings offered on the altar, and the Lord smells a sweet savour. When He does so, He says in His heart, "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Is that the reason why God will not curse, because the imagination of man's heart is only evil from his youth? One would think that was the very reason why he should curse. But what is the secret of it? Why, the Lord "smelled a sweet savour." Men—you and I—are utterly bad, good for nothing, and the only ground of acceptance is the sweet savour of the sacrifice of Christ. What peace it gives when we think of the glory of that Person, and the value of His work, and that we are accepted according to all its value before God, who never ceases to accept it, and before whom the value of Christ's sacrifice is as fresh as ever.

And now comes another question. Not only are we accepted in righteousness, but the body of the believer is to be redeemed and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. (Rom. viii. 23; Phil. iii. 21.) It is remarkable that there are hundreds

of the Lord's people who do not think about their bodies being saved as well as their souls. Supposing the soul only is saved, and the body is to be left in the grave never to be raised again. In that case Satan could say, "Well, I could not get their souls, but I hold their bodies in death." But such is not the case, the work of Christ applies not only to the soul, but also to the body of the believer. On the ground of the work of Christ a man can go right up into heaven without passing through death at all. If the Lord were to come from heaven just now we should go up with Him straight into the glory of God. Have you ever thought what a wonderful thing it is? Can you say that you are at this present moment fit to go into that unsullied light? Ah, if you understand what we have been saying about the work of Christ you can answer, Yes! It is not on the ground of what I am, but of what Christ is. Will the work of the cross be more valuable twenty years hence than it is to-day? Not a bit. And therefore as far as title goes I am fit for the glory now. But you say, How are you going to escape Hebrews ix. 27, "It is appointed unto men once to die"? Well, now that Christ has died it is no longer necessary for a believer to go through death. Is not that a wonderful triumph? "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." It is wonderful; how naturally we think we are going to die. Well, it continues,

"And was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."

Now, that is a perfect picture of what will take place when the Lord comes. He was not "found." No doubt they said, "Where is Enoch?" "Gone." "Where?" "No one knows." When the Lord comes a similar thing will take place. I am sure it will not be loss of time to read 1 Thess. iv. 14-18. From verse 15 to the end of the chapter a parenthesis can be made, and verse 14 may be read with the first verse of chapter v. Very beautiful is that word in verse 16, "The Lord *Himself*." No other. When it is the Jews who are in question, as in Matthew xxiv., you will remember that the Lord speaks of sending His angels; but when it is a question of the Church, His heavenly people, it is "the Lord *Himself* shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." What happens then? The dead in Christ rise first. Now, that is very important to notice. I find a great many saints of God have a wrong notion about it; and this, no doubt, arises from applying verse 14 to the Lord's coming *for* His saints, instead of His appearing to the world. They think that when the Lord comes He will bring the spirits of the departed into the air, and that we, the living, shall meet them there. But what occurs before the living are

changed? The dead in Christ rise first. Where from? Out of their graves, which are here upon earth. How is the body raised? "So also is the resurrection of the dead . . . it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory." (1 Cor. xv. 42, 43.) If you are not familiar with this scripture, I should advise you to look at it; it implies a great deal. "It is sown in dishonour; it is raised *in glory*." It is not said that when the dead are raised they first stand before the judgment-seat, and then are glorified. They will come up in glory. The question whether they were fit for the glory or not was settled long ago. They will be "*raised in glory*." "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them." Many of those who fell asleep had been disappointed at not meeting the Lord whom they had expected to come. But they will not be disappointed. They will be raised on the earth in glory; so they will actually see the Lord coming for them, and *all* the saints will go up together to meet the Lord in the air.

It has been often observed, that "the last trump" does not mean that there will be no other trumpet sounded. It is a military expression. The first sound was the signal to strike tents; the second, to fall in and be ready to go; the third, and last, signified that the army was to commence to march. When that signal—"the last trump"—is given, the dead in Christ will be "raised in

glory," and all the living changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. That is our translation.

The work of Christ is of such infinite value before God, that if the Lord were to come this moment we should not pass through death at all.

One little word more. What was true of Enoch before he was translated? "He had this testimony, *that he pleased God.*" What does that mean? He had the consciousness in his own soul that he was doing that which was pleasing to God. Do we not all desire that? Let us ask ourselves, "Is God pleased with my daily walk and conversation?" This testimony that Enoch had is worth everything. Many a person has tried to please God in order to get peace. But here the divine order is perfect. Abel is accepted on the ground only of sacrifice; and the believer is so completely freed from the consequences of his sins through the death of Christ that he can go right up to heaven at once. And that being the case, he may have the consciousness down here that he is pleasing God.

May the Lord grant that the hope of His coming may be kept bright before our souls.

R. F. K.

CHRIST IS RISEN.

CHRIST is risen; then for the believer the time of joy and peace has come. Why live in doubt, if Christ is risen? Why merely hope to be forgiven, if Christ is risen? Why hope for peace in the end, if Christ is risen? Why hope that God will have mercy upon you, if Christ is risen? Why hope for some one to befriend you, if Christ is risen? Why hope for some solid resting-place for your weary and troubled soul, if Christ is risen? Why look to self at all, if Christ is risen?

Why, beloved reader, the joyful news is *that Christ is risen from the dead*, and if you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is for you to cry, "Hallelujah! for Christ is risen, and His grave is the tomb of all my sorrow and misery and woe."

Christ is risen. Then the time of weeping is past, and the time of peace, and joy, and assurance for the believer has come.

Why go about hoping merely, as if Christ were in the grave? Every doubt supposes that Christ is not risen, and that Satan bears sway still. But Satan is defeated, and Christ is risen and victorious.

Every doubt supposes that the debt is still unpaid, and that God, the divine Creditor, is not satisfied. But, dear friend, you are mistaken; *the debt is paid*; Eternal Justice is satisfied; *for Christ is risen again from the dead*, and He is now the accepted One at God's right hand.

Every doubt supposes that redemption is still unaccomplished. Oh, doubting soul, why insult the Saviour? Why put dishonour upon Him? Where is the proof that redemption is accomplished, and that believers have in Him redemption through His blood—the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of God's grace? (Eph.i.6,7.) It is found in the fact that *Christ is risen*! On the cross He cried, "IT IS FINISHED;" and *God set His own seal upon what was done* when He brought forth Christ from the dead.

Ah! yes, Christ is risen. Then God is satisfied with the work done; Satan is vanquished, and our sins are borne away for ever.

Christ is risen. Words of infinite and eternal significance! They place the believer in possession of all the fruits of accomplished redemption wrought out upon the cross. And as we gaze by faith at that risen Christ, at the five wounds which He will bear for ever, out of which flowed the blood of atonement—the blood that made peace with God—can we have a single doubt? Nay, for we read in those wounds our pardon and everlasting peace.

CHRIST IS RISEN.

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The time then for weeping is past. The time for trembling in the presence of death is over and gone. Christ is risen, and as He shows us His hands and side we are made to rejoice. "Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord." (John xx. 20.)

Yes, *Christ is risen*. This dries our tears, and fills our hearts with joy and peace.

But more. Is Christ risen? Then the believer is risen with Him. Is Christ accepted in the presence of God? Then the believer is accepted in Him. (Eph. i. 6, ii. 13.) Is Christ before God without the sins He took in grace on the cross, having borne the condemnation due to them and us? Then the believer is *in Him*, beyond all condemnation. (Rom. viii. 1; John v. 24.)

But what about the old man? God says that he was crucified on the cross. (Rom. vi. 6.) Not converted or sanctified, but crucified. What about the principle of sin within? It met its eternal condemnation when Christ was made a sacrifice for sin. (Rom. viii. 3.) And for faith "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Romans viii. 2.) Not indeed to walk as we list, but "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. viii. 4.)

And now we who had no righteousness save the filthy rags of our own righteousness, are, in Christ

risen and glorified, "made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. v. 21.)

As the blessed consequence of this, we are left free to serve our God in righteousness and holiness all our days. Not indeed with the legal thought of obtaining something or of making our salvation more secure, but because we possess everything in Christ, and are eternally secure in Him. (John x. 27-30; Romans viii. 29-39.)

But there is one thing more. Now all this is known to and enjoyed by faith; soon we shall be *with Him* in the Father's house above. Now we walk by faith; but then we shall be in the unclouded light of His presence, made like Himself, and to be with Himself for ever. "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John xiv. 2, 3.)

Surely we can close by saying, What more could God our Father do for us? what more could we possess and enjoy? To His name be everlasting praise!

E. A.

"THE Lord is risen : the Lord is gone before,
 We long to see Him, and to sin no more.
 The Lord is risen : our triumph-shout shall be,
 'Thou hast prevailed ! Thy people, Lord, are free !'"

THE CHURCH WALKING WITH THE WORLD.

THE Church and the World walked far apart,
 On the changing shores of Time ;
 The World was singing a giddy song,
 And the Church a hymn sublime.
 "Come, give me your hand," cried the merry World,
 "And walk with me this way ;"
 But the good Church hid her snowy hand,
 And solemnly answered, "Nay,
 I will not give you my hand at all,
 And I will not walk with you ;
 Your way is the way of endless death ;
 Your words are all untrue."
 "Nay, walk with me but a little space,"
 Said the World with a kindly air ;
 "The road I walk is a pleasant road,
 And the sun shines always there.
 Your path is thorny and rough and rude,
 And mine is broad and plain ;
 My road is paved with flowers and gems,
 And yours with tears and pain.
 The sky above me is always blue ;
 No want, no toil I know ;
 The sky above you is always dark ;
 Your lot is a lot of woe.
 My path, you see, is a broad, fair path,
 And my gate is high and wide—
 There is room enough for you and for me
 To travel side by side."
 Half shyly the Church approached the World,
 And gave him her hand of snow ;
 The old World grasped it and walked along,
 Saying in accents low,
 "Your dress is too simple to please my taste ;
 I will give you pearls to wear,
 Rich velvet and silks for your graceful form,
 And diamonds to deck your hair."

130 THE CHURCH WALKING WITH THE WORLD.

The Church looked down at her plain white robes,
 And then at the dazzling World,
 And blushed as she saw his handsome lip
 With a smile contemptuous curled.
 "I will change my dress for a costlier one,"
 Said the Church with a smile of grace ;
 Then her pure white garments drifted away,
 And the World gave in their place
 Beautiful satins and shining silks,
 And roses and gems and pearls ;
 And over her forehead her bright hair fell,
 Crisped in a thousand curls.

"Your house is too plain," said the proud old World,
 "I'll build you one like mine :
 Carpets of Brussels, and curtains of lace,
 And furniture ever so fine."
 So he built her a costly and beautiful house—
 Splendid it was to behold ;
 Her sons and her beautiful daughters dwelt there,
 Gleaming in purple and gold ;
 And fairs and shows in the halls were held,
 And the World and his children were there ;
 And laughter and music and feasts were heard
 In the place that was meant for prayer.
 She had cushioned pews for the rich and the great
 To sit in their pomp and pride,
 While the poor folks, clad in their shabby suits,
 Sat meekly down outside.

The angel of mercy flew over the Church,
 And whispered, "I know thy sin" ;
 The Church looked back with a sigh, and longed
 To gather her children in.
 But some were off in the midnight ball,
 And some were off at the play,
 And some were drinking in gay saloons ;
 So she quietly went her way.

THE CHURCH WALKING WITH THE WORLD. 131

The sly World gallantly said to her,

“Your children mean no harm —
Merely indulging in innocent sports.”

So she leaned on his proffered arm,
And smiled, and chatted, and gathered flowers,
As she walked along with the World ;
While millions and millions of deathless souls
To the horrible pit were hurled.

“Your preachers are all too old and plain,”

Said the gay old World, with a sneer ;

“They frighten my children with dreadful tales,

Which I like not for them to hear :

They talk of brimstone and fire and pain,

And the horrors of endless night ;

They talk of a place that should not be

Mentioned to ears polite.

I will send you some of the better stamp,

Brilliant and gay and fast,

Who will tell them that people may live as they list,

And go to heaven at last.

The Father is merciful, great, and good,

Tender and true and kind ;

Do you think He would take one child to heaven,

And leave the rest behind ?”

So he filled her house with gay divines,

Gifted and great and learned ;

And the plain old men that preached the Cross,

Were out of the pulpit turned.

“You give too much to the poor,” said the World,

“Far more than you ought to do ;

If the poor need shelter and food and clothes,

Why need it trouble you ?

Go, take your money, and buy rich robes,

And horses and carriages fine,

And pearls and jewels and dainty food,

And the rarest and costliest wine.

132 THE CHURCH WALKING WITH THE WORLD.

My children they dote on all such things,
 And if you their love would win,
 You must do as they do, and walk in the ways
 That they are walking in."
 The Church held tightly the strings of her purse,
 And gracefully lowered her head,
 And simpered, "I've given too much away ;
 I'll do, sir, as you have said."
 So the poor were turned from her door in scorn,
 And she heard not the orphan's cry ;
 And she drew her beautiful robes aside,
 As the widows went weeping by.
 The sons of the World and the sons of the Church
 Walked closely hand and heart,
 And only the Master, who knoweth all,
 Could tell the two apart.
 Then the Church sat down at her ease and said,
 "I am rich, and in goods increased ;
 I have need of nothing, and naught to do
 But to laugh and dance and feast."
 The sly World heard her, and laughed in his sleeve,
 And mockingly said aside,
 "The Church is fallen—the beautiful Church—
 And her shame is her boast and pride!"
 The angel drew near to the mercy-seat,
 And whispered, in sighs, her name,
 And the saints their anthems of rapture hushed,
 And covered their heads with shame ;
 And a voice came down, through the hush of heaven,
 From Him who sat on the throne,
 "I know thy work, and how thou hast said,
 I am rich, and hast not known
 That thou art naked and poor and blind
 And wretched before My face ;
 Therefore, from My presence I cast thee out,
 And blot thy name from its place!"

Selected.

“WE WALK BY FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT.”

WE wish briefly to show the contrast between the path of Abram and the path of Lot, as furnished in the Book of Genesis, but chiefly for the help of young believers, who are called to face the terribly increasing evil and alluring influences of these last difficult times.

When Abram was called to leave his country and his father's house and go unto a land that God would show him, his nephew Lot went with him. Both became rich in flocks and herds; and when their respective herdmen strove at Bethel, on account of the land being too small for them (allowed no doubt of the Lord to separate Abram from his relative), Abram said to Lot, “Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee. . . . If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.” From this point mark the course of each of these two noted saints of God. Abram walked by *faith*, while Lot walked by *sight*; but observe with what vastly different results. “Lot lifted up his eyes, and *beheld* all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere. . . . Lot *chose* him all the plain of Jordan . . . and *pitched his tent* toward Sodom. . . . But the men of Sodom were *wicked* and *sinners* before the Lord *exceedingly*.” Soon afterwards Lot *dwelt* in Sodom,

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Then came his first warning; namely, in the war of the nine kings he was taken captive *from Sodom*, with all he possessed, to Hobah, near Damascus, whence Abram had to rescue him. Did this warning voice cause Lot to alter his course for the better? No, it appears not, as he returned to Sodom and became more involved than ever; for we read that he sat as a magistrate in the gate of the city.

Then came his second warning, which was much more solemn than the first. One evening two angels arrived at his house to announce that as the iniquity of the city was so great they had come to destroy it by fire. It is evident how far Lot's heart was in Sodom from the fact that next morning "while he *lingered*, the men [angels] laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his daughters; *the Lord being merciful unto him*: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city," and said, "Escape for thy life. . . . Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven." (Gen. xix. 16, 17, 24.) How solemn! And it is most marked that so little is said afterwards of Lot in God's word. Solemn warning indeed for any who have an eye or a heart for this world that lies in the wicked one—that is, under the prince of the power of the air, even Satan, the god of this world—a world under the righteous judgment of a holy God on account of man's sin. Lot's back-

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sliding consisted of about four steps, and we are not aware that a soul ever reaches the full length all at once. He *beheld*, he *chose*, he *pitched his tent*, he *dwelt* in Sodom. Should a world-bordering believer read these lines, we lovingly warn you, dear one, *beware of the first wrong step*; and may the Lord indeed in His mercy keep each of us from entering upon the lines of sight. For the Lord said, for our learning, “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” As to things of sight, it is written, “The heavens and the *earth*, which are NOW, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto *fire* against the day of judgment and perdition of *ungodly men*.” (2 Peter iii. 7.)

It may perhaps be said by some, “Then we must needs go out of the world altogether to comply with these requirements.” We do not think Abram would have said so; Lot might. But the secret lies in the Lord’s words, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Of course, the only One who ever did walk the path of faith in all its perfection was the blessed Lord Himself, and He left “us an example, that ye should follow His steps.” (1 Peter ii. 21.)

When circumstances forced Abram and Lot to part company, how much wiser would it have been had Lot conferred with such an honoured man of faith as Abram, instead of being allured by that well-watered plain, where he took his first three wrong steps!

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When Lot had departed, the Lord said to Abram, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art *northward*, and *southward*, and *eastward*, and *westward*: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I *give* it. . . . Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for *I will give it unto thee*. Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, *and built there an altar unto the Lord*." Abram therefore got infinitely more by faith in God than Lot could ever possibly obtain by sight; "for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." Abram had also four steps about the same time, which are—he *looked*, he *walked*, he *pitched his tent*, he *dwelt*. But note, each step was in the path of faith, and in company with the Lord, which led to where *he built an altar unto the Lord*. The path of faith always leads God-ward. Which of the two plains are you in, dear reader? Is it the plain of Jordan—well-watered it may be, but where your soul is lean and barren, and very likely out of your Lord's company? or are you in the plains of Mamre, with your soul increasing in fatness and in the true spirit of worship, having your *altar unto the Lord*. We read not of any such thing as an altar being built by Lot in Sodom. There is no altar with the world. The Lord says to His own, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate . . . and I will be a Father unto you."

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It was apart from God that Lot went astray, but not so with Abram. Lot's loss was enormous, but he did not cease to be a saint. We remember that the example of our blessed Lord is the only perfect one, for Abram had his failures as all saints have; but, beloved child of God, as all Scripture is written for our learning, we earnestly beseech you to let Abram's example, and not Lot's, be yours. “For *we* walk by FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT.”

J. N.

“CHRIST...LOVED THE CHURCH.”

“CHRIST also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it . . . nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also doth the Church: for we are members of His body.” The great thought of “the Church” is in our Lord's mind; and it is the Church He nourisheth and cherisheth, not a mere fragment of it, of which there is no word at all.

We should avoid getting occupied with a thought which is other than that of our Lord Jesus. The Church as a whole is His object of love and care as truly as when the saints were “all together,” and our thoughts should expand so as with Him to take in the Church in its totality, not only those we might deem the faithful, the spiritual, or a more holy portion of the saints. Constant occupation with the idea of a remnant, and the thought that we only are *it*, tends to obliterate from our mind the scripture

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thought of *the Church*, and to endanger our settling down with the sectarian idea that we are the only people Christ is caring for at the present hour; and from this to our degenerating into a sect with fresh ideas and correct views is not a great step. We should have a care lest we hurt ourselves and mislead others by cherishing unscriptural notions; and certainly if we do not have the whole Church of God on earth in our faith, mind, and heart, in our worship, teaching, testimony, and discipline, we shall not answer to Christ's mind regarding His saints. Let us beware of entertaining un-Christlike ideas and belittling the Church, or Christianity, or Christ's love, care, and work for the whole body and every member of it. It is to be feared that most saints never rise worthily in their thoughts, so as to take in Christ's mind and heart for the Church, because of this constant occupation with themselves. The depreciating words which one sometimes hears as to the ungathered saints among the sects of Christendom, as if they were not really the living members of Christ's body, and equally precious to Him as objects of His present love and ministry, are very painful, as they indicate minds and hearts not in concert or sympathy with the Lord's thoughts. It is "THE CHURCH" Christ is to present to Himself glorious, having neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing; and there is no object so near His heart now as the Church, His body, and His Bride.

Extracted.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.

ALL is *utter vanity* here beneath the sun. Solomon, the wisest of men, with more wisdom than all others have possessed, learnt it long ago (Ecclesiastes); but men are very slow to believe him in the nineteenth century. What can be clearer than that to live without Christ, and to die in our sins (John viii. 24), it were better for us that we had never been born? And to live for self, or with selfish motives and objects, when we are His (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20), is just a wasted life. Christianity, in one word, is "Christ" displacing "I." (Gal. ii. 20.) "I" rules in the world. "Christ" should rule in all in the Christian. "To me to live is Christ," said the apostle. (Phil. i. 21.) It is not a question of denying self in this or that, but, occupied with Christ and the things above, self is forgotten, and we become unselfish, and then all is simple and easy. Neither is it a question of *giving up* for Christ; but having Christ, we are infinite *gainers* now and for ever. (Phil. iii. 4-15.) In Him we have *all*, and it becomes a positive hindrance and weight to hold to things here. A Christian that is really single-eyed, living Christ, is the most independent man in the world. Loving God, all things work together for his good. (Rom. viii. 28.) And dependent on God alone, he becomes independent of men. He walks by faith, not by sight. (2 Cor. v. 7.) A thousand things that the natural heart loves and craves for lose their attraction. He is already satisfied with Christ, and has no room for them. But as sure as Christ is not

the one Object, all-absorbing, the heart turns to something here. Alas! have we not all to mourn more or less that this is often the case?

If the compass does not point to the north pole, there is something wrong, and the ship will go astray on the wild waters, and may-be drift on a rock. And if the compass of our hearts, so to speak, does not point to Christ, depend upon it we shall drift with some current in the world, sooner or later to our sorrow. A beloved Christian once said, "The world is not big enough for the heart of man, but Christ is too big." This witness is true. Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon are the proof.

It is the superior attraction of the person of Christ, rejected here and glorified above, that draws souls truly to an outside place on the earth in faithfulness to Him; and the mixed religion and ways of professing Christendom are left in the rear. But there are some who take this place outwardly, convinced in head, and not in conscience and heart, and hence carry many old things and notions with them. One sees exactly the same principle at work in the history of Israel.

What so many dear Christians never seem to get hold of in power in their souls is, that before God they are actually *dead* and *risen* with Christ, and *seated* in heavenly places *in Him*; i.e., over Jordan now. The mass are sheltered by the blood in Egypt, or at most on the other side of the Red Sea. The full Christian position is heavenly, in Christ (Eph. i. 3, ii. 5, 6), and that is out of Egypt (the world), and in Canaan (in spirit), over Jordan. It is also true that, having crossed the Red Sea, we are in the wilderness. The world is henceforth a sandy desert to us, though, of course, being yet in the body, it has to be clothed, fed, and cared for, till we are actually *caught up* to the heavens, to which we *now already belong*. (1 Cor. xv. 48; Phil. iii. 20.)

B. H. C.

THE PASSAGE OF THE JORDAN ; OR, THE HEAVENLY POSITION OF THE BELIEVER.

JOSHUA iv.

THE crossing of the Jordan by the children of Israel, and their consequent entrance into Canaan, have long been looked upon by many as a type of a Christian's dying and going to heaven. Jordan is to them the river of death, and Canaan the heaven into which the believer goes when the days of his pilgrimage end. So they sing—

“There everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers ;
Death, like a narrow sea, divides
This heavenly land from ours.

“Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dressed in living green ;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.”

Now, we are not disposed to quarrel with this view. Very far indeed from that. Still, strictly speaking, the analogy will not hold good ; for in heaven there will be no Jericho to besiege, no Ai to capture, no covetous Achan to stone, no Gibeonitish wiles to withstand ; the sound of war, the shout of mighty men preparing for the battle, will all be over when we reach those peaceful shores.

Is then the crossing of the Jordan void of
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spiritual significance? Is there nothing in the ark's going into the midst of the river and remaining there till all the people had passed over? Nothing in the twelve stones set up in Jordan where they remain unto this day? Nothing in the other twelve taken out of Jordan and set up in Gilgal in the land of Canaan? Nay, we are told that all these things were written for our learning. (Romans xv. 4.) Something therefore is to be learned from them, if they were written for that end.

But if from our present point of view we do not see in Jordan the physical death of the believer—the setting free of his deathless spirit from the tabernacle house in which he dwells—yet Jordan does speak of death, and Canaan of the heavenly places. Christ's death, and ours as having died with Him, is the story Jordan tells first of all. For into the midst of Jordan the ark went, borne upon the shoulders of the priests, and on that very spot were set up the twelve stones which the returning waters of Jordan buried out of sight for ever. That ark was Christ, and those stones every believer in Him.

“Dead with Christ,” “Planted together in the likeness of His death,” such are the terms in which the doctrine of the thing is set forth in Romans vi. Who is there that does not see that Christ's dying *for* us and our dying *with* Him are not one and the same thing? All may not be

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able to clearly explain the difference, but that there is a difference none can doubt. Now, it is His death *for* us that clears us for ever from the dire consequences of our sins. In that death atonement was wrought. He the just One suffered for the many unjust, and they are clear. But our death *with* Christ tells not of God's judgment against our sins, but against ourselves as children of Adam. It announces the total condemnation of "sin in the flesh" (Rom. viii. 3), and proclaims the fact of our having been set aside for ever. Thus our history as connected with "the first man" (1 Cor. xv. 47) is closed. The last line of it has been written, and there is nothing more to add. Crucified, dead, and buried *with* Christ is the finish of that, and the book is sealed, never to be opened more.

This, at least, is one lesson taught by the twelve stones buried in Jordan's bed. *Twelve* stones—not fewer, let the reader remark—were laid there. The least of the twelve tribes had its memorial stone. There was no difference. So the youngest believer in Christ is associated with Him in His death, and the truth is declared in the Scriptures for his faith to apprehend. "Ye are dead," or "Ye have died," is the very emphatic statement of Colossians iii. Does Adam's sin—I speak not of our own—involve all who descend from him in death and condemnation? No one will deny it in the face of Romans v. 12, 19, least of all the

believer. But, through the abounding grace of God, we are entitled to say that we are out of that state, we have died with Christ, and thus ends the life to which death and condemnation were attached. "Dead with Christ," say the sacred oracles ; "Dead with Christ," says the believing soul.

But by this is not meant that "the flesh" is not in us, that sin, as an evil principle, is no longer present in the believer, as some foolishly dream. It is there, though we are privileged to reckon ourselves dead to it ; it is there, but it is not to reign. (Rom. vi. 12.) If I have died with Christ, what possible claim has sin upon me ? I am no longer under its dominion. (Rom. vi. 14.) Its sovereignty is gone. As a child of Adam I *was* its slave, but as a child of Adam I *am* dead. What can a master say to a slave who has died ? Nothing. Death has set the slave free. So our death with Christ has set us free from the mastership of sin, though not from its presence. We are free now to reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

The twelve stones taken out of Jordan and set up in Gilgal, in the land of Canaan, speak of another thing altogether. Remark that in this instance, as in the former, there were twelve stones, not fewer ; for the great truth that finds an illustration here holds good for all believers everywhere. It is to Ephesians ii. that we must now turn. Here the former state of the believer

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—a state in which all men are by nature—is described by the words “*dead in trespasses and sins.*” Very different this from “dead with Christ.” The latter is true of the believer, the former of all mankind. How appalling is this condition! *Dead*, dead to God, as a deaf man is dead to sound, and a dumb man is dead to speech, and a blind man is dead to sight. And not only so, but “*dead in sins.*” Out of this state “God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” (Ephesians ii. 4–6.) Here then is the meaning of the twelve stones taken out of Jordan and carried into Canaan. Quickened together with Christ, raised up and made to sit together in the heavenlies in Him.

It will be evident to the thoughtful reader that in Ephesians ii. we are on a different line of truth from Romans vi. Romans shows the closing up of our life as of Adam, Ephesians the beginning of a new life in association with Christ risen and glorified, and our entrance into a new sphere, where all things are of God. (2 Cor. v. 17, 18.)

Here let me utter a word of caution. We have to distinguish between things that differ, but not always to separate them. The truth of Romans vi. and that of Ephesians ii. concern the same

individual. He who is dead with Christ is assuredly quickened, raised up and seated in the heavenly places in Christ. It is impossible that the one should be true of a believer and not the other. Both are true, though the soul's apprehension of them may mark distinct stages of spiritual growth. And both must be remembered; for the twelve stones set up in Gilgal, while speaking of our heavenly position, also remind us of the other twelve buried in Jordan. Our death with Christ should never be forgotten, though we may rejoice that we are risen with Him. Let us not confound these things.

From the standpoint of Ephesians ii. the believer is already on heavenly ground as associated with Christ in glory. The wilderness with its Marahs and its Elims, with its difficulties, its trials of faith, and, let us add, the rich, unfailing resources of the living God, are not before us here. Our position in Ephesians is not that of Israel on the wilderness shores of the Red Sea, blessed as that position was, but that of Israel across Jordan and in the land of promise. Elsewhere we are viewed as in the desert journeying on to the eternal rest, but not in Ephesians. The stones were set up, not in the wilderness, but in the land of Canaan.

Present identification with Christ in heaven, united to Him there by the indwelling Spirit, the Father's name known, indicating the relationship of children in which we have been placed according to His eternal purpose (Eph. i. 4), sharing with

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Christ all that He can share with creatures ere we are with Him in glory, such is the portion of the believer now. It is thus the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed us. Oh, what truths are these! They invite our research, and open to our view vast fields of blessedness which we are encouraged to explore. For though all be ours by an indefeasible title, yet, as far as present enjoyment goes, it does not pass beyond that of which we have been enabled to take possession by spiritual energy and simple faith. When Israel had crossed the Jordan they found the enemy in the land. They might survey the God-given territory to its extremest limits, and with wondering, adoring hearts exclaim, "All is ours"; yet had they to fight for it at the point of the sword, and that only did they enjoy which they thus made their own. But these heavenly things are revealed, and the Holy Spirit is given that we might know them. (1 Cor. ii. 9-16.) Let us search them out, let us fight for them that we may actually possess what is really ours. And when possessed the soul must watch, for it is from this heavenly position, with its corresponding aims and hopes, the enemy will seek to dislodge us. To withstand his attacks we shall need the whole armour of God. What that armour is we may learn from Ephesians vi. May God grant, dear Christian reader, that you may know your present heavenly portion, and that you may receive grace to walk worthy of it.

GAMALIEL; OR, NEUTRALITY.

WHAT fatal advice was that which was given by Gamaliel, the famous doctor of the law, to his fellow-councillors, in reference to the work of God that was being accomplished by the apostles!

He said, "*If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.*" (Acts v. 38, 39.)

Now, Christ declares, "*He that is not with Me is against Me.*" (Matt. xii. 30.) He shows that there is no middle ground.

Gamaliel, on the other hand, pleads for that middle ground in his advice; he advocates neutrality. He does not urge an honest investigation into the true nature of the work, in order to learn whether it be of God or man; and herein lay his clever but fatal mistake.

When the truth is in question neutrality becomes opposition. Everyone is morally bound to know the truth and follow it, for he will be judged according to the amount of light in which he has walked, and the measure of privilege he has enjoyed. If he reject that light, and neglect that privilege, his condemnation is but the greater, but his responsibility is co-extensive with his light.

To shut your eyes to light, or to prefer darkness, is not neutrality; it is opposition, it is wilful obstinacy.

Gamaliel cited two cases as precedents to his position. He mentioned one "Theudas," who boasted himself to be somebody (who or what we are not told), and who had a considerable following; but his boast was transparent, and his imposture self-evident. He was slain, and his dupes brought to nought. In this case there was not truth, but only a "*boast*."

Then he instanced "Judas of Galilee," who rose in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him. But he perished, on account, doubtless, of opposition to Cæsar, and his followers were dispersed. In this case it was not truth, but sedition.

Think of producing such faulty examples as reasons why "*these men*" should be let alone!

What similarity was there between them and the case of Jesus of Nazareth? Did He "*boast that He was somebody*"? No! He did not need to boast, or assume a character. He was altogether what He said. What He expressed itself in His words and ways. Devils confessed Him, if man did not. Heaven acknowledged Him, if earth refused Him. He did not boast.

Again, Did He object to Cæsar's taxation? No. "*Render to Cæsar*," He loudly proclaimed, "the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." A seditious word never

escaped the lips of Him who, withal, was "*born King of the Jews.*"

Between the cases of these two men and that of Jesus there is no resemblance. The folly and rebellion displayed by them demanded their rejection. The grace and truth that came by Him called for allegiance. Moral judgment should have refused the first, and espoused the other. But Gamaliel, purblind doctor of the law, places them on a par. Is that all that learning could do for him? Is that all that his religious training and wide reputation could supply? What a fearful lack! Where is the mysterious "*one thing*" to be found that the most profound human erudition cannot furnish? How comes it that these "ignorant and unlearned men" were more wise than this sage counsellor? What had they that he had not? He had all that learning and scholarship and observation could give, and yet he was far behind them! They, like Daniel of old, who by the favour of his God knew more than all the magicians of Chaldea, were in the secret. They were the babes to whom these things had been revealed, as they were not to the wise and prudent; and they had, by grace, espoused a cause which was destined to survive the enmity of eighteen centuries, and which bears the stamp of being both a counsel and a work of God.

"*Refrain from these men,*" said Gamaliel. He had not even the eyes of Rahab the harlot, who distinguished in the two spies the forerunners of

victorious Israel, and who at once threw in her lot with them. Rahab was not neutral. Hers was the faith that made her identify herself with God's work and counsel. Not so Gamaliel. "*Let them alone,*" said he. He was prompted by the caution of unbelief and the wisdom of this world. Where was his determination to discover the truth? Where the zeal, the commendable zeal, that actuated one of his school to come to Jesus by night, and learn, in the shades of obscurity, the love of God in the gift of His Son, and of the lifting up of that Son, in order that, through faith in Him, eternal life might be had? Where was there a trace of a similar energy? "*Let them alone,*" was his fatal advice. "*And to him they agreed.*" Suicidal agreement! But the vessel thus let alone by them is sailing in triumph still, as upborne on the waste by the infinite grace of her exalted Lord. "*The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*"

And the council, guided for the time by the advice of Gamaliel, let the work alone, closed their ears to the testimony it bore, and shut their eyes to the blessed results it accomplished. They took no pains to find out whether God was in it or not. Theirs was the inaction of apathy. But the work stands whilst they have perished. God has placed the seal of indestructibility on that insignificant seed then sown by such unlearned and ignorant hands. Yonder massive creation will pass away, but "unto Him will be glory in the

Church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end."

Oh, the more than folly of being neutral on such a battle-field, of endeavouring to occupy middle ground amid such antagonisms, to be lukewarm when Christ bids you to be either cold or hot! But, in fact, neutrality is impossible; for, again to quote His solemn words, "*He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad,*" is only to prove that anything but whole-hearted decision for Him is determined opposition to Him.

J. W. S.

DIVINE LOVE.

THOU winnowest my way,
 Thou wilt not let me be;
 Each step Thou watchest day by day;
 For why? Thou lovest me.
 Love *must* its object bless;
 Love cannot brook a flaw;
 It knows to stoop with fond caress,
 Yet keeps the rod in store.
 Love hath its "eyes of fire"
 To bring me to Thy feet,
 To purge and search it doth not tire
 To make its object meet.
 Love hath its hand of might,
 To lay and keep me low;
 It hath its touch of fond delight,
 That bids all weakness go.
 Love hath its "two-edged sword,"
 That pierceth through and through;
 Love whispers low, "Fear not thy Lord,"
 "I live—I died for you."
 Love hath its "eyes like doves,"
 That touch the inmost heart;
 And sweetly to its object proves
 "Thou hast the loved one's part."

J. J. J.

THE PROVISION MADE FOR THE SOUL'S RESTORATION TO COMMUNION.

THE thirteenth chapter of John teaches that the Lord Jesus washes His disciples' feet, and that it is necessary that He should do so if they have part with Him. The washing is by the water of the Word applied by the Holy Ghost.

The Lord Jesus bears His loved ones on His heart, and is solicitous about their condition. If we are unhappy He feels it. If any wander He is our Advocate with the Father, in view of our restoration; and in our weakness He is our High Priest with God. This still leaves room for God to act as a Father in chastening us; but His discipline is always to this end—our profit and restoration, and His own glory.

The twenty-eighth chapter of Exodus teaches the same truth illustratively, the Lord Jesus being to His people what the high priest was to Israel. He ever liveth to make intercession for us, even as the high priest during his period was appointed to make intercession for those whom he represented. The high priest bore the names of the tribes on his shoulders and on his heart; Christ bears His saints on His almighty shoulders, and loves them with an unquenchable love. It is all love on His side; while on ours there is too often failure, or at best, imperfection.

If our communion is interrupted, it is an interruption of that which we are privileged to enjoy with the Father and the Son (1 John i. 3); and when we are restored, it must be to the same privilege. We cannot be restored to communion with the Father alone, nor the Son alone, but the Father and the Son, and that by the Holy Ghost who dwelleth in us. Therefore if there is a shrinking of heart from intercourse with either the Father or the Son, restoration is not complete; there is a defect in our faith and in our knowledge of the love of either. "The Father Himself loveth you," is by some persons not so fully accredited as the love of the Lord Jesus; which is a very serious defect.

In Exodus xxviii. we see the names of the tribes were engraved on precious stones. These would always bear the test of God's presence; indeed the stronger the light, the greater the lustre; and as God viewed through that medium, He never saw anything but beauty and perfection. "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob." (Num. xxiii. 21.)

It was only as the high priest represented Israel before God that God could recognize them; and it is as being in Christ, accepted in Him, that God can find any pleasure in us. If we are not in Him we are outside the region of blessing, though we may still be the objects of pity and mercy so far as the invitations of the gospel are concerned.

Restoration is never complete unless the soul is

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perfectly happy and at home in the presence of God. David sinned grievously, but he knew the Lord had forgiven the iniquity of his sin; and if he afterwards refers to it, it is only to give glory to God for His mercy, and to assure others that there is forgiveness with Him that He may be feared. The way to approach God under such circumstances is by confession and prayer. As David says, "I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin;" and as John also says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John i. 9.)

The language of the fifty-first psalm shows us how real David's confession was, and how truly he desired to be led into paths of righteousness. God loves, and must have, *reality*; that is, "truth in the inward parts;" and if we do not find rest at once it is because we are not brought to this point. When we do arrive at it we look at the sin as God looks at it; we loathe it, and bless God that He did not allow us to continue in it, or pass it by without letting us see its character. Sin ought to be to us, who have the divine nature, exceedingly sinful, and because we are born of God, in that sense, unnatural. It is encouraging to a burdened heart to find that God foresaw and provided beforehand for our failure; even as the Lord Jesus knew that before the cock crowed twice Peter would have denied Him thrice.

It is a delusion to think that we live without sin. "What man is there that liveth and sinneth not?" while, on the other hand, it indicates a dreadfully wicked state of heart if we treat it lightly, saying, "Let us continue in sin, that grace may abound." God says of such, "Their damnation is just." They know not God, whose eyes are purer than to behold iniquity, and who will by no means clear the guilty.

In connection with forgiveness of sins and restoration to God's presence, it is interesting to notice that the laver in which the priests washed themselves represented a sea, and was very much larger than was required for the purpose, if it had not had a typical meaning. When a priest washed there the impurity was lost in the sea of water; which was not the case when the parts of a sacrifice were washed, a smaller laver then being used. "Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back;" and, "Thou wilt cast them into the depths of the sea." Such scriptures teach us the important truth, that *sin* confessed is not only removed, but that, if a figure can convey the meaning, they are as completely gone from the sight and memory of God as from our persons. "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. x. 17.)

Our restoration is not effected without sacrifice, even as we could not have come to God in the first instance except through the atonement of Christ; only there is this difference, that the "one

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offering" suffices, and that we have, as it were, only the ashes by which we are *reminded* of the sacrifice. It is always the cross that gives peace, as on the ground of that alone could God righteously forgive us even the least fault.

These then are the points necessary to our full restoration of soul; namely, to know that "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;" that there is forgiveness with God that He may be feared; that His desire is that we may be restored, because He loves us as His children; and that the sacrifice, the one offering of Christ, affords a ground on which God can righteously do it, and forget our sin as well as forgive it. True confession on our part always leads to full restoration.

In closing, permit one direct word to yourself, dear reader. Are you out of communion, and therefore needing restoration? If so, let what you have read induce you to return unto your Father, and again confide in the love and grace of your Saviour. There is no joy for you in your distance, but there is full joy for you if you return. Be wise then, confess your sin, and be restored to your sweet and holy privileges. Your Father has not ceased to love you; your Saviour cannot but welcome you. In His name we therefore bid you to come. "Return unto the Lord, and . . . He will *abundantly pardon*," and will again lead you into paths of righteousness and peace for His name's sake. Amen.

H. J. T.

TRUE HAPPINESS.

THERE is a saying in the world, that “man never is, but always to be, blest.” This is an acknowledgment that the world does not possess, and cannot supply, real present happiness.

All seek and desire to reach it; but while hoping for, and pursuing it according to the various ways by which it is supposed to be obtained, there is the humbling confession that man is still unblest.

It is a sad confession for the world that it has not yet succeeded and never can succeed in supplying true happiness, notwithstanding its pleasures, wealth, and progress.

Why is this?

There are two chief reasons. Man is, through sin, away from God, who is the only true source of joy (Psalm xvi. 11); and sin is in the world, with its followers—suffering, sorrow, death, and judgment.

One of our poets wrote—

“There’s a poison drop in man’s purest cup.”

This is but too true; sin has poisoned everything here. “The sting of death is sin.”

Is there then no way to possess present happiness, and also the absolute certainty of it eternally?

Thank God, there is. He has wrought for the putting away of sin in righteousness; thus

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removing the distance that sin had caused, so that we may enjoy His presence even now—our sins all gone for ever. We have noticed what man's confession is; now let us see how God proposes to make man happy. He says, "*Blessed* [happy] is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. *Blessed* is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity."

For whom is this blessedness, and how is it to be possessed?

It is offered to every creature in the wide world who takes the place of a sinner before God. It is provided in infinite grace for all, and is the present portion of all who believe.

It is not secured by works, prayers, nor any goodness of man; for in Romans iv. we read, "David . . . describeth the *blessedness* of the man unto whom God imputeth [reckoneth] righteousness WITHOUT WORKS."

It is in Psalm xxxii. that David, by the Spirit, describes this blessedness.

Let us look a little further at this beautiful psalm.

Until David had to do personally with the Lord about his sin, and taken his place before Him as one who had sinned, he had no rest nor happiness. But the end was, he went and confessed to God, and God forgave. He got

DIVINE FORGIVENESS.

The righteousness of God in thus forgiving sins was not then revealed. David knew he was

forgiven on the authority of God's word; he enjoyed divine forgiveness and the

DIVINE ASSURANCE

of forgiveness. But "how God can save, yet righteous be" was not known. This could only be revealed after the work of redemption was accomplished.

In Romans iii., however, we may learn it simply and clearly. God there reveals HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS in justifying the ungodly; how He can be "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." He proposes this blessedness to man as a sinner, and finds His own joy in it too.

When the question of sins is thus settled there is

DIVINE CONFIDENCE.

The *sinner* draws near to God in confession as ungodly, and is forgiven, and then with the divine assurance that all is forgiven, and covered; *i.e.* out of God's sight for ever (Hebrews x. 17), he can now draw near *as godly*, and express his confidence in and dependence on God by prayer (see verse 6 of our psalm), happy too in the certainty that when the storm of judgment comes on this poor world that has so long despised "the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering," it shall not come nigh unto him; for he knows that the waves and billows of divine judgment due to him rolled over Jesus on the cross, and he can say, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. viii. 1.)

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But this is not all. Instead of hiding from God, like Adam, and going on through this world in fear and unhappiness, God Himself is the resource of his soul all the journey through, and he has the assurance of

DIVINE CARE AND DIVINE DELIVERANCE

through everything. (Compare Romans viii. 31 to end.)

Next he has the promise, where there is an obedient spirit and a broken will, of

DIVINE GUIDANCE

in going through a scene of difficulties and perplexities, where Satan's power is exercised to deceive and turn the feet into a path of disobedience.

The word and Spirit of God are given to all who believe, and thus are they taught and instructed in His ways.

The psalm ends with the assurance of

DIVINE JOY AND GLADNESS

in solemn contrast with the everlasting sorrows of those who hide their sins from God, and seek their joy away from Him.

It is only in the possession of these seven divine blessings freely offered, and bestowed on all who believe, and all the other infinite blessings which accompany them, and in the personal knowledge of Him who is the "Giver of all good," that you, dear reader, can really enjoy true happiness.

S. M. A.

“AS” AND “SO” IN JOHN’S WRITINGS.

THESE words convey to us some of those wonderful comparisons and measures of divine things which God has given us in the Scriptures. Let us look at a few of the places where they occur. “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.” (John iii. 14.)

Once sin came in, nothing short of the lifting up of the Son of man—the cross—could meet and satisfy God’s holy and just requirements with respect to it. The brazen serpent was the divinely appointed remedy for that day; so the Son of man lifted up is the alone source of eternal life to all who believe. Nothing short of this work could meet at the same time God’s justice and our need. But it is also the righteous outlet for God’s love to flow out; not now to one nation, but world-wide in its aspect. Here we have the measure of our distance as sinners; what we were, as seen in the light of God’s holiness: nothing less than the lifting up of the Son of man could meet the case, and lay the groundwork, according to God, for the gift of eternal life.

“As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live

“AS” AND “SO” IN JOHN’S WRITINGS. 163

by the Father: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.” (vi. 57.)

The Lord Jesus was indeed the Sent One, the dependent Man on earth, who ever walked in perfect communion with, and dependence on, His Father. His words, His works, were those which the Father had given Him to speak and to do. Now, He is not only the giver of life, but food to sustain the life He gives. So our life is to be regulated on these principles—communion, obedience, and dependence on Him, drawing the resources to sustain the divine life, and carry us on from day to day, from Him.

“I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine, even as the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father.” (x. 14, 15.) The sheep had heard His voice; He had called them by name; but what a measure of the intimacy of knowledge between Him and them, flowing from the divine life and nature possessed, expressed in the words, “As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father.” “As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love.” (xv. 9.) Can we take in fully the extent of the Father’s love to the Son? Such is the measure of the Son’s love to His people, we cannot grasp its extent, its breadth, its fulness, its abiding and unchangeable character. Love that would serve, cost what it might; love that led Him to give Himself up to

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death, and the enduring of God's wrath against sin ; love that rose superior to all that could try, and test, and prove it to the last extremity ; it is divine love ; it is absolute perfection.

Thou "hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me." (xvii. 23.) Here is the Father's love to those whom He had given to the Son ; seen in all its fulness when they shall be manifested before the universe in the same glory with Christ as truly *one*. Loved *as* His own Son. Is it not true now to faith ?

"As He is, so are we in this world." (1 John iv. 17.) As the Accomplisher of redemption, the risen and glorified Man, the Son has taken His place on the Father's throne, waiting the day when He shall sit on His own throne. We are before God our Father, *now* in this world, in all the unclouded favour and acceptance in which Christ is.

"As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." (xx. 21, xvii. 18.)

This gospel speaks of the Son as the Sent One of the Father. He is thus mentioned over forty times. We are not of the world, as He was not ; but sent into it as not belonging to it ; just as the Father had sent Him. His path as the Man on earth—the Servant (He was God too, as we know), was one of absolute, undeviating obedience and dependence, terminating only in death itself.

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The servants of God, and saints of past ages, had trodden the path of faith some little way; but here was One who never swerved from the path of submission to His Father’s will for a single moment. Passing through a world where every element was opposed, where everything bore the marks of sin and ruin, where the manifestation of perfect goodness drew out perfect hatred, He could draw His resources as the dependent One, the perfect Servant, from His Father. How truly He has marked out the path and principles of true service! And surely how great the distance at which we follow in His steps.

Let us then sum up a little of what is expressed in these two words, “as” and “so.” We find in chapter iii. 14 the measure of God’s requirements with regard to sin; what His holiness demands—the lifting up of the Son of man. In chapter vi. 57 the measure of dependence in the one who, through receiving Him, has got this new life and nature. In chapter x. 14, 15, the measure in which Christ knows His sheep, and they know Him. In chapter xv. 9 the measure of Christ’s love to His people. In chapter xvii. 23 the measure of the Father’s love to them to be displayed in glory. In 1 John iv. 17 the measure of our present acceptance. In chapter xx. 21 the measure and principle of true service.

B.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H. S. H.—Many thanks for your interesting letter of enquiry. We are not surprised that newly converted souls should find it hard to grasp the meaning of certain scriptural terms. *Forgiveness* is easier to understand than justification, because in our daily life we are familiar with the idea, and there is nothing strange about it. With justification it is otherwise. Now, the believer in Jesus is both forgiven and justified. In Acts xiii. 38, 39, to which you refer, the fact is stated and nothing more. Justification here, and in Romans iii. iv., does not go beyond forgiveness of sins. To forgive and to justify are not terms that express two acts. It is but one act viewed from two sides. If I think of the forgiveness of my sins, my heart rejoices in the One whose love has been shewn in that gracious act; if of justification, my thoughts turn rather to the One who has righteously cleared me. *Forgiveness* connects itself with pity, compassion, love; *justification* with righteousness. Hence in Romans, where the righteousness of God is the great subject, we have justification rather than forgiveness; for the love of God is not named till the fifth verse of chapter v.

Christ was raised for our justification, and here faith comes in; for we are not justified without it. We believe on Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Unto judgment and death He was delivered on account of our offences, but in His

resurrection God declared how fully He was satisfied with that one sacrifice for sins. Accordingly, in Romans iv. 24, it is God who is the Object of our faith. We believe on Him who not only gave His Son, but who raised Him from the dead, and believing we are justified. Christ's being raised was, if I may so say, His justification, His clearance; for He was charged with our offences upon the cross, and His resurrection was proof that those offences had been met. We too, believing, are cleared. His justification is the proof and measure of ours.

M. S.—Matthew xxv. 14, 30. It must surely be evident to every unprejudiced mind that the "wicked and slothful servant" of this parable is an unconverted man. Is it possible, think you, for any one who knows the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, to speak of Him as hard and unjust? Would the idlest saint on earth give his Lord such a character as that? Certainly not. Nor does it assist in the understanding of the parable to introduce into it the question of salvation. The "good and faithful servant" was not saved on account of his successful trading. Salvation is of grace, and not of works, as Ephesians ii. 8, 9 plainly shows. Service is the subject here. The Master in His sovereign wisdom gives "His goods" to whom and in what measure He wills. The servants who know their Master, and enter into His mind, trade and gain. They get His commendation at the end, and share in His joy. Not so the one who knows Him not. There is encouragement for the true servants, and solemn warning for any who are in the place of servants without knowing the One whose servants

they profess to be. These, having no true knowledge of their Master, nor devotedness to Him, use not what has been committed to them for His glory. Their talent is buried in the earth, and the object for which it was given wholly missed.

J. McP.—Matthew xxv. 41 ; Revelation xx. 10. We dare not take it upon ourselves to tone down the solemn and inspired words of Scripture. Rather would we leave them as they are, that they may bear upon the conscience in all their undiminished force. Were we to concede, for the moment, that the language is figurative, yet no one will deny that it is a figure of something, and if the figure is so terrible what must the reality be?

W. R.—Hebrews v. 9. The word rendered "*perfect*" in this passage signifies the completion of all that was required in order to anyone being installed in a certain office. It is used here in connection with the Priesthood of the Lord Jesus, for the exercise of which all that He in grace passed through as a Man on earth so blessedly fitted Him. In Himself He was ever perfect ; but to fill the office He sustains, in a way suited to the need of those on whose behalf He fills it, He must needs go through certain things. He has gone through them at an infinite cost to Himself, and thus being made perfect has become "the Author of eternal salvation unto all that obey Him ; called of God an High Priest." The meaning of the word "*perfect*" in other passages must be determined by its context, and with due regard to the subject in hand. Certainly it has not always the same sense.

IS THE BELIEVER'S STANDING IN CHRIST CONDITIONAL?

IT seems strange, very strange, that any should seek to persuade us that though we unfeignedly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and know, because God says so in His word, that we are saved, yet our *ultimate* salvation is by no means certain. According to their showing almost everything depends on ourselves, so that if we reach heaven at last every atom of the glory of it shall not be laid at the feet of Christ. He has done His part, and we shall have done ours, so the song must be—

Worthy is the Lamb, and worthy am I.

Yet every true Christian would shrink from that. Even those who tell us that we should not be too sure must instinctively feel that all the praise belongs to Him who loves us, and has “washed us from our sins in His own blood.” (Rev. i. 5.) But they think that if our standing in Christ is not dependent on our walk, it would lead to carelessness of conduct. So, to preserve us from this evil, and keep our feet in holy paths, they make our salvation uncertain, and contingent upon the way we live.

Now, personal holiness is of the first importance. Let war be waged to the bitter end against everything that would weaken this, for without

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holiness no man shall see the Lord. Only let us be clear as to the root of it, and let us see in what sort of soil so fair a flower grows.

One of the things that tend to obscure this subject is the idea that we are now in a state of probation, and that at the end of our mortal life it shall be decided whether or not we have merited a place with God in the mansions above. If it be indeed true that we are in a probationary state—candidates for heaven—then it is beyond dispute that none can tell how it will go with him, and he who puts on the armour had better not boast as he who puts it off. The issue lies with the Judge, and we must await the verdict of that impartial tribunal. But is it so?

What is meant by being on probation everybody knows. A servant enters a new situation. He is not definitely engaged, but goes for a month on trial, with the understanding that if he suits he shall remain. During that month he is on probation, and it depends on his conduct and capabilities whether he retains his place or not. Is that how we stand with God? If so, then uncertainty as to our final acceptance becomes us all, and any other feeling is overweening confidence, of which we may have cause to be ashamed by-and-by.

But, unless we are woefully deceived, Scripture sets the matter in a very different light. There have been probationary ages—periods during which man has been tried under varying circum-

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stances, and they have all ended in one way. From Eden to the flood, from the flood to Sinai, from Sinai to the incarnation, from the incarnation to the cross, man was on his trial. With what result? This—In innocence he fell into sin, without law he proved himself lawless, under law a law-breaker; and finally, when the Son of God became a Man and dwelt among us, men said, "This is the Heir; come, let us kill Him." (Matthew xxi. 38.) Their murderous proposal was carried out. They killed the Prince of life, crowning Him with thorns, and crucifying Him between two thieves. There ended man's probationary state.

It is evident then that if Christianity is to accomplish any good it must work by what it brings, and not by what it finds. "In me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing." (Romans vii. 18.) Clean cannot come out of the unclean. (Matthew xv. 19.) The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots. Nothing avails but the communication of a new life, with a nature that shall love what the old nature hates. Such a life the believer in Jesus possesses. It has been given unto him; it flows from a new source, incorruptible and undefiled; it is eternal life, not in Adam, but in God's Son. (1 John v. 11-13.) Let that fact be distinctly borne in mind.

But another question arises—How have our sins been dealt with? Have they been passed over as mere frailties of the creature, the outcome

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of a nature we were not responsible to control? No one taught of God will contend that it is so. The awakened sinner knows his responsibility, feels it in his conscience, and does not seek to excuse himself. Guilty and condemned he knows himself to be. For such there is good news indeed. To the cross, which is not only the expression of man's sin, but of God's love, his eyes may turn, and there see how his sins have already met with their reward. The Just has suffered for the unjust, and in the condemnation of his Substitute, and, we would add, in His resurrection, he beholds his own deliverance.

Standing where he now stands on the highway of life the believer in Jesus may look backward and forward and view his path from the cradle to the grave. Let him with diligence and conscientious care note every sin he has committed from first to last, and when he has counted them all up—forgetting none, omitting none—he may gladly, gratefully declare that for those sins, every one of them, the Saviour suffered, and from those sins, every one of them, God Himself has justified him for evermore. (Romans viii. 30–33.)

When these two glorious truths are believed and understood—viz., that God has given unto us eternal life, and that we are justified from all things through Christ crucified and risen—how is it possible that we should be uncertain as to our ultimate salvation? Shall the sins which lie buried in the grave of Christ be disentombed?

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Charged upon Him at Calvary, shall they be charged the second time upon me? Shall God justify and yet condemn? say I shall never perish and yet suffer me to be lost at last? The Christian reader shall himself answer these questions, and answer them in the affirmative if he dare and can.

In the light of the cross the believer learns God's everlasting hatred of sin. Never and nowhere, not even in the depths of hell, shall God's abhorrence of sin and what is due to it be seen as we see it at the cross. And as we stand upon the edge of that measureless sea of suffering once compassed by the crucified Redeemer, as we gaze across its dark waters and listen to the roar of its angry waves, our heart grows faint, and, like Elijah, we wrap our face in our mantle, we bow down to the ground, we abhor ourselves and loathe and turn from the sins that cost Christ infinite sorrow and pain to put away.

Leaving the subject of our sins, let us return for a brief moment to that of *life*. The believing soul shares in that life of which Christ is the spring and source. This life, as in fact every blessing, comes to us as the fruit of His cross. So we read, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John iii. 14, 15.) But not only so for the Holy Spirit as "the Spirit of life" now indwells the

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believer and identifies Himself with the life given unto him, so that it is said, "The Spirit is life" (Romans viii. 10), even as it is elsewhere affirmed that Christ is our life. (Col. iii. 4.) Both are true. Christ is our life, for the life we have received flows from Him. On the other hand, "the Spirit is life," inasmuch as dwelling in the believer He acts upon the life, develops its affections according to the heavenly relationships in which we have been set. Hence "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" are declared to be the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians v. 22.) They are in truth the traits of the life given unto us, but not the life separated from the Spirit. Here practical godliness comes in and has its place. It is the outflow of *life* in the power of the *Holy* Spirit of God.

Our point still remains to be examined. What about the "ifs" of Scripture, such as, "If ye continue," and, "If ye hold fast," and so on? Do they not seem to involve uncertainty, and make the permanence of our standing in Christ conditional? To this question we reply, There are no "ifs" connected with redemption and our place in Christ. It is God who has set us there (1 Cor. i. 30; 2 Cor. i. 21), and in Him we are complete. (Colossians ii. 10.) Moreover, whom God calls He also justifies, and whom He justifies them He also *glorifies*. (Romans viii. 30.) There are no "ifs" connected with that. The

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purposes of God shall never fail of their accomplishment. But the believer, viewed from another stand-point, is one of a great company embracing all who call upon the name of the Lord, numbers of whom it is certain are mere professors and nothing more. Still they do profess, for they have been baptized unto His name. It is to all on that ground that the "ifs" are addressed, and there the question may be raised, Who among us shall reach the Canaan above? The answer is, Those who continue, those who hold fast. At this door our responsibility enters. Dangers and difficulties there are—perils to face, and foes to fight. The Christian must neither shrink from the one nor flee from the other if he would be the companion of Christ in glory. He will find against him the world, the flesh, and the devil. He need therefore be sober, vigilant, and steadfast in the faith. Canaan is before him, but the wilderness lies between, and the wilderness must be crossed if Canaan he would reach. He must continue, he must hold fast. If, alas! he should for the moment slip, he has an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. (1 John ii. 1.) If he is deeply conscious of his weakness and infirmities, he has a High Priest with God, whose hands never grow weary. (Hebrews iv. 14, 16.) But he must go on, he must continue.

" Though nature's strength decay,
And earth and hell withstand,
To Canaan's bound I urge my way
At His command."

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Nor need the feeblest saint doubt. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. x. 13.) "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. i. 6.) Besides all this the watchful eye of God is over His own, and they are kept by His power through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed. (1 Peter i. 5.)

To sum up what we have sought to set forth.

I. That men are not in a state of probation now ; they were, but it came to an end with the rejection of Christ ; man by that crowning act of wickedness proving himself utterly guilty and corrupt.

II. That to the believer has been given life from a new source, a life with which the indwelling Spirit identifies Himself, acting upon that life, and thus becoming the spring of the believer's spiritual thoughts and affections, and leading him into paths of holiness.

III. That the sins of the believer have been put away by the atoning death of Christ, God Himself justifying him from them.

IV. That the knowledge of these things, based upon the word of God, gives certainty as to eternal salvation.

V. That the "ifs" of Scripture are not connected with redemption, and our place in Christ,

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but with our journey here below, and are addressed to all who are on the ground of Christian profession, the reality of which is proved by the believer's perseverance to the end.

Thus, whether we think of ourselves as "in Christ," and blessed with all the spiritual blessings which divine grace confers on those who are in Him, or as those who journey onward to God's everlasting rest, we may be *always confident*. As regards the former, we know that God will never be untrue to Christ, by whose one offering He has been glorified, and eternal redemption secured. Sins atoned for, the believer himself justified, everlasting life communicated to him, and sealed with the Holy Ghost unto the day of redemption, he may well be confident, for nothing can set aside those great and eternal realities. On the other side, though passing through a scene beset with dangers and temptations in which he is responsible to hold fast and to continue, he may be *always confident*, for God is faithful. Conscious of his own weakness and insufficiency, and fully aware that he cannot keep himself a single hour, he may count upon God to keep him. Prayer, meditation upon the Word, watchfulness, and the like, are among the means divine wisdom has furnished for his preservation; but if his heart is set on reaching the goal where Christ is, he may, we repeat, be *always confident*, not in himself, but in God, who shall confirm him unto the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. i. 8.)

DO YOU FEEL YOUR SINS FORGIVEN?

DO you feel that your sins are all forgiven?
Indeed, I do not; but I know they are.

Now, I cannot understand that. How can any one know it?

If you had wronged me, and I told you that I forgave you, would you not know it?

Most certainly. But how can you say that God ever told you that He forgave you? Did you just feel at a certain time something that you thought was God's voice inwardly telling you that your sins were pardoned?

I certainly did not.

Then how can it be? I have tried to get converted as hard as any man could. I have prayed for grace, for strength, for the pardon of my sins, and for the Holy Spirit, and I do not yet feel any difference, and I never could feel as I have heard some men say they have.

I know that you may have heard some Christians say they *feel* they are pardoned, they *feel* they are saved; but this only tends to mislead. It did mislead me, and I have no doubt it is misleading you. These Christians may mean a right thing, but they state it wrongly. I feel happy because I *know* that my sins are pardoned, and I will show you how I know that by-and-by; but I do not *feel* that my sins are pardoned.

But do not some people feel it while others do not?

Not at all. What I am contending for is, that

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the forgiveness of sins is a thing that can be felt by no one; and unless the knowledge of it is founded on the word of God, and that alone, for every one, individually, it will be sinking sand for a death-bed. Scores of anxious people have been deluded into the idea that they knew the gospel when some pleasing emotion passed through their minds.

Is there nothing about this "feeling saved" in the Bible?

Indeed there is not. You can easily satisfy yourself by turning to a concordance. Never once is the word put beside "salvation," "forgiveness," or, in fact, anything about a man's peace with God. But we find, in Luke i. 77, that part of John's commission is declared to be "to give *knowledge* of salvation." Did Abraham feel he was to have a son when he was so old? No; but he knew it. And how did he know it? Because God said it. He felt glad because he knew it, because he believed what God said. It is really because people do not believe that God means exactly what He says, that we see so many intelligent men who cannot say whether they are saved or not.

But I have often thought that I had received Christ and trusted in Him alone, but I find my faith so incapable of producing effects.

But did you start saying, "I am saved," before trying to do anything?

Oh, no! I was always waiting for fruits.

Fruits of what? fruits of doubt? Suppose you had got the right fruits, would you then have believed you were saved?

Oh, yes!

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That is to say, you would trust the fruits you brought forth rather than God's word—not for your salvation, but for your knowledge of it.

Then am I to do nothing ?

Absolutely and literally nothing. You must take salvation exactly as the thief on the cross did. He could not turn over a new leaf; his last wretched leaf had been turned in reviling his Saviour. He could not do any work for God, for there was a nail through each hand; he could not run in the way of God's commandments, for there was a nail through his feet. And until you stand still and accept salvation for nothing, knowing that you are saved simply on the authority of the bare word of God, you will never be saved. We do not look inward to what we feel, nor outward to what we do, but to the Son of man lifted up. (John iii. 14.)

Well, I think I see what you mean. I am not to examine to see if I *feel* better, *feel* saved, or *feel* happy. But here is the next difficulty, How am I to know it ?

Two things are to be distinguished—"salvation" and the "knowledge of salvation." First, How am I to get saved ? and then, How am I to know it ?

First, then, my *salvation* depends solely and entirely upon the work, the person of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Secondly, the knowledge that I am saved depends solely on the record, the *word*, the testimony of God—"He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son." (1 John v. 10.)

ADAPTED.

YE ARE NOT OF THE WORLD.

IN John xvii. Jesus, praying to His Father, said, “And now come I to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because *they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.* I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest *keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*” (vv. 13–16.) And in John xv. 18, 19: “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you: if ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because *ye are not of the world*, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”

These two scriptures show clearly that the Lord’s people are not of the world, even as He; and that as the world knew Him not, but hated Him, so must we meet with its hatred also. There is not a single thing in unison between the Christian and man’s world. “*The whole world lieth in the wicked one.*” (1 John v. 19.) But Christ “gave Himself for our sins, that He might *deliver us from*” (*out of*) “this present evil world.” (Gal. i. 4.)

The term "*world*" is used in Scripture in different ways. We read of God making *the worlds* by His Son. (Heb. i. 2.) It expresses too the moral condition of unconverted men without God, living for self, time, and sense; so that the Lord said to His own, "If *the world* hate you," and it also sets forth the system that men have built up on the earth—without God, whose elements are totally opposed to Him. Hence we find that John, in exhorting those classed as young men in his first epistle, says, "Love not *the world*, neither *the things* that are *in the world*. If any man *love the world*, the love of the Father is not in him. For *all that is in the world*, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is *not of the Father, but is of the world*." (1 John ii. 15, 16.)

Yet, although Christians are not of the world, but, as elsewhere presented, a heavenly people, the greater number are left awhile upon the earth to glorify God in their bodies till Christ returns. Hence we find ourselves in the midst of a vast system of things totally opposed to the new life which God has given us in His Son, and to everything that that life delights in. But we have also the Holy Ghost, who is the power of that life; and walking by faith, we overcome the world, and pass through the midst of it unscathed by its manifold evil influences.

At the same time it is important to distinguish

between worldly elements contrary to God and things which are needful for the body in the circumstances in which we may be placed. There is a wide difference between the two. We have died with Christ, and hence are "*dead to sin*," (Rom. vi.), but *not to nature*. We are now in Christ risen, and can enjoy communion with God. And if we walk in the Spirit we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh (which, of course, remains in us, and lusts the moment it is allowed), nor yield to the evil of the world, whilst seeking to use natural things in the fear of God, and for His glory, watching always, lest even any natural blessing that He has given us should in any way become our snare.

Now, Satan uses the world in different ways to hold men in his power, and to draw away the hearts of Christians from God and the simplicity which is in Christ. We may divide the moral state of the world around us under at least five heads; viz., wicked, worldly, social, political, and religious. Christ, as we have already cited, gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from (out of) this present evil world (Gal. i. 4), and *that* in every form in which we come in contact with it. Let us seek briefly to present what we mean by these different terms.

First, *the wicked world*. We speak thus of the world of the ungodly, of men following their own unbridled will, and the lusts and desires of

their evil hearts. Ungodliness abounds ; all kinds of license, revelry, and open and secret wickedness. Men, with *no fear of God* before their eyes (Romans iii. 18), indulge their lusts and passions, and the desires of their hearts and minds, in gluttony, drunkenness, immorality, infidelity, blasphemy, &c., &c. Now, surely no one with any pretensions to Christianity would sanction such manifest evil for a moment. Even *the natural conscience* of thousands is shocked at such like things. Men of the world themselves would not believe in the Christianity of the man who followed such practices. A Christian is saved to sin no more, and it would be difficult to find one who would not own at once that these things were sins, and must be wholly refused and shunned.

Secondly, *the worldly world*. By this term we would present the world of fashion and vanity, folly and pride, &c. Alas ! how many true children of God, as well as carnal professors, are more or less ensnared by the world in this aspect. There are numbers of believers, who are sheltered from judgment under Christ's precious blood, who seem to have no idea that His death has not only saved them from the consequence of their sin, but also laid them under obligation to refuse the world. It is only too often the case that there is no real deliverance in the soul ; they have never learnt that they have died with Christ (Rom. vi.),

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and are now before God in Him, privileged and responsible *to live Christ* henceforth. And did that blessed, perfect One follow the fashion, vanity, folly, and pride of this world? Far be the thought. All these things are of *the flesh*, and the flesh was judicially dealt with at the cross, and set aside by God once and for ever as utterly incorrigible and worthless. We are saved to give no place to the flesh, and to refuse all worldliness as part of that system that Satan and men have built up here without God.

Thirdly, *the social world*. All our readers doubtless know the meaning of the word "social." Now, this is one of the most specious forms in which Satan presents the world to our hearts, in order to allure us from Christ, and the things unseen and eternal. Thousands who refuse the wickedness of the flesh, and the gross worldliness of Vanity Fair, readily excuse themselves and others for a little social worldliness. We might give *details* of what we mean, but it would carry us beyond our limits in this paper. But think for a moment of the thousand and one things that Christians go on with every day in the home circle, and the social intercourse of life, which are merely for selfish pleasure, or to please others, regardless of whether they are pleasing to God. How often the exercised Christian hears the words, "I don't think there is any harm in this or that;" or, "So-and-so does it, and therefore

there cannot be any harm in it" (very low ground, to say the least of it); and no thought whatever as to whether it is according to the Word, and for the glory of God! Is the practical Christianity of the Bible to go world-bordering, as nearly as possible, without openly going into it? or is it a positive thing? "To me to live is *Christ*," said Paul. This is a sure test. Not, "Is there any harm?" But, "Is it *Christ*?" "Is it Christlike?" "Is it suited to Him?" "Is it according to the word of God?" "Will He be glorified by it?" He who loves us as He loves His own Son, withholds no joy nor pleasure from His people that is good for us, and expressly forbids all that is bad. He has connected His glory with us, and it is only the study of His word, under the teaching of the Spirit, that will enable us to know what is suited to Him, and what will glorify Him.

Fourthly, *the political world*. The meaning of this familiar expression is well known. The question is, What is the relation of the Christian to it? God has His ways in government in the world, as well as His ways in grace; and we read that there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. (Rom. xiii. 1.) If our readers will weigh the opening verses of this chapter, they will see that the whole teaching is that the Christian should be subject to such, rendering tribute, custom, fear, honour, &c. to those to whom

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they are due. But there is not one word about our taking part in the rule. And why? Because Christians are a heavenly people, and their citizenship heavenly. (1 Cor. xv. 48; Phil. iii. 20.) What has a foreigner to do with the government of the British Empire? Nothing whatever. All he has to do, if he lives in this country, is to be subject to the rulers and the laws. So also the Christian is a stranger and a pilgrim here. (1 Peter ii. 11.) He belongs to another country, and, therefore, so long as he dwells upon earth, he has but to be subject to the laws of those ruling. This simplifies matters immensely for us, if we will only be simple about it all. If we begin to reason about it we shall form mere human conclusions, which are contrary to the word of God. Faith acts in simple, whole-hearted obedience to what God says. Minding *earthly things* is one of the characteristics of the enemies of the cross of Christ. (Phil. iii. 18, 19.)

When Christians get linked with the world, whether in government or anything else, they are sure to become losers in their own souls. It is impossible to get the political world to act on Christian principles *according to the word of God* (although it may be more or less influenced by Christianity), and therefore, sooner or later, as has been often practically proved, the Christian necessarily succumbs in some measure to worldly principles, unless he breaks away to go on with

God. What part hath he that believeth with an unbeliever? (2 Cor. vi. 14–18.) The Christian's ruling time is future. When the Lord judges and reigns, we shall judge and reign with Him. (1 Cor. iv. 8; vi. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 12.)

Fifthly, *the religious world*. This is the worst form of evil before God, because it is the corruption of that which is most immediately connected with Himself in His relations with men. Nowhere, and in no way, have men more grievously sinned against God than in connection with holy things. All around us at the present moment, more or less throughout Christendom, we see the results of Satan's power and man's self-will. Vast religious systems, formed of mixed principles of Christianity, Judaism, and heathenism, maintained and carried on to a very great extent by unconverted men, or by converted and unconverted together. Worldly elements of all kinds abound to suit the eye and heart of man, though ostensibly for the glory of God, and all sorts of worldly practices (in some instances even unrighteous) resorted to, to support them. "My people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?" (Jer. v. 31.) Oh, what indeed?

A falling away was prophesied, and a falling away has come (2 Thess. ii. 3); things are rapidly heaving up to open apostasy and revolt against God, and the worship of Satan. (Rev. xiii.) What is the Christian's path? *Separation*. Separation

from all evil, doctrinal or practical, as proved by the sure word of God; and a path in fellowship with all who do the same. (2 Tim. ii. 19–22.) Thousands are misled by the subtleties of Satan, who clothes worldliness with religious titles, or introduces a little religion to make worldliness go down better, so that those who otherwise would have a bad conscience become his dupes. Nothing but cleaving to God's word, and making a clean sweep of all religious worldliness, is worthy of Him whose holy name we bear, and "who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world," &c., (Gal. i. 4) in its religious as well as in every other form.

"*They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world,*" saith the Lord. (John xvii. 16.) This is unmistakably plain. We are responsible, then, to refuse the world, and the things in it, in whatever form Satan may present them to our hearts, whether wicked, worldly, social, political, or religious: "And this is the victory that *overcometh the world, even our faith.*" (1 John v. 4.)

May the Lord graciously exercise the heart of every Christian who reads these lines, that we may be occupied with Him and heavenly things, in simple faith rising superior to all in the world here, so leaving it practically behind us, and pressing on to the glory until we behold Him face to face, for His own precious name's sake.

E. H. C.

TELL THEM OF JESUS.

NOT long since I was calling at a few cottages in the country, in one of the counties of England, asking the inmates to come to a gospel meeting, which was to be held in a farmhouse a little distance off. I spoke to one young girl about her soul, and in course of conversation asked for a Bible, that I might show her a verse from God's own word. Great was my astonishment to receive the answer, that there was not one in the house. These poor, ignorant people had never read the Scriptures for themselves; they had only "heard a little about them in church," that was all. But think of this in so-called Christian England!

Oh, may the Lord graciously use the little instance recorded above to stir up the hearts of His own dear people to the terrible reality that precious souls are perishing around, heedless and ignorant, it may be, of eternity!

Let us not be selfish, and satisfied with being saved ourselves; but may we be so happy and rejoicing in that blessed One who gave Himself for us, that out of the abundance of our hearts our mouths may speak. Yes, speak of Jesus; tell of God's boundless love in the gift of His only, well-beloved Son.

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The Lord is coming quickly. Then the little moment of privilege afforded us now of serving Him, pleasing Him during His rejection, will be for ever past, and that door of mercy closed too.

“Shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life.” (Phil. ii. 15, 16.)

“It was only a tract in the cottage, left with a friendly smile;
But the woman’s face grew brighter, as she bent to her daily
toil;
And the messenger given so kindly was placed with care away,
To read in the quiet evening at the close of the busy day.

“Only a kind word spoken of the home and the rest above,
Of the wonderful patience and mercy, and the gift of an
infinite love;
And the man, so hard and callous, heard of this grace so free,
And felt with a new emotion, then surely *He* cares for *me*.

“Only a short little visit to the weary one, sick and lone,
To smooth the ruffled pillow, and to speak in a gentle tone;
And the sufferer grew more quiet at the sound of a soothing
prayer—
For the light of heaven came gleaming through the shadows
settling there.

“Only the work of a district, one short little hour in the week:
Not very long for labour, not many words to speak;
But the angel of mercy is passing, with the caller, from door
to door;
And the fruits of the heavenly mission remain for evermore.

“Only one life for service, one talent to lay at His feet;
And efforts and prayers are needed, and workers in every
street:
For eyes are grown dim and heavy, which a smile of love
would light,
And some are far from the Master, and perishing in the night.

“It was only a tract in the cottage, but its message was clear
and plain;
And the voice of Jesus was calling, and He did not call in
vain;
And one more sheaf was gathered, another soul was won.
It was but a little service, but the Lord pronounced, ‘Well
done.’”

E. M. D. B.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

EDIFICATION. (Romans xvi. 25.)—The term “My gospel” in this verse refers not merely to those aspects of the gospel which were common to the various preachers of it, but to those distinctive truths which were committed to Paul to announce in the form in which they are found in his epistles. Repentance and remission of sins in the risen Saviour’s name all preached, but Paul’s gospel embraced very much more. At the close of an article by Mr. Stoney on this very subject, he sums up the special features of “My gospel” in their application to the believer thus :

- “i. We are in God’s righteousness.
- “ii. So complete is God’s righteousness, that all which offended against it has been judicially ended in the cross of Christ; the old man crucified with Christ.
- “iii. Eternal life in Christ is given.
- “iv. We are in the Spirit, and not in the flesh . . . it is Christ liveth in us, and we in Him.
- “v. The glory of God is our hope, and we are there through the same righteousness, in Christ.
- “vi. We have a definite place now in heaven, as well as a future inheritance there.
- “vii. We look for Him to come to change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto His own glorious body.”

Whether these things are preached to-day from the pulpits and platforms of Christendom we leave it for others to determine. For ourselves we fear they are not.

YOUNG BELIEVER.—Certainly those who lived before the law was given will be held responsible for their sins. It is true that not having had the law which forbade the things they did, their sins did not take the actual form of transgressions. (Rom. iv. 15.) Still

sin was ever sin, and death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not transgressed a definite command as Adam did. (Rom. v. 14.) But the responsibilities of men are always measured by their privileges, and will be in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. (Rom. ii. 12.) Then as to sin not being imputed where there is no law (Rom. v. 13), we are not at liberty to interpret those words as meaning that prior to the law men might sin as they like, and it would make no difference. What violence would be done to other passages were such an interpretation admissible! As far as we know there had been no command against murder when Cain slew his brother. Was he therefore to be held guiltless? Surely not. But the passage means that where there is no law each particular sin is not imputed as a violation of some given command as in Adam's case. With respect to your quoting the last clause of 1 John iii. 4 as a definition of sin, you will see by looking at the Revised Version that the clause is rendered, "Sin is lawlessness." And this rendering is just, and commends itself even to English readers, inasmuch as sin could not be a transgression of the law if no law had been given.

To your final question we can give but brief answer. Many things were permitted in the days of which you speak which were undoubtedly not according to the mind of God. (See Matthew xix. 8.) It must also be remembered that those who stood in the relationship you mention, though holding a secondary place in the family, were not viewed as they would be now, and certain rights were secured to them by law. More than this we cannot say here.

A FATHER.—Your question is not easy to answer, and it is possible that many circumstances might influence our reply, were they known to us. Besides, it is evident that conscience is involved, and in that case what one might be free to do another would not.

To his own master each must stand or fall. In the point you mention the recipients would not come under the influence of the donor, and there would be less grounds for objection. But we can only commend you to such a word as James i. 5 and Col. i. 9, 10.

A. W. (Joel ii. 28.)—There can be no doubt that the prophecy of Joel is distinctly Jewish, and awaits its fulfilment. Peter quotes it in Acts ii., not with the idea that it was then fulfilled, but to silence those who mockingly said, "These men are full of new wine." What they were witnessing was not the effect of strong drink, but of the presence in power of the Holy Ghost, for which that ancient prophecy should have prepared them. So Peter says, "This is *that* which was spoken by the prophet Joel." It was the same in character and outward effect.

As to the passage being employed to justify public preaching by Christian women, we can see no sanction in it for such a practice. In chap. xxi. 9 we read of the daughters of Philip the evangelist who prophesied, and none can deny that according to 1 Cor. xiv. 3, prophecy stands high in the rank of teaching. In the same chapter, however (*vv.* 34, 35), we are told that in the assemblies women were to keep silence, and in 1 Timothy ii., where the broad distinction between the place of men and women is drawn, the latter, *as a class*, are not suffered to teach. Still, if women were gifted, as some undoubtedly were, their gift was to be exercised, but in its proper sphere. Now, in relation to another matter, Paul appeals to nature as teaching what is comely (1 Cor. xi. 13–15); and to nature we might be permitted to appeal in this connection. For surely everything tends to indicate that the fitting sphere for women's gift is not the public platform and before the eye of a mixed multitude. It is in vain to say that God has blessed the preaching of women. We do not doubt it. In His sovereignty He is pleased to use all manner of

means for the furtherance of His gracious ends; but we shall go far astray if we are prepared to believe that every instrument He uses is stamped with His approval. Your question as to John iii. 4 we do not understand. Will you kindly repeat it? If 1 John iii. 4 is meant, then our answer to "Young Believer" may furnish the help you require.

T. G. A.—In your view of the case you entirely exclude sin, and what sin has wrought. If the minds of them who believe not are blinded by the god of this world—lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ should shine unto them—are men not responsible for this? How is it that Satan has such power over them, and why is it that they turn from so blessed a testimony and believe it not? Is it not because of sin? And if God shines into the heart of any, so that, believing the gospel, they are saved, shall they not thank Him for it? On that hinges the whole matter.

But the distress of soul which your letter reveals is a gracious indication that God's voice is making itself heard within your heart. Your very misery is a great mercy. And if indeed in days past you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, you are now learning how hard and bitter a thing it is to have turned away from Him. But you are brooding over your own wretched self—looking within, if perchance you may find any thing from which you may gather hope that you were once truly converted. All this God may use to show you what you are in yourself. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." (Isaiah i. 5, 6.) What can meet such a one but the full, free, infinite grace of God, that looks for no good, and is fully aware of all the evil that is there? Sinner, wanderer, as you

confessedly are, there is untold blessing for you if you come back and confess your sins and backsliding to God. Look and see how, in Hosea xiv., those who had fallen by their iniquity are graciously encouraged to return unto the Lord. Fatherless, so to speak, they were; for they had strayed away from God. But in Him "the fatherless findeth mercy;" and of such He said, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely." And God is all this and more to-day. Oh, then, come back; unbosom yourself to God, tell Him all the sin and the shame! "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin," and "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John i. 7, 9.)

Trouble not yourself about the doctrine of election. Occupation with such questions in your present state of soul is more than mischievous. Be assured all is for you. "Every one," "whosoever," "all"—these are they who are invited to come, and these are they to whom the gospel is addressed. Many things you may find hard to understand; but be entreated to turn resolutely from every distracting point, and as a sinner kneel before God and tell Him all. Think of His love in not sparing His own Son; think too of that precious blood that washes away every stain. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart He will not despise.

"Come, leave the desert land,
And all the husks on which thy soul has fed,
And trust the faithful hand
That offers thee a feast of living bread.

"Oh, canst thou turn away?
It is thy Father that invites thee near.
Nay, sinner, weep and pray,
And heaven shall hail the penitential tear!"

J. H.—If the Lord should lead those of whom you speak to study the Book of the Revelation, there can be no doubt it would yield profit and blessing. (See chap. i. 3.)

LETTERS RELATING TO SALVATION.

No. I.

DEAR —, It is very important to apprehend the way salvation is presented in the Scriptures; and you will, I think, be better able to do so if you are now clear as to the forgiveness of sins.

Although forgiveness and salvation are closely connected, yet they convey different ideas, and refer to man in different conditions as a sinner.

Salvation is a term wider in its application than forgiveness, though it is founded upon the latter in the word of God.

There are many professing Christians whose creed might be summed up in the statement that they must do something very good (or a number of good things) to be saved, and do something very bad to be lost.

Much of the teaching too that is abroad fosters this idea.

It is therefore essentially important to have clear knowledge from God's word as to what constitutes a person lost or saved.

The first important truth then to apprehend is, that *there is nothing to do to be lost.*

From the moment we are born into this world we are lost, and therefore need salvation. Sinful

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“by nature,” and “children of wrath,” every child of Adam’s race needs a Saviour.*

Neither good works (so called) nor ordinances can alter the lost condition of such ; and no sinful works committed constitute such a one lost, he being *that* already ; though each one who dies unforgiven will assuredly be answerable for his own sins, for “God . . . will render to every man according to his deeds.” (Rom. ii. 5, 6.)

What then is to be done to be saved ? How is a sinner to escape a condition in which, if he should die, he would perish for ever—be eternally lost ?

Thank God, there is nothing to do to be saved. All has been done.

Not one need die in his sins, for Christ has died, “the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God.”

None need perish for ever, for “the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” And again, “The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared.” (Titus ii. See also chapter iii. 4–7.)

In and by the word of God it is that salvation is presented to us. We read there of *the word of salvation*.

* As regards infants, the death of Christ was needed for them ; and therefore, as “it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish,” we can count upon His grace to take them to heaven if they die, because the atonement made by Christ avails for them. Hence also, any ordinances administered to them with a view of fitting them for heaven is a slight on the perfect work of Jesus and the grace of the Father.

So the apostle spoke to the religious Jews in Antioch (Acts xiii.) when he says, "To you is the word of this salvation sent."

So the angel informed Cornelius, as recorded in Acts xi. 14, he was to send for Peter, "who shall tell thee WORDS, whereby thou and all thy house *shall be saved*."

Cornelius was a pious man previously, but needed to hear and believe the gospel to be saved.

The word of salvation is the testimony by the Spirit of God, through the Scriptures, to us as lost sinners, of the death of Jesus for our sins, who, having suffered for our sins, and been made sin, has been raised from the dead, thus becoming the all-sufficient Saviour for every one who believes on Him.

To all who receive the *word* of salvation (which the gospel is, Eph. i. 13) Scripture gives the *knowledge* of salvation.

This Zacharias first declared by the Holy Ghost in Luke i.: "To give *knowledge* of salvation unto His people, by the remission of their sins." To possess this, dear —, is of more value than all in the world without it, and it is the portion of all "His people."

I will now only give you three scriptures (taken from amongst many), which prove conclusively that it is the present portion of each believer to know that he is saved.

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1 Corinthians i. 18 : "Unto us *which are saved* it" the cross of Christ "is the power of God."

Ephesians ii. 5, 8 : "By grace ye are saved."

2 Timothy i. 9 : "Who" (God) "HATH saved us, and called us with a holy calling."

In closing, I will only add that you will find these three important facts established in the word of God:

1st. That each one, however different socially, morally, or religiously, is lost beyond all human hope or aid.

2nd. That the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Son of God, constitute the only and all-sufficient way of salvation for all men. He came into the world to save sinners. He died as the Saviour of sinners, has glorified God about sin, and God has glorified Him because He (God) has been so glorified as to sin.

3rd. All who believe in Him, as He is presented by God in His word (that is, as a Saviour), *are* saved now. They have received the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls, and this salvation is eternal. (Heb. v. 9.)

I hope to point out to you in my next letter the three ways in which salvation is presented in the New Testament. I trust that the consideration of these will not only more fully establish in your mind the truth of what we have already noticed, but make clear the application of certain passages which are used by some to deny the truth of present salvation.

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No. II.

DEAR —, at the close of my last letter I sought to point out to you how complete in Scripture is the assurance to the believer as to the salvation of the soul; and in this respect salvation is as absolute and sure now as it will be when the believer is in heaven.

There are, however, two other ways in which Scripture speaks of salvation, which must not be confounded with the former, else the mind is kept in uncertainty and doubt.

There is but one salvation, properly speaking, even as there is only *one Saviour*; but it consists of three parts or stages, so to speak.

Corresponding to these, we find that Christ is presented to us as Saviour in three distinct ways.

Everything, I need not say, rests on His atoning work on the cross. All blessing flows from that, and is sure to all who believe; but there is a past, a present, and a future as to the believer's salvation.

We have already noticed some of the scriptures relating to the salvation of the soul. This is the first way in which Scripture presents it; and for the believer this is a past thing; that is, he can say, "I am saved, and saved for eternity."

If you will now look at Hebrews vii. 25, you will find that Christ is there presented as a living Man at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and viewed as a *present* Saviour, and as the High Priest of His people. As ever living there, "He

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is able also to save them to the uttermost" (or completely) "that come unto God by Him."

You will find in the margin of your Bible that "to the uttermost" is rendered "evermore," for salvation is here connected with His present intercession for His people; and, as living there for them, He is able to save them through everything right to the end of the journey.

It is after we receive the salvation of the soul that we are "His own," and that therefore He is our High Priest. It is for these alone that He prays or intercedes on high. Compare carefully John xvii., especially verse 9, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine," &c.

This beautiful prayer is a sample of His intercession on high with the Father for His own. We also find that this intercession is exercised in reference to their failures, as shown in Peter's case, where the Lord said to him, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Peter failed, but not his faith. His confidence in the love and grace of his blessed Lord and Master did not fail. (See also 1 John ii. 1.)

Thus we have the present salvation of the people of God—their practical deliverance day by day in going through a world of sin, temptations, difficulties, and sorrow. Whether it be reproof, chastening, comfort, sympathy, or grace that His people need, He ministers it to them.

He died to save us from our sins and from this present evil world. (Gal. i. 4.) He lives to save us in the midst of all the dangers and difficulties in connection with our journey through the world. As it is so beautifully expressed in Romans v. 10: "If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His son, much more, being reconciled, *we shall be saved by His life.*"

Not that our responsibility is set aside by this. In Philippians ii. we are told to "work out" our own salvation "with fear and trembling;" for it is God who works in us, both to will and to do (the desire to do and the doing) of His good pleasure.

This refers to the practical walk or conduct of the people of God, *in* whom God by His Spirit dwells and works. You will find in the first chapter that Paul speaks of his own salvation, and how what appeared to be against him would turn out for his practical deliverance.

You never find "fear and trembling" for the believer in the presence of God. We have "*boldness* to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Heb. x.); and "boldness in the day of judgment." (1 John iv.) But as regards the world and Satan's power and wiles, we have to be watchful and dependent every moment, or we may fall, and thus dishonour our Lord, grieve the Holy Spirit, and bring shame and chastening on ourselves *here*.

But we need too the present service of Christ

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for us—His grace and help—to enable us to go on through what is to us a wilderness journey.

In connection with this I will only further refer you to Romans viii. 35–39, as I trust you will have gathered sufficient from what we have considered to help you to apprehend this subject more fully.

It is not only deeply interesting but exceedingly important, yet it is, alas ! almost entirely lost sight of by a large number of Christians.

We now come to the *future* salvation, for which the believer waits.

This relates specially to the believer's body. This "mortal body" has not yet been made the subject of the saving *power* of Christ. It is still the "earthen vessel," subject to suffering, pain, and death ; though we must not forget that the very hairs of our head are all numbered, and that all that happens to us in the body now is ordered by a Father's hand of love, and by his unerring wisdom ; and also that Christ has already bought our bodies ; they belong to Him, and are the temples of the Holy Ghost.

I will only refer you to three scriptures which relate to this latter salvation ; that is, our final deliverance out of the world altogether when the Lord comes into the air with a victorious shout, as described in 1 Thessalonians iv.

The first passage is Romans xiii. 11.

In this epistle salvation is always looked at as

future, because the term, when used here, comprehends also the salvation of the body, as the complete expression of the saving power of Christ's work as applied to the believer. If you will look also at chapter viii. 23 you will find the deliverance of the body beautifully referred to, and in verse 11 it is also spoken of as the quickening of our mortal body. It is the same in its application as verse 23.

The second passage is Philippians iii. 21.

You will notice that in the previous verse we are looking for the Lord Jesus Christ *as Saviour*—for so it should read. This is with the knowledge that He will then transform our body of humiliation into conformity to His body of glory. What a glorious prospect it is, and what a wonderful salvation it will be!

The third scripture as to this subject is 1 Peter i. 5.

These references will, I trust, be sufficient to show you the distinct way in which Scripture presents this part of salvation.

In this last scripture we read that salvation is "ready to be revealed," and in the meantime the believer is "kept by the power of God through faith."

In verse 9 the salvation of the soul is spoken of as being already received: "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." But the deliverance of our bodies, and our

deliverance out of this world entirely, await His coming again, which may be at any moment. Then His people, who have even now His Spirit dwelling in them (Rom. viii. 11), shall "be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."

In the meantime His power and His love are exercised in carrying His sheep through the wilderness, and saving them through the countless dangers by the way. Thank God, He has said, "I give unto them" (My sheep) "eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand." (John x. 28.)

S. M. A.

A SOLEMN CONTRAST;

OR, "THE HOLY MOUNT" AND "THE PLACE WHICH IS CALLED CALVARY."

"Behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—MATTHEW xvii. 5.

"Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me."—MATTHEW xxvii. 45, 46.

LOOK, kind reader, at verse 21 of the preceding chapter (Matthew xvi.), and you will see that the Lord Jesus had at this hour the cross distinctly before Him. The time too had come for His disciples to be plainly warned of all that was about to happen. So it is written, "From that

time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." It is the cross, but the cross rather from man's side, for there is no mention here of those deeper sufferings in which atonement was wrought. The tide of human hate and rebellion against the Lord, and against His Anointed, was rising rapidly, and was about to culminate in the final rejection and crucifixion of the Son of God.

From every point of view it was an awful ending to such a path as His had been, so full of grace and blessing for sinful men—awful, I mean, for those who were the instruments of bringing it all about. For think of the amazing fact that the Son of God was here on earth. Not with outward pomp and splendour had He come. Not in flaming fire such as attended the giving of the law on Sinai's solemn mount. Not with hosts of mighty angels such as shall swell His train in the approaching day of judgment. He came not thus; for sin was here, and men were alienated from God, duped and blinded by their malignant foe, and He would free them from his hateful yoke. Therefore He came in the fashion of a lowly man, His deity enshrouded in a tabernacle of flesh and blood. He came, full of grace and truth, to look upon us with human eyes, to touch us with a human hand, to feel for us with a

human heart, to shed over us human tears—He came not to condemn, but to save; not to impute our trespasses unto us, but to reconcile us to God, if indeed we would listen to His voice. No words like His ever fell on mortal ears, nor since the world began had deeds been seen such as were witnessed where'er the Saviour went. Yet was He despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. They that sat in the gate spake against Him, and He was the song of the drunkards. Nor would the heart of man, energized by Satan, be content till He had been apprehended like a thief, crowned in derision with a bramble crown, and crucified with malefactors for His companions. What an ending! and what an exhibition of humanity was there!

Behold Him then—the One who had given eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, tongues to the dumb, and life to the dead; who had cleansed the leper, wiped the tears from weeping eyes, bound up the broken heart, and whose words were words of eternal life—behold Him, I say, upon a common Roman cross, and that cross the only reward that men gave for all He had said and done!

But all this, so plainly foreseen and foretold by the Lord, is but the dark background of the picture, and serves to throw into bolder, brighter relief the lovely scene on the holy mount. Taking with Him Peter, James, and John, He goes into a high mountain apart, and is transfigured before

them. They gaze upon Him, and, lo! His face shines as the sun, and His raiment is white as the light. And as they look, being eye-witnesses of His majesty, a cloud of glory overshadows them, and they fear, and fall on their faces. Then from out of that cloud a voice is heard: it is the voice of God the Father, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

It is thus that God the Father gave honour and glory to Jesus. Thus did He confess Him, who was in humiliation here, whom men conspired to kill, as His beloved Son, and the One in whom He found His good pleasure. Every thought, every word, every impulse of His heart, was, like incense pure and sweet, ever ascending to God the Father, and furnishing, so to speak, fresh motives for the Father's love.

But we must turn from "the holy mount," where the heart, captivated by its beauty, loves to linger, and betake ourselves to "the place which is called Calvary," where we shall see Jesus in other scenes. On the cross we behold Him now. Tread gently, O my soul, for thou art on holy ground. There is no overshadowing cloud of glory here, no voice from heaven, no Moses, no Elias, no angel such as ministered unto Him in dark Gethsemane. Instead of a face shining as the sun, we see one marred more than any man's. Gloom and darkness without, answered by greater gloom and darkness within, which at last found utterance in

the piercing cry of "ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" Passing with the rapidity of thought from Calvary to the mount of transfiguration, and from the mount of transfiguration back to Calvary, we can but exclaim, What a mighty revolution is here! On that mount honoured and glorified, on this bruised and forsaken; *there* God the Father saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" *here* the Son crying, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me." Say, my soul, dost thou understand this great mystery?

How this negatives, grinds to powder, and utterly destroys the dishonouring thought that the cross to Christ was only a martyr's death! Who has ever heard of God's martyrs being abandoned, and obliged to confess in a loud voice, and in presence of their foes, that they were forsaken of God in the hour of their extremity? Nay, have they not gone boldly to the stake, and joyously welcomed the faggot and the flame? Sustained by the power and presence of God, they have sung songs of holy triumph while the devouring fire has been doing its deadly work, and their faces have shone like an angel's. But it was not so with Jesus, though none had served as He had served, or loved as He had loved.

We are not left to ransack our brains for a solution of all this. In vain would be the task did heaven throw no light upon the otherwise dark problem. One verse in Isaiah liii. explains it all. Let me quote it: "All we like sheep have

gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." With that verse in view the mystery which enshrouds the cross passes away, and we understand how that "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."

MIGHTAM OF DAVID.

A GOLDEN PSALM.

IT is always interesting and profitable surely to trace the way in which the Spirit of God conducts the soul of the saint forward in truth, working, like the principle of life in vegetation, silently and unseen, but ever working to carry forward the soul from its spring-time to its autumn maturity. A thousand influences may stand opposed, like the chilling winds and leaden skies, the biting frost and devastating blight in nature, but in spite of all, with ceaseless, noiseless activity, in divine energy, the unwearied Witness of a glorified Christ works on toward the desired end—the presenting of every man perfect in Christ Jesus. As the Lord Himself said to unbelieving Israel, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," so may we say of the Spirit of God. There is the same divine activity in goodness

not only in respect to saints in their corporate character, but towards individual believers. All are under the tutoring hand of the Holy Ghost as objects of unflagging interest and subjects of culture for the glory and joy of Christ.

Nor is it at all difficult, if we go back to a past dispensation, to find the same principle underlying the inspired words of David and others in the Old Testament. Like water seeking, and, if the supply be kept up, invariably attaining, the level of its source, so the sacred strain rises higher and higher till it loses itself in the immeasurable elevation from whence it flowed, and to which it has returned.

Psalm xvi. is a case in point. The psalmist cries to El* (the mighty One), trusting in Him. It is the place of dependent subjection—man trusting in God, and leaning upon Him in holy, confiding dependence. This is the key-note of the psalm. Fittingly then *the soul* addresses Him, though no words be uttered, and its language is, "*Thou art my God*" (Adonay, Lord in blessing). It is in fact Messiah upon earth who speaks, pleading His trust and confidence, and who then, looking up unto Adonay, says, "My goodness extendeth not to Thee"; for He speaks as a man, and therefore will not assert His equality with God, but, looking to the saints, says of them, "In whom is all my

* The different names of God are not marked in the Authorised Version, to the great loss of the English reader. In his comments on this psalm the writer has noted them.

delight," or "my good pleasure." How beautifully does David's "michtam" thus mark with precision the position of Christ as a man, taking a place of subjection here upon the earth, and in that place making Jehovah alone His portion, and the saints only His delight! Every false god He refuses utterly—"Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips." With His whole heart He repudiated idolatry, that ancient sin of Israel soon to be more blasphemously revived. As a man upon earth Jehovah alone was Messiah's Adonay; and surely this was true of the psalmist, as it is to-day of every true saint of God.

The progress of the inspired strain is now marked clearly; for we read, "Jehovah" (*name of divine relationship*) "is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; Thou maintainest my lot." The soul of the saint is here confessedly in the presence of its object, and the heart opens to its own blessedness. First I speak of Him and of what He is to me, and then I speak to Him and of what He does for me. He is my *portion*, my all; or, as in Col. iii. 11, Christ is *everything*—the portion of my inheritance and the portion of my cup. "The inheritance" of this verse and the "heritage" of the next are the future things, while the "cup" and the "lines" are the present things. He speaks first of the inheritance and then of the cup. How true is this in the ex-

perience of saints! Many a one knows that Christ will be his portion for ever, who has afterwards to learn that just as truly and as blessedly is He his portion *now*. Both are true—

“We want Thee here each hour of need,
Shall want Thee too in glory.”

And both are *equally* true and equally important. For when afterwards we have learnt that Christ is our portion all along the road, and that in Him are infinite resources for faith to draw upon; and when we have proved how utterly impossible it is to get along a single step heavenward without Him, we are apt to think that He is more to us and more necessary here than ever He can be there, where all the hindrances shall be gone. Ah! neither will that do. Whether we are in the wilderness or in the land, whether in the furnace or on the throne, He is the *essential* element in all our blessing, and in all our joy. For this reason, to be with Him will be heaven, and to be like Him will be glory. When my heart has left its every weight below, when my new nature is unshackled and unassailed, when my spirit is emancipated from its burdensome clay and has entered upon the tenancy of a glorified body, its “house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,” what shall I find in heaven capable of addressing me in a way suited to my blessedness but *the One* who bled for me here to procure it? Whom

shall I find, did I search every nook in glory, capable of assuring my heart amid its rapturous, new-born joy, or of receiving the first adequate tribute of a love which Himself had inspired, save the One who became flesh, that in life, and in death, and in resurrection there should come forth unto His saints the revelation of His Father, and our Father; of His God, and our God? How fittingly then says the psalmist in another place—"Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee"!

Next we have the speaking *to* Him. It is a real privilege to the saints of God to speak *of* Christ, but how much greater the privilege of speaking *to* Him, especially since we know that with this is coupled an even greater thing—His speaking *to us*, as He said, "My sheep hear *My voice*." Here we speak to Him—"Thou maintainest my lot." Oh, what a joy it is, amidst all the exigencies and vicissitudes of this chequered scene, to be able to turn the heart from every opposing thing, as we read, "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear;" to be able to turn to Himself and say, "Thou maintainest my lot"! Oh, harassed, tried, troubled, sorrow-filled saint of God, look up from this time forth, and exclaim, "Thou maintainest my lot!" How tranquilly then the soul passes to the discovery that our lot, whatever be its

drawbacks, is a singularly good one! As we sometimes sing—

“O Lord, how blest our journey, while here on earth we roam,
Who find in Abba’s favour, our spirit’s present home!”

In unison with this the psalmist says, “The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places [or the best places]; yea, I have a goodly [or most excellent] heritage.” In the eyes of the worldling it may not appear an enviable one, but “the secret of Jehovah is with them that fear Him.” And when we have learnt that the Lord Himself is His people’s portion, whether here or in glory, and that Himself is the Maintainer of their lot, we readily acquiesce in David’s words, and own the pleasantness and the goodness of what His love has ordained for us. Dear reader, is it so with you? Whatever your lot below, and however it may appear to yourself or to others on earthly principles, can you look up and say, “The lines are fallen unto me in the best places; I have a most excellent heritage. Thou maintainest my lot”?

But the saints of God need *guidance*, and they also need *instruction*; and David’s God was Paul’s, concerning whom said the apostle, “My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” So here we find, “I will bless Jehovah, who hath given me counsel.” What beautiful confidence was the psalmist’s! indeed, we may say, was that of Christ as a dependent man! He had turned to

Jehovah, and Jehovah had answered him, and had opened his ear morning by morning to hear as the *learner* (Isaiah 1. 4); and now, with a worshipping heart, he can testify of Him that He had given him counsel. And the night-season afforded its lessons too; when all else was hushed into quietude his own heart spoke, and its exercises yielded instruction of no little value. It is herein saints lamentably fail. They know so little of retirement of spirit in the presence of God, when no eye sees but His. In silence and solitude, before the day broke, bringing its calls and its claims, its discords and its distractions, the psalmist had passed through a season of meditation, during which God wrought exercise of heart and conscience, which spread its sober and salutary effect over the day's activities. Surely herein is something to be coveted, and to be cultivated too, by the saints of God.

But now we hear again, and distinctly, the voice of One greater than David, the prophetic language of One who was both David's Root and David's Offspring; for though the sweet singer of Israel no doubt entered into it in measure, only He who was Jehovah's Fellow, "the faithful and true Witness," could fully say, "I have set Jehovah always before Me." Still the principle has its direct application for us also, and is of immense importance as a practical thing in the path of a saint across this poor world. "I have

set" indicates settled purpose of heart, a distinct spiritual activity of the soul; and we, dear reader, may well ask ourselves whether we can say that we have thus practically enthroned Christ in the foreground, whether as a spiritual action of the new nature we have given to Him this commanding and abiding place before the soul, so that He is ever in front of us, never to be less than our one object, our one purpose, our one desire?

"My Lord, my Life, my Rest, my Shield,
My Rock, my Food, my Light."

And if it is indeed thus with us, if this little couplet is the truth, and not mere lip-language, shall we not know the sequence in the verse, as the blessed issue of His tender mercy, "Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved"? Is it not just like Himself that, when we have made Him our everything, He should take up His place at our right hand as the answer to our fealty of heart to Him? As though He said, Since you have put Me *before* you, I will take sides *with* you, and be *for* you, so that you may never be moved.

The next thing is, that the effect of this is seen in *gladness* and *rejoicing* of heart as a present reality. There is resurrection too in the future. It is still the prophetic language of David's Son and David's Lord; and thus we read, that in the same hour in which His heart was broken over the woe-deserving cities, "Jesus rejoiced in spirit,

and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth." (Luke x. 21.)

Shall we venture, dear reader, to tell you why you have so little joy of heart, so little gladness of spirit? and why, therefore, you and I are such a poor testimony of the power of grace, such poor epistles of Christ? Ah! it is because we have in so small a degree got Him as the one only ever-abiding and supremely enthroned Object before the heart! The secret of joy is obedience, confidence, and dependence; and every saint who is exhibiting a lack of it is publishing a libel upon Christ! The Man of sorrows in the hour of sorrow "rejoiced in spirit." And no servant of His ever trod a more thorny path than he who said, "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice," and who, when he said it, was in bonds, and apparently at the mercy of an imperial and cruel despot.

But we must hasten on. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption." This was literally fulfilled we know in His case (Acts ii. 25-32; xiii. 34-37); for though He had power to lay down His life, and power to take it again, He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father—"crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God." And then finally we read that Jehovah opens before Him "the path of life." Death and hades could not im-

prison Him, were powerless to hold Him, and now He holds their keys (Rev. i. 18) for us His saints.

But in entering upon resurrection He has opened the path of life to us in all its inviting beauty before our souls—"a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it." Faith delights to have Him conduct it along that shining way which His own steps have traced, that path of the just which "is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." In His presence even here on earth our fullest joy is found, and the fulness itself awaits us, and is surely very nigh at hand. SELECTED.

GRACE.

"Grow in grace."—2 PETER iii. 18.

"I am gracious."—EXODUS xxii. 27. "The God of all grace."

1 PETER v. 10.

"We have access by faith into this grace."—ROMANS v. 2.

"Through our Lord Jesus Christ."

DO you sometimes long, dear Christian, to understand and enjoy what is meant by the *grace* of God? (Titus ii. 11.) Perhaps you believe that it would be of the richest blessing to your soul, and would help you on in serving our Lord Jesus Christ (John xii. 26), and give you joy deeper and steadier than you now have.

To whom has God's grace appeared? To all.

To you, dear Christian, feeble as you are in following and living for the Master—to you specially. Have you enjoyed it? Do you *grow in* it? We stand in grace (1 Peter v. 12); it is the *home* of our souls, that which God has given for us to *dwell* in. It is very much in proportion as we enter into this that we are able to act (as enjoying what it is to be God's dear children—"dear children" to God, not adopted beggars) easily and happily, as He would like us to.

"How is it I don't understand grace?" you say; "I try to." You will *never* do it that way. If you begin to think your best and highest thoughts of what God has done for you—*that* is not *grace*.

Grace reveals what God is, and you can only know this, in faith, by *hearing* what *God* has thought, and how He acts and thinks. Trying will never help you. But if your soul is quiet and still in the presence of God (Acts x. 33), and thus ready to hear, He will delight to tell you how, through His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, He is gracious.

"Grace supposes all the sin and evil that is in us, and is the blessed revelation that, through Jesus, *all* this sin and evil has been put away. A single sin is more horrible to God than a thousand sins, nay, than all the sins in the world are to us, and yet with the fullest consciousness of what *we are*, all that God is pleased to be toward us *is love*."

Have we been brought to this that "*trying is no good*" ? Then get alone with God, and tell Him so, and He will fill your soul with the sense that He is the God of all grace, and that *you* stand in grace, and can rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

F. L. M.

"HE IS ALTOGETHER LOVELY."

NONE ever can with Him compare,
 For He is fairest of the fair ;
 No tongue His matchless worth can tell
 He is God's gift unspeakable.
 His head is as the most fine gold,
 His person doth all grace enfold,
 His speech distilleth like the dew,
 His words of life are ever new.
 He is God's own anointed One,
 The Father's well-beloved Son,
 The *earth-rejected, crucified,*
 The *heaven-accepted, glorified,*
 The first-begotten from the dead,
 Of new creation now the Head,
 With glory and with honour crowned,
 Whose praise the heaven of heavens resounds.
 His love all human thought transcends,
 His own He loveth to the end ;
 For ever blessed now is He
 Before whom *all* shall bow the knee.
 Perfect in comeliness and grace,
 God's glory shining in His face,
 Our hearts in adoration bow,
 And give to Him our praises now.

L. W.

FRAGMENTARY THOUGHTS.

BEWARE of being occupied with experience.

We shall have joy, we shall have mercies, and guidance, and we are to give thanks for all; but it is our blessed privilege to be occupied with facts, the truth of God, the blessed truth about His beloved Son.

To be occupied with the Lord Jesus Himself is the only way to have lasting enjoyment; for He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

And this is the way to remedy our state; for we see Jesus, and we also see how utterly unlike we are to that perfect One, this leading us not to self-occupation, but to self-judgment, and an enjoyment of the blessed truth that we have died, and our life is hid with Christ in God (Col. iii. 3), crucified with Him. (Gal. ii. 20.)

Satan is ever trying to get saints away from contemplation of the person of Christ. He has no power over one so engaged.

One generally finds that Satan's most subtle attacks are directed against the person of Christ.

May we lose ourselves in wonder, love, and praise.

Wonder that that blessed One, who is all-perfection and who is everything (Col. iii. 11), should have been made sin for us; He who knew no sin that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. And we *have* become it, not by any change in ourselves, but because we are *in Him*. (2 Cor. v. 21.)

Love, because God spared not that Son, the Object of His love and delight, and because the Son gave Himself for the Church, and for every believer individually.

Praise, because it is our joy to render, and it is all we can render to God and the Lamb for such love and such perfection.

“Lost in wonder, Lord, we worship,
As upon Thy face we gaze;
And of Thy love deeply drinking,
Give it back to Thee in praise.”

A. W. F.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

S. S.—The thought that departed Christian friends are engaged in watching over and ministering to those related to them on earth is a mere human fancy that receives no support from the word of God.

STANDING AND STATE.

IT is of the greatest possible moment that we should clearly and carefully distinguish between the *standing* and *state* of the believer in Jesus. To mix them up, to confound them as is too commonly the case, is to becloud the soul, and to keep it in the dim gray twilight, in which one object seems to run into another, and nothing is seen as it really is.

By the word *standing* we mean all that the believer is and has, viewed as in Christ, all that is abidingly and eternally true of him in those divine and unending relationships in which he has been set by the favour of God, and in virtue of the great work accomplished on the cross by the Lord Jesus Christ.

By *state* is meant all that the same individual is in his varied exercises here. Possessing divine life indeed and sealed with the Holy Ghost unto the day of redemption, yet imperfect, failing, having still an evil nature that has to be kept in check, and often having to chide himself for his lack of whole-hearted devotedness to Christ, and want of diligence in His blessed service.

Many a soul fails to keep these things distinct, and judges of his *standing* by his daily and

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hourly *state*. When he is going on well, when he finds pleasure in divine things, when his spirit is free and fervent in prayer, and the sky above his head bright and blue, then he believes his standing to be secure, and that God regards him with favour. When he is inwardly dull, and his feelings lack warmth and spring, then he fears that all is wrong, and doubts as to his security begin to prevail. He is mixing up his *standing* with his *state*, and as a natural consequence all is darkness and confusion.

A moment's reflection should convince the least observant that our *standing* and *state*, according to the preceding definitions, are very different. What we are in Christ is one thing, and what we are in ourselves is another. Over against our standing we may write, with untrembling hand, the word *perfection*, but who would dare write down that word as descriptive of our state? Having said this much, however, we must jealously watch, lest the consciousness of our imperfect state be allowed to enfeeble in our souls the sense of what we are in Christ. To suffer the imperfection of the one, to impair in our mind the perfection of the other, is ruinous in the extreme. In the measure in which this is done we fall away from grace.

A simple and beautiful illustration of what we would show is furnished in Numbers xxiii. xxiv. In those chapters we learn that Balak, king of

Moab, had brought up Balaam from Aram, out of the mountains of the east, saying, "Come, curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel." But when Balaam viewed the people from "the top of the rocks" God put words of blessing in the prophet's mouth, and made him go and tell Balak what Israel was in His sight—separate, blameless, and beautiful as gardens by the river-side; as trees of lign-aloes which the Lord had planted. They were very far indeed from all that if their practical ways and every-day life were considered. But that is what they were in "*the vision of the Almighty.*" Viewed from below, they were stiff-necked and rebellious; viewed from above, from "*the top of the rocks,*" Balaam has to say that God had not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither had He seen perverseness in Israel. (v. 21.) There was, indeed, to human sight, plenty of both; but when the justification of the people is in view, these are not before God's eye. "He hath not beheld neither hath He seen." Precious words! Looked at in the light of the New Testament, how loudly they speak of the grace of God—boundless and free! How they tell of that atonement which covers the believer's every sin, that buries it, that blots it out as a thick cloud, that casts it for ever to the bottom of the sea.

And let it be noticed that this great blessing is based upon the immutability of God's nature

and counsel. It is, therefore, unchanging, and can never be set aside. "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (v. 19.) If God hath blessed, it is impossible for the enemy to reverse it. Nor shall any weapon formed against His people prosper. "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, *What hath God wrought!*" (v. 23.)

It is on these lines that Paul goes in Romans viii. 33, 34, when, speaking by the Spirit of God, he asks: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" How evident it is that their state and ways here below are not in view. Had they been, there might be much to condemn, and much to charge them with. But the justification of every believer is perfect and complete. The babe of yesterday, and the father converted fifty years ago, are alike as to this. Both are equally and eternally justified. Let the accuser heap charge upon charge, it is of no avail. "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel." Believer, see to it that your heart is established in this true grace of God.

But let us proceed a little further. As far

as we have gone, what has been before us is rather what the believer is *justified from*, but there is more. In 2 Corinthians v. 21 we read: "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." The earlier part of this verse carries us to the cross, for it was there that the sinless One was made sin for us. *All* that those words mean we shall never know. The dark, lone land, covered by the cross of Christ, is closed to mortal sight. But He who suffered and died has been "raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father," and divine righteousness has placed Him in the very glory of God on high. If His resurrection tells of the putting away of our sins by His atonement, His exaltation as man to heavenly glory tells us that there was more in that work than the putting away of sins. God has been infinitely glorified thereby. Shall God be insensible to all that Christ has done for His glory? Nay, God shall show His righteousness in placing Christ in heaven above. He *has* placed Him there, and the believer is there *in Him*. The Saviour has won for us a place in that glory according to God's eternal counsels. God's righteousness is expressed in setting the saints there *in Him* now, as it shall be in placing them there in person by-and-by. The present answer to Christ's work is, that not only is

the believer justified from his sins, but that he is made the righteousness of God in Christ. If the former only were true, it might leave the believer on earth, an earthly man though justified; the latter opens heaven to him, and places him there now *in Christ*.

The identification of the believer with Christ, his oneness with Him, is set forth in the most absolute way in many a precious passage which no sense of personal short-coming should be allowed to weaken for an instant. We must hold fast grace. For this position, of which we speak, is the fruit of divine and unmerited favour, and, therefore, true of all believers alike, though all may not equally apprehend it, and none of us enjoy it as we might. But that is another matter. If our apprehension and enjoyment of the blessing were the measure of the blessing conferred, how small would it be! But our gracious God and Father deals not with us so. He has blessed us according to *the riches of His grace*. That is the measure, and not our poor and narrow thoughts. We are taken into favour in the Beloved, and blessed in Him according to God's estimation of His worth. Let us look at another passage that tells a similar story.

"As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." (1 Cor. xv. 48.) The earthy and the Heavenly stand in contrast

here, the first man and the Second, the first Adam and the Last. Mark the manner in which each race is identified with its Head. Behold the earthy. As he is, so are they who are connected with him. Behold the Heavenly. As He is, so are they who are connected with Him. The Head and the race are one, one as to present standing and acceptance, one as to life and righteousness; for in the life of the last Adam we have part, and we are made the righteousness of God in Him, and loved too as He is loved. In short, all that can be said of the Head is said of the race in this brief but comprehensive sentence, save, of course, in those things in which no creature, here or hereafter, can ever share. Look up, dear Christian reader, let your eye rest on Christ in glory, and as you gaze upon Him listen to these words, "As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." And again, "As He is, so are we in this world." 1 John iv. 17.

Do you hesitate to receive this testimony as applying absolutely to you, because you are so far from what you ought and wish to be? You are that, no doubt, as in truth we all are; but shall the fact of our imperfect state prevent our accepting as true all that God declares to be so? Where is your faith? And what is faith but the soul's accrediting as true every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God?

Moreover, the believer is not in the flesh, but

in the Spirit if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in him. He is not in Adam, but in Christ. As a child of Adam he has died with Christ, and in His grave he has been buried. (Romans vi.) It is clear that a man who is dead and buried is passed out of the scene in which he once lived, and moved, and had his being. This is true of the believer. His connections with the first Adam are for ever dissolved as far as his standing goes. His sins atoned for, sin in the flesh condemned, he is now in Christ, having been quickened in the power of His risen life. He is under the headship of the last Adam. This is his abiding place in common with every saved soul. Whatever ups and downs there may be in his daily experiences, these in no way affect the truth we have been considering. "Ye are complete *in Him*," is the witness of the Holy Ghost in Colossians ii. 10, and the truth of this remains, though our inward state leaves much to be desired.

Does God then take no notice of our state? If the existence of the flesh is not recognized when our standing in Christ is discussed, is the existence of it always and everywhere ignored? To say so would be a great mistake. God does not forget our mixed condition. In 2 Corinthians xii. Paul speaks of himself as "*a man in Christ*." Of such an one he gloried. Caught up into paradise, he heard words that could not be communicated in mortal speech, and received

revelations such as had been given to no one else. But he was not always there, and when he awoke to his ordinary surroundings he was in danger of being exalted above measure. This danger God recognized, and He did not forget that this "*man in Christ*" had still the flesh in him. Therefore God graciously adopted preventive means to hold the flesh in check, so that His servant Paul might not be puffed up at the abundant grace bestowed.

Nor must we forget it either. But if our standing before God is so high, our relationship to Him as children so near; if the life of the last Adam is the life of which we live, if we are placed in present association with Christ in glory, if the Spirit of God makes our body of flesh and blood His temple, if we belong to heaven now, then there ought to be assuredly a state of soul and a walk answering to all this grace. And if in our *inward* life we walk with God, separate in heart from this present evil world, living in spirit in heaven where Christ is, our *outward* life will bear the marks of this heavenly communion. The world's principles and practices, its pursuits and aims, will not be ours. Should they have been so, it shows that our spiritual life has declined, for the outward life is but the reflex of the life within. Here then is a call for confession and humiliation before God. And if we would have our state in suited correspondence with our standing and relationships, we shall find that this will not be

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effected by occupation with our state, but rather with an object outside, and infinitely above us. Such an Object we have in Christ. How well Paul knew this, and how simply he expressed it when he said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Galatians ii. 20. May it be given unto us to say the same in truth.

HOW TO READ THE SCRIPTURES.

IN approaching this subject we shall do well to bear in mind the mighty issues that depend upon a right understanding of the word of God. For the unsaved, their happiness for eternity hangs upon their taking in what He has said as to the way of salvation. For the saved, the whole question of their walk and practice, their joy, hope, and testimony, is dependent upon their knowledge of God's revealed will. If we remember this, the means to be used in acquiring a right understanding thereof will assume more importance in our eyes, and we shall pay the greater attention to the employing of them.

It may be asked, "Why, if the consequences of misunderstanding the Scriptures be so serious, are

not its truths presented in such a way as to preclude all possibility of mistake?"

With the great cardinal, saving truths of the gospel this *is* undoubtedly the case. They lie upon the very surface of the Word, so that the poor anxious soul, distracted with fears, may at once take them in, and find joy and peace in believing.

But with other truths it is not so. What wondrous mines of divine teaching lie, for instance, concealed in type, parable, and history! God desires that we should be diligent in study. He has hidden the precious nuggets of gold beneath the surface, so that we might use diligence in digging them up, and that, having done so, we might value them the more for the trouble they cost. But let us remember that God has supplied us with the spade wherewith to dig, and the power to enable us to use it, so that none have any excuse on the score of inability to understand. We shall see this by-and-by.

It is of the utmost importance that we should remember that the great subject-matter of the Scriptures is *Christ*. Whether we take the inspired Book as a whole, or whether we consider it in detail, Christ is always the Object of its testimony. Perhaps this may not be clear to all. One may ask, "How does such a verse as Nehemiah xii. 6, taken from one of the Jewish genealogies, point to Christ?"

Let a little illustration serve as an answer.

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Imagine a sign-post with the words "To Edinburgh" inscribed on it. Every letter on that finger-post points to Edinburgh. Take one letter away, and you destroy the completeness of the direction. It would be folly to select the letter "N," for example, from the word "Edinburgh," and say that you cannot see how "N" points to that city. So with the Scriptures. They are like the finger-post, pointing to Christ, and in doing so, every verse, every word does its share.

Dependent upon the fact that *Christ* is the Subject of Scripture is a matter of very practical moment; namely, that we can neither rightly understand it, nor enjoy the reading of it, till we are perfectly *at rest* in His presence.

If we do not know Him as our Saviour; if the question of our sins and of our souls' salvation has not been settled; if we have not been washed in His precious blood; if we have never heard Him bid us be at peace; if, as weary and heavy-laden sinners, we have never received rest at His hand, the Bible will be more or less a sealed book to us.

The reason of this is easy to see. For if a doubt of our salvation remain in our minds we shall be pressed with anxiety, and *self* will necessarily occupy a large place in our thoughts. If we read the Scriptures it will be to learn how *we* may get blessing, how *our* souls may be delivered from doubt. We shall not be free in heart to study them with the desire of learning

Christ till we have, so to speak, parted company with ourselves at His cross.

Christians who make their own blessing their object in studying the word of God, and are only interested in it as far as it concerns them and their own welfare, necessarily lose much of its fulness, and their times of meditation are, in consequence, often barren and profitless. Let us remember that, though all Scripture is *for* us, it is not *about* us, except so far as the glory of Christ is bound up with our welfare.

Springing from the practice of making our own interests our guide in the study of the Word is the use of the term "non-essential" with reference to revealed truths. Men make a distinction between truths which are "fundamental" and those which they consider "non-essential," a distinction which Scripture does not warrant. I grant that there are certain great truths, fundamental in their nature, without a knowledge of which none can lay claim to the name of Christian. I admit, further, that there are many truths of which one may be ignorant, and yet, for all that, be a true child of God.

But all that God has revealed is essential to the glory of Christ; and to neglect any part of His word, whether prophecy, history, or doctrine, because we do not see its immediate bearing on ourselves, is to exhibit a spirit of selfishness and indifference to His interests.

It is well, of course, that we should discover the fulness which lies in all the little details of Scripture; but it is of paramount importance that we should endeavour to seize its scope *as a whole*. Let us take a good survey of the field, and seek to comprehend its bearings, position, &c., as a whole, before we begin to examine microscopically every blade of grass.

And then let us seek to take in the scope of each of its parts, each of the sixty-six books into which the volume of inspiration is divided. If the questions were put to us, "For what purpose was each written? What is its subject? and, How does the inspired writer deal with it?" how many of us could give an answer, even as to the books of the New Testament, let alone those of the Old? And yet all this may be learned from Scripture itself, without reference to commentaries or any other human writings.

If we would get this wider view of God's revelation we must *read consecutively*; that is, we must not fly about from one part to another, reading one day in Judges and the next in Jude, without any system at all. That method of study will never give us an insight into anything but *details*. Who would dream of treating a story-book in that way—reading a page or two in the middle one day, then a chapter at the end, and then at the beginning? Who would wonder at a boy's complaining of the difficulty of arithmetic if he made it his practice

to read his book "wherever it happens to open," or "wherever he thinks it would be nice"? I do not say that on some occasions the Holy Ghost may not direct us to some special portion as peculiarly suited to our state of soul; but we find that those who, *as a general rule*, study Scripture *consecutively* see most of its beauties, and are best able to admire the perfect harmony of its various parts.

Another thing that we must never forget is our own inability to rightly understand one word of Scripture apart from the teaching of the Holy Ghost. We cannot fathom that which is infinite by that which is finite. The mind of man will not suffice for the things of God. The most gigantic intellect, the most profound scholarship, are alike of no avail in this matter. The Holy Spirit, who in the first instance dictated the words, can alone make them intelligible to us.

And it is for this purpose, amongst others, that He has been given to us. (1 Cor. ii. 10-15.) And be it remembered that He indwells every believer in Christ (John vii. 39; Eph. i. 13); so that none of us can say we are without power to understand and know the things freely given to us of God.

Unintelligence in divine truth implies either the want of diligence in study, or the lack of subjection to the Holy Ghost. God has, as it were, placed in our hands the key of the treasure-house of Scripture, telling us that all is ours.

Whether it be the depths of prophecy, the heights of doctrine, or the symbolism of type and shadow, nothing is beyond the reach of the saint who is both diligent and dependent.

The realization of this will send us often to our knees. We shall earnestly seek illumination from above upon the pages of the written word, and we may take it that our prayer is answered in proportion as we discover *Jesus* in our daily reading.

And further, with the continued study of the Scriptures, and increased light upon their teaching, new desires will take possession of us, new motives will influence us, and our prayers will become more an expression of *God's* mind than of our own desires. Apart from reading the Word, our prayers are apt to be merely the expression of our own wishes, limited more or less to our own little circle of interest; while, on the other hand, if we do not give prayer its place, the Word has not its proper power over us. While our minds are being stored with its riches, our consciences are left untouched, and our souls are famished.

If we give the Holy Spirit His due place as our divine and infallible Teacher, we shall have less recourse to human works, such as commentaries and notes. I do not say we shall not find them of use for reference, but in our daily reading we shall do well to leave the Spirit of God free to minister the things of Christ to us *first-hand*. This alone can maintain us in communion.

Very often difficulties that one encounters in the study of Holy Writ seem insuperable, owing to our natural yet pernicious habit of placing comprehension before faith. We hesitate to believe what we cannot understand. But this will not do in the things of God. We must implicitly believe every word of His that we read, whether we understand it or not. We may be sure that the darkness is in us, not in His word, and we can confidently look to Him for further light. But for this, if we dishonour Him by want of faith, we may look in vain.

We must not make Reason our guide. In the Scriptures God addresses Himself, not to man's intellect, but to his *conscience*. Where the man of wisdom stumbles and misunderstands, the simple soul, whose conscience is at work, may find no difficulty. Where Reason can see no path, Faith may proceed without perceiving any obstacle.

In conclusion, let me point out that we shall make no progress in the knowledge of Christ unless we live in the power of what we already know. God teaches us His will that we may do it. We may look in vain for fresh light until we have put into practice what He has already taught us.

Dear Christian reader, seek that your knowledge of God's word may increase from day to day, so that your life may be more for His glory. Let your prayer be, "Help me to *live* the truth that I have learned."

E. V. G.

THE PERSON OF THE SON.

THE blessed person, life, and work of our Lord Jesus Christ on earth are set forth in the four gospels. The chief feature in Matthew is His presentation as the Messiah ; in Mark as the Prophet and perfect Servant of God ; in Luke as the Son of man ; and in John as the Son of God. In beautiful keeping with this, our Lord's genealogy is traced in Matthew to David and Abraham ; is omitted in Mark ; is traced back to Adam in Luke ; and is also omitted in John, as it is obvious that, as *the Son of God*, He had none. At the same time, in all the four gospels, other titles, names, and traits are also brought forward, but the above is the salient feature of His presentation in each.

In the first chapter of the Gospel of John, the varied glories of the ever-blessed Son of God come out in a most marked way. It commences with the sublime statement, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The Word existed eternally. The Word never had a beginning. In the beginning the Word already *was*, and the Word was with God. The latter clause brings before us distinct personality ; and moreover the Word was *God*, which shows His deity. So that in this

wondrous verse we have before us the eternity, personality, and divinity of the Word; His glories before creation, which eternally abide. As another has beautifully written of Him, "He is, and He is the expression of, the whole mind that subsists in God—'the Word.'"

And the Holy Ghost adds emphatically, "The same [or He] was in the beginning with God," thus carefully guarding His distinct personality in eternity, before creation and time.

And this wondrous divine Being, the Word, who was with God, and who was God, was the Creator. "All things were made by Him." He it was who spake, and it was done; who commanded, and it stood fast. He it was who called heaven and earth into existence; who studded the boundless sky with untold myriads of mighty orbs; who said, "Let there be light," and there was light; who clothed the earth with verdure, and gave life to every living thing. All things, visible and invisible, were made by Him. Every living creature in heaven or on earth; every principality, power, might, dominion, the innumerable company of angels, and the whole race of man; all owe their existence to the mighty fiat of the everlasting Word. "And without Him was not anything made that was made."

"In Him was life." It was nowhere else. The Word, God, is its eternal source and spring. The

life was ever in Him. "And the life was the light of men." The life was revealed, manifested down here in the world, "the light of men." As we get also in 1 John i. 1-3, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you," &c.

Men were here in darkness; the world was under the power of it through the entrance and reign of sin; men, fallen creatures, with mind and heart darkened. But the Light appeared. "The life was the light of men."* The ever-blessed Son of God, walking here as Man upon the earth (sin apart), Jesus, was the life. The Holy Ghost passes from the presentation of the Word in eternity to His manifestation here in time among men. He in whom was life came into the world. The life was the light of *men*, not of angels. But though "the light shineth in darkness," and that with unclouded lustre morally, yet so gross was the darkness that it

* The form of expression in Greek is very strong, as identifying completely the life with the light of men, as co-extensive propositions. (See *Synopsis*. J. N. D. Note, page 386. New edition revised.)

comprehended it not. Instead of the darkness being dispelled by the bright shining light, it remained as it was. Man as such was completely under its power. Gross darkness covered the world, and there was no comprehension of that wondrous light.

John, a man sent of God, came and bore witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe. "That was *the True Light* which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The True Light did not shine for that people only whom God had blessed of old, who had the law, and the law is light (Proverbs vi. 23), but for all, for men in general. The world knew Him not, and the Jews received Him not; but there was a people who did, a people born of God, to whom He gave right to be the children of God, all believers in this day of grace. (John i. 12, 13.) Blessed are all they who are found among them.

Pursuing this wondrous chapter, we come next to the incarnation. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." (John i. 14.) Wondrous grace! The eternal Word here on the earth as man, clothed with true humanity (without sin)—*holy*. A real Man, Jesus, dwelt amongst men, the holy One of God. "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." (1 Tim. iii. 16.) "And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father [or, a glory

as of an only begotten with a Father], full of grace and truth." (John i. 14.) How deeply blessed! Who does not know the joy of an earthly parent in an only begotten son? How much greater the joy and delight of the heart of the Father in His only One! How wondrous that men should contemplate such an One! No man hath seen God at any time. He is invisible, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, neither can see. (1 Tim. vi. 16.) He is a Spirit—light, love—the invisible God; but the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him. In Him we learn here what God is; for He was Immanuel, God with us.

John the Baptist, seeing Jesus coming to him, saith, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Wondrous mystery! This same blessed One is the Redeemer, the One who was about to offer Himself a sacrifice for sin—the Lamb of God. Abraham said to his son Isaac, "My son, God will provide Himself a lamb." Here is the great Antitype of whom we may take these words as prophetic, God's Lamb, the holy One, without blemish and without spot, the Lamb which taketh away sin. He was the One who was going to die, and who, later on, did die. At Calvary Jesus offered Himself without spot to God, to put away sin. (Hebrews ix. 14, 26.) Sin has gone from before God, for every

one who believeth, and that for ever. But He was on the cross in relation to the sin of the world, and eventually, as the result of His work, sin will be taken away from the world altogether. And God will establish an eternal system, wherein righteousness shall dwell, based on the perfection of the finished work of Jesus, the holy Lamb of God.

Of this same blessed One, John bare record, when he saw the Spirit descending on Him at His baptism, that it is He who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost, *the Son of God*. (John i. 33, 34.) "Again the next day after, looking upon Him as He walked, John saith, "Behold the Lamb of God." Not only is He the sin-Bearer, but the Lamb of God, in whom God could find His perfect satisfaction and delight, and who, as a burnt-offering on the cross, was a sweet savour before Him. Disciples followed Him as they heard John's words, and the gladness spread from one to another, that the Messiah, the Christ, the anointed One of God, was found. Jesus Himself calling Philip; the latter findeth one, named Nathanael, confessing Him as Jesus of Nazareth, of whom Moses, in the law and the prophets, did write. Nathanael confesses Him as *the Son of God*, and *the King of Israel*, and Jesus, amongst other things, said to him, "Henceforth ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon *the Son of man*." This precious

portion thus closes with a foreshadowing of that blessed day for this poor earth when, the curse being removed (Rev. xxii. 3), Jesus, Son of God and Son of man, shall reign as King of Israel, and when all things shall be gathered in one in Him both in heaven and on earth. (Eph. i. 10.)

How wondrously the Holy Ghost brings before our souls in this chapter the manifold glories of the person of God's beloved Son! Surely every heart that knows Him and His love must bow in worship, adoration, and praise as we think of Him; He who is the everlasting Word, God, the mighty Creator, and yet become a Man, that He might glorify God, accomplish redemption, and eventually deliver this groaning scene. This is He who is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, crowned with glory and honour, the triumphant Saviour in the eternal glory of God.

"Thou art the everlasting Word,
The Father's only Son;
God manifest, God seen and heard,
The heaven's beloved One;
Worthy, O Lamb of God, art Thou
That every knee to Thee should bow."

May God engage each Christian's heart's affections increasingly with His blessed person; giving us a holy jealousy for the glory of His name, and grace to follow Him faithfully by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report, until He come.

E. H. C.

LIFE AND LIPS.

A WORD TO YOUNG CHRISTIANS.

“**I** DON’T wonder your watch will not go,” said the watchmaker. “The works are clogged with dust; it requires cleaning.” “Ah!” thought a young Christian, “How like my service for Christ! The hands of the watch are unable to indicate the time of day because of the minute particles of dust which have somehow found their way into the delicate structure of the interior. How like my service! How often have I failed to witness for Christ with my *lips* because of failure, or at least the allowance in my inner life of that which hindered testimony. When opportunities have been given me of speaking a word for Christ, both privately and publicly, I have had often to challenge myself as to whether I should be happy in doing it, for I felt I dare not attempt to speak of the love of Christ to others without being in the enjoyment of it myself.”

And is not this the experience of many young believers, ay, and of older ones too? Are we not conscious that the *life* must speak as well as the *lips*? And if it tells another tale, do not our consciences condemn us? What is *lip* service at the best without the consistent walk which tells

that the *life*, in some measure at the least, supports the testimony of the *lips*? Paul said, to him to *live* was Christ, and surely to him to *preach* was Christ; he preached Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And can we expect to lead sinners to the feet of Jesus if we are not at His feet ourselves?

Does our daily life speak of Christ to those who know us best, and with whom our daily lot is cast? Do we sufficiently remember that the world judges of Christianity by what the Christian *is*, and not so much by what he says? Do we expound those precious truths, that we are not in the flesh, and that we are dead to sin, dead to the world, through the death of Christ, as clearly in our *lives* as with our *lips*? Or do we find ourselves frequently allowing the first, winking at the second, and enjoying the third? Oh, let us take heed, fellow-believer, lest our *lives* belie our *lips*!

Perhaps you say, "But the flesh will creep in, and that it does so often, even with the most devoted and godly." Yes; but do you give it place? There is a great difference between the flesh creeping in, and the flesh being countenanced, and its activities sanctioned. "And frequently we fail and sin." True; but, blessed be God, He has not left us without a remedy, and, if, like the watch, we need *cleansing*, we know that "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to *cleanse* us from all unrighteousness." Confession is humbling and painful to us,

but it vindicates God, and prepares our hearts for renewed communion. Again, instead of making light of our failures, we can seek in the presence of God to learn in each the peculiar lesson God would have us learn.

“But it is so easy to contract defilement in the world,” you say. Yes, nothing is easier, if we are not walking with God. Turn your eyes to right or left, and you will be sure to see something to defile your mind, and mar your enjoyment of better things. “Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee,” is God’s preventive. It is the eye that Satan is playing so skilfully upon in the present day. How well he is succeeding! How rapidly are commanding positions acquired where the eye of the public can be caught with lascivious pictures, the productions of men of impure minds! And shall our eyes betray a restlessness, a turning to the right hand or to the left? Let us rather pray—

“Oh, fix our earnest gaze
So wholly, Lord, on Thee,
That, with Thy beauty occupied,
We elsewhere none may see.”

We are living in days of difficulty and darkness, but the thicker the darkness the more appreciable the light, and ye are light in the Lord. Oh, let us walk according to the light! Do you think, dear young believer, that in a day of such utter rejection of Christ, and of such marked disloyalty to Him on the part of those who profess His

name, that God does not value every bit of service, however small, for Him and every act of loyalty to Him? When were those words spoken, "If any man serve Me, him will My Father honour"? When Judas, the betrayer, with the murderers of Jesus, were at the door, so to speak. And would we seek the honour that cometh from God only? Then let us serve Christ in this dark age in life and lips.

Do we need incentives? God has given them richly. Shall we lack encouragement in this life and lip service to Christ? God will withhold no *good* thing from them that *walk* uprightly. Will our service be unnoticed? Not by our God, who takes note of the cup of water given to one of His own. And what the end? "Verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and *serve* them."

Shall we not then gird ourselves afresh for this service for Christ? It is never too late to seek true devotedness to Him. True, His coming is near, very near; but during the little while that remains let us be waiting and watching servants. Souls are perishing around us, Satan's hosts advancing. Do we wish to be well to the front as warriors of God? Then let us in our daily life walk with God, and by prayerful dependence upon Him have our faith strengthened, our confidence in Him deepened, and so out of the abundance of our hearts our lips shall speak.

H. H. H.

OUR FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON.

“One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after ; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple.”—PSALM xxvii. 4.

“**I** WANT to be familiar with the place where the Lord is at home” is the thought of the believer to whom He is precious, and, as it was with David, amidst the many occupations of life one great desire holds sway in his heart, and that is to be in the constant enjoyment of the Lord’s company. “My soul thirsteth for Thee,” David could say, “my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is ; to see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary.” (Psalm lxiii. 1, 2.)

How slowly we learn that this fair earth, though it may furnish all that can gratify nature, is indeed a dry and thirsty land to one who has tasted heavenly things, and often our Lord must hide its attractions from us that our thoughts may be more at leisure for Himself.

We may see God’s power and beneficence in nature, and trace His acts in history ; but if we thirst for the beauty and glory of the Lord, we must inquire in His temple, and see Him in the

VII.

sanctuary. There, where all is divinely suited to Himself, and the fragrance of Jesus' name pervades all, we have boldness to enter by the blood of the Lamb once slain, and learn, not God's works alone, but His ways—Himself. Not only what He has done, but *why* He has done it. Not alone what He purposes in grace, but why He has purposes of grace at all. And there to worship; the heart overflowing as it discovers what our God must be to so desire our company, and to fit us in such a divine way for His.

“Not to shield my path from sorrows
 Is His care and thought,
 Not to make the dark world brighter
 Where Himself is not.
 But to have me *there* beside Him
 In the love and light,
 There to tell my heart how precious
 Am I in His sight.”

Christ is our life, its source, its sustenance, and its object; and the longer we tread our pilgrimage pathway the more really we know our need of Him. It was not at the beginning of his course, but when nearing the journey's end, that the great apostle of the Gentiles expressed his deep longing to KNOW HIM. Not wealth, nor ease, nor honour, was his desire, but more of Christ.

Communion with God is not merely a doctrine, it is a fact; not a sentiment, but a reality. A correspondence in thought and feeling with the eternal God. Reader, in what way does this com-

munion influence your life and conduct? How could you bear the thought of having to pass one week out of communion? May God's people find His company more than ever a necessity to them, and precious seasons of intercourse with Him a constant enjoyment in every-day life.

Men astonish their fellows by wonderful periods of fasting. May not angels wonder at the way some Christians can go on for days without even desiring the bread of life?

The existence of a personal intercourse with God will alone sustain spirituality. No increase of intelligence or zeal will have the same effect. If we trace effects to their real causes, we shall find spirituality is the direct result of communion with the Father and the Son. How is it that we know so little of this wonderful reality which yet we hear so much about?

With the Lord Jesus no earthly distractions could interrupt His constant dwelling in the Father's bosom. Though angry tempests might rage around Him, a divine calm reigned within. Even when His favoured people were plotting their Messiah's death, He could speak to His disciples of His joy and peace, which He would give to them.

About what subjects are you in fellowship with the Father and the Son? This may be an unusual question, but it is an important one. It is possible to be in full fellowship with the Lord about some

of His interests, and yet care nothing at all about others equally dear to Him. Do I ever little value what He values greatly? Do I highly esteem anything which is abomination in the sight of God? Can we be content that there should be a difference of opinion between God and ourselves?

I need not ask, Do I like this saint? but, How has the Lord shewn His love for him? Not, Will this interest *me*? but, Does it interest *God*? I should like to think that the Lord can count on my sympathy with *all* His interests. Whatever has His attention deserves mine.

The Father's counsels and affections all centre in the Lord Jesus Christ. He looks upon that well-beloved Son with a perfect, unfailing satisfaction, and can say, "In Him I have found My delight"; while the believer responds, "All my fresh springs are in Thee."

It was to make known the Father that Jesus lived amongst men. He would have us know that Father as He knows Him; and with what holy joy He could speak of the Father's home and love and glory to which He was guiding the pilgrim footsteps of His people.

If we are thus called to share all the Son's joy in the Father, and the Father's delight in the Son, do the transient interests of time so engross us that this communion is little valued

and seldom sought? Does our Lord ever sadly turn from our door because we are too busy to heed His knocking or want His company?

For a little while we may know the fellowship of our Lord's rejection—the riches of the reproach of Christ; but soon we shall have fellowship in His glory. The distractions which hinder our joy in God will be forgotten, and our oft failing faith be needed no more. We shall be for ever at home; but all that makes heaven home to us will be that “Where I am,” which has made His presence here a foretaste of heaven to our souls. At last we shall *see* our Lord, whom we have loved with a love begotten of His own, and the Saviour's glad words of welcome will fill our hearts with rapture; but, as we essay to join in the chorus of adoration to the Father, above all the voice of Jesus will sound a deeper, richer note of joy as He leads His people's praises in the great congregation.

“Here, who follows Him the nearest
Needs must walk alone;
There, like many seas the chorus,
Praise surrounds the throne.
Here, a dark and silent pathway;
In those courts so fair,
Countless hosts, yet each beholding
‘Jesus only’ there.”

S. E. M^c N.

HEARING AND TELLING.

“What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light.”

MATTHEW x. 27.

IN this short sentence our Lord gives us a condensed lesson on ministry. First, we have the preacher's topic. “What I tell you.” The preacher's business is to declare Christ's message. “Preach the word.”

Our Lord's words define the scope of the preacher's work accurately. He is not to tell what *he* thinks or what other people think, but what the Lord says. He is not to substitute human philosophy for divine revelation. He is commissioned by, and can appeal to, the highest authority.

His message is contained within the covers of “The Book”; his work is to proclaim it and make it known. But not only is this the case; the words of Christ touch the messenger very closely and personally. Look at them again—“What *I* tell *you*.” Each messenger must not only know the truth generally, but on each occasion he needs to get the special truth for the particular occasion fresh from the lips of his Master by secret communion in meditation and prayer. How great is the difference! In the one case there may be a cold, clear statement of doctrine; in the other

there is all the fervour of conviction and heart-felt power. Notice next where he learns it. "In darkness." The meaning here apparently is, in secret (see context). "When I speak with thee," said Jehovah to Ezekiel, "I will open thy mouth."

The Lord Jesus said of Himself, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world." Spiritually this should be true of all His servants. Is it so? Is sufficient care always taken to secure time for withdrawal from public view and public activity? Unless this be done, deterioration must ensue. To Abraham alone under the midnight sky, to Moses in the desert, to Daniel and Ezekiel in Babylon, and to John in Patmos, did God make some of His choicest communications. Thus He continually teaches His servants now, and fills their hearts and lips with the messages of His love and grace. Let us watch daily at His gates, and wait at the posts of His doors. Let us closely follow Him who said, "He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as they that are taught." (R.V.) Then notice where he proclaims it. "In light." And the parallel sentence following adds, "upon the housetops." They are to proclaim it publicly and fearlessly; with no bated breath, no subdued voice, no hesitating speech, but with all the courage and confidence of those who can say, "Thus saith the Lord." They are the servants of Him who is "Light," they are the "children of light," they

are "lights in the world," and they are commanded to let their light shine before men. Before the light of day, and before the boasted light of human wisdom and learning, the servants of Christ can fearlessly declare the Gospel, which is the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Extracted.

THE "IFS" OF SCRIPTURE.

THE Word of God always maintains the responsibility of man. Indeed, it must; for no morally intelligent creature can be other than responsible. Grace and redemption may introduce principles and facts which modify the operation of the principle; but the principle remains true. But I think that the Word casts a more definite light on the place responsibility holds in connection with the grace that is revealed in Christ than many are aware of.

I would lay it down as a principle evident to every one, and incontestable in human relationships, but forgotten in divine ones (and with only one exception not based on relationship, which I will state in its place), that responsibility is based on, and measured by, the relationships in which we are. Parent and child, husband and wife, master and servant—evidently in all these the responsibility is based on, and measured by, the relationship. The one exception is where God, or one having

competent authority in the case, claims the recognition of another in any given position or authority. Thus, if Christ, Moses, or a prophet be sent, adequate testimony being given, we are bound to receive them. The mission is in fact an instituted relationship.

Now our original responsibility is no longer a question for those who know the truth. It is no longer, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?"—always abstractedly true, no doubt; but we have sinned, and on that ground are guilty and lost. But the great truth of Christ and redemption has come in. If I call myself a Christian I place myself on this ground—the ground of redemption. The question is, to put responsibility in its place, where this is owned. Now, redemption is a work of God, and not responsibility on our part. Yet they are, by many, constantly mixed up together, and uncertainty is introduced where all is perfect, and confusion where all is clear. But there are two things generally in the position of the Christian—redemption wrought by grace for him, and his actual attainment of glory. Now "if"—that is a *condition*—is never connected with redemption. It is always connected with our course towards the glory, and here it is of continual occurrence.

In the purpose of God there is no variation or uncertainty. In His government He may set conditions, and in fact does so, for government is

connected with our conduct, but in His purpose it is not so; and in redemption even, taken in its application to us, there is no uncertainty. In Ephesians you have no "if." "We have redemption through His blood." In Titus it is, "Not according to works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us." "By grace ye are saved." The value of Christ's work admits of no "if," nor its application even to every believer. He "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, . . . according to His own purpose and grace, . . . given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

So in type Israel stands still, and sees the salvation of Jehovah, who led forth the people He had redeemed, and guided them by His strength to His holy habitation. And again, "Ye have seen . . . how I have borne you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself." The whole was absolute and complete redemption. So we have no more conscience of sins, but are accepted in the Beloved. He hath by one offering perfected for ever those that are sanctified. Here it is the application to conscience. But not only is a full title made in righteousness, not only are the sins blotted out, and we are justified from all things, accepted in the Beloved, and our consciences purged, but we are made meet (fit) to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Nothing lacks in completeness.

Hence the thief could go straight to Paradise, fit, through the travail of his soul, to be Christ's companion there. Yet ordinarily we are left to tread, longer or shorter time, our pilgrimage here.

Now this, as in Deuteronomy viii., is to humble us, and prove us, and know what is in our hearts. We enter on it on the ground of redemption. All Christendom stands on *this* ground; many little realize its value, but it is Christendom because redemption is accomplished. The first thing tested is—Is it realized? Are we really so? If not, we perish in the wilderness in unbelief. On this point I do not enter. But the question remains then, Shall I arrive safe in Canaan? for we are not yet there. And here come in all the "ifs." If I hold fast the beginning of my confidence firm to the end; if ye continue in the faith, and the like.

I believe there is a full answer given to what is in question, practically realized, in Philippians ii., iii. In other passages it is doctrinally set forth. But the answer is not redemption—a finished work. This is the basis of all, and if one imbued with the mind of God had seen one drop of blood sprinkled on a door-post, he might have been certain on to Solomon's, and yet far better Christ's millennial glory; but it was not accomplished, and God teaches us by what is revealed, whether historically as to His ways, or prophetically in His word, as to things to come, and all His counsels given us in the New Testament.

But the wilderness was not redemption, and God would have us to look at redemption as complete. He suffered, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God. We are complete in Him (Christ), but, as I said, whatever exercise of conscience we may have had before knowing the value of the blood of Christ, or what the lingerings of unbelief, cradled by self, to make out our own righteousness, it is usual in God's ways to have a practical wilderness course after redemption, when the knowledge of ourselves, and of God and His ways in grace and government are developed, to humble us, and to prove us, and to do us good in our latter end.

When we come to see what we have to lean on at the end, we are brought back to the beginning; though one who has walked faithfully with Christ will surely have a sweeter and deeper knowledge of Him who began and finished all.

All Balaam can say is, when the question was, Could Israel enter into Canaan? I can do nothing. There is no enchantment against Jacob, no divination against Israel, as at this time it shall be said of Israel and Jacob, *What hath God wrought!* But meanwhile, between the two we are in weakness, and in temptation, and real perils. The flesh is in us, and what pleases it is there. Shall I arrive safe in Canaan? is *the* question.

If I mix up this with redemption, all is confusion, all is uncertainty; for while it was

said to be finished, and our sins remembered no more, here all is in question again, and, imputed or not imputed, I lose heaven by sins which have been borne; or if they have not been borne, then redemption is unfinished and incomplete.

Now the government of God, though in perfect love and grace—"Whom the Lord loves He chastens"—yet has always a legal principle in it; that is, the ways of God depend on what we are, not in the perfectness of His love, but in His ways with us. Besides, the heart craves holiness, and knows God can bear with nothing else. We would not that He should. He makes us partakers—blessed truth!—of His holiness. Now the mass of Christendom are really unbelievers, and, like Israel, perish in the wilderness—never do get into Canaan. Those fear who are true of heart, and, if there is no distrust of grace, it is a salutary fear, lest any of them should seem to come short.

There will be found in Numbers two great principles (found again in Hebrews) which characterize the position: the red heifer, Numbers xix., practically answering to John xiii., 1 John ii. 1, 2, but here known to believers for restoring communion after they have practically failed; and the priesthood; the former meeting a failure in the wilderness, the latter the sustaining power for weakness—"grace to help in the time of need." In Numbers xix. we have the red heifer out of its place, say the wise rationalists,

whereas the essence of its meaning depends on where it is. Then (chap. xx.) Aaron dies, and after Sihon (Balaam, as we have seen) comes God's *judicial* estimate of His people. In Deuteronomy ix. we find His moral estimate—*this*, What has Israel done? *that*, "What hath God wrought!" and the comparison is full of instruction.

The statement, "What hath God wrought!" is an accomplished thing—it is wrought. Now in the wilderness, though redemption was the basis of all, an accomplished work was not what was wanting for the wilderness itself, but living care, guidance, ministry, and constant need to be met; and this was what was found, and what we find in that of which this was only the type.

They had to reach Canaan as we have glory, and that where there are spiritual wickednesses on the way, in a wilderness where there is no way, nor bread, nor wine, and we ourselves without strength. And the dangers are real and present. It is not a full and finished salvation—which, thank God, there is—but daily dependence, and a living One who can sustain, guide, and protect us.

God, that we may know ourselves and Him, puts us in this place of danger—real danger and difficulty—where by ourselves we could not get through, and gives us to find it out, but with the testing and trial, with the question, "If you hold fast the beginning of your confidence steadfast unto the end." All these are most real, and

forgiveness itself leaves all vague; but there is the infallible promise for faith to lean on, and divine support, "We are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto the salvation ready to be revealed."

The well-known passage (John x.) assures everything: "They shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck them out of My hand." No perishing either. Christ is our life (no greater power to pluck us out), and that according to the divine power of the Father and the Son. So in 1 Corinthians i. 8: "Who shall confirm you to the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus"; so "God is faithful by whom ye were called." There is no uncertainty or doubt, then, in the wilderness; but the kind of certainty is different, and the difference practically important. Redemption is accomplished, and Christ our righteousness according to all the value of what He has wrought for the glory of God. It is finished, perfect, and accepted of God. But in general the race is to be run, that we may win Christ, be found in Him; we have to hold fast to the end, that He may present us blameless, as in Jude.

This is a never-ceasing work, but as certain as if all was done. "He withdraweth not His eyes from the righteous." It is constant dependence, in order to get safe to the end; but dependence on what is sure, as God is sure. We

work out our salvation with fear and trembling, but God works in us to will and to do. The wolf seizes and scatters the sheep, but he cannot seize them (the same word) out of Christ's hand; the faithfulness and the strength are alike, and both divine. The "if" is there, and dependence constant, and diligence in it called for; but God, with whom is no "if," is there to meet it.

There are uncertainties and questioning experiences of this kind, when all our Christian life and happiness are lumped together, and which are confounded where redemption is not known; but the soul has really to say to God. It will say, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" but this is an abuse of terms. The soul is looking for a certain state as ground of acceptance. Now this is really a question of righteousness. What is said is surely true, but holiness is what is holy; yea, God Himself loved for His own sake. It is not holiness when it is desired with a view to acceptance. That soul does not know redemption, Christ as its righteousness, and is looking at its own state as its ground of acceptance. It has to learn that it is guilty and lost; not something to be desired, right and essential as the desire is, but to learn that it is not what, nor has *done* what, God desires, and has to be saved, must cross the Red Sea; and that its business is not to wait for what is desirable, but to acknowledge its own sinful state, and that what it needs is redemption, to stand still, and see the salvation of God.

J. N. D.

WHAT IS GREATER THAN "THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD"?

Being brief remarks on Professor DRUMMOND'S pamphlet,
entitled, "*The Greatest Thing in the World.*"

BIBLE readers are familiar with the fact that the expression "*under the sun*" is found only in Ecclesiastes, and there twenty-nine times. It is the string on which this book is crystallized; for therein Solomon describes the heart of man—too large to be satisfied with anything under the sun. Again the Spirit of God touches the string of this king's heart, and there comes forth "the song of songs, which is Solomon's," in which the strongest figures of love are used. But language is too feeble to express, and the heart too small to take in—What? Something outside the world.

Elsewhere Solomon describes, and in his description personifies, wisdom. But he does not close without this warning: "For whoso findeth Me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate Me love death." (Proverbs viii. 35, 36.) Are we not right, therefore, in concluding that "the greatest thing in the world" embraces *a love of death*? For the world hated Christ when He was here, and He is beyond doubt "the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. i. 24.)

The only begotten Son in the bosom of the Father could alone make known "the Light, the Life, and the Love" to all that see Him, where Satan, sin, and death are reigning. Therein lies the way out of this supreme satisfaction of human attainment which this writer holds forth to those who, many of them, were never freed from the law of sin and death, and who fails, in what he says, to distinguish between saints and sinners, all men and the brotherhood. Such a way Pride can never see, and if it essays to find and follow it, like the Egyptians, it will perish in the sea. The humble receive grace that brings this great salvation to them. They "stand still"; so it is that they see the path of life.

In the lowly form of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, despised, rejected, His face marred more than any man's, was God seeking to reconcile the world unto Himself. But the world gave the Lord nothing but a crown of thorns, the cross, and a grave.

Following Christ from the cradle to the cross in the yearly routine of their worship, leaves these world-worshippers in the darkness there found. No certainty of forgiveness of sins is theirs, no deliverance from its power, no boldness to enter the holiest through a veil that has been rent. But the empty tomb reminds other worshippers of the joy of our Lord in gathering His brethren—partakers of the heavenly calling—

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around Himself, and leading their praises as described in Hebrews ii. 12. To them is entrusted the ministry of reconciliation. (2 Cor. v. 20, 21.)

The Prince of life draws attention to His flesh and bones (Luke xxiv. 39), and Life and incorruptibility were brought to light through the gospel preached by those who now see Jesus crowned with glory and honour. As His ambassadors they pray in Christ's stead, “Be ye reconciled to God.” “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” How? “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” “But *God* commendeth HIS love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” “We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us.”

Our Lord, in John xv., shows the circle of love and the circle of hatred. The world is associated with the latter, the Father with the former; so it is hardly fitting, in the face of such a Teacher, for a professed Christian to speak of “love” as the greatest thing *in the world*. The prayer of the

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apostle in Ephesians iii. forbids the thought: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom every family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, *being rooted and grounded in love*, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

Love "rejoiceth in the truth." Our attention is called in 2 John to the fact that love should be in the Truth. Pilate, the friend of Cæsar, asks, "What is truth?" but does not wait for a reply. Thus the deceitfulness, as well as the desperate wickedness, of the heart of man displayed itself in every phase; whilst Jesus makes known THE LOVE peculiar to God towards those exceedingly mad against Him. (Acts xxvi. 11.) Three hundred years later one of the Cæsars beguiles the followers of the rejected Man into union with the World, though He who had witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate forewarned them by a letter from the glory, through His last living apostle, addressed to Pergamos, and complains that His disciples are sitting where Satan's throne is, and that their hearts are beguiled with false love from Himself to a thousand idols. God says, "I have

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drawn thee with the cords of a Man, and with the bands of love." And the Lord Jesus says, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."

What remedy can there be when there is no love for the truth, and the truth is not spoken in love, but the return of Him through whose resurrection we have been begotten again unto a living hope, "to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven"? At the appearing of Jesus Christ the secret of our life, our light, our love will be seen by the wailing nations; and the dwellers on earth, who had their portion in this life, will find the things that are seen are temporal. Their source and centre were themselves, and their love did not extend beyond themselves.

H. T.

THE DOVE.

THE dove let loose in Eastern skies
Returning fondly home;
Nor stoops his wing to earth, nor flies
Where idler warblers roam,

But onward speeds through air and light
Above each low delay,
Where nothing earthly stays his flight,
Or shadow dims his way.

Thus grant me, Lord, from earthly care,
From earthly passion free,
Ever, through faith's and love's pure air,
To wing my way to Thee.

M. W.

ENJOYMENT.

WE must be careful not to confound what is exclusively God's work with what is our responsibility.

It is God the Holy Spirit who leads us into enjoyment, our responsibility is to see that we do not grieve Him. (Ephesians iv. 30.)

Every Christian, whether a babe, a young man, or a father (1 John ii. 13), has the blessed privilege of communion with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ our Lord; there is nothing higher, and it is fulness of joy. (1 John i. 4.)

It cannot, however, be expected that a babe should have such deep communion as a father; but he may have fulness of joy, and in time he will grow up to be (1 John i. 4) a father. Not by making his growth an object, but feeding on Christ he grows. (John vi. 48, 57.)

The moment enjoyment is pressed, as an object, Christ, the true object, is displaced.

The prayer of the apostle (Ephesians iii. 15, 21) was, that God might so work in the saints, that they might be filled to all the fulness of God. Well may we say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," who has taken up, such as we are, to fill us with His fulness, and display in the ages to come the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us by Christ Jesus.

Do not grieve that Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption (Ephesians iv. 30); then you will have fulness of joy, not by making joy an object, but Christ, who is everything, and in all. (Colossians iii. 11.)

A. W. F.

LORD, DIRECT US.

GRACIOUS God, Thy children keep ;
 Jesus, guide Thy silly sheep ;
 Fix, oh, fix our fickle souls ;
 Lord, direct us ; we are fools.

Bid us in Thy care confide ;
 Keep us near Thy wounded side ;
 From Thee never let us stir,
 For Thou know'st how soon we err.

Lay us low before Thy feet,
 Safe from pride and self-conceit ;
 Be the language of our souls,
 Lord, direct us ; we are fools.

Dangerous doctrines from without,
 Lies and errors round about ;
 From within a treacherous heart,
 Prone to take the tempter's part ;
 By Thy Word we fain would steer,
 Fain Thy Spirit's dictates hear ;
 Save us from the rocks and shelves ;
 Save us chiefly from ourselves.

Never, never may we dare,
 What we are not, say we are ;
 Make us well our vileness know ;
 Keep us very, very low.

May we all our wills resign,
 Quite absorbed and lost in Thine ;
 Let us walk by Thy right rules ;
 Lord, direct us ; we are fools.

From Words of Truth, 1853.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. C., ST. NEOTS.—We are sorry that the writer of the article entitled “*Do you feel your sins forgiven?*” should have failed to convey to your mind the thought that was evidently before his own. If you will kindly read it again with care, we hope and believe you will see that there was no intention to set aside *feelings* in connection with forgiveness. The whole point is simply this: Do I know my sins forgiven because I feel happy? or, Do I feel happy because I know my sins forgiven? The writer’s contention was, that the believer does not *feel* his sins forgiven; but *knowing* them to be so because God in His word says they are, he feels happy on account of it. That contention we believe to be just, and we should rejoice were the difference clearly seen by all. Were you, dear friend, personally asked how you knew your sins to be forgiven, and you answered, “Because I feel so happy,” we should think your reply uncommonly poor and unsatisfactory. To base your knowledge of forgiveness on happy feelings is to build your house upon the sand. But if you are resting on Christ and His precious blood shed for sinners, then the word of God entitles you to know that you are forgiven. This is clearly stated in Acts x. 43, xiii. 38, 39. Believing God, who speaks in those passages of Scripture, you then *know* you are forgiven, and can rejoice therein. Feelings are one thing, and the simple belief of the truth is another. Feelings change, but the word of God abides the same for evermore. In resting on the

former, we rest upon *self*; in resting on the latter, we rest upon *God*. We shall leave it for you to say which is the better and happier course.

J. E. T.—1 John v. 6–13. In studying this passage it should be observed that the words “*witness*,” “*record*,” and “*testimony*” in the original are one and the same. If this be kept in mind it may help in the understanding of it.

The thing witnessed to, or testified of, is that “God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.” (v. 11.) Three things may be noticed here: (1) That this life is not in the first Adam. It is altogether distinct from nature, and is in and from a new source. (2) That it is not gained by works; we win it not by labour and toil; it is God’s gift. (3) That a real life is given, a life which associates us with God’s Son. Those three points are simple and clear.

The Spirit, the water, and the blood bear witness that eternal life is given to us, and is in “His Son.” The Spirit witnesses in His way, and the water and the blood in theirs, but the witness is but one.

It was from the pierced side of Jesus, dead upon the cross, that blood and water came. The blood speaks of expiation, and the water of cleansing.

The value of the blood we may learn from such scriptures as Romans iii. 25, v. 9; Hebrews ix. 14, x. 14. It is by the blood that our sins have been put away. This was absolutely necessary; for how should God give eternal life to one whose sins, apart from the blood of Christ, had not and could not be blotted out? The blood must be shed, the Saviour must die, or our

sins remain bound to us for ever. But Jesus Christ came by *water* and blood. The water is a symbol of the Word, and the water cleanses. How? Is it by the gradual purification of the old Adam nature till it be restored to its original unfallen state, like a dying man may be restored to life and health? Were it so it would be Adam reinstated, and the life would be in him and not in the Son, the last Adam. How, then, are we inwardly purified? We reply, By the communication of life, wholly new life, eternal life that is in "the Second Man," even in God's Son; and the Word clothed with quickening power is the instrument used to accomplish that end. That Word, living and operative, discerns the thoughts and intents of my heart, and discloses God's to me; moreover, it is the revelation of Christ to my soul. But the giving of this life involves and supposes now the setting aside judicially of all that we were as of Adam. This is fully unfolded in Paul's doctrine. We have died with Christ, and the fact of the water flowing from a *dead* Christ shows that the life now received is not in connection with man in nature. It is eternal life in the Son. The believer cleansed from his sins and made partaker of eternal life receives also the Holy Spirit, who can and does dwell in him—the blessed Witness of sins having been put away by the blood and of eternal life bestowed; who also leads us into fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. Thus the Spirit and the water and the blood unite in bearing testimony that God hath given to us eternal life. All this may be but dimly seen and imperfectly understood; but it is a sweet and blessed thing that a saint, though born but yesterday, has all

in Christ that the most advanced possesses. And we may remember for our comfort and joy that God ever speaks of us according to what He has really given us, and treats us as though we had realized it all.

DELTA.—To be gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ supposes, we believe, subjection to His authority and rule on the part of those thus gathered, whether in number they be two or three hundred or two or three individuals only. Subjection to His authority involves obedience to His word—to the principles laid down there in connection with the gathering together of His people; for how can any be subject to His authority if they disregard His word and choose their own way? And this truth must not be divorced from the doctrine of the “One Body.” Hence if there were ten different companies of saints gathered thus in one city yet they would be but one, seeing the same divine principles were confessed and the same authority owned by all. Were they not gathered thus in the unity of the “One Body” they would be simply independent companies, even if wholly composed of dear children of God, who in themselves might be most excellent in His sight, and for whom we should cherish the deepest affection, seeing they belong to Christ even as we do, though we could wish them a clearer understanding of the principles that should govern the assembly of God everywhere and at all times. We have to be careful lest while walking in a narrow path we separate ourselves in thought and affection from the *whole* Church of God upon earth, of which, we need not say, *every believer* forms a part.

YOUNG BELIEVER.—1 John iv. 15, v. i. We quite agree with you that the greatest care is needed to distinguish between divinely given faith and the mere intellectual belief that is found on every hand. The difficulty you experience in reference to these verses will be overcome if you carry your thoughts back to the early days of Christianity. To believe that Jesus of Nazareth, the reputed son of Joseph the carpenter, was none other than the Son of God was a thing beyond the power of man. He who in very truth believed it was born of God, for apart from that divine operation it would be believed by none. (See John i. 12, 13.) The apostle John looks at things in reality, and speaks only of those who had received Jesus as the Christ and as Son of God. Where this is so now the soul is born of Him. As to your second question we can say nothing. Christianity is not intended to set the world right, that is not its mission. It leaves things much as it finds them; but those who are the subjects of its saving power are called into heavenly hopes and associations in the power of which they are to walk, whether they be masters or slaves, bond or free.

G. C.—John xiii. 27. We have always taken these words to refer to the unhappy deed which Judas had before him, even the betrayal of his Lord; and to accomplish which, to deaden all feeling, to make him deaf to conscience, to carry him to the very end of his awful course, Satan himself entered into him. All this was before the mind of the Lord, who, feeling it as none other could, bade him do it *quickly*.

THE MYSTERY OF THE PERSON OF JESUS.

“WHEN the camp setteth forward, Aaron shall come, and his sons, and they shall take down the covering veil, and cover the ark of testimony with it: and shall put thereon the covering of badgers’ skins, and shall spread over it a cloth wholly of blue.”—NUMBERS iv. 5, 6.

“When Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary . . . after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not *touch* any holy thing, lest they die.”—v. 15.

“They shall not go in to *see* when the holy things are covered, lest they die.”—v. 20.

AARON and his sons were priests, and the sons of Kohath were Levites. The priests had to do with the ark as under the eye of God, the Levites as it was displayed before man.

The holy mystery of the person of the Lord Jesus is unfolded in type in the ark and its coverings. The ark, which was wholly of gold, sets forth the divine nature and being of the One “who, subsisting in the form of God, did not esteem it an object of rapine to be on an equality with God”—the One whom Jehovah could address as “My fellow.”

The priest first took down the veil, and covered the ark with it. We are not left in doubt as to the meaning of this. Hebrews x. tells us this veil was “His flesh.” It was a type of the true and perfect humanity of the Lord Jesus.

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The materials of which the veil was composed were blue, purple, scarlet, fine twined linen, and cherubim of cunning work.

These set forth in symbolic language the "body prepared" for the only begotten Son of God on His entrance into this world as a babe in the manger at Bethlehem.

The believer, in his place of priestly nearness, is permitted to approach with holy reverence and see what took place when Jesus, that "holy thing" born of a virgin, "took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." (Philippians ii. 7.)

The cherubim of cunning work wrought in the veil tell how in Him the divine and human are so combined that none can separate them. The fine twined linen witnesses to the purity of His person; the purple and scarlet to the royal dignity of Him whose star guided the wise men of the East; the blue that He was ever heavenly.

The pure and holy humanity of the blessed Lord was thus shadowed. Though truly human, He was in His nature neither like Adam innocent nor Adam fallen. Adam in Eden was innocent, though capable of sinning. Christ was holy, and incapable of committing sin, though truly and really a Man.

When the priest had covered the ark with the veil he laid over it a covering of badgers' skins. This covering expresses that which resists evil from without.

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The fine linen in the veil signifies the inward purity of His person; the rough badger skin the moral resistance to all evil, shown in the holy spotless walk of the Lord Jesus.

He passed through a sinful scene in sinless perfection. He was not only holy in His person, but undefiled by and separate from sinners in all His ways and words. Evil found no vulnerable point in Him. He could say, after being tested during His wilderness journey, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me."

Next. Over the badgers' skins was spread a cloth wholly of blue—a colour which denotes that which is heavenly. This outside covering was before the eye of men. They might be blind and not discern it, still it was there to be seen. So when that blessed One was here—a heavenly Man upon earth—there were those who saw no beauty in Him. Nevertheless the light—that moral, heavenly light which ever radiated from the Word made flesh—shone along the whole pathway of Jesus here below. This was the covering of blue.

Having thus laid these symbolic coverings on the ark—coverings which speak, as we have seen, of the mysteries of the holy person of the Lord Jesus—the priest put in the staves, and his work in connection with the ark was at an end.

The Levite, who represents a servant of Christ before the eye of his fellows, now comes forward, and his work begins.

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What was his work? Was it not to bear upon his shoulders the ark with its sacred mysteries and significant coverings, that ark which speaks to us of One who was wholly heavenly, One who has been aptly termed "the heavenly Stranger"?

None ever walked through this world as He. Every thought, word, and way bore the heavenly colour. A Man of a new order; a Man in whom God found all His delight; a Man who ever breathed the atmosphere of heaven; a Man who, even when engaged in the most trying services toward guilty, sinful men, never left the bosom of the Father, but ever abode in *unclouded and uninterrupted communion*. They were the Father's works He did, and the Father's words He spoke.

Such was the One of whom the ark spake that was borne on the shoulders of the Levites.

Let us note well two things the Levite was not allowed to do. May they be a warning to us.

He was neither allowed to *touch* nor allowed to *look* into the sacred mysteries which lay hid beneath the cloth of blue.

Woe betide the hasty hand which sought to withdraw the covering of blue, and expose what was underneath. Death was his portion.

Has this no voice for Christians to-day? Does it not warn us, in solemn and impressive accents, against rude and irreverent speculations concerning the person of the only begotten Son of God? Does it not tell us that God prohibits

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the subjection of His Son to the unhallowed gaze and touch of men who seek to separate and divide the all-various perfections which compose the holy mystery of His person ?

As priests or worshippers we are permitted to distinguish and adore. As Levites or servants we are forbidden to dissect and disunite. It is ground too holy for mortal eyes, too sacred for mortal touch.

In our unholy gaze we may bring down upon ourselves the judgment of Bethshemesh (1 Samuel vi. 19), and in our hasty handling that of Uzza. (2 Samuel vi. 7.)

May this be a warning to us not to seek to uncover that sacred burden, and say, *This* is the gold, and *that* is the fine linen ; *this* is eternal life, and *that* is human life.

Jesus is the God-man. The knowledge of the wonderful mystery of His person the Father has reserved to Himself. No one knoweth the Son but the Father. (Matthew xi. 27.)

May we learn how to tread softly, and worship, as priests, and how to serve as Levites. As priests we may linger adoringly over the varied perfections of Jesus. We may delight in His perfect humanity, and in His essential deity, and we may magnify the grace displayed in the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us. All this may be done in a holy, reverent spirit of worship, as we acknowledge Him to be very Man born of a woman, and in the same Person the Eternal

Life which was with the Father, and the true God, who is over all, blessed for ever.

But let us not seek to unravel that mystery which without controversy is great. “Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” (1 Tim. iii. 16.)

H. N.

“WE REST ON THEE.”

2 CHRON. xiv. 11.

ALL things are restless, Lord, one great uptossing;
Afar and near, the gath'ring gloom we see.
Man irks control, and will with will is crossing;
Where could we rest our hearts if not on Thee?

The poor vain world of progress still is dreaming;
Meanwhile the clouds roll onward, billows rise,
And hollow seems to us its “busy scheming,”
Who wait to see the “Morning Star” arise.

The nearness of Thy coming signs are telling;
Soon will the world despise our Hope no more.
Wave upon wave, opposing forces swelling,
Yet wilt Thou bring us safely to the shore.

Fresh courage give, O Lord, so sorely needed.
By love constrained, more faithful may we be.
Alas! how often has our foe succeeded!
How often have we failed to rest on Thee!

We have no power; but Thou art interceding.
Our names are ever borne upon Thy breast;
In priestly service for Thy loved ones pleading,
Bearing us onward to eternal rest.

M. A. W.

SALVATION.

SALVATION! the very word is brimful of joy and gladness, of relief and rest. It implies danger, but a sure deliverance; deadly perils, but a sure escape.

In circumstances where men and women sometimes chance to be this is clearly seen. We will suppose you fast asleep in the topmost story of a house on fire. The flames, fanned by the wind, are rapidly ascending from the basement to the first-floor, and from the first-floor to the second. Of your perilous position you know nothing till the cry of the crowd in the street arouses you from your slumber. The smell of fire and smoke tells its alarming tale. You leap from your bed, and rush to the door, only to find that escape by the staircase is impossible. You fly to the window, and look down on the gathering crowd below. You are seen from the street, and the excitement of the people is intensified a thousand-fold. They see you wringing your hands in an agony, and know that at any moment the house may fall in, and that you will then inevitably perish. But hark! there is a cry of "Fire-escape!" The great crowd parts asunder. The escape approaches, the ladder is flung against your window, the brave fireman climbs up, leaps into your room, he brings you down, and you are *saved*. That is SALVATION.

Or let us imagine you on a voyage round the globe. When far out to sea the wind freshens. The barometer is falling fast. A gale springs up, and increases to a hurricane. The waves roll mountains high. Crash go the masts. The ship no longer answers to the helm. She springs a leak. All hands are at the pumps, but the water gains upon you. The storm abates, but the ship sinks. The boats are lowered, a few bags of biscuits thrown in, and a keg or two of water, and one after another gets into the boat, and the ship is abandoned to her fate. You are hundreds of miles from land, and your only hope lies in your seeing a sail. One, two, three days pass, and no sail is seen. You and your companions in misfortune look at one another. You know well what is in each other's mind, but you dare not utter it. Cold and exposure do their work. The weakest succumb. Death lays his kindly hand upon them, and their sorrows end. Silently and reverently you commit each body to the deep, and wonder who will be the next. But see! A sail! a sail! You hoist your signals of distress. Every moment seems an hour as you watch and wait. But your signals are seen. The good ship bears down upon you, reaches you, and you are taken on board, and kindly and tenderly cared for. You are *saved*. That is SALVATION.

It is a great thing to be saved from a house on fire, or from dying of cold and exhaustion on the wild, lone sea, far away from home and

kith and kin; but the believer in Jesus is saved with an infinitely greater salvation than that. He is saved from the horrors of eternal death, judgment, wrath, hell, and everlasting banishment from God. Oh, what a salvation is ours!

The cost of it is beyond price. Worthless as we were, our salvation could not be bought with silver and gold lavished on the poor, or spent in splendid deeds of charity. Nor could it be accomplished by the exercise of almighty power, such as in days of old built the great temple of the universe, and filled it with untold marvels of earth and air and sky. Moral considerations could not be satisfied thus, and satisfied they must be if *sinners* are to be saved. Salvation for *sinful* men could only be by sacrifice, even the sacrifice of the Son of God, of whom Paul could say, He loved me, and gave *Himself* for me. (Gal. ii. 20.)

And He has come. Oh for a thousand tongues to tell it! Come to seek and save the lost, even by the endurance of fathomless sufferings upon the cross of Calvary.

If any poor, anxious sinner enquires how he must be saved, let him hear the simple answer to his question given in Acts xvi. 31: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Other than that there is none. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. ii. 8, 9.)

“IT IS FINISHED.”

JOHN xix. 30.

WE are told in Hebrews v. 9, that the Lord Jesus Christ is become “the author of *eternal* salvation unto all them that obey Him.”

Salvation that may cease at the end of a day, a week, a month, a year, cannot have the word *eternal* affixed to it. Eternal salvation is for all days, all weeks, all months, all years. It covers the whole span of our earthly existence, and finally places the saved soul with Christ in glory.

There are many who have the knowledge and certainty of this, based not indeed on what they have inwardly felt, but on what God says to them in His faithful Word. Others, however, and they are not a few, cannot speak on such a subject with certainty. They fain would, but from various causes are afraid lest they should be too sure.

In some instances this fear flows from not distinguishing between personal holiness and that which satisfies divine righteousness in respect of our sins. Does the reader understand what we mean? Perhaps not. Let us then try to make the matter plainer.

“I am praying to be made better,” said an anxious man to us a day or two ago. He wished to become more like Christ, and his prayer was

directed to that end, though when questioned he did not know anything as to his being actually and eternally saved.

"Well, surely it is right to pray for that," you say. Yes, in one sense it is, for we ought to grow more like Him here below, even as we shall be perfectly conformed to His image in glory. But our desire and endeavour to be more like Christ will not give us the knowledge of eternal salvation. It will not set our mind at rest in reference to our sins against a holy God. This our friend did not quite see.

Think of your sins as so many items in a heavy bill which one day you will be required to pay. Can any personal holiness on your part meet, or even help to meet, the claims of your Creditor? Were you to become as holy as the angels that surround God's throne, would your holiness atone for your sins? Assuredly not, for it is written in His Word that "*it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*" Yes, *the blood*; nothing but that. Now, your holiness and the blood of Jesus are not one and the same thing, are they?

If your sins are sins against God and His throne, who is it that has to be satisfied about them? You, the sinner, or God whom you have sinned against?

The one great, grand point is whether God is satisfied. What would meet the requirements of

the case He only could tell. But He has provided what would meet them. Jesus is the Lamb of God. He has suffered, He has died, and God is satisfied. Now, if God is satisfied, ought you not to be ?

The work that was needed has been done. Jesus said on the cross, "*It is finished.*" It could not be a finished work if anything of yours had to be added to it.

It is said at the end of Hebrews ix. that Christ hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself—that He was once offered to bear the sins of many; and in the first chapter we may read, that when He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

If then, believer, your sins have not been put away they never can be, for Christ will not suffer and die again. If, on the other hand, they have been put away, ought you not to know it, and to thank God for it ?

What is needed on your part is that you should believe God's testimony about the finished work of Christ. It is through the belief of the truth that our souls find peace.

You speak to God, and say, "O God, my sins are many, and great. They are more in number than the sand of the sea. Beneath the weight of them I must sink in the deep waters of Thy wrath."

And God answers, "But I have laid thy sins on My beloved Son. He has borne them all. My justice is satisfied. I have blotted them out as a thick cloud; yea, I have cast them into the depths of the sea."

These are truly gracious words, but how shall they profit thy soul if thou dost not believe them?

This is good news for the anxious, good news from God, published in His Word. Here are glad tidings that make the heart glad, only *they must be believed*.

THOUGHTS ON JUDE.

(Verse 2.)

THIS epistle, written at a time when Christianity was being largely professed, and that profession accompanied by a walk and ways that proved the unreality of it, seems to be especially addressed to a remnant. Just as God preserved a seed according to the election of grace in Israel (Rom. ix. 29), though the nation itself had apostatized, so here—though the professing Church had become so deeply sunk in every kind of iniquity, even to the depths to which Sodom and Gomorrah descended—there was a remnant preserved in Jesus Christ. I think it is evident that it was

written to those specially who were children of God, who were possessors as well as professors, as encouragement for them in the midst of everything to discourage and cast down;—the “but” of verse 17 would seem to bear this out—and as such it is specially precious to those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

The salutation at the beginning of this epistle differs from that of all the other epistles.

Grace is not mentioned; but love, which is deeper, and which takes in *more* than grace. Grace is mentioned in verse 4 as being turned into lasciviousness. The grace of God is the character that His love takes when displayed to those who have nothing in them to love, and who are His enemies.

The grace of God to saints is love acting towards them without reference to what *they* are in themselves; *i.e.*, as undeserving of it.

Grace, of course, can only be enjoyed aright in God's presence; but a professor could know about it, and with a heart untouched and conscience unreached turn it into lasciviousness.

Love, on the other hand, requires a divine nature to enjoy it in its full aspect; this the believer has, and love is his present and eternal portion. He is to dwell in love (1 John iv. 16), though in its *activities to him* now it must always take the form of grace; but in heaven, though we shall be the monuments of the “exceeding riches of His

grace," yet we shall not require grace then, for "we shall be like Him."

"All pure without, all pure within the breast;
No thorns to wound, no toil to mar our rest."

But that love that was first displayed to us in grace we may enjoy in its fulness for ever and ever. And we begin that joy now, though hindered. We may be living in spirit in heaven now, and having an ever-deepening acquaintance with love—holy love; which is at once the satisfying portion of the heart, and the contrast to, and safeguard against, the awful apostasy and iniquity described in this epistle, and which is abounding and increasing on every hand at the present time.

Mercy perhaps refers more to temporal deliverances (as we read He is "the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe") and providences. Our food and raiment are mercies; for we have no *rights*, though we sometimes lose sight of this and of the hand that ministers them, with that tender consideration for our frame that the heart of Jesus alone knows.

Mercy also has reference to our sins and failings; that is, in the government of God. Not only has He forgiven us all our sins, and removed them as far as the east is from the west; but, since we have known the love He has bestowed upon us in making us His children (1 John iii. 1) in His *governmental* actings towards us in this

place of testing, where He is humbling and proving us, we can say, "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. . . . Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame ; He remembereth that we are dust." There is an illustration of mercy to one who has sinned in 1 John v. 16, and also in 2 Samuel xii. 13, while Philippians ii. 27 and James v. 11 bring out the truth of mercy to us as poor weak human beings, subject (as being still connected with a groaning creation, and surrounded by enemies) to sickness, sorrow and death, persecution, injustice and dangers, etc.

We are to have peace also—peace though the storm rages around us, and with the world, and with one another. And these are to be multiplied. What abounding grace amid abounding iniquity ! They are the good and perfect gifts of the Father of lights, and, like the loaves and fishes, are to be multiplied,* filling us with joy and praise to God.

How this shows that, if we change, He changes not, and the grace seems to get brighter as the night gets darker ! This is what our G^{od} desires us to have, mercy and peace and love multiplied ; and while the eye is on Jesus we shall prove the blessing.

A. W. F.

* This word occurs at the beginning of both Peter's epistles.

LETTER TO A FRIEND.

I HAVE been for some time feeling that I did not understand what “always bearing about in the body *the dying* of Jesus” really meant. Why “*the dying*” and not “the death” of Jesus? I think God has shown me; and it is this: If you look at Romans vi. 10–13, after first looking at Colossians iii. 3, you will notice that after reckoning ourselves to be *dead to sin*, but *alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord*, verse 13 tells us to *yield ourselves up unto God*, as those who are *alive from the dead*, and *our members as instruments of righteousness unto God*. Now turn to 2 Cor. iv. 10, and you will find that in order that *the life* of Jesus may be manifest in our bodies, we are to be always bearing about in the body, not the death, but *the dying of Jesus*. Turn then to Ephesians v. 2. What was the blessed Lord doing when He was *dying* on the cross? And this is put before us as the way to “*walk in love*”—the pattern of it. Why, *He was yielding Himself up entirely to God to do His will*. And *He was yielding Himself up for others, to serve others—us*. “An offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.”

Dear brother, if you and I are, like Paul, *always* yielding ourselves up, “as those alive from the dead,” *to God* to do His will, and always also yielding ourselves up *for others*, to serve others; that is just what the Lord Jesus as man was doing on the cross (though more than man and making atonement), and self is then practically gone. There is no self in such a course. And may “*the love of Christ*” constrain us *all*, more and more thoroughly and truly, thus to “*walk in love*,” thus to apply the cross practically to our daily walk, that His life may be manifested. J. D.

“BORN AGAIN.”

JOHN iii.

THE truth connected with the Holy Ghost, together with that concerning Christ and His work, is the great safeguard against the error by which Satan is working in the present day. The enemy's craft must be met by the truth of God.

In this chapter we have the work of the Spirit in quickening souls, and this is brought out in contrast both with God's previous trial of Israel, and with man's natural power in the reception of outward evidence.

From chapter ii. 24 we see the need of getting hold of God's truth for our own souls. The profession of Christ may be ever so sincere, but apart from *life* and fruit it is worth nothing, and is nothing. The people saw that He was the One who should come, the sent One of God, and they had right thoughts about His works, and yet all that went for nothing, and was worthless in the sight of God. The solemn question was, What was in man? (Chap. ii. 25.)

The conviction spread among them that Jesus was the Messiah because of the miracles which He did, and they were ready to have Him in their own way. Nicodemus said, “We [not I] know

that thou art a teacher come from God ;" but the wickedness of man's heart had not all come out. Man proved what he was in the treatment he gave to the Lord Jesus, notwithstanding the undeniable evidence vouchsafed in His works that He was come from God.

There are none so *hostile* to truth as those who know but will not have it. The spies who had been sent up, and had seen the land, were those who were active in speaking against it. You cannot go the way of the cross without having its trial and difficulty, as well as its infinite gain. The cross is not pleasant, of course and it never was intended to be pleasant. Directly I see that Christ has a right and claim on my conscience, my nature rises to resist His power. I see that He ought to have the first place, and that other things should give way. This I do not like. The cross must be contrary to our nature.

The Lord now meets Nicodemus with the declaration that he must be born again, or rather *anew*, which is a stronger word than "again" or "from above." It is the same expression in the original as "*from the very first*" in Luke i. 3.

You may find lovely qualities in human nature; but nature never loves Christ where the cross and the glory come together. The new birth is a thing totally new. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Christianity does not alter it at all. Man is in love with creation, and yet he

neither loves God nor believes His love. The creation is ruined, spoiled—not willingly as man is, but still it is fallen. Man’s will is gone away from God. His intellect may be all very well in its way, and his disposition may be amiable, but you never find *one* who naturally seeks after God. Nay, you generally find the most amiable person the last to turn to God. Man must be born entirely anew. He must come into heaven with a nature altogether distinct from that which he has got. Man will use his good qualities as well as his bad, just as an animal, but with more intelligence. The eye must be opened. It is a new ground and way of perception, by which we can even see the kingdom of God.

There was neither holiness nor righteousness before the Fall. The original state was something distinct from both. Adam was innocent, but not properly righteous or holy. To apply innocence to God, or to the Lord Jesus, would be absurd. God is holy; seeing what is bad, and abhorring it, which holiness, negatively at least, consists in. A righteous man judges what is contrary to justice, and hates it. An innocent man (such as Adam was) did not know things in themselves good and evil, though of course he knew that it was his duty to obey God. Adam’s sin was in his trying to be like God; our goodness is in desiring to be like Him. Ought we not to seek to be like God—to imitate Him, as Paul exhorts?

(Eph. v. 1.) We are called by glory and virtue, and are seeking to remind our souls that God's counsel is, that we shall be conformed to the image of His Son. This one thing we should do, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before." Adam knew nothing of this; his whole moral nature was entirely different. In sinning, man got his conscience, and was ruined in getting it, because it was a bad one. Consequently he was afraid of the God he wished to be like. He lost innocence, and we never regain it; but we are renewed after the last Adam. We are, after God, created in righteousness and true holiness. We are made partakers of the divine nature, and brought to judge of sin as God judges it, and to love holiness as He loves it.

It is after God that we are created again. (Ephesians iv. 24.) Not only have we, as men, the knowledge of good and evil, which made Adam afraid of God, and hide himself, but now in being born again it is another thing. We have life in our souls in a divine way.

We have the holy moral nature that God has, and in this nature there is a positive delight in the righteousness of God. This new nature feeds upon, and delights in, what is of God, and is satisfied with the object before us, even Christ Himself. God has chosen us in Him, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in

love. He has us before Him in this the image of His own nature. In Christ we have all that God delights in, brought out and displayed in a Man. He is the perfect and blessed display of all God is, and He is the expression before God of what He has made us to God.

This quickening of the Spirit has a double character, but it is death in both. We are dead, and are to reckon ourselves "dead indeed unto sin." This is liberty. But there is death practically, or putting to death, and that is what we do not like, for this is the cross. We like the liberty, but not the mortifying or putting to death our members on earth.

The sentence of death that God has passed on flesh and sin is an unchangeable sentence, and it is a positive blessing to have done with the flesh, for it is a condemned thing. The sentence was executed upon Christ that we might live after the power of the new man—Christ. There is an important point as to this, which is often confounded and mistaken. We must live that we may die—not die that we may live, as is often represented. Men talk of death before they have life, but they are wrong. Death, morally, is the consequence of having life. And this is just the difference between a monk—not using the word offensively—and a Christian. As a monk, I mortify myself in order that I may live, instead of first having life as a Christian,

from God, that I may die. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter." (v. 5.) "Of His own will begat He us by the word of truth." God has begotten us by the Word. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." "He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." The Word gives light and understanding to the simple.

"That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." There is the communication of a new nature in believing; and when born of God, the truth sanctifies and cleanses. There is "the washing of water by the Word," but this cannot be till after we are born of the Spirit by the Word. There would be no sense in saying, That which is born of water is water; but that which is born of the Spirit is of the spiritual nature of God, not of man's nature.

Hence Christ could say to His disciples, "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." In the new and holy nature, in which I am created of God in Christ, I can now take up everything that I delight in, and I can judge everything contrary to it. Thus the word has a cleansing power. But we must not look at self, nor take pleasure in it. We want an object outside ourselves—even the renewed man does. The moment there is the communication of the divine nature, there must be delight in Christ Himself.

This is brought out in a double way in John v.

and vi. In chapter v. there are dead sinners quickened, or raised. This speaks of God communicating the divine nature. I do not speak of *faith* now, but it is God's own power that is spoken of—God quickening. In chapter vi. we get faith fully insisted on; and here is the object of my faith presented. This is perfection—to be so occupied with Christ as to be forgetful of self. While told to reckon ourselves dead, we are looked on as having already died with Christ. How is this? Christ is looked on as coming down into the place of death, that there, where I was, Christ might be, and rise up out of it for my deliverance. Because of what He suffered on the cross, as manifested in the power of His resurrection, old things have passed away, and all things have become new. God will have none of the old thing now. It is defiled and corrupted, and good for nothing.

"All things are become new," not renewed. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He is the eternal life that was with the Father and is manifested unto us. This is not the man that fell out of Paradise! How then can God and man be connected? "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." There was the insuperable barrier of man's will on one side, and the power of death on the other. Therefore He says, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" But "if it die" (the corn of wheat), "it bringeth forth much

fruit." Then in resurrection the exceeding greatness of God's power is displayed as stated in Ephesians i. 19, and, passing over the allusion to the Church, we read in the next chapter, "You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." In connection with it all, and the basis of it, is Christ; who is dead and risen, and with whom we are quickened together. The last Adam has not His place as Head of the family, except by death first. Why? Because redemption could not have been wrought; nor would it have been, as now, a question of God's righteousness. These being accomplished, He is entirely and in everything fitted to be the Head of the new creation. This new link is wrought by the Word. The living Word, by the Spirit, is the power; and resurrection-life with Christ is the standing into which we are brought.

Christ, we may observe, speaks to Nicodemus about the things that he, as a Jew, ought to have understood. (Compare Ezekiel xxxvi.) He says, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" God's earthly things were not evil or fleshly things, but the promised earthly portion which the Jews were to look for. In the latter day they must be sprinkled with water, and have a new heart from the Spirit before they can inherit. This Nicodemus should have known. Then there are the heavenly things, which are better. "The wind bloweth where it listeth," etc.

That is the sovereign acting of His grace. He will take any poor sinners of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews, and bring them into the blessing He has to give. "God so loved *the world*." This goes beyond the Jews. It is not here that God so loved Israel.

For all alike Christ was needed. For the *best* the Son of man must be lifted up, and for the *worst* God would give His only begotten Son. Under promises, law, or nature, death must come in, if man is to be saved. In nothing can they be taken up in their own title. But into what are we brought by that which Christ has done!

The Lord goes on to say, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen." Here was the double revelation of God. Christ is speaking as a divine person, and as One who has seen divine glory. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." He knew and saw, as One familiar and at ease with the Father and the Holy Ghost, with the glory of the Godhead. He was Himself in the unity of the divine essence. And though we were not only men outside it all, but fallen men, yet now, as born of God, what are we not brought into! We have resurrection life in Him; we are one Spirit with the Lord. It is not the poor thing of the renewal of good qualities; but it is Christ, the Son, Himself making us partakers of His own things.

J. N. D.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

F. W.—We can hardly imagine a *Christian* engaging in dancing in public parties unless indeed his heart had become engrossed with the things of the world to a fearful extent. Dancing is generally associated with other kinds of worldliness destructive of every thing that a *Christian* should cherish most. Could a person, before beginning a public dance, ask God's blessing on the performance? or could it be gone through to God's glory? If not, is it a thing that a *Christian* should touch in any shape or form? If dancing were a means of expressing the joy and gladness that filled a *Christian's* heart on account of God's exceeding grace, we could the more easily understand a *Christian* taking part therein; but it is not commonly connected with such matters, we believe.

A. B. C. (Luke xiv. 26.)—It must not be supposed that the disciple of the Lord Jesus is to "*hate*" father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren in the sense of disliking them or regarding them with aversion, which is the meaning attached to the word *hate* in ordinary usage. But if any would be a disciple, then his Master must be necessarily first; and if the claims of the Lord should ever come in conflict with the claims of natural relationship, then His claims must carry the day. The Lord must be supreme if a man would be a disciple indeed. He must "*hate*" father and mother in the sense of loving them less. Only in such a case we had better be quite

sure that it is the *Lord's* claims in very truth—not our own will, nor the dictum of men who assume the place of “spiritual guides,” nor of the Church so-called. We have known some who have been led sadly astray through listening to these.

E. F.—Your question as to the various dispensations of Scripture, and what characterizes them, is of deep interest and profit, but we fear the correspondence columns of this magazine hardly offer space for more than the briefest answer. The following notes, which are not our own, may help you.

“GENESIS informs us that *creation* was completed in *six* days, and that God rested on the *seventh*.

This corresponds with the dispensations: the millenium forming the *seventh* period.

The *eighth* day, in Scripture, always has reference to the resurrection, or *new* state; so with the *eighth* or *eternal* period.

Observe this: We have—

1. The *Adamic* dispensation. Man in innocency.
2. Man *fallen*. God's grace in giving *promise*.
3. Noahic. Judgment after the judgment of the flood.
4. Abrahamic or patriarchal. Separation from idolatry.
5. Mosaic. The *Law*.
6. The Gospel. Heaven *opened* to *faith*. (Hebrews x. 19–25.)
7. The Millennial. Heaven *opened* to *sight*. (John i. 51.)
8. The *Eternal*. The NEW heavens and NEW earth.” (Rev. xxi. 1–5.)

AN OLD STORY RE-TOLD.

READ EXODUS xii.

WE trust, kind reader, that you are not one of those who view this chapter simply as a piece of ancient history,—interesting enough perhaps, but containing nothing for present profit. The Spirit-taught Christian will never be persuaded to regard it thus. Glowing on its sacred page he beholds the features of his much-loved Saviour, and revolving around Him, like stars in their courses, he sees great truths of undying worth. Nor are these written in curious hieroglyphics, which only the learned can with difficulty decipher, but in characters so plain that he who runs may read.

At the hour to which our chapter takes us back thick threatening clouds were gathering fast across the land of Egypt. The barometer had fallen low, the atmosphere was heavy, and many an ominous sign foretold an approaching storm. Nine times had Egypt been smitten, nine times had she refused to yield, and now a great catastrophe was at her doors. One plague more was determined upon her. The hand of God, patient and long-suffering, was about to strike, and from His power there was no escape. The

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solemn sentence had gone forth, and the first-born in every family, their joy, their glory, the centre and crown of all their hopes, should be laid in the dust. The potsherds of earth must learn that it is vain to strive against God their Maker.

Shall I pause for a moment here to ask whether there is no analogy between that day and this? Is there no predicted judgment that men have to fear? Is the world, with its growing weight of sin, for ever to whirl through the ages, as it has done since the Flood? Let Scripture answer these questions, and they shall be answered in very decided terms. (See Acts xvii. 31; 2 Thessalonians i. 7-9.) And if any ask, Wherefore should the world be judged? To such we would reply, Shall Christ be dishonoured, His deity denied, His atoning work excluded from the plan of man's redemption; shall Truth be summoned before a tribunal of earth, and haughty men smite her upon the mouth, and say, "Thou liest;" shall the gospel be neglected, its proffered gifts disdained, its solemn warnings pass unheeded; shall the world's dark history grow darker till its pages be blacker than the blackest night, shall all this go on, I ask, and God take no notice? Gracious and full of pity is He, not willing that any should perish, and in the activities of His love He can go to the verge of beseeching men to be reconciled to Him (2 Cor. v. 20); but if all

be refused, what can it issue in but this—that God shall at length vindicate His own name and glory by meting out to men the just reward of their deeds?

But apart from the judgment of the world at large, can you or any of us stand before God when our actions are weighed in His balances, and reasonably hope for an acquittal at His hands? Happily there is no need to argue the point, for it has been argued at length already in Romans ii., iii., with this result, that every mouth is stopped, and all the world become subject to the judgment of God. The controversy therefore is at an end. Every individual under the sky is proved guilty, and is consequently subject to God's judgment.

It was there that Israel stood on that memorable night of which our chapter speaks. If Egypt was proud and arrogant, if with shameless cruelty she had in earlier days slaughtered the new-born sons of those whom she held captive, Israel too had sinned, deeply sinned. Greater privileges had been theirs, and therefore greater responsibilities and less excuse. Who then could stand before God who is glorious in holiness? None. On that ground Egypt and Israel were alike. And if the former was dealt with in judgment and the latter spared, it was not because these were better than those, but because of the sprinkled blood on lintel and doorpost; and that

blood spake of death already accomplished, and pointed onward to the death of One in whose atoning sufferings and shed blood the most ungodly may find a sure shelter, across whose threshold the Avenger shall never pass.

If in my conscience the question of my personal sin and guilt has been distinctly raised, where, I may ask, shall I find relief and perfect rest? Certainly not in aught that I can do, for what doings of mine, however noble in their design and perfect in their execution, can avail to expiate my sins and purge away my guilt? "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" All this might indeed be done, and the soul remain torn with a thousand distractions and alarmed with a thousand fears. Nothing can yield rest but the knowledge of what the blood of Christ has wrought, and a recognition of its preciousness and power. In the shedding of that blood the question of sin has found its settlement. What the tears of ages and the pious deeds of all mankind would be unable to effect, that blood alone has done. In virtue of it a Mary of Magdala may find release from the cruel

tyranny of Satan; the demoniac may receive deliverance from the hand of his relentless foe; here the dying thief is made meet for Paradise and the blessed company of Christ; and here too Saul of Tarsus, with his hands red with the blood of God's martyred saints, obtains pardon for crimes so great as his. And though eighteen centuries have rolled away, the precious blood of Christ remains in undiminished efficacy. Washed in its cleansing flood the leprous lose their leprosy, and sinners covered with the sores and ulcers of countless sins find health and healing. Well may the Spirit of God describe it as *precious* blood. Precious it is, infinitely so, for nothing in heaven or on earth, nor all things put together, could take its place. It stands alone in its glory, the one thing in the wide universe that puts away sin, purifies the conscience, shields from judgment so justly deserved—the one thing that maintains God's righteousness inviolate, and yet enables Him to be the Justifier of the ungodly. (Rom. iv. 5.) Let us sound its praises! Precious, precious blood of Jesus, that cleanseth from all sin!

The doctrine of the blood, taught in such significant terms in Exodus xii., is woven into the warp and woof of all Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation. To despise it, to trample it under foot, to deny its atoning virtue, is a sure sign of apostasy, and one that is becoming more and

more apparent. The pride of man, aided and abetted by an unseen and cunning hand, haughtily refuses the doctrine of the blood, and declines to accept the great fundamental truth of the Bible, that "without shedding of blood is no remission." (Hebrews ix. 22.) Alas for those who reject it! It is true they boast of greater intellectual freedom, a broader platform, enlarged boundaries of thought, and growing liberty and light. But we would not share their fortunes for all the world. The blood of Christ is the sinner's only hope and refuge. Shall we surrender that to follow a mere will-o-the-wisp that will allure us we know not where? Shall we drop the substance to catch the shadow, which, however, eagerly pursued, will elude our grasp at last. May God forbid!

Reader, are you resting upon the blood, the precious blood of Christ? Are you under its all-sufficient shelter? "When I see the blood, I will pass over," was God's gracious pledge to Israel. It is His still. If you have not trusted the blood, trust it now. The judgment hour approaches with its sure, if silent, tread. Your earthly future is so uncertain, and the end of life may be nearer than you think. Listen to our entreaties. Come under the cover of the blood. There you may abide in peace, and rejoice that He has said, "*When I see the blood, I will pass over.*"

DELIVERANCE FROM THE POWER OF SIN.

Being revised Notes of a Lecture on Romans vi. 6-23,
by R. F. KINGSCOTE.

THIS chapter may be justly called *the* chapter of the New Testament that shows how God has delivered us from what we were as children of Adam; from sin—the sinful nature that is in us—and shows us too the real power for holiness of life and walk down here. The question of holiness is one raised on all sides to-day, and the fact that sin has power over them, instead of their having power over it, is what troubles many Christians. There are thousands of the Lord's people who are in that difficulty. But it is a remarkable thing that those who talk so much about holiness, and their difficulties as to it, often overlook what is to be found in this important chapter.

God will deliver us from sin and all its consequences when we are in glory; but there is also deliverance from its *power* now, although we still have it in us.

The word "holiness" is twice mentioned in this chapter, in verses 19 and 22, both of which verses speak of practical holiness of walk while in this world. It will help greatly to the under-

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standing of the chapter to notice that its main truth is set forth in three consecutive verses, 10, 11, and 12. I will first take them up as a whole, and afterwards speak of them more in detail.

Verse 10 is what is true of Christ alone. In verse 11 the Spirit of God says, so to speak, "What is true of Him is true of you, because He took your place before God on the cross;" and faith believes this. Verse 12 is, "Carry it out in practice." We get first what is true of Christ. When the Spirit of God wants to teach us something about ourselves, He speaks of Christ first, then says, that "what is true of Him is equally true of you," and ends with, "Now carry it out." "Likewise," in verse 11, is very significant. Likewise; that is, in the same way as Christ. Christ died unto sin once; *likewise* reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin. Christ is now alive unto God; *likewise* reckon ye yourselves to be alive unto God.

In verse 12 we get another word which is full of meaning—"Therefore"—that is a conclusion drawn from what goes before. This verse implies two things. First, that the sin *is* in our mortal bodies; second, that instead of it having power over us, we have power over it. If I say to a man, "Don't let that child come into the room," I imply that he has the power to keep him out. So when God says, "Let not sin reign," it implies that you have the power to carry it out.

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This chapter unfolds the way of deliverance from the power of sin *now*, while we are down here in the body: "the end everlasting life." (v. 22.) The end is coming by-and-by, the end of all exercises of soul, and trials and troubles. Precious thought! But let me now take up these verses a little more in detail.

In verse 10, as I said, is what is true of Christ only, "In that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God." I am quite sure that numbers of the Lord's people read this verse as if it said "died *for* sin." But it is not so. What, however, does it mean when it says He "died *unto* sin once"? We will just look at one or two scriptures that might help us, as it is very important to the understanding of the next verse that we should catch its meaning. "He [that is, God] hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." (2 Cor. v. 21.) What a wonderful truth! I could not attempt to explain it, and I suppose we shall not fully comprehend it throughout eternity. He was not made sin in His life when He trod the earth in spotless purity. He was not made sin in the garden of Gethsemane when He prayed to the Father in such an agony that He sweat as it were great drops of blood. It was not then, but on the cross; when He hung there, and was forsaken of God that He was made sin. What passed between God and His Son during those three hours of darkness

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we are not told; but at the close that cry was heard, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" But Scripture is totally silent as to what took place during those hours when darkness covered all the land. God drew a veil over the scene. Ah! dear friends, just think of it. God made Him to be sin for me (speaking individually), because nothing else would fit me for His presence in glory.

Have you ever noticed the difference between this verse in Corinthians and 1 Peter ii. 24? "Who His own self bare our *sins* in His own body on the tree." There, you see, it is the *sins*—actual offences committed. In 2 Cor. v. 21, He was made *sin*; that is different. It is important to see that the Lord Jesus was not only there to bear our sins, but all the depth of our evil, sinful nature—sin, root and branch, all came out before God then. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin.

The next scripture I will ask you to look at is Romans viii. 3, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." That expression, "sin in the flesh," means sin in our flesh, as children of Adam. The evil of our nature not only came out before God, but was judged and condemned there and then. God there saw an end of it. This verse is so blessed:

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“God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.” It is not a mere, bare doctrine. Think of God’s Son going under all the waves and billows of God’s judgment! “God sending His *own* Son.” Why does it say “own”? It reminds us of the love that the Father has to the beloved Son. Think how He loved His Son; or, as the Lord Jesus in Mark xii. 6 speaks of it (let us turn to the passage), “Having yet therefore *one* Son, His *well-beloved*.” He had only one Son. We know how fond parents are of an only son. That does not express all. He must add something—“His well-beloved.” So in Romans viii. 3 it is not dry doctrine, but a question of God’s heart of love. The Spirit reminds us of it, so to speak. Just think of it! And then think of that God who “sent Him,” “spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all;” and then think of that beloved Son “made . . . sin for us.” When He was on the cross, sin in the flesh was judged and condemned. He alone *could* sustain that awful weight, and not be crushed under it. He did sustain it. He said, “It is finished.” Let us turn to the chapter. “When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.” (John xix. 30.) Those who understand the Greek language, say that the word for “gave up the ghost” means that He gave up the ghost by the action of His own will. He laid down His life, we know. He had “power to lay it down.” (John x. 18.)

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Now, in verse 10 of Romans vi., "He died unto sin once." The death of the Lord Jesus was the death of One who had undergone the judgment of God against sin, and had died to it. He died to sin; has done with it for ever. He is never going to come in contact with it again in that way for all eternity.

The illustration given in verse 16 of Roman vi. will help us to understand the application of this to us. It speaks of sin being a master, and we its slaves. However tyrannical a master may be, a *slave* cannot get rid of him by giving notice to leave, like our servants can. However hard a master he may have, he is bound to him for life. But the time comes when that slave reaches a death-bed, and now he slips out of his master's grasp, out of that state and condition in which he was a slave; he dies *to* his master.

"In that He died, He died *unto* sin *once*." *He* has done with it for ever. But have you ever seen that *you* are as clear as He is in God's sight? You do not question for a moment whether He is clear of it, but you do question whether you are free of it. "If I am dead to sin, why should I feel this working of sin in me?" Many think that verse 11 means, "Carry this truth into practice;" but it is rather that faith accepts what is true of me in God's sight, faith believes what God says; and thus we can reckon ourselves to be dead unto sin, because in God's sight we are so.

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What foolishness it would be for me to say to you, "Reckon yourself to be the Emperor of Russia." Why? Because it is not true of you. But in God's sight we have as much died to sin as that blessed One has, and thus God can say to us, "You may reckon yourselves to be dead unto sin."

I purposely did not quote just now the latter part of verse 10—"In that He liveth, He liveth unto God"—because I wish to look at it separately in connection with verse 11. When John was in the isle of Patmos, and saw One like unto the Son of man, he bowed at His feet. And He laid His right hand upon him. How should you feel to have the right hand of that living, glorified Christ laid upon you? He said to John, "Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the Living One; and I became dead [that is the correct wording of it], and, behold, I am alive for evermore." He is the living One. "In that He liveth, He liveth *unto God*." It is not simply that He is alive. I cannot explain it, but I suppose that Christ, as alive from the dead, need never be occupied with sin again, or come in contact with it as the sin-bearer. He is free from death, judgment, and sin for ever.

Now comes our side of it. You may count that you live to God in the same way. Have you ever done that? It is just as much an exhortation to reckon ourselves to be alive unto God, as to

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reckon ourselves to be dead to sin. And in God's sight, as in Christ, we are as much delivered from sin as we shall actually be delivered from it when we shall be in glory. We have nothing about practice in this verse. It is faith believes what God says about me. God says, "I have given Christ. He has died to sin; so have you. He is alive to God; so are you." As to a matter of fact, for a time, just for a little while, sin is in you still, but it is not for long.

Verse 12, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body." Now, as I said before, that verse proves, first, that sin is there; but it says also that you need not obey it. Do not pay any attention to what it says, you need not obey it. See what a power that gives us—that we have done with it as much as Christ has. I have only got it in me for a short time while I am in this body, but I have not to obey it any more than the slave of whom I have spoken, if he were to be raised, would have to obey his old master. "No," he could say, "I have died out of your hands, and am beyond your control." The old master has no power to tell you to do anything. I can say, "I shall not pay any more attention to what he says now, he has no right over me."

There is one more thing. Not only do not obey him, but do not let sin, that old master, have the members of your body as instruments

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to use. You used to use them in the service of sin; but now they are no longer to be used in the service of sin; they are to be used as instruments of righteousness unto God. The eyes, feet, hands, and the tongue—these are the members of our body. Ah! the tongue. You remember what we read in James iii. 5 about the tongue: “Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things.” And verse 6 too. Oh, how solemn! This is one of the members we are not to let sin have. So in verse 2, “In many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.” I picked out this verse because the Spirit of God says, that if you will not let sin have your tongue, you will be able to govern or bridle your whole body. How much the tongue can do! We often say things we are sorry for after. What mischief the tongue can cause! Yield not your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God. Sin may come in, and try to usurp a claim over them, but do not let it.

I would just refer to one more verse in the end of the chapter (v. 21), “What fruit had ye *then* in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?” But in verse 22, “*Now*”—what have you got now that ye are “become servants to God”? “Your fruit unto holiness, and *the end*” (there’s the end,

you see)—“the end everlasting life.” Instead of death, the wages of sin, when that bright and blessed end comes, for us it is “everlasting life.” Then we shall not only be delivered from the *power* of sin, but from its presence too, and be holy and without blame before God in love.

But God looks at every believer as in Christ, as much delivered from sin now as we shall be in glory.

God grant that we may not give our members any more to the service of sin, but to His service who has done so much for us. Amen.

PEREZ-UZZA AND BAAL-PERAZIM.

THE incidents in David's history connected with these names, and recorded in 1 Chron. xiii., xiv., contain certain principles as to the ways of God with His people while going through the world, which we need to learn for our own profit.

I desire to express briefly some thoughts suggested by these incidents, recorded by the Spirit of God “for our learning.” (Rom. xv. 4.)

The truths to be learnt from these two names—Perez-Uzza (the breach of Uzza), and Baal-Perazim (the place of breaches)—though different in their character, are yet closely connected. Both give

us certain divine principles which are of abiding importance, inasmuch as they are connected with and spring from the nature and character of God Himself, which cannot change. In this sense "Israel's God is ours," and David's God is ours also—revealed now as He could not be then, but still these very principles abide in all their force and importance for us.

Two important principles, then, find a striking illustration in these two chapters, and are also expressed in the New Testament, very briefly but very emphatically. The first is: "He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself." (2 Tim. ii. 13.) He must be true to His own character, and maintain His own word and authority, though we may forget and prove unfaithful. The other principle is: "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." (Heb. xiii. 5, 6.)

Blessed it is for the soul when these two principles are understood. We find them set forth and enforced over and over again in the word of God.

How strikingly, for instance, they come before us in the history of Jacob, to whom similar words to those quoted in Hebrews xiii. were addressed, and how emphatically these lessons were pressed upon him. He must reap the bitter fruit of forgetting the true character of God and what was

due to Him, and of taking his own way as to divine things (for the blessing he sought was of God), yet he was made with equal force to feel the tender mercy and compassion of God, and to learn that He is for His people, and that His own arm will undertake for them against all enemies.

The practical effect of laying hold of these two principles or truths is beautifully expressed in the Epistle to the Philippians. Thus in chapter ii., the apostle says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. *For it is God* which worketh in you," etc. And in chapter i., "In nothing terrified by your adversaries."

We are here for God, and therefore we must pass the time of our sojourning here in fear; but God is here for us, and therefore we may say, "I will not fear what man shall do unto me." See also Luke xii. 4, and following verses.

God's work must be done in God's way. He gives the guidance and the power for this; so that there is no excuse for adopting ways and methods of our own. These may appear more suitable, and be deemed more expedient, or more in keeping with the mind and thoughts of man; but God cannot deny Himself. He is the best judge of what is suitable for His own glory, and if in grace He connects us in any way with Himself and His glory, we must learn to distrust ourselves; not only having our hearts set upon

doing the right thing, but also our minds and thoughts instructed in the divine way of doing the same.

The word of God was plain for David, if only he had considered it, and sought its guidance; but he disregarded it; he leaned on his own understanding, and had to reap the humbling and sorrowful consequences. The brightness was turned into darkness, and the joy into mourning.

The natural mind and the foolish pride in us may rebel against and resent this solemn interference on the part of God, for such is the tendency of our hearts; but the lessons have to be learned, our wills must be broken, and our hearts trained in meekness.

But God is a blessed and patient teacher. He waited in this case; not only so, but He gives David to know that He is for him. The goodness of God leads him to repentance, and David's spirit is chastened and subdued. He owns at length that God's way is right. He can truly say, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept Thy word."

Not only so, but there is gain and profit to us in God's chastening, where we are exercised by it. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Thy statutes." And again "Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of Thy law."

We must not despise the chastening of the Lord,

as though there were no need for it; nor faint under it, as though He were against us; but, knowing that perfect wisdom and perfect love are combined in it, we may humble ourselves, and seek to profit by it all. "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies."

But though David is thus dealt with, and with him others, who likewise erred, yet God was for him, and his enemies must learn this.

David is thus won, and his heart recalled to dwell upon the goodness of God.

But here another lesson is also impressed upon his soul. David triumphs over the enemy; but, like Paul, he must learn to say, "Yet not I, but the grace of God."

It is beautiful to see the way in which David refers to and seeks counsel of God in all this. Confidence in and dependence upon the Lord shine out here in his conduct, and God honours and answers these. As has been said by another, "Faith honours God, and God honours faith."

David is made to feel that each fresh step needed to be taken by divine guidance. The guidance for one day's work and victory will not do for the next. This casts us constantly upon God; our confidence in Him is encouraged, but not the self-confidence which would go on without Him.

David must wait until the Lord goes forth before him to battle, and this is the secret of

victory. How ready we are to go before God, hindering Him and bringing discomfiture on ourselves.

All this was training David's heart in the lessons which we have before alluded to—that God's work must be done in God's way; and David learnt this lesson. (See chapter xv. 2, 11–13.)

He owns the wrong and mistake as on his side; he vindicates God against himself; he humbles himself, and gets exalted.

What warning, and yet encouragement, for us in all this; and how necessary that we should lay to heart these things which a gracious God has given for our learning, in a time when men "have sought out many inventions" in things pertaining to God.

Is there not indeed, even amongst those who have professedly given up the way of human expediency in divine things, a practical going back to it again, in a marked and increasing degree; or, at least (what is perhaps worse), the adoption of these things again in the very place and in connection with what we hold to be a witness against the ways and plans of man in the things of God?

Surely we need to beware of what outwardly attracts, of what makes a display before men, and tends to exalt self. God exalts the lowly, and goes on with such. How beautifully the Spirit of God turns our eyes and thoughts in all

this to the perfect Servant: "Behold My servant, whom I have chosen; My Beloved, in whom My soul is well pleased. . . . He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory." (Matt. xii. 18-20.)

In Him we behold perfect obedience and perfect dependence in everything; and in the scripture just quoted, the Spirit of God calls us to contemplate Him, while expressing at the same time God's perfect satisfaction and delight in Him; and it is indeed only as we learn from Him, and drink into His spirit, that these blessed ways, which are so pleasing to the Father, shine out in our lives.

S. M. A.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

T. B.—The prayer which the Lord Jesus taught His disciples, and which is commonly called *the Lord's Prayer*, is, we need not say, divinely perfect in all its parts. In the fewness of its words it stands in striking contrast to the prayers of the heathen who, as our Lord tells us, thought they would be heard for their much speaking, while in simplicity and breadth its beauty is beyond compare. It expresses, as another has said, "daily dependence, the need of pardon, the need of being kept from the power of the enemy, the desire of not being sifted by him, as a dispensation of God, like Job or Peter, and of being preserved from

evil," together with the wish that perfect obedience to the Father's will should be known on earth as in heaven, and that His kingdom should come. But whether the Lord intended it to be used as a form is another matter. For our part we think not, and our reasons are briefly these: (1) That in the two places where it occurs (Matthew vi., Luke xi.) the words are not identical. (See Revised Version.) (2) That it was exactly suited to the position of the disciples when our Lord was upon earth, but with His rejection, death, resurrection, ascension, and, we must add, the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, their position changed, and hopes connected with heaven and heavenly relationships took the place of what had been known before. (3) That the prayer is not in the name of the Lord Jesus. It is the Christian's privilege now to use that name, to connect it with his prayers to the Father, to ask in His name, and when this is done rightly and intelligently it gives weight to prayer which otherwise it would not possess. But though we speak thus we fully believe that many of the principles of that beautiful and perfect prayer always abide, and will find an echo in every believer's heart.

With respect to the manna about which you enquire, there can be no doubt that it was a *miraculous* provision for God's people during their forty years' pilgrimage in the wilderness, and not a mere product of nature. When it first fell they knew not what it was, for the like had not been seen on earth before. On the Sabbath none fell, and when they got the old corn of Canaan the manna suddenly ceased. All this

shows the mighty hand of God in thus providing for the support of the thousands of Israel as they journeyed from Egypt to the land of promise.

H. W., BRISTOL.—You will find an answer to your question in 1 Corinthians xii., xiv., and we hope, if God permit, to insert shortly a series of letters or papers on that and kindred subjects. Meanwhile a small pamphlet entitled, "*Have you received the Holy Ghost?*" may help you. It may be obtained at the office of this magazine, either direct or through any bookseller, or you may get it at the book depôt of W. Fryer, 7, Byron Place, Park Street, Bristol.

CROYDON.—Daniel ix. 27 ; Matthew xxiv. 15. As far as we are aware Scripture does not enable any to say with certainty how long it will be after the rapture of the saints, before the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, is set up in the holy place. It is clear that it will be in the middle of the last week of years, but the difficulty lies in determining at what point the week begins. A covenant is made for one week with the "many," but it is evident that before the covenant is made he who makes it acquires a position and great influence. It seems to us that the point is left in obscurity for wise purposes not hard to understand. But when the desolating idol should be seen standing in the holy place it was an emphatic sign for the Jews to flee, for then would begin the "time of trouble" such as no nation had ever known. Others may, and probably have, more light on the subject, but what has been said is as far as we feel free to go.

ERRATUM.—Page 281, line 7, instead of "wholly of gold," read, "wholly overlaid with gold."