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The Gospel Messenger.

THE THIEF'S CONVERSION; OR, "WHITHER SHALL I FLEE?"



ATE one night two men, muffled up to the eyes to prevent recognition by the police, were to be seen knocking up the schoolmaster who lived in the rooms attached to a gaol in the East End of London, in the Whitechapel district.

"Will you come, sir, and see a dying man? He gave us no rest till we came to fetch you."

It was a request to be thought over. To dive into the lanes, and alleys, and courts of such a district needed a heart filled with the love of Christ, and care for the souls of the perishing. After a little conversation, and hasty prayer, the Christian man announced his readiness to accompany the callers.

Before long he knew not where he was, but had to trust to his rough-looking guides. By-and-bye they came to the miserable house in which lay the dying man.

Through a thieves' kitchen went the three. Up the rickety stairs they toiled, till at last they reached the garret. When the visitor's eyes grew

accustomed to the dinginess of the room, he discovered a man lying in a corner on a heap of straw.

Evidently he had led a hard life. Sin had left its mark on his features. He was far gone in disease, and it was not difficult for even a novice to discern that his minutes were numbered.

"Tell me, oh, tell me, where it is written, 'Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?'" were the eager, earnest words, which fell upon the ears of the servant of Christ.

Little did he expect such a question, and quickly inquired of the dying man how he came to send for *him* so urgently, and why he asked the question.

It then came out that some months previously, on a Sunday evening, he had been discovered by the police attempting robbery, and they gave chase to him. There was some little distance between them, and as he ran along he came up to a mission hall, with which our friend was connected. Quick as lightning the thought passed through his mind, "If I could slip in there unseen by the police, they would never suspect me of such a dodge." The thought led to action. The police followed hard on his track, only to suddenly find their man had mysteriously disappeared.

He sat down in the mission hall. The opening hymns and prayer were over. The preacher had just announced his text, and his audience were

waiting expectantly for his opening remarks. He began by repeating his text, and these words—so divinely fitted for the occasion and to the listener—broke upon the ears of the startled runaway thief, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" (Psa. cxxxix. 7.)

Not a word of the sermon did he remember, but this verse of God's Word worked its way into his conscience. Throw off the impression he could not. Months and months of sin could not obliterate the impression made. He might elude the vigilance of the police, but not the omniscient eye of God. He might escape an earthly tribunal, but not the great white throne and the Judge of all the earth.

And now he was dying. Meet God he must. His wasted life lay behind him, eternity before him. Can you wonder, then, at the earnest message sent to the Christian schoolmaster to come and see him? And how gladly did he turn to the Word of God, and read in the ears of the dying man, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me" (Psa. cxxxix. 7-10).

What beautiful words, yet how inexpressibly solemn to the sinner with the shades of an endless night gathering round him,—unprepared to pass

from time into eternity—from the company of his fellows into the presence of his God!

My dear reader, have *you* ever faced the truth as to this? Face it you must, sooner or later. There is no conceivable, possible escape. You may hide the secrets of your sins in your own breast—in the recesses of your heart, but they must all come out. You must be unmasked one day. This poor degraded man heard the Word of God once, and it led to his conversion. *You* have again and again heard it, till you are almost Gospel-hardened. *He* was a poor Tyre-and-Sidon sort of a sinner, and repented in sackcloth and ashes. *You*, perhaps, are a very Capernaum sinner, weighted with privilege,—exalted to the very gates of heaven. You can hear its very songs, and listen to the Saviour's voice inviting you to trust Him.

Take care. This poor sinner will rise against you in the day of judgment, if you repent not. The more your opportunities, the greater your privilege, the graver your guilt, the sorer your punishment; "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

Let me then, urgently and lovingly, beseech you to face the matter now. To delay, is to imperil your soul. To attend to it now, is supremest wisdom.

The reading of the words which had been engraven on the tablets of his memory, deepened afresh the work of the Spirit of God in the dying man's conscience.

How delightful the task was to tell out the story of God's love, of Christ's work ! How eagerly the dying man drank in the message, probably never before spoken in his ear, but if so, long long ago in his childhood days !

With him it was—

“Tell me the story simply,
As to a little child ;
For I am weak and weary,
And helpless and defiled.
Tell me the story slowly,
That I may take it in—
That wonderful redemption—
God's remedy for sin.”

And oh ! how he listened, this wide-awake soul, as the thought of a lifetime of sin, of having to meet God, of the boundless eternity before him, of judgment to come, and the lake of fire—all crowded in upon his startled spirit !

The well-known parable of the prodigal son was explained to him, tenderly and patiently. The dying thief saw its import. He too had wandered into the far country. He too had spent his living with harlots. With him too there was a mighty famine in the land—nothing to satisfy the awful soul-hunger that possessed him. He would arise, and go to God. He would confess his sins, and throw himself upon His mercy, pleading alone the precious blood of Jesus.

This he did, then and there. He came to his Father, just he was.

Was he welcomed ? Oh ! yes. Heaven rejoiced over that scene in that dingy garret in the East

End of London. One more brand was plucked from the burning,—one more trophy of redeeming grace! What a Saviour! Did He not Himself say, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out"? (John vi. 37.) He did, and the convicted thief found His words to be true.

The dying man had found out what St Augustine found out long ago—if memory serves me aright—that the way to escape from God is to flee to God. Just as the Psalmist, who found it impossible to escape from God, said, "In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and *my refuge, is in God*" (Psa. lxii. 7).

I daresay, like another dying thief plucked from the very gates of hell, he rejoiced over those words, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43).

When the schoolmaster turned to go, he found that several of the abandoned occupants of that den of iniquity had crept noiselessly into the room, and were listening eagerly to the Word of God—some moved to tears. His guides again led him through the labyrinth of courts and streets, and then they parted, never to see or hear of each other again.

Years have rolled by. The servant of Christ is now absent from the body, present with the Lord—enjoying his rest in the presence of Jesus.

But what of you, dear reader? When a few more years shall have passed, both writer and reader will be in eternity—it may be only weeks.

Let me ask you, solemnly and earnestly, as we

stand in thought by the deathbed of this poor branded thief, and as we see our own boundless eternity looming in the near future, WHERE WILL YOU SPEND IT?

It must be either in heaven or hell—with Christ or the devil—with the redeemed or the damned—in bliss or in anguish. Which? Very soon the question will be irrevocably settled. Seize now your golden opportunity.

Christ has died. Amid the brooding darkness of Calvary all God's waves and billows of judgment on sin passed over His holy spirit. Listen, as on the cross He cried those three blessed words, "*It is finished*,"—words never to be uttered by the hopelessly despairing lost in hell—their punishment is eternal!

If Christ had not borne the judgment, exhausted the wrath, atoned for sin, and uttered these words, bespeaking a finished salvation, heaven's gates could never have been opened wide for us. They stand wide open. Whoever will, may come. The vilest may enter. *Will you?*

Ponder every word of this verse, till you find somewhat of its deep meaning, and reap its wondrous blessing: "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). Then, instead of wishing to flee from His presence, you will find there your *home* for time and for eternity.

A. J. P.

TWELVE MILLIONS STERLING.



HERE died, towards the end of 1892, the celebrated American "Railway King," Jay Gould by name.

He had amassed, in the space of some thirty-six years, the immense sum of sixty million dollars, or twelve million pounds, and then died at the comparatively early age of fifty-seven.

In order to accumulate such a pile of wealth he had to resort to practices which could hardly be regarded as fair dealing, and is reported to have affirmed that, to enrich himself, he had ruined thousands.

That, however, was a small matter with him. He was born, as he falsely said, to make money; and it was no consequence who suffered so long as he succeeded.

But he died! There is no discharge in that war. Had money been able to purchase Jay Gould's escape, then it would have been given most lavishly. Could thousands or millions have cleared him of the claims of this inexorable creditor, then they would have been handed freely over.

But no! Death will not be bribed or bought over, its claims must be met. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Neither wealth, nor strength, nor youth, nor rank is of any avail in presence of the universal leveller.

None are excepted, none are passed over, none are spared. The strength of a Samson, or the wealth of a Gould, is equally powerless here. The most iron frame, or the most impregnable fortress, falls alike before this mighty foe.

“There is a reaper whose name is Death,
Who with his sickle keen,
Reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.”

Like the mills of God, he “grinds slow but sure.” His approach may be tardy, but it is none the less steady.

Are *you* prepared for that sure approach, my reader? If not, before you read another line come by faith to Christ. He is the life of His people. He died for them—bore their judgment, and lives for them on high. Trust His precious blood alone.

Well, this rich man died after saving, on an average, some three hundred thousand pounds yearly. All that was carefully hoarded up and stored away.

And for what? The man had to leave it all, nor carry a fraction with him.

But, perchance, he was applauded for his success? Nay, he said that he was universally hated (no wonder), and that he reciprocated the feeling! Oh! but he paid dearly for his stores.

But, again, if he had rendered others unhappy, he was, no doubt, happy himself. Possessed of such boundless supplies, he could banish care and

anxiety. The ends would always meet with plenty over. He must have been content and happy.

Listen to his words: "I suppose that I am the most miserable devil in the whole world!"

What a confession! Hear it on all hands. Let it be announced far and wide in this money-loving, self-seeking age.

Time was when other pursuits commanded the soul of man. Now, the one absorbing, and, perhaps, the most debasing passion that can reign in the heart—that of the love of money—is the god of the day.

And one of its chief votaries declares himself the most miserable devil in the whole world!

Again I say, what a confession! What a fearful but true admission!

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Mark viii. 36.) Or if he gain twelve millions sterling, "what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" That is a fair question at such a moment.

Did you ever read the story of "The Man with the Muck Rake," as told in John Bunyan's plain but telling language? It is worth perusal.

By way of contrast with the experience of Jay Gould, I will give that of the apostle Paul. He writes in Philippians iv. 11, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am to be content." Blessed estate! And in 1 Timothy vi. 9, he writes, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which

"I HAVE FELT THE EMBRACE OF HIS LOVE." 11

drown men in destruction and perdition, for the love of money is the root of all evil." Of all bad and mischievous loves that of money is the worst.

One brighter contrast still, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. viii. 9). Here is One who instead of ruining thousands that He might be rich, did the very opposite. He became infinitely poor (see Psa. xxii.), that others might enjoy eternal glory.

"Rich in glory Thou didst stoop,
Thence is all Thy people's hope ;
Thou wast poor that we might be
Rich in glory, Lord, with Thee.

When we think of love like this,
Joy and shame our hearts possess :
Joy that Thou couldst pity thus,
Shame for such returns from us."

J. W. S.

"I HAVE FELT THE EMBRACE OF HIS LOVE."



SHOULD like to tell you of a dear girl
I had lately the pleasure of seeing for
some time before her death.

I had been asked by her cousin to see
her, but having forgotten her address,
could not go until a letter came saying
that she had got rapidly worse. I then went at

once, feeling there was no time to be lost, though not being at all sure of the reception I should get from her friends, as I had heard they were very worldly.

When I introduced myself to her mother, I was met with unexpected cordiality, and she brought me at once to her daughter's little room.

I was greatly struck with the appearance of the girl. She was about twenty years of age, though looking even younger, and very lovely. The dark masses of her soft wavy hair rested on her white forehead, while the hectic flush in her cheeks, and the intense brightness of her lovely dark eyes, as she turned to welcome me, told me all too plainly that this was a beauty which was soon to fade away. Then what about her precious soul? I sat down to speak to her of Christ, and of His great salvation, but how real was my joy to find that He had been before me, and had revealed Himself to her already. About a month before, the doctor had said that her case was hopeless, and that she could not recover. Then the thought forced itself on her that she was a sinner, and must meet God. She knew she was not ready, and anxiety, terror, and sorrow filled her soul.

One day her mother and aunt were sitting beside her, vainly trying to soothe her; and at last had to leave her alone in her distress. "When I was left alone," she told me, "I turned on my side, and cried in great agony and distress, 'Oh that I could see Christ!' Hardly had the cry been

uttered, when the end of the room was lit up with such a wondrously bright light, and there, in the middle of the light, I saw Christ, with an angel on each side of Him. I saw *Him* standing there," she repeated, pointing to the very spot in the room where she had seen her blessed Lord and Saviour for the first time. "I took my eyes off Him for a moment, and when I looked again He was gone; but OH, I WAS SO HAPPY! I called up mother to tell her that I had seen Christ, and was so happy."

My heart rejoiced to hear all this, for I did not doubt that the Lord had revealed Himself to her, in this wonderfully gracious way, even as He did of old to Saul of Tarsus. A long time we talked together, and she listened gladly to all I told her, as I sought to fortify her against any attack of the enemy, by getting her feet firmly fixed upon the solid rock of God's Word, pointing out to her that whatever change she might find in herself, her eternal safety depended not on anything in herself, whether good or bad, but on the faithfulness of God's Word, and on the perfection of Christ's work.

There was much to bind her to earth, for she was engaged to be married to one who was perfectly devoted to her, and all through her illness it was his greatest delight to bring her anything that could be of use to her, or give her any pleasure. When first I saw her, she told me that whenever she rallied the world and its prospects filled her mind; but before the end came all that was gone, and on her bed of weakness she lay a very real

witness of the power of Christ to fill with joy and peace any one whose eyes are fixed on Him, no matter how strong the links may be which bind to earth.

I cannot recall the particulars of all my visits, but I remember one day when I sat beside her as usual, she told me that she had lain awake all night, and had been very unhappy, thinking that she had not repented enough, and that her faith was not strong enough. A sense of distance between her soul and Christ had come in, and she was miserable.

"It seemed to me," she said, "as if I stood on one side of a deep dark river, and the Lord Jesus was on the other, and the river flowed between us, and I could not get across to Him. At last I said to Him, 'Lord, I am very weak, and very weary, and I cannot get across to You, and You surely won't let a poor sinner that is clinging to you perish.' Immediately I was folded to His bosom." Oh, what heavenly peace and love beamed from her countenance as she said this! and what joy it was to speak with her of that Blessed One, who is so willing to meet the weakest and most needy, in every possible circumstance of need, and to make that need but the means of bringing His own within the circle of His blessing. When leaving her that day, I said, "You are happy now, I trust." She calmly replied, "I have felt the embrace of His love."

Some time before she died she asked her mother

to take everything out of her room. Seeing her hesitate to do it, she said, "You need not be afraid, mother, for Jesus is with me, and I have neither pain nor ache; all are gone, and I have no fears; you need not grieve for me. It used to be as if I had a very rough lane to walk, and Jesus was at the end of it. My feet were very much hurt, so I said to Him, 'Jesus, I am very tired, and my feet are very tender, I cannot get on a step without You;' and at once He was at my side, and He is with me now." Her mother asked her if she were given the choice of recovery, and of having all her bright earthly prospects realised, or dying, which she would choose. She gently answered, "Mother, since you took everything belonging to me out of my room, I feel so happy,"—meaning that when everything which reminded her of earth was taken from out of her sight, the question of earth's portion was closed for her for ever.

Many times before she went away to be with Christ, she said to her mother and sisters, "The Lord is with me; I see Him as really and as plainly as I see any of you standing at my bedside." And once more repeating, "*Jesus is with me; He is with me now,*" she closed her eyes, and gently slept away, going to be "for ever with the Lord."

After she was gone her mother said to me, "I can hardly realise that a child of mine—one whom I have carried in my arms and nursed in my bosom—has gone to heaven, as I have seen her go."

How infinite the grace that was manifested to

dear M——, and how tenderly she was put to sleep by Him who purchased all that peace and happiness for her at such an infinite cost to Himself! Surely we can enter in a very little measure into His joy who had sought His sheep, and found her, and borne her home rejoicing!

And now, reader, what remains to be added to this lovely story of the condescending grace of the blessed Lord Jesus, but just this question, Do *you* know Him for your own soul's joy and comfort? To you it may not be given to see visions, and to dream dreams about Him; but if you will but come to Him, to you it will surely be given to feel "the embrace of His love." His word to you is, and it is His own voice which gives the invitation, "Come unto me, *all* ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28).

R. S.

"ALL THINGS"; OR, DETECTION, JUSTIFICATION, AND SATISFACTION.



"**A**LL things that ever I did," said the woman of Sychar, as she passed into the city after meeting with Jesus. "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did" (John iv. 29).

It was a memorable day to her. She had gone to the well to draw her water, and found sitting upon it a wearied stranger, whom she

recognised as a Jew. Contrary to the habits of Jews, He bade her give Him to drink, which took her greatly by surprise. Her interest deepened as He continued to speak with her; she was spell-bound, listening to His voice, although she did not understand the things of which He spoke. Then with a word He touched the springs of her moral being, and reached her conscience. "Go," said He, "call thy husband, and come hither." "I have no husband," she replied, seeking to disguise the truth. "Thou hast well said, I have no husband, for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband; in that saidst thou truly."

It was but a sentence, and yet, as in a vast and perfect panorama, her whole guilty life stood before her soul! There were terrible sins, which stood out as mountain peaks; while what seemed lesser sins, were, like the valleys, comparatively unseen; yet now *all* was discovered. There were sins which had been before the face of all, public, and well known; and there were sins which had been in secret, known, it may be, to none; yet, now *all* was known to Him whose eye was upon her. As in the very presence of God, she retraced the path she had trodden through life, and found nothing but sin and shame, and deepest misery. "Sir," she exclaimed, "I perceive that thou art a prophet." None but God could so have called the past to view, and she was conscious that the wearied stranger was a Man of God. It was a solemn moment to her.

Yet her heart was attracted to Him. While she was conscious of an eye being upon her which read the very depths of her being, there was also a heart of perfect tenderness expressed in His words of grace to her, and this caused her own heart to expand before Him. Oh, how exquisite are the ways of divine goodness! Sin fully detected, all the guilty past fully exposed, not a sin lost sight of, its full blackness known; yet the heart is drawn to trust in Him who has made the exposure, in the sense of His unbounded grace!

Dear reader, have you been thus alone with Jesus? Can you say of Him, He told me all things that ever I did? We must hear the solemn story from His lips, either now, or by-and-bye. Oh, how tenderly would He tell it now, in the time of grace! But if refused, He who is ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead, will judge each out of those things which are written in the books, according to his works. He tells the story *now*, that He may move to repentance and bring in His own salvation. The sad unfolding of the story *then*, will be to show the righteousness of the sentence which banishes for ever to the lake of fire (Rev. xx. 11-15).

We have seen how *all things* are *exposed* in His presence; now let us see how the loved sinner is *cleared* from the sins which are so hateful to God.

The apostle Paul stood up in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia. He had been invited to speak,

if he had any word of exhortation for the people. Of what did he speak? Of this same Jesus. He spoke of Him as raised up among the people, God's promised Saviour. It was as such that the woman of Samaria saw Him and owned Him. But more, speaking of the people, he says, "Though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain." He thus speaks of *the death* of Jesus, for which the people begged. Yet further, "But God raised him from the dead." It is A RISEN SAVIOUR whom he preaches to them. Now let us hearken to his words concerning this Saviour, who died, and is risen again.

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

"JUSTIFIED FROM ALL THINGS." That is, perfectly cleared from the guilt of every sin, so that no charge can be brought; declared righteous, according to the just judgment of God. The law of Moses could never justify the ungodly,—it could only condemn; but the Gospel declares that God now justifies the ungodly. But how can this be? Is it through works of righteousness which we have done? Never. It is through this "man," the Lord Jesus Christ, whom Paul preached as having died and risen again.

In that deeply solemn hour of His death, "He

was delivered for our offences" (Rom. iv. 25), and bore the judgment due to them.

"Oh, what a load was His to bear,
Alone in that dark hour;
Our sins in all their terror there,
God's wrath, and Satan's power!"

But His is a finished work. He is now for ever beyond the power of death and of judgment, alive in the glory of God. "He was raised again for our justification," that we might have the joy of knowing that we are as clear from guilt and its judgment as is He who died for us. Beloved reader, have you understood this? Have you looked by faith upon the cross of Calvary, and known the precious Saviour as suffering for your own sins? And have you looked into that glory of God where He sits, and said, He who died for me has so perfectly glorified God about my sins that He sits there perfectly clear, and I must be as clear from guilt and its judgment as He is!

But some will ask, *Who* are so cleared? Thank God, the scripture is most plain, **ALL THAT BELIEVE**. The blessing is not assured to the worker, nor the striver, nor the doer of his best (though may God forbid that we should act or think carelessly in these matters!), but it is assured to the believer on the Lord Jesus Christ, however feeble or poor. Do you say, What is it to believe? Take for an example the little child nestling in its mother's arms, turning from all beside to rest in her loving embrace with perfect confidence. Do you so rest

with childlike trust in this precious Saviour, turning away from all beside?

But is *all* the guilt of such gone? All! God's Word declares it. "All things" are exposed in the light of God's presence; but the believer is "justified from all things," through His Saviour who died for him and rose again. We may conclude, then, in the words of Holy Scripture, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1).

How precious is the grace that thus perfectly clears the sinner whose sins have been detected in the light of God's presence! But can the love of God content itself in merely justifying the sinner? Indeed it cannot! Nothing can content it but placing the one who has been cleared in the same glory with Christ, in perfect conformity to the image of God's Son. Already God has wrought us for this self-same thing, and has given to us the earnest of the Spirit. There is a new creation, in which "old things are passed away; behold, *all things* are become new. And *all things* are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. v. 5, 17, 18).

In hope we look forward to the blessed moment when every trace of sin's sad story shall be removed, and all that is of the flesh be done away; when only that which is of God shall remain for ever. Faith anticipates that bright day; and even now, by the power of the Spirit, finds its present

home where Jesus is, gazes upon the unseen and eternal things which are of God, and the soul delights itself in a region of infinite and endless satisfaction.

Beloved reader, if you have experienced the *detection* of the light of the presence of God, may you know the free *justification* of His grace. And if this be known by your soul, may you also realise by faith that you have part now with Christ where He is, in all the range of things eternal and divine, The perfect *satisfaction* of the soul that knows His love is thereby assured.

J. R.

"YOU MUST COME DOWN."



YOUNG woman lay dying of consumption. Two district visitors had constantly called to see her and supply her need, but they had never spoken to her about her soul once. God had, however, convinced her of her need, and

opened her heart to accept the full salvation which He has provided through the finished work of Christ, and He had, moreover, given her full assurance of the same through His written Word.

As her visitors had never spoken to her of these things, she determined to speak to them, and, as she felt her end was very near, to testify of God's goodness to her. On their next visit, therefore, she

opened the subject, and spoke very plainly to them. They were not very long, however, before they let her know that they considered it very presumptuous on her part to teach them, and that it was her place to listen to what they might say. The dying person listened respectfully to what they said, and then asked them to be good enough to call her mother, who was downstairs. On her arrival she said, "Mother, I want you to take me out of bed and put me on the floor."

"My dear," her mother replied, "I cannot do that, you would catch cold." (There was no carpet on the floor, they were so poor.) "Let me put the bolster and pillows on the floor, and lay you on them."

"Mother," she said, "I want you to lay me on the bare boards."

Her mother, thinking her mind was going, answered, "I cannot do that; let me put a blanket on the floor and lay you on it."

"No, mother," the girl again said, "I want you to take me out of bed and lay me on the bare floor."

Seeing her so determined, her mother very unwillingly complied. When she had done so, the dying girl looked up from the floor into the faces of the district visitors, and said, "*You must come DOWN.* You will never be saved until you do."

They left, never to return; and three days after the young woman's soul took its happy departure to be with the Lord.

Yes, my reader, how true it is, if you are "going

about to establish your own righteousness, and have not submitted yourself to the righteousness of God," though you may "have a zeal of God" (Rom. x. 2, 3), "*you must come down.*" And you had better do it quickly, too, for Christ is coming quickly (Rev. xxii. 7, 12; 20), and then the day of salvation will close.

As the Lord said to Zacchæus, so say I to you, "Make haste, and come down." There is no time to waste. Delay is dangerous. It is not a train you have to catch,—you would make haste to do that. It is not to make your fortune,—thousands make haste to be rich. It is something of infinitely greater importance. It is your precious soul that needs to be saved, and it is beyond the whole world in value (Matt. xvi. 26),—and yet, over that you linger and delay!

"*You must come down,*" if you have never *submitted* yourself to God's righteousness. Yes, "*you must come down,*" though you may be a zealous district visitor, a church member, a regular attendant at service, baptized, confirmed, and a communicant. The most religious man that ever lived (Phil. iii. 5, 6) had to "come down"; had to give up his own righteousness, which was of the law, and which he had sought to establish; had to make the humbling discovery that he was the chief of sinners; but, in the very light which showed him that, he learned that Jesus in glory was a Saviour for him. He is the same for you.

Pages for the Young.

MY SINS.

"Hide thy face from *my sins*."—PSA. li. 9.

"O God, my sins are not hid from thee."—PSA. lxix. 5.

"Thou hast cast all *my sins* behind thy back."—ISA. xxviii. 17.



LITTLE boy, five years old, once visited a Christian lady. After tea she showed him some nice pictures, and then played some tunes on the piano, which pleased him very much. By-and-bye she sang a hymn to him, beginning with the

words,—

"I am thinking of my sins,
What wicked things I've done,
How very naughty I have been,
Although I am so young."

The boy then said, "Please, play me something else, for I don't like that." The lady asked, "Why not?" He answered, "Well, it is not very comfortable to think about *my sins*." "Have you got no sins then?" "Oh yes, *lots*." "And what do you do with your sins?" Now mark his reply, "I always try to *forget them* as soon as I can."

How natural, and how common to every unconverted child, to wish to forget, or try to cover up his sins. But God's Word declares that, "He

that covereth his sins shall not prosper," but blessed is he "whose sin is covered" by the Lord. You may try to forget your sins, but that will never do, for every sin is marked by God; and since He is most holy, He must either judge you for them in the lake of fire for ever, or judge them in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. The wicked heart says, "God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see" (Psa. x. 11). When the Holy Spirit works in your heart, one of the first things He does is to bring your sins to your remembrance.

The words first quoted at the top of this paper are the words of a guilty soul crying out in fear, "Hide thy face from my sins." King David had sinned grievously, and though he tried to forget and cover up his sins, at last they had all to come out, and he cried, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight. . . . Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities." God is holy. So holy is He, that when "his only begotten Son" hung upon the cross of Calvary, a sacrifice and a ransom for all, He hid his face from him, of whom He had said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." How terrible must sin be to God! but how lightly we think and speak of it.

Now in Psalm lxxix. 5 there is another cry, "O God, *my sins* are not hid from thee." As long as that is your case you must be lost, for He must punish your sins with death; "for by one man sin came into the world, and death by sin, for

that all have sinned," and "again, the wages of sin is death."

Perhaps you still think it unpleasant to be spoken to about your sins and your soul. If so, it reminds me of what happened in a London tram-car. A friend of mine got into it in company with a blind gentleman. After they were seated, the blind companion, who was one of the Lord's redeemed, took a card out of his coat pocket, and held it so that every one in the car could read it. Only two words were printed in bold letters upon it, "MY SINS." The passengers stared at the blind man, and some must have felt very uncomfortable, for they turned away their heads, and others got out as soon as possible. After showing the card for a time he quietly slipped it into his pocket, and produced another card with these two words, "The Blood." The blind gentleman never uttered a word, but yet he preached in a very solemn way, and I pray that these same four words may speak to you, my dear young friend. These blessed words, "The blood," tells of the only means whereby your sins can be blotted out; and God can justify you "through faith in his blood" (Rom. xii. 25), even "the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter i. 19).

In the third scripture, instead of a wailing because of "my sins," we have a joyful exclamation from a pardoned king. "Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption:

for thou hast cast *all my sins* behind thy back. What a glorious deliverance! May it be yours and yours, now, by simply believing; for God is "the justifier of him which *believeth in Jesus.*" How happy your lot, then, as a forgiven child of God, to whom He can write, "Your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake." And what a joy to confess and live to the Son of God, who loved you and gave Himself for you, that you might for ever be with Him, and like Him. He it was who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me."

T. R. D.



MERELY asking for forgiveness, and the confession of sins, are two different things. Confession means real exercise, and brings with it blessing. The mere asking for forgiveness is often only skin-deep. Confession must be individual. It is the individual who has failed, and he confesses his sin to God as his Father. The man who says he has "*no sin,*" has no truth in him. This should cause some latter-day perfectionists to call a halt, and see the solemn ground they are really on. The man who says he has "not sinned" makes God "a liar" (1 John i. 10), for He asserts that "all have sinned" (Rom. iii. 23), and every Socinian would do well to ponder this statement. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—W. T. P. W.

"GOD SAYS I AM JUSTIFIED."



ERY vividly does the memory recall that striking occurrence which took place at B—— in Surrey, one morning some years ago.

I had been telling a considerable company at the market house, the previous evening, of God's way of salvation for sinners, and was to return to London by the eleven o'clock train in the morning.

At about ten o'clock, a young man, apparently of the artisan class, called at the Christian friend's house where I had spent the night, saying he wanted to see the gentleman who had been preaching the night before. Upon being seated he related to me something of his past history.

He said that for many months he had been in very great soul trouble, and distress about his sins, and had longed for rest and salvation: that he had gone the round of all the churches, chapels, and meeting houses in the town, hoping he might hear something that would give him comfort, but without any result, except to make him feel more miserable, and that latterly he had begun almost to despair.

"But, after the meeting last evening," said he, "I went home so thoroughly wretched that I was unable to sleep a wink the whole night long, and now I have come to you to ask you whether you

can tell me *shortly*, out of the Bible, and so that a plain man can understand it, How may I KNOW that MY sins are forgiven? I have only half-an-hour or so," he added, "before I have to go to my work."

What a joy it was to my heart, to have such a question put to me, by one whose whole soul seemed to long for a solution to it, I cannot adequately convey to my reader.

"Yes," I replied, "I rejoice to be able to give you out of God's Word *exactly* what you are seeking, and I am so glad to find that the Lord has spoken more deeply than ever to your heart. But, before I do so, you must allow me to ask you a few questions."

"Certainly," replied he.

"How do you expect to be saved? may I ask."

"Through Christ alone."

"Do you trust in any measure to your works, your prayers, or to any effort of yours?"

"No," said he, with impressive emphasis.

"Now, tell me, do you believe that God is willing to save you *just as you are, in your sins—and NOW!*?"

"*That* I cannot answer," he replied; "I do not know whether God is willing to save me as I am, or not; but one thing I am sure of, and that is, that if God does not save me as I am, then I'll never be saved at all, for I am a sinner, and I cannot be better."

"I thank God," I exclaimed, "for having shown

you that you are LOST. Now, if I can make plain to you from Scripture that God is willing to save you, *as you are*, will you believe it?"

"Oh yes!" he answered.

I turned to Rom. v. 6, and read, "For when we were yet *without strength*, in due time Christ died for the UNGODLY." "Are you 'still without strength,' and 'ungodly'?" I inquired.

"I am," he said.

"Then you are the sort of sinner Christ died for?" He nodded assent, so I continued. "Read on (ver. 8), 'God commendeth his love toward us, in that, WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS, *Christ died for us.*' Now, do you see that God is willing to save you *as you are*?"

"I do," he replied.

"Yes, God has given His own Son to die for you, He has atoned for sin by His death, and God has raised Him from the grave, and placed Him at His own right hand in glory. I want you now to tell me, Do you believe that God is satisfied with Christ's death as having made a full, complete, and everlasting satisfaction to Him for all your sins? Think well on the question before you answer."

He paused a little, and then said, "I do believe that."

"Well," I remarked, "if God is satisfied with Christ's death as an atonement for your sins, what charge can He have against you?"

"None," said he.

"And if God has no charge against you that Jesus has not disposed of by His atoning sufferings and death, what have you to be afraid of?"

"Nothing," he answered, "but I want to know for myself that *my* sins are forgiven."

"Very well," I said, "we shall now turn to the scripture that answers your question, Acts xiii. 38: 'Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you *the forgiveness of sins.*'" He opened his eyes wider! "Is not '*the forgiveness of sins*' exactly what you want?" I asked, moving closer to him, and putting the opened Testament into his hands.

"*It is,*" said he, looking in evident amazement, as he gazed at the wonderful words of the text before him, and then after a pause added, "But why did they not tell me this before? I never knew of this verse!"

"*That* I cannot explain," replied I, "but at all events *there* it is in black and white in God's Word. 'Be it known unto you . . . that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.' Do you see it all now?" I asked.

"I see," he responded, "that the forgiveness of sins is offered to me, but I am not satisfied yet."

"Oh! what more do you want?"

"I want to understand how I may KNOW that MY SINS ARE FORGIVEN."

"The answer to that you will find in the next verse (39), 'And by him ALL THAT BELIEVE *are* *ustified from all things*, from which ye could not

be justified by the law of Moses.' Do you believe in Christ alone as your Saviour?"

"Yes," was his emphatic answer.

"And that God has accepted the death of Christ as an atonement for all your sins?"

"I do."

"You do really *believe*?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Then God says, through His servant Paul, that you *are* justified from all things. Is He not saying what is true?"

"He *must* be."

"Then *you* are justified from all your sins, for God says, 'ALL that believe are justified,' and you are one of those that DO believe."

The young man's countenance became radiant, his eyes sparkled with gladness, and he exclaimed, "I see it now—I thought I had to FEEL some change first, which was all a mistake. I have only to believe in Jesus, and *God says I am justified. I believe it, and I am saved!*"

What a happy moment that was to me, those who labour for the salvation of souls can best conceive.

"And now," I said, "the half-hour has expired, and you have to be going, and I too have to catch my train for London. Is there anything else you would like to ask?"

"Well," said he, "just one thing more. Might we three" (my host was sitting silently in an arm-chair throughout the conversation) "kneel down and thank God for having saved my soul?"

With delight of heart we immediately knelt down, and poured out our hearts in praise and thanksgiving to God.

Since that day the young man has been known as a consistent and happy Christian; and a few months ago, after an interval of many years, I met him again, and was glad to find him rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ not only as his Saviour, but as the object and desire of his heart and life.

Without doubt it is a glorious thing to be truly converted to God, and saved through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and I may add, that although I have met scores of men and women who are disgusted and disappointed with the world, its pleasures, and its sins, I have never met one person who was sorry for having yielded his or her heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. Reader, has yours been yielded to Him yet?

J. C. T.



THE BISHOP AND THE EMPEROR.



CONSTANTINE the Great, who lived in the fourth century, embraced the Arian heresy, and would not therefore acknowledge the Lord Jesus as a Divine Person.

On one occasion he was waited upon by a deputation of bishops. One of them, an aged man, was very careful to pay due respect to the emperor; but when the Prince

Arcadius was introduced, the bishop treated him with great familiarity, as though he were but an ordinary boy.

Much annoyed at this disrespectful behaviour, Theodosius ordered the attendants to turn the aged man out of the palace.

Noting the emperor's anger, the bishop fearlessly said, "If you are angry because a slight has been put upon your son, even so will the heavenly Father be angry with those who refuse to His Son the honours which they pay to Himself."

This noble reply much affected the emperor, and happily led him to perceive the error of Arianism, and to renounce its profession.

Great is the folly of the man who refuses Christ as a Saviour, and yet hopes for the favour of God. "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him." The Lord Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life : no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

God will have nothing to do with the sinner that will not approach Him in the name of Jesus. "Go to Joseph" was the word long ago. Now God's command is, "Go to Jesus." Every knee must bow to Him. God is determined to exalt His Son, for, when here, man abased Him. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36).

C. H.

TO-DAY, AND TO-MORROW.

"Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."—PROV. xxvii. 1.



TO-MORROW seems always to be man's day; to-day is always God's day. It is astonishing how to-morrow fills the mind of man. What is going to be, what shall come, is ever his thought; but God says, "Boast not thyself of

to-morrow."

I should like you to look out "to-morrow" and "to-day" in the Word of God, and hear what the Holy Ghost has to say about these two words, for I take this verse in Proverbs as the counsel of the Spirit of God to all our souls.

Are you saved yet, my reader? If not, do not defer the salvation of your precious soul until to-morrow. If you have not peace with God, and are not already saved, the Holy Ghost says to you these important words, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow." Where may you be to-morrow? To-morrow is out of your reach; to-morrow you may never see, may never touch. Oh, you who have plans and prospects for to-morrow, think of these words, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow."

What brought these words so vividly to my mind was the sad news that, a year ago, thrilled every heart in this land, when the announcement of the death of Prince Albert Victor caused universal sorrow. The young Prince was in the prime of his

youth and energy, and on the very eve of his marriage, when he was so suddenly cut off by death. Side by side, we learn, there lay piled in the Lord Chamberlain's office the papers for the ordering of the ceremonies connected with his marriage, and the papers for the marshalling of those who should attend him to his grave. Ah! how sadly illustrative of my text, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow." How sadly solemn, too, for all connected with the illustrious youth.

Have you, my reader, plans for to-morrow? Do you say, "To-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant" (Isa. lvi. 12). God says, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow."

Do you know what took place in a town in the middle of England shortly since? Guests were invited to a marriage-feast, and at the appointed day and hour a number of deeply interested, and loving friends were in the bridegroom's house, but what for? To see the bridegroom die at the very moment when they should have been sitting down to his wedding-feast. Ah! to-morrow is not yours, dear unsaved soul. God says, "For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James iv. 14). You would put off till to-morrow the salvation of your precious soul—put off coming to Christ, and tasting of the grace of God. Think of what God says, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow," and avail yourself of the opportunity you have to-day. Say not you will believe the Gospel some time hence.

If you want salvation, have it now ; if you want to know the grace of the Lord, know it now. Do not think of to-morrow, but soberly, seriously, settle down to think of the most solemn thing a man can think of, the salvation of your precious soul. In Heb. iv. 7, the Holy Ghost says, "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." There is the Holy Ghost's counsel to a soul who has been putting decision for Christ off till to-morrow.

It may be the last warning that the Holy Ghost may ever give to you, the last counsel He may give you. Oh ! listen to His counsel to-day, bow down to Jesus, hear His voice. It is always the devil who fills a man's mind with what he will get "to-morrow." The Lord's word is always "to-day"; and when He says, "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart," it means this: Give in ; bow ; let your soul receive simply the tidings of the love of God, and of the blood of His Son ; let Him bless you now.

Let us turn now to two scenes in Luke's gospel. First we shall see a man in all the busy scenes of life's history (Luke xix. 1-10), and then a man on the very brink of eternity, the bustle of life all gone by for him (Luke xxiii. 39-43). Jesus met both. He met Zaccheus, He met the dying robber, and He will meet you.

The Lord had passed by Jericho before, but Zacchæus had missed Him. Has He not passed by you before to-day ? But have you met Him yet ? yea, have you wanted to meet Him ? Amid his

busy life Zacchæus wanted to see Jesus, and of course the devil at once put hindrances in his way; he "could not for the press, because he was little of stature."

If you want to come to Jesus to-day, Satan will have plenty of hindrances to put in your way, and these will test your reality. Zacchæus could not get at Jesus because of the crowd; that was the devil's hindrance for him; and to you perhaps he says that you are too young, and that there is plenty of time yet. Ah! "Boast not thyself of to-morrow!" Or perhaps he says to you that you are too old. Listen not to his lies, for God says, "*To-day*, if ye will hear his voice," and He will save you if only you will trust His Son.

What does Zacchæus do? He is in downright earnest. He does not fold his hands,—like you, procrastinating sinner that you are, just waiting for the thunderbolt that may launch you into a lost eternity! That is not an earnest seeker after salvation who folds his hands, and says, I must wait for something to happen to me. Zacchæus says, I must get rid of the hindrance, so he gets clear of the crowd. What next does he do? He climbs into a sycamore tree, and, hidden from view as he thought, and above the crowd, he sees Jesus. The Lord comes on, and we read, "When Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him." Their eyes meet; "I see Him," says Zacchæus in his heart, "And He sees me."

Now note what Jesus said unto him, "Zacchæus,

make haste, and come down, for TO-DAY I must abide at thy house." Are not those lovely words? And do you think the Saviour is altered now? No, He is the same to-day. He still says, "Come down." Why? Because you have to come down from the point of distance in which you are; you have to come down from your own thoughts, and from your unbelief. The Saviour wants a place in your heart. Will you let Him in to-day? If you really wish to, you will do just what Zacchæus did. "He *made haste*, and came down, and RECEIVED HIM JOYFULLY."

But, you say, will He receive me? How can you ask, when He says, "Make haste, for TO-DAY I must abide at THY house"? And when Jesus was come to his house, He sweetly said, while others were grumbling, "*This day is salvation come to this house.*"

Have you received Him to-day into your heart, my reader? If so, this reassuring word is for you, "This day is salvation come to this house."

Now, is all this too rapid for you? I grant you that it was very sudden. Why, the whole story may have been enacted in five minutes. Zacchæus simply obeyed the voice of Jesus, and then took Him home with him; and if you have received Him into your heart to-day, by faith, you as really and truly take Him home with you. The blessed Lord will be your guest, and, if you will, you may take Him home to your house "THIS DAY."

In the twenty-third chapter of Luke we do not

see a man that was a sinner taking the Lord to his house, but we see the Lord taking a man that was a sinner to His house. Here it is not a good man like Zacchæus, who gave half of his goods to feed the poor; but it is a man who had taken other people's goods, a man too bad for the society he had outraged and plundered to tolerate him any longer on earth. But each of these cases is met by sovereign grace. Jesus saves them both.

In this last case we see the Saviour dying amidst the scoffs and jeers of all around, and then a voice at His side is heard speaking to his godless companion, like himself in the jaws of death, and saying, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? and we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss." That prayer of the Lord's, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," must have gone down into the heart of that poor dying robber, and divine light have entered his soul.

That poor dying thief felt that the One also dying between him and his scoffing associate was more than man. The writing over His head, proclaimed that He was a King, and that His name was Jesus—Jehovah, the Saviour. In his soul there sprang up confidence in the One whom he had thus heard praying for His murderers, and to his fellow-robber he says, "Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? and we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds;

but this man hath done nothing amiss." It is lovely ! He reverses the sentence of priest, scribe, and Pharisee ; he clears the character of the blessed Lord, when all were against Him. "This man hath done nothing amiss," was heaven's verdict of Jesus coming from a criminal's lips. Then he turns to the Saviour, in childlike faith and confidence, and says, "Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom."

He knew that death could not hold Him, that He must rise from the dead, and come to the throne, so he says, "Lord, when You come to the throne remember me." The grace of the Lord's answer goes far beyond the thought and desire of the man's heart, for, if he had only got his desire, his prayer would not be answered yet, as Jesus has not yet ascended the throne, as Son of David. I will give you a better portion than a place in the kingdom by-and-bye, the Lord says to him, and I will give it to you TO-DAY. "Verily, I say unto thee, TO-DAY shalt thou be WITH ME in paradise," —i.e., in certain truth, I Jehovah, the Saviour, will give to you, the dying thief, the paradise of God to-day with Me. Do you want to be with Me ? You shall be with Me TO-DAY.

The Saviour dies before the thief, and the Redeemer receives the one redeemed by His precious atoning blood, and takes him with Him into paradise that day. Jesus does the work that redeems him, and the Shepherd goes home with the sheep on His shoulders, and takes him with Him

that day into the Father's house on high—the paradise of God. Jesus takes home with Him, as the fruit of His toil and travail on earth, a man too bad for earth, but made fit by His work to be taken into the paradise of God in the arms of his Saviour! That was grace, indeed, blessed, sovereign grace!

I repeat again, that *to-day* is always God's gospel. Come to Jesus to-day, my unsaved reader; put it not off, be decided for the Saviour, let Him save and bless you *to-day*. He who bare the judgment of God and the punishment of death that you might escape eternal destruction, let Him have His own way, and save you "TO-DAY," and have you with Him for ever. Let me counsel you, my reader, Take Jesus home with you to your house to-day, as Zacchæus did, and very shortly He will take you to His house, to share His home for ever.

W. T. P. W.

SALVATION SEEN, AND PEACE POSSESSED!



FAVoured man was Simeon. It had been announced to him, as we read in Luke ii. 26, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. That must have been a welcome intimation to him; for, in seeing Christ, he should see Him in whom all the proper hopes of

his nation were centred—Him, too, who should bring much more than the fulfilment of Israelitish hopes—but at all events he was informed by the Spirit of God that he should thus be favoured, he should behold the Lord's Anointed !

Meanwhile he had to wait ; and possibly enough the lamp of hope burned at times dimly, and faith held the promise but feebly. Still he waited for Israel's consolation. Faith bides God's time, and knows, that though that time may seem long, yet the promise is sure, and the word must be fulfilled. It acts, moreover, in keeping with that word. Faith is never mistaken, though always and necessarily tried.

What God has said He will accomplish, and though heaven and earth pass away His word will never fail. Faith owns that. Hence Simeon was "just and devout." That is, his practice and his faith beautifully harmonised. The period of waiting for consolation was happily occupied by seemly conduct. And yet the faith he had must have been limited by the measure of the light in which he lived.

You and I live in days when Christianity has been fully revealed ; because Christ has come, died, risen, and gone on high,—the Spirit of God having come, and the Word of God being wholly made known.

But not so then. Simeon had the comparatively dim light of the Old Testament, by which his faith would take character. But how interesting to read

that he was both just and devout, and therefore pleasing to God. He walked up to the light he had. More should be given. Already, through grace, a believer, he awaited that which should give full character to his faith, and enable him to "depart in peace."

Simeon was, in spiritual matters, abreast of his time. He was waiting for Christ's advent, and, therefore, for salvation.

Though a believer, though just and devout, he had not yet seen salvation, for the simple reason that He who is salvation had not yet come, and could not therefore have been seen.

We live subsequent to His gracious advent. Christ has come, has died, has risen, and faith now can take up a different strain, and can rejoice in God's salvation. Yet, alas! what a strange anachronism is often presented to-day! How many professing believers are waiting, like Simeon, for salvation! They hope to depart peacefully after having seen God's salvation, but how little they know that they might live peacefully, too, because that salvation has come! And how much they miss!

Who would be content with a peaceful departure when he may enjoy that peace all along the road? A peaceful death is a blessed thing, but a peaceful life—a life of peace with God and devotedness to Him—is far better.

Look at Simeon's words, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." "*Now*," he says, and

why? Because at that happy moment he "took up the child in his arms, and blessed God."

Then, and, of course, not till then, did Simeon grasp in his waiting arms the now lowly and incarnate Son of God.

God's salvation was embodied in that infant form. "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Oh! how real. Faith, long tried and patient, is now rewarded; and in view of God's salvation, now embraced, this dear devout believer is able to say, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

"*Now*"—supreme moment of the faith of a lifetime!

"*Now*"—happy end of all soul-perplexity and doubt!

"*Now*"—consolation, in the deep, full meaning of the word, gladly enjoyed—"for," says he, "mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

You live, dear reader, some two thousand years after Simeon. Think of what has taken place in the interim. The Lord's Christ has come; He has become incarnate; has been crucified; has borne all the wrath of God against sin; has been raised from the dead; has accomplished all the work of redemption,—so that the Spirit can say, "Now is the day of salvation!" How different from Simeon's day of long expectancy! Salvation is now so near, so attainable, so within the reach of faith, that the solemn question is raised, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

The reception of God's salvation is the guarantee not only of a peaceful departure, but of a peaceful life; and, apart from God's salvation, there is neither peace in life, spite of all its pleasures, nor in death, spite of all its insensibility. The one divine secret of peace in life, death, and eternity, is the embracing in the arms of faith God's salvation.

J. W. S.

AFAR OFF.



AND came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh" (Eph. ii. 17).

Reader, I have something to say to you about being "afar off." In this passage we (Gentiles) are spoken of, as being dispensationally afar off. "Without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world," was our miserable condition before the cross (see verse 12), and then in verse 13 we read, "Ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

Reader, is this true of you? Have you been made nigh by the blood? Is God your Father? Is the Lord Jesus Christ your Saviour, and are you rejoicing in hope of the glory of God?

In Luke xvii. 12, we find the story of ten lepers who stood *afar off*. Although some of them, at least, were Jews, and dispensationally nigh, yet their

leprosy came between them and Jesus, and we see them in this passage, without hope, like the Gentile in Ephesians ii. They were not, however, without God, or without Christ, for Jesus was there. God had come in grace into this world, and so He cleansed them. He brought salvation to the poor despairing hopeless leper who could only stand *afar off*, like the sinner in chapter xviii., and cry for mercy.

Reader, have you ever felt your sin has made you *afar off*? Have you ever cried for mercy?

Now turn to Luke xvi. 23, and read, "In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham *afar off*, and Lazarus in his bosom." What a discovery for the rich Jew, who had been dispensationally nigh, but whose sins had made him *afar off*.

What a discovery, I say, to find himself in hell, without Christ, without hope, without God; all he valued and considered his own (see John viii. 33-44) *afar off*, lost to him for ever; for remember, there is a great gulf *fixed*, and in eternity none can ever pass over it.

How different in his case from that of the prodigal son (Luke xv.), who, turning to God with the confession of his sin, was met when he was "*yet a great way off*," by the tenderest welcome that a Father's heart could afford, and who ran to the returning wanderer to express it.

W. M.

THE GUNNER'S CONVERSION.



HE work of God in this dispensation of grace is to bring souls out of darkness into light, and from the power of Satan to Himself. He follows the sinner in his wayward course with tenderest pity and infinite love, seeking to withdraw him from his purpose. The moment when the sinner is found of Him is fraught with consequences of the greatest importance, because from that moment he begins to learn the magnitude of the provision made for him in divine grace.

There is always a deep interest attached to the time of conversion, when the sinner is brought to God. Some first turn to God in the quiet of their own chambers; others while listening to some earnest evangelist preaching the glad tidings; others, again, amid the busy scenes of life, or in their daily occupation. Such was not the case with the subject of this paper. He was brought to a saving knowledge of the grace of God amid the horrors of war, and the dangers of the battlefield.

It was on the morning of the storming of Delhi, during the Indian Mutiny in 1857 of historic fame, that J. C——, of the Royal Horse Artillery, saw his lost condition, and turning to "the God of all grace" learned that there was mercy even for him. For four months the handful of British

troops with which he served had been fighting against tremendous odds. Two causes combined to thin their ranks: many had fallen in the frequent encounters with the enemy, and many more had fallen a prey to cholera. They had passed through scenes that no pen can depict, or language describe, enduring privation and hardship enough to make the stoutest heart quake, and not least from the peculiar trials of a foreign clime, viz., the burning heat of an Eastern sun, and then during the heavy rains, being kept day and night at their guns. At last the fearful life-and-death struggle came, when about six thousand men took a walled city, seven miles round, with a defending force of thirty thousand, and after six days' hard fighting not one armed mutineer or rebel remained alive within the city. The loss to the victors was about a quarter of their number.

It was very early on the morning of the 14th September that the great stronghold was stormed in three places, by as many columns, composed of about half the besieging force. About sunrise, with the object of engaging a battery of the mutineers, and keeping them occupied while the infantry entered the breach made in the walls, the order was given to the Horse Artillery, "The troop will advance at a gallop," and they dashed on to the conflict. J. C—— knew what an effectual enemy they had to cope with, and as they galloped on he looked at the rising sun, and the thought rushed into his mind, "That is the last sun that

I shall ever see." But he was not prepared for death. The sins of a wild reckless course flashed across his mind, and for the first time in his life he prayed, and in real earnest too. What was passing within found expression in the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner." When they had their guns within easy range of the foe they halted, under a murderous fire of grape-shot from the mutineers within the walls. But J. C—— was preserved, and plucked as a brand "out of the fire." When the enemy first fired upon them, J. C——'s horse being killed under him, he was thrown violently to the ground. The sudden fall stunned him, and he lay senseless on the sod. The enemy fired a second and a third round, and then ceased, to open fire no more, for the British infantry, having fought their way in through the breach, drove them from their guns.

J. C—— soon recovered a little, and raising himself on his elbow saw around him the sad result of the firing. Most of his comrades were killed. God, to whom he turned, had in His mercy heard his prayer, and not only saved him from eternal perdition, but preserved his life here. From that time he was the Lord's, one of the brands plucked from the burning, saved just at the very verge of destruction, and when escape seemed impossible. He had an eventful career afterwards, and though he often failed the grace that saved him, yet it never failed him.

About two years ago he was led into a fuller

knowledge of what the believer in Christ is brought into, and during the few remaining months of his earthly course he learned much of what was his in Christ. He rejoiced in the knowledge of much of the fulness and beauty of the teaching of the Word of God that he was before a stranger to, ere he passed away to be for ever with the Lord, whose precious blood had procured his liberty, and to whom he owed everything.

About a fortnight before the end came, a friend visiting him read two well-known verses to him, simply pressing one thought in connection with each verse, and these were a great comfort to him up to the last. They were read again to him half-an-hour before he breathed his last. The first verse was John iii. 16, "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," with the remark that here all the blessing that the believing sinner receives is traced up to its *source*—the heart of God. The other verse was John v. 24, "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 unto condemnation; but is passed from death unto life," with the added thought, that here Christ is the *channel* through which all the blessings come. Thus the knowledge of the *source*, and the *channel*, with that of the righteous *basis*,—the work of the cross, and the blood shedding of

Christ,—were the stay and comfort of J. C——'s soul to the last, and, resting there, he fell asleep.

"But," my unsaved reader may say, "what has this to do with me? I was never in such circumstances, and never expect to be." As to the battlefield and its accompanying horrors it may be true, but as to learning thyself to be a sinner before God it is a different matter; and we commit this striking record to paper, with the earnest hope and prayer that it may be used for thy blessing. Having learned thyself to be such, and casting thyself on the same boundless grace and mercy of God, mayest thou, like the subject of this paper, learn that there is mercy even for thee. Many times hast thou listened to both warning and entreaty. Be wise in time. God's time is now. He waits to be gracious. Turn not away, for still there is mercy for thee. Now is the day of salvation. Accept His offered pardon, and eternal glory will be thine. Reject it, and ere another sun rise thy doom may be eternally, and irrevocably, fixed and sealed. Then turn at once to Him who is "mighty to save,"—a just God and a Saviour,—and thou shalt obtain mercy at His hand,—be brought *now* into the favoured family of God, and receive an eternal inheritance among those who are sanctified through faith in Christ Jesus, and in the Father's house above sing the eternal praise of the One who came into this world of ours to die, "the just for the unjust," that He might bring us to God."

LOST FOR A FLOWER.



YOUNG lady who was standing near the Niagara Falls saw, growing upon the bank of the river, a flower of rare beauty. Bending carefully to pluck the flower, she found it was beyond her reach. She then stooped a little lower, but still failed to grasp it. Aware of her danger, but tempted by the nearness of the coveted flower, she bent cautiously until her fingers touched the stem. But, at the same moment, her foot slipped, and with a shriek she fell headlong into the river, and was swept over the cataract. Her life was lost for a flower.

Art thou, my reader, reaching after the flowers of pleasure, fortune, and fame? Are they almost within thy grasp? Well, even if thou obtain them, they will soon wither; and in the meantime, thy foot may slide, and thou mayest fall into the bottomless pit!

A flower was a small thing for which to risk the precious life; and, while we deplore the accident, we can but wonder at the young lady's folly. Yet there are many who for mere trifles are running a greater hazard than the loss of life.

You may say, "What is to be feared more than loss of life?"

The loss of the soul, dear reader. He who was acquainted with the happiness of heaven, and

whose eye had surveyed the gloomy caverns of the damned, said, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

If thou couldst gain the wealth of the Indies, and spend many years in the gratification of thy varied desires, what shall it profit thee in the day when the angel of death shall beckon thee away to an eternity of woe? What shall it profit thee when thou standest before the great white throne, and the Judge shall pronounce the dread sentence, "Depart, ye cursed"?

Regrets would be unavailing. Be wise, then, in time! Whatever thou dost lose, do not lose thy precious soul.

The Saviour holds before thy eyes a crown of glory, which will more than compensate for every earthly loss.

He will not cast out the vilest that comes to Him, nor despise the most abandoned.

"The blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin."

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

"Still undecided? Time flies apace,
Jesus entreats thee; spurn not His grace;
What-if the word were passed
This night shall be thy last?
Where would thy soul be cast?
Where hide thy face?"

PERFECT PEACE.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee."—ISA. xxvi. 3.



PEACE, peace for him

Whose mind is stayed on Thee ;
Peace for the troubled child of God,
Who trusts implicitly.

Peace, perfect peace !

Peace anxious soul, for thee ;
Peace through the precious blood of Christ,
Once shed on Calvary.

Peace, perfect peace !

Peace, priceless, full, and free ;
'Twas purchased by God's own dear Son ;
'Tis free as air for thee.

Peace, perfect peace !

For those to Christ who cleave ;
Ere going back to heaven, He said,
" My peace with you I leave."

Peace, perfect peace !

The very peace of God ;
Oh ! let this peace rule in thy heart,
This peace to which thou'rt called.

Peace, perfect peace !

'Mid earth's turmoil and din ;
What rest to have this precious peace,
God's own sweet peace within !

Peace, perfect peace !

Lord, let this peace be mine,
That I, a blood-bought child of God,
May to Thy glory shine !

HOW I CAME INTO THE LIGHT.

"Now thanks be to God who always causeth us to triumph in Christ."—2 COR. ii. 14.



OR ten years I was in doubt, darkness, uncertainty, and unrest. Before that I had begun to feel that all was not right between my soul and God. I had wept over my sins and my past life, but peace could I nowhere find. I was

convicted, and felt I must reform; but getting no relief, I sought the world's amusements, pleasures, and worthless attractions. But these failed,—*all* failed! All proved unreal,—a bubble, only to burst at a touch!

I then searched God's Word, but could claim nothing for myself to bring rest to my heart. Oh! the despair of those days, the unreality, the hollowness! I then tried to mould my will, wishes, and inclinations, and carefully studied Thomas à Kempis's "Imitation of Christ." All that I gleaned from that was, "Learn to break your own will, and yield your own wishes,"—so I got no comfort from it.

Thus the years dragged on. *Outwardly* all looked fair. I had everything, yet possessed nothing. The intense longing for reality only increased.

"Surely there is something *real*, something beyond all *this world* can offer, that I *ought* to have!" I exclaimed one day to a friend, looking

up at the blue sky above me as I spoke, and envying the very birds that circled over my head that summer's morning.

"What more *can* you possibly want, with everything around you to satisfy you?" was her reply.

I looked around, to discover if she was right. The garden I was sitting in was fragrant with summer's first flush of beauty; the rich bloom of the rose, and flowers of every hue, met my gaze. Close at my feet was the soft green grass; trees, laden with foliage, shimmered in the brilliant sunshine. In my heart only was darkness, and a famished, aching, longing for *satisfaction*. Things only grew worse and worse, and a weight as of the deepest grief hung over me.

I no longer tried to be cheerful, but, day after day succumbed to an uncontrollable misery. Again and again I besought God to send relief, to send deliverance; and God *did* answer me, though not before I was brought still lower.

At this very time I became acquainted with a Christian lady, whose experience of souls was sufficient to make her discover that I was deeply distressed in some way, and she persistently pressed me for my confidence, but without success. Curiously enough, though in this disturbed state, I hugged a kind of false peace, and, fearful of losing even this, I dreaded exposing my miserable anxiety. I have no doubt now that I was in the 7th of Romans, continually crying, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this

death?" However, one day she mentioned the foundation the Christian rested on, and after having with difficulty extracted some remarks from me (for I possessed a certain head-knowledge on these subjects), she said, "I think in time you will be all right." Her words caused me a shock, for, as I saw that she doubted my safety, every bit of anything I rested on was shaken to pieces.

I left her, however, in ignorance of my real feelings; but when alone, I looked my agony in the face, and the awful cry broke from me "I am lost, lost! O God! I am drifting, drifting to darkness and chaos!"

Oh! that I could have then seen the "bright light that is in the clouds" (Job xxvii. 21)—could have seen CHRIST the WISDOM of GOD, and the RIGHTEOUSNESS of GOD. His time, however, had not yet come. Instead of seeking and resting on God's promises, I became a prey to unbelief. The devil tempted me with doubts. The Bible was not inspired—why believe it? And I indulged these doubts, eagerly reading books endorsing them, and forcing myself to accept their lies.

The troubled state of my feelings at this time it is almost impossible to describe. I felt myself a unit in the vast universe. Disorder, destruction, oppression, and cruelty reigned everywhere, and I thought God had abandoned me and all creation. At length all this mental conflict told on my health, and, my strength failing, I left home for change of air.

And now all the tender mercy God had in store for me flowed out. After a few days at the sea, I became very ill; and then it was a ray of hope began to dawn upon my soul.

I found a Christian friend, who was used of God to show me what I lacked, and soon the finished work of Christ came in power to my soul, through Dr Bonar's well-known hymn—

“I hear the words of love,
I gaze upon the blood,
I see the mighty sacrifice,
And I have peace with God.”

And directly the fourth verse was reached—

“I change, He changes not ;
My Christ can never die.
His love, not mine, the resting-place ;
His truth, not mine, the tie.”

the light then dawned upon me, and I exclaimed, “Surely Christ is *everything*, and we are *nothing*!” From that blessed moment the truth of the gospel of the glory of God shone into my soul. I saw “Jesus for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (Heb. ii. 9),—that *He* had completely satisfied God's justice about sin, death, and judgment. I saw that God was satisfied, not by any miserable works that *I* could do, but “that being justified by *faith*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. v. 1).

Streams upon streams of mercy flooded my soul; every doubt suggested by Satan, and every fear, now fled. The strong man had been bound by a stronger than he. I beheld every enemy dead upon the seashore, and, with the children of Israel, I could sing, "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously. . . . The Lord is my strength, and my song, the Lord is become my salvation. . . . Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy" (Exod. xv, 1, 2, 6). To my soul there came everlasting rest, in the knowledge that God's Christ can never die.

The unchangeable, immovable Word of the living God tells us so,—“Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that *I might take it again*; . . . I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again” (John x. 17, 18). The speaker is Jesus, “Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it” (Acts ii. 24).

Dear reader, in this paper some of my soul's experiences are told, and every word is *true*. It is written with the earnest prayer that the Christ of God may become precious to the soul of any unbeliever who may happen to read it. Remember, Christ died for the *ungodly*, the *careless*, the *scoffer*.

Love, pent up in the heart of God for poor sinners, overflowed at the cross in the death of His Son. “God commendeth His love toward us, in that,

while we were *yet* SINNERS, CHRIST died for us" (Rom. v. 8).

The treasures stored up in Christ are unfathomable. Wave upon wave comes rolling in from the ocean of God's love upon the soul desiring to know *Himself*. Well may we sing:—

"O, Christ! He is the fountain,
The deep sweet well of love!
The streams on earth I've tasted,
I'll drink more deep above.
There, to an ocean fulness,
His mercy doth expand;
And glory, glory dwelleth
In Emmanuel's land."

"*He* satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Psa. cvii. 9).

May God grant that each weary, thirsty, hungry, unsatisfied soul may learn the priceless blessing of possessing CHRIST!

Yes, dear reader, the Name of Jesus, which is as ointment poured forth, soothed and calmed and healed my poor troubled soul; and I pray God it may do the same for you.

"There is no other Name than Thine,
Jehovah Jesus, Name divine,
On which to rest for sins forgiven,
For peace with God, for hope of heaven.

Name above every Name, Thy praise
Shall fill yon courts through endless days;
Jehovah Jesus, Name divine,
Rock of salvation! Is He thine?"

THREE SUDDEN DEATHS.



ONE Lord's Day evening last summer, the writer was distributing tracts at the railway station in the village of H—— in Derbyshire, and amongst the many who received a copy was a young lady, the only daughter of a neighbouring town-councillor. Upon handing one to her the striking title, "Your dying hour," was repeated with solemn emphasis, to which she responded, "I hope my dying hour will not come yet."

She reached her home that night apparently in the very best of health; the following afternoon she was taken ill, and by Tuesday night she was a corpse.

Her dying hour came *quite unexpectedly*. Where is she now? God only knows! Though bright, attractive, much sought after, and beloved by friends, and a source of comfort to her widowed father, yet she left behind no proof that she was trusting to the precious blood of Christ, which alone could shelter her from judgment, and fit her for the bright glory of God.

One thing is certain. Her destiny is *now* unalterably and eternally fixed—either for heaven or hell, for joy or despair, glory or gloom, for the company of *Christ and the redeemed*, or *the devil and the damned*.

A little over a week after, another young lady left the same railway station, to go a few miles down the line to be married. Before her destination was reached she became ill, and was in consequence carried into a waiting-room, where she shortly afterwards expired. *Her dying hour came quite unexpectedly!* Yes! and so may *yours* too, my unsaved reader. Quite unexpectedly!! Without a single moment's warning the silver cord of your sinful life may be snapped, and you, unforgiven and unblessed, may pass from earth to the dark regions of the lost. May God by His Word and Spirit awaken you to see the awful condition in which you stand before Him.

Yet a few more weeks and another person died suddenly. This time it was a man who had a very little more than an hour before left his wife, and home, to go to his daily work. His dead body was carried to a place near at hand, a coroner's inquest was held over it, and a verdict of "Death from heart disease" returned. The day but one following the body was lowered into the grave, there to await the resurrection either to life, or to damnation (John v. 29).

His dying hour came quite unexpectedly!

Unsaved reader, whoever you may be, young, middle-aged, or old, in tender love to your precious never-dying soul we would remind you that your dying hour may come like a flash of lightning, quicker than the twinkling of an eye! Think, then, of what your doom would be! "After death

the judgment,"—eternal banishment from God's presence!

Perhaps you tremble as you contemplate such a prospect. So also did Felix, the Roman judge, as the prisoner Paul stood before him, and reasoned with him of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come" (Acts xxiv. 25); but alas! the love of the world and its approval hindered him from coming to and believing on Him, who has said, "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). Imitate him not.

Belshazzar trembled at the writing on the wall, but was slain the same night, and many a man, woman, and child has trembled, and yet been eternally lost. The last pleadings of love, and the last call of divine grace have been unheeded, and are now hushed for ever.

Unsaved reader, it may not yet be too late for you to prepare for your dying hour, but oh, let me implore you to delay no longer. Come to Jesus owning all your guilt, and you will have the sweetness and joy of hearing Him say, "Thy sins are forgiven; thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Luke vii. 48-50). Then if your dying hour comes either unexpectedly, or you quietly fall asleep in Jesus, you will be "absent from the body, and present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 8). Delay not one hour in coming to Jesus.

P. H. S.

NOTHING BETTERED BY MAN: MADE WHOLE BY JESUS.

"And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him. And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, when she heard of Jesus, came," &c.—MARK v. 24-34.



HE condition of this poor woman was deplorable. The victim of a severe malady for a long period of years, she had turned, in her sufferings, to those who had studied the art of healing, but with no result. One physician after another had been tried, and one after another had sought to cure her plague, but in vain. So great was her trouble, that with the hope of finding a remedy, she had reduced herself to absolute want. Fee after fee had been paid, till her means were all expended. And yet, with all their efforts to do her good, she was *nothing bettered*, but *rather grew worse*.

It was a clear case that the help of man was in vain. Twelve long weary years of repeated disappointment had gone by, and instead of finding her strength returning, and the hope brightening of once again being in health, she was *nothing bettered*,—not one whit, but on the contrary,—*she rather grew worse*. What was to be done now? A poor penniless woman, with her life departing from her, all hope in the world seemed gone,

and nothing but a painful lingering death lay before her.

What pains the blessed Lord has taken to show us our condition in His sight, and the vanity of human aid to deliver us from it! What could be a more striking picture of the sinner's state before God? In our case, from the moment we come into the world, our life, so to speak, has been leaving us. And what are tens of thousands around doing to-day? Turning to man, in one way or another, for a remedy. There are many physicians who take the ground of soul-healers, and many are the remedies offered to the sin-sick soul. And many have suffered "many things" with the view of obtaining healing and salvation from the plague of sin; but, alas! only to find themselves, like this poor woman, further off than ever from the object of their hope.

Millions, too, have been spent by suffering sinners, and hundreds of devices have been planned by many spiritual physicians, throughout the length and breadth of this vast globe. Yet what is man's present state before God? "*Nothing bettered,*" but "*rather grew worse.*" Education may improve the world morally here, but we are not speaking of that. It is a question of our state as sinners before God. He has pronounced our case as incurable, as far as man is concerned. Yet thousands have their own opinion, and think there is some hope for them after all. Well, you may try, and try again, to improve the flesh, but it is incor-

rigible. God gave it up at the cross, and from that moment to this it never was—neither will it ever be—one whit better. "*Nothing bettered,*" but "*rather grew worse,*" is the verdict on man.

Sinner, Christless professor, *your case gets worse.* You may spend your last penny with the view of a remedy, but you will only find, sooner or later, to your bitter disappointment, that your case is hopeless, human aid utterly vain, and that nothing lies before you, as an unsaved one, but the deeply solemn future of death here, judgment after, and then the lake of fire for ever.

Now in verse 27 we read that the woman, "when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment: for she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole." "When she had heard of Jesus." Blessed news! Here was One who could meet her case, and she knew it. She heard of Him, and believed in Him, and came to Him. An immense throng surrounded Him, and it could have been no easy matter for a poor weak woman to make her way all through that press. But difficulties did not hinder her. *Jesus was there.* He could do what the many physicians could not. One can well understand how, at such a moment, she would shrink from the public gaze. But the faith that led her to say, "If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole," brought her through. She could not yet come face to face with Him, but she could come behind in the press. And she came, "*and touched his garment.*"

Here we must pause a moment, beloved reader, to ask you, Have you heard of this wonderful Jesus, the blessed Son of God? Doubtless you have; but have you believed on Him? In the great press of this poor world, have you touched Him by faith? If, through grace, you have been aroused to a sense of your danger and need, and learnt the folly of your own efforts, and the vain help of man, nothing, we are assured, will satisfy you, till you have come to Him. Have you ever said from the heart, as well as from the lips, "If I may touch but his clothes, *I shall be whole.*" This poor woman's faith never wavered for a moment, when she heard of Jesus. There was no doubt in her heart. The only "if" was, "*if I may touch.*" And that was open to her. "If I may touch but his clothes, *I shall be whole,*" said she. She heard, she came, she touched.

Oh, come then to Him now, poor sufferer from sin. One touch of faith suffices for the greatest sinner on earth. As yet you may fear to have to do with Christ openly before all. But, oh! if you would but trust in Him, in the secret of your own heart, *you would be made whole.*

"And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up: and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague" (ver. 29). "Straightway" (immediately). This word characterises this blessed gospel of Jesus' holy servant-work. She was completely healed. The Lord's work was, and is, always perfect. He never half-healed or half-saved any

one. "And she *felt* . . . she was healed of that plague." Her faith was not in vain. One touch of the garment of that Blessed One was sufficient, and her twelve years of misery and suffering were at an end.

And so with you, troubled soul, if you do but come, Jesus will meet *your case*. He will make *you whole*. His *work* is perfect, His *word* is perfect, and His *way* is perfect. Come unto Him. Not only will Jesus blot out all your sins by His own most precious blood, shed for sinners on the cross, but He will deal with the very source of iniquity in your soul. He died for *sin*, as well as sins. And through His death is a perfect way of deliverance from the mastery of *sin* now (see Rom. v. 12, vi., vii., viii. 1-3). And then you will *feel that you are whole*. Thousands, occupied with self, are making a saviour of their feelings. But no lasting happy feelings can you have, until you have first come to Jesus. Once He has made you whole, you will feel it. "He that believeth in the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (1 John v. 10).

"And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing" (vers. 30-32).

Jesus is the Son of God. A perfect Man, a faithful Servant, the omniscient Son. Immediately the

woman touched His garment she was made whole. And immediately Jesus knew it in Himself. Virtue went out from Him. Divine grace gave that faith, and Divine grace met it. The value in the touch was *the faith* that was thus exhibited. Divine virtue made her whole. The disciples express their surprise. *They* may or may not have seen the poor woman, one among many crowding round the Person of their blessed Master. But though *He* saw her not, for she came behind Him, He knew all things, and He looked round about to see her that had done this thing. How deeply blessed!

So also is it with poor sinners now. Where there is but the touch of faith, Divine power meets it. Jesus is in the glory now, yet is He approachable by all. For every one that comes to Him, not only is there a present pardon, a full salvation, but a Divine work in the soul. God always meets faith. And oh, how blessed for the man, that, with the sense that he is made whole, becomes cognisant that the eye of Jesus is looking round about to see him, and feels that nothing but perfect love can dwell in the One who has wrought so great salvation for him! The heart is completely won.

"But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth" (ver. 33). Oh, it was a blessed fear and trembling! She knew what was done in her. The eye of the One who had so graciously healed her, was looking round about for her. And that faithful, loving heart was drawing

her by invisible bonds of mercy to His feet. Blessed place! She came and fell down *before Him*, and *told Him* all the truth. Her heart's confidence was won. Where could she go but to the feet of Him who had made her whole? All thought of the crowd is forgotten. One Person alone rivets her soul,—*Jesus!* At His blessed feet all comes out. There is no need to hide anything there. *She told Him all the truth.*

Oh, beloved reader, can you longer stay away from such an one as Jesus? Have you touched Him in simple faith? Has He made you whole? If so, where does He want to see you? At His feet. Will you go your own way, healed, and forget the Healer? God forbid such folly. We know what Jesus has done *for* us, and we know what He has done *in* us. Where then, and to whom, shall we go? Oh, let us be found together, where He is, in His presence, at His feet, pouring out all our heart's story there. Perfect love, matchless grace, infinite mercy, are in that heart of hearts to meet us. He is all worthy of our unreserved confidence. In the light of the presence of the Holy One of God, Jesus our Saviour and Lord, let us bow in heart, and with our lips confess all the truth. We have no need to hide anything from Him. In fact we cannot; He knows all already. But how deeply blessed to have to do with such an One, who knows us perfectly, and delights to have us in the light with Himself!

“And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole, go in peace, and be whole of thy

plague" (ver. 34). What precious words of comfort, joy, and peace to fall from the lips of Jesus on the ear of that poor woman! It was no temporary healing. She *was* whole, she was to *go in peace*, and she was to *be whole*. All was divinely perfect.

So is it also with every one who comes to Jesus now. It is not a temporary salvation that Jesus bestows, but an eternal one. "He that believeth on the Son hath *eternal life*" (John iii. 36). "He became the author of *eternal salvation* unto all them that obey him" (Heb. v. 9). And "being justified by faith, *we have peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). *We are whole*, through His infinite grace. His own blessed lips declare it. It is written in His Word. And His Word endureth for ever. Believest thou? Yes? Thou art whole. Go in peace. Be whole of thy plague of sin, is the Lord's word for you to-day and for ever.

E. H. C.



THE WORLD: IS IT A DARK PLACE, OR NOT?



Y brother, who is blind, was travelling in Cornwall, and had stopped at Helstone to change horses for Penzance, as he was posting.

While waiting, he was shown into a room. After a while he rose to find the bell, as he wished to call the waiter. A

lady who was in the room kindly asked him what he wanted, and offered her assistance. He thanked her, and sat down.

The lady then said, in a sympathetic voice, that she was very sorry he was blind, and further, that she feared the world must be a "very dark place" to him."

"Oh, no!" said my brother; "I don't think the world can be a very dark place to any one who has a living faith in the Lord Jesus."

"Ah! no," said the lady. "If one has that, of course one can go through anything; but very few, you know, have that sort of thing."

"I don't know," said my brother; "more have it than you suppose, I expect. You see' here are we two, quite unknown to each other, and yet we find we each have this same faith."

"I fear," said the lady, "I have not got it exactly like that. My faith is very weak."

Just then the waiter came to say the horses were ready, and so my brother bade goodbye to the lady, and left.

The point that strikes one is, that the lady, who had so little faith, could be sure, as a matter "*of course*," that any one who really had a living faith in the Lord Jesus could "*go through anything*." She placed no limit on the sustaining power of that Name. None! No, it was a matter "*of course*" to her, weak though she felt her faith to be.

Now, is it not a fair question, whether there is

any other name of which anything similar could be asserted?

As far as I am aware, no one pretends there is any other; and Scripture asserts the same fact, when it says, "There *is* none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12). If, therefore, *this* Name be rejected, there is none other left, and the responsibility is all the greater. If there were a dozen names, there might be some excuse for rejecting them all, in the uncertainty which was right; but here there is only one, and "none other."

Seeing the world is what it is, is it a just idea of God that He has left us in our sore need, with sin and suffering around us, and certain death, as men, before us, and without any remedy, any name in which we can have faith, and which will enable us, as a matter "of course," to "go through anything," even death?

But that Name, the precious Name of Jesus, has been given among men; and those who have faith in it have "the light of life," let the world be never so dark,—light indeed in a dark place. And they can, "of course," "go through anything," as this lady said.

Reader, have you faith in this Name?

"Jesus! the Name I love so well,

The Name I love to hear!

No saint on earth its worth can tell,

No heart conceive how dear."

THE WORLD'S FAIR.



T is a solemn moment this in which we live, there is so much of that abroad by which Satan, the god of this world, deceives and allures on to destruction those who too willingly submit to him. Man in every way is pandered too, and he is made to believe that he is in a prosperous way, while nothing can be further from the thoughts of God, or opposed to His Word.

The "first man" Adam, and all in association with him, have been set aside, and God has "the second man," the "last Adam," the Lord from heaven, Christ in risen and ascended glory, before His mind and heart. There He now sits in heavenly glory, the "Heavenly One." What a sight for faith, and for the one redeemed to God by His blood!

Why the "second man," and "the last Adam," if the "first man," and "the first Adam," has not been set aside? All is headed up in the fallen man, or in the risen, victorious man, Christ Jesus. If I am in the "first Adam," I am lost and condemned; if I am in Christ, the "second man," the "last Adam," I share His position, relationships, and acceptance, with the Father, He having made an end of my sins on the cross.

The world too as a whole is under the just judgment of God.

The world,—what is it? It is a system of things

that has grown up away from God, that from Cain's day has gone on its own course, Satan its prince (John xiv. 30), and god (2 Cor. iv. 4), and having refused the Son of God when He came, and rejected the testimony of God the Holy Ghost ever since, there is nothing left for it but the unsparing judgment of God.

The arts and sciences began in Cain's day. Cain *went out of the presence of the Lord* and built him a city, and his descendants embellished it with the arts and sciences. Great improvements were made, but without God; pleasant society, but without God; sweet music, but without God; wonderful achievements, but without God; houses, cities, bridges, but without God; and so it has been from then till now; the murderer's hand has been on it ever since: they stoned the prophets, and murdered the Son of God. Such is the world. *Do you belong to it?*

The Son of God when here, and speaking of His death, said "*Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world (Satan) be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die*" (John xii. 23-33).

The world then is morally judged; it is under the awful sentence of Divine judgment. The Son of God said, "*Now is the judgment of this world*" —*now!* in the day of judgment the judgment will be executed; but in the mind and thoughts of God, it is judged *now*. He regards it as such.

The "first man" is set aside. His descendants, who have been but a repetition of their fallen head, who go to make up the world away from God, are under the sentence of Divine judgment.

Christ in ascended glory is before the mind of God, the Head of a new race, a new order of beings; "Therefore if any man be in Christ, there is a new creation." "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus" (2 Cor. vi. 17; Eph. ii. 10).

Well then, beloved reader, think of this world under the judgment of God, about to be swept into hell, having "*a fair*," and sporting on the brink of everlasting perdition.

Ye sons of night, awake to the solemn truth of this! "*A fair*," when the glittering sword of judgment hangs over your guilty head! "*A fair*," when your guilt, and the iniquity of your heels, cry for God's judgment! "*A fair*," when the blood of the true Abel cries to God for vengeance! "*A fair*," when the testimony of God the Holy Ghost is disregarded! "*A fair*," when the longsuffering of a slighted God is well-nigh exhausted! "*A fair*," on the cracking brink of an eternal hell!

"The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and shall condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here" (Matt. xii. 41).

Would you expect a condemned malefactor to play "*fair*," when he knows that in a few short hours he must die, and give an account to his God?

Alas! poor world, it is just what you are doing! The world is under judgment. "NOW is the judgment of this world." Its moral end had come then. It is only a question of Divine patience now. The axe is laid to the root of the tree, ready to cut it down.

But mystery of folly, the world, in spite of this, in the very teeth of Scripture, in the full view of the anger of the Almighty, and on the threshold of eternal judgment, is assembling to have "*a fair!*" They are about to raise high their golden calf as the object of universal admiration, and then sit down to eat and drink, and rise up to play!

But deeper mystery still! The so-called Church, the ostensible spouse of Christ, who professes to be not of this world, and to belong to *Him* alone, is playing the harlot, and rushing to the scene to link arms with the haters of the Son of God, her Lord and Bridegroom, and to commit adultery with the nations of the earth. Angels may well blush as they witness the dreadful sight, and the Spirit of God grieved, solemnly reiterate the warning, "I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev. iii.).

What has become in this our day of the command of God, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty"? Has the Church become so fascinated with her false lover (the world) that the words of her ever faithful Lord and Master have ceased to have any

weight with her? Have the deceitful smiles of the world a greater charm for her than the love, beauty, and glory of Him, who died for her? Shall the glitter and the show, and self-laudation of this vain world, that is under judgment, be more to her heart than the Christ of God, that it would not, and will not have to reign over it.

O Church of God, spouse of the Christ of God, think of your Lord's dishonour, the grief of His Spirit, as you are seen linked with your false lover, kissed with the deceitful kiss, and lured to the sin so grievous to thy Lord.

"Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds" (Rev. iii.).

These are the words of an insulted and grossly dishonoured Lord; of Him who says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing."

It is true that pulpit orators have not been wanting to raise their voice in favour of the unhallowed compact; but what a dreadful linking of the holy with the profane; and what a confusing of light with darkness; and what a caricature of Christianity! "Divines," too, are standing about the altar, to pronounce as valid the marriage of the spouse of Christ with the world, and then to have a grand celebration of the adulterous nuptials!

The nations are confederating to have "a fair"! If God judged the attempt of the people of old to combine, and "make us a name," the sentiment of

which was embodied in the tower that was to reach unto heaven, do you think that He will look with complacency upon this latter-day attempt to accomplish the same thing? Far greater the iniquity of this later attempt, on account of the abundance of revelation from God, and the unholy and disobedient connection of the Church with it.

Then, as "the fair" is in progress, and the multitudes throng the streets of that city of wicked renown, an event may take place of momentous importance to the Church, the world, paganism and Judaism. Ah, what event is that? The voice of God, the archangel's trumpet-blast, and the Lord's descending shout, may be heard, and every saint of God, dead and living, be caught up to meet their Lord in the air, and thus be for ever with Him. He says, "I am the bright and morning star." "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely, I come quickly." Fair Church of the living God, the purchase of the blood of thy Lord and Bridegroom, destined to reign with Christ for ever and ever, can you put your "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus," to that wonderful promise of His? If not, why not? Is it because of your association with the world? If so, break with it at once, and be what your Lord commands you be, "Like unto men who wait for their Lord."

A world "lying in wickedness," and under the judgment of God, having a fair, thus 'sporting on the eve of its eternal judgment; and the faithless Church of God, and spouse of Christ, playing the

harlot with it;—and both joining their voices to exalt the “first man,” whom God has set aside, to the dishonour of the “second man,” the exalted Christ, in whom God’s thoughts centre, is a sight over which we may well weep, and from which every loyal heart does well to withdraw itself.

E. A.

“TRIUMPH!”



S the Lord with you, George?” Such was the question put by a young Christian to one who was close upon the shores of eternity, and whom he had known for some years as a happy follower of the Lamb.

The question aroused, as it were, all the remaining energies of the dying man, whose eyes were fast glazing in death, and whose body was racked with intense pain, which often caused a state of semi-unconsciousness, resulting from what proved to be a fatal attack of pneumonia. Fastening his eyes upon the speaker, he replied, in broken accents, —“I—can—safely—say,—with—all—my—heart, He—has—never—left—me—since—He—first—took—charge—of—me;” and then, as though to give the ground of his confidence in the presence of God, he added, “God—is—satisfied—with—what—Jesus—has—done,—and—I—am—satisfied—too.” This was his last intelligible utterance. Two

hours afterwards, and he was with the Lord. But what triumphant words ! They declare that he had found Christ sufficient for life, and sufficient for death. He was " more than conqueror, through him that loved him," and " was persuaded that neither death nor life, . . . nor any other creature," should be able to separate him " from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord " (Rom. viii. 35-39).

And now, reader, might I ask whether death would find you prepared ? It may overtake you sooner than you are aware ; or, it may be, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour, may return for His saved ones, and thus close the door of mercy, and you be left outside that closed door.

Death is a real thing ; but to die without Christ, is to die unsaved, and to be lost for ever. *

Think of eternity ! Where will you spend it ? In heaven or in hell ? The entrance of sin has ruined all in this world ; it cannot enter heaven, and if you are to be there you must be cleansed from your sins. Do you ask, How ? Let God's Word reply, " The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin " (1 John i. 7). Nothing but the blood can cleanse ! God says so. " Without shedding of blood is no remission " (Heb. ix. 20, 22), was borne witness to, in type, in the Old Testament, and is verified by the death of Jesus, the Son of God, in the New Testament, whose blood alone could make atonement. The sacrifices under the law witnessed that atonement was necessary ;

the sacrifice of Jesus declares that atonement has been made. "It is finished," He said, on Calvary, ere He bowed His head and gave up the ghost. And not only so, but we are told that "one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came out blood and water. And he that saw it bear record, and his record is true, and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe" (John xix. 30, 35). Believe what? Believe that Jesus, the Divine Son of God, has made atonement.

John the Baptist is spoken of, in the beginning of John's gospel, as being sent to bear witness to the life of Jesus, that "all men through him might believe" (John i. 6, 7). The apostle John is called to bear record to the atoning death of Jesus, that "we might believe." God makes everything of Jesus. My dying friend declared that "God was satisfied with what Jesus had done, and he was satisfied too." Happy testimony! God and a sinner at one about the atoning work of Jesus! The value of that work, which men seek to deny, the ransomed triumph in, while God sets forth the blood of Christ as that which has made propitiation (Rom. iii. 25). Millions have trusted that blood, and proved its cleansing efficacy. Do you, dear reader, trust it likewise? Then, you will be able to join in the praise-song of the redeemed: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever" (Rev. i. 5, 6).

SETTLED AFFAIRS: A DYING
TESTIMONY.

HAD known Mrs. M—— for some years as a simple believer in the Lord. A few months since her husband, drawing near to threescore years and ten, passed away from this scene. The children were all gone before, and now the empty chair

and silent voice told their own tale, "Be ye also ready." A few months rolled by, and she sent for me again. She was beyond aid; she was only following her husband. One day I learned from a sister-in-law, who waited on her, that she had all her worldly affairs settled. Going to her side, I said, "Your sister tells me all your worldly affairs are settled, is this so?" "Oh, yes, they are all settled; I've nothing to think about," she replied, not lifting her eyelids. "And the Lord has settled all your spiritual affairs?" She opened her eyes, and with great emphasis replied, "*I* could do nothing at that; the blood of Christ in its solitary dignity has settled all that. I'm too weak to speak more."

They were her last sensible words to me. Two days after she passed to be for ever with the Lord.

What a testimony! It is magnificent in its simplicity. "THE BLOOD OF CHRIST IN ITS SOLITARY DIGNITY HAS SETTLED ALL." What rest, peace, and joy it gave to her soul I can truly witness. God grant to you, my reader, to know

the settling power of that precious blood in its solitary dignity for all the affairs of your soul. Add nothing to it. It avails before God for the blackest sin, and avails in its own SOLITARY DIGNITY.

W. T. P. W.



THE SWORD: FLAMING, DRAWN, AND SHEATHED.



HE sword carries with it the thought that the one who wields it has the power of death. Man is exposed to the sword. Driven out of the earthly paradise, the Lord God placed cherubim and a *flaming sword* at the east of the garden, to keep the way of the tree of

life. Man is outside that blest abode, and he cannot get back. The flaming sword *turns every way* (Gen. iii. 24). It is an impassable barrier. The earthly paradise is lost, and there is no such thing as an earthly paradise regained. Men might sigh for the fruit of the tree of life, but the way to it is effectually barred by the Lord God Himself. His holy cherubim guard the entrance; His flaming sword would deal death to all who dare to intrude there.

But man's poor duped heart seeks to make the best of matters. He cannot get back to the paradise God prepared for him, so he sets to work to prepare one for himself. The first-born child

turns out a murderer, and builds a city without God; his descendants introduce the harp and organ, and all kinds of brass and iron work, to please the ear and eye, and to make life pleasant and comfortable. So the world has gone on. Man seeks a new paradise on earth, and his cities and his inventions have multiplied everywhere. But his cities groan with sin. Cain's awful example is followed by the world. He murdered Abel, while the world slew Christ, then established itself here without God, and is further off paradise than ever.

Moreover, a *drawn sword* is suspended over man's guilty head. All the world is subject to the judgment of God (Rom. iii. 19). It is like David, who sinned, in causing the people to be numbered. Thus trusting in his own might, and exalting himself, instead of depending upon God, he exposed himself to His sword. *God was displeased with this thing* (1 Chron. xxi. 7). David found himself *in a great strait*. Called to choose the character of the punishment of his sin, he said, "Let me fall now into the hand of the Lord, for very great are His mercies; but let me not fall into the hand of man." Many pray similarly when the consequences of their own acts come upon them; but *self-judgment* is lacking. There is no true repentance, only a desire to escape judgment, and confidence in the mercy of God. Judgment went forth by the sword of the angel of God. But the Lord beheld, and repented Him of the evil. The

recognition of His mercy was so far right. "It is enough, stay now thine hand," said the Lord. And the hand of the destroying angel was stayed.

God's character is immutable. He delighteth to-day, as then, in mercy. Mercy stays off the day of the execution of judgment upon the world of the ungodly. Long has the sword been outstretched. Oft has He chastened man for his sins, ever remembering mercy; but still the sword is unsheathed, hanging over the head of rebellious sinners. Tens of thousands cast themselves upon God's mercy. But is that enough? Is the day we live in a day of mere mercy, blessed as mercy is? Is the Gospel one of mercy only, though surely richest mercy is there? Read the divine record in the following verses, "And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem: then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned, and done evil indeed: but as for these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, O Lord my God, be on me, and on my father's house, but not on thy people, that they should be plagued," &c. (1 Chron. xxi. 16, 17).

This is a passage of the deepest interest. David seeing the outstretched hand, and the drawn sword, realised his guilt, and confessed it. The king and

his elders, clad in sackcloth (a sign of repentance), fell upon their faces. This was the beginning of the true way out of the great strait that he was in. He no longer talks of mercy, but utters his own condemnation before God. "*Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? Even I it is that have sinned, and done evil indeed, &c.* Let thine hand, I pray thee, O Lord God, *be on me,*" &c. David had found his true level. He owned his guilt, and that his judgment was just. That is where each sinner *must* come to be saved. Men may talk of the mercy of God from one year's end to the other. Thousands of lips may cry weekly, "Lord, have *mercy* upon us, miserable sinners," but if there is no *self-judgment* before God, there is no way out of the great strait in which as sinners we are all found. Reader, have you ever cried, "Is it not I?" "Even I it is;" "I have sinned;" "I have done evil indeed;" "Let thine hand be on me." It is a blessed moment when a soul reaches that point. It is there that God meets him.

Did the sword fall upon that self-judged man, guilty though he was? Far be the thought. Then the angel of the Lord commanded Gad (David's seer) to say to him, that David should go up and *set up an altar to the Lord, &c.* And David went up, and after paying the full cost, six hundred shekels of gold by weight, for the place, and all that was necessary for the sacrifice, he built an altar, offered the victims, and *the Lord answered by fire.*

What a lovely picture of God's way of meeting the sinner's case for His own glory! No sinner need bring his sacrifice now. God has provided One, which is the great antitype of all. On the altar of God, the cross of Calvary, Jesus offered Himself without spot, was forsaken, died and bled. He consumed the fire of judgment. God was glorified in Him. He paid the full price. The awful cost was His own life's blood.

“What, sinner, canst *thou* do?
Where, sinner, canst *thou* fly?
Eternal wrath hangs o'er *thy* head,
And judgment lingers nigh.

So Jesus died for sin,
Upon the cross He died,
God's righteousness was there displayed,
And justice satisfied.”

The outstretched sword fell upon Christ, the Holy Lamb of God. “*It is finished*,” was the dying Saviour's cry. There only can you find a shelter from God's sword of vengeance. His love to a guilty world has provided a perfect and eternal salvation for *every one that believeth*.

“And the Lord commanded the angel, and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof” (ver. 27). David's cry for mercy would never have brought that about. It was the sacrifice according to God's ordering alone that could do that. Your cry for mercy, poor Christless sinner, will never avail you, if you fail to trust in the precious blood of Christ.

God's sword of justice and judgment was sheathed in the heart of His well-beloved One, and is, therefore, sheathed now for ever for the feeblest believer in Him. Mercy it is, unbounded, full and free, but mercy flowing through righteousness, because Jesus died. Grace brings now a free salvation to the guilty and the lost. The self-judged sinner who owns his guilt and state before God, and his desert of judgment, is freed once for all through faith in Him who wrought the mighty work of eternal redemption on Calvary's cross. He lives again, the crowned and triumphant Saviour, seated on the very throne of God. No cherubim and flashing sword now guard the way to God's heavenly paradise. A thief went straight there with Christ, washed in His precious blood (Luke xxiii. 39-43). *And so may you.*

The earthly paradise is lost for ever. You may as well pursue the wind as seek one now on this sin-stricken earth. But God has opened wide the door of a new, and heavenly, and eternal one, for all who cry with David, "Is it not I?" "Even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed." Then he believed the Lord's message, and offered his sacrifice. Believe then now *on Him who offered Himself*, and the sword of Divine justice is sheathed, your judgment for ever gone, and you are before God for ever in all the acceptance of Him who sits as Man exalted on His throne. May God give *you*, dear reader, to know it *now*.

E. H. C.

"I'LL CHANCE IT!"



THESE Christian lands are flooded with the light of a threefold testimony from God. Whatever may be the disposition of man's heart toward God, the light is there, He has not left Himself without a witness. Those to whom the witness is borne are solemnly responsible, and the day is fast approaching when God will require it at their hands. Terrible will be the moment when God does this, and when no word of excuse will be found in the mouths of those who will stand condemned—self-condemned—in His holy presence.

For a moment we will look at these three witnesses, from, and of God. In creation, God has for six thousand years given a world-wide testimony of Himself in His power and glory as Creator, *and to every creature has this witness been borne.* The Word of God states this in the clearest way possible. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.* Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world" (Psa. xix. 1-6).

The hand of God and the glory of God are seen everywhere. The land and the sea, the mountain and the valley, the giant tree and the blade of

grass, the waving grain and the precious fruits, the raging storm and the quiet calm, the cold of winter and the heat of summer, the lily and the thorn, all testify of God. The heavens, with their glorious suns, moons, and stars, and depths of immensity which no telescope can penetrate, all testify of God, —of Him who by His creative word called this vast universe into being, and who by His word of power upholds everything in its appointed place. The mighty orb, and the tiny blade of grass, are alike the object of His regard, and dependent on His word for existence.

Man with this testimony from God, apart from the question of His intervention in grace to save him, is left without excuse. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so *that they are without excuse*" (Rom. i. 20). It is often said, What is to be done with the heathen? God surely will do what is just and right, and this scripture shows that, when viewed in their responsibility, they are left without excuse.

In the law given on Mount Sinai we have God's second testimony. It was an expression of God's claim upon man, and the measure of his creature responsibility. It was God requiring from man love and righteousness. God had a right to claim this from man; but when God expressed His claim in the shape of a definite law, it only brought out the deep depravity of man's nature, and all that

flowed from it. The very thing which was ordained to life was found to be unto death. Its prohibitions but served to increase man's sin by changing it into transgression! Thus it became the ministration of death and condemnation, and worked wrath toward poor fallen man, and his vain attempts to keep it only ended in utter failure.

"Now we know, that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. iii. 19, 20).

The third testimony is the blessed and wonderful revelation of God in Christ. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John i. 18).

Creation displayed the glory and handiwork of the Creator, and was the abiding testimony that God was; while the law was God demanding from man love and obedience; but neither the one nor the other was a revelation of God Himself. God remained *unrevealed* until the Son of God came, and in Him God was fully revealed, and to any sin-burdened soul coming to the blessed Lord was the Father revealed. Blessed fact! "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to

whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Then He spoke those precious words, so much blessed to souls since: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28). It is to such that He reveals the Father.

Man without God, a sinner, and guilty, is without rest. He is like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, casting up mire and dirt. How could a being made in the image and likeness of God, now fallen and away from Him, have rest? Impossible! He needs rest, and he only gets it through coming to Jesus, the revelation of the Father.

No doubt this blessed One who declared God and revealed the Father in His own person, was the One who died on the cross for sinful men, God thereby giving a testimony to the whole world of His love,—love that could provide a sacrifice in the death of Christ to meet the need of the sinner, and furnish a way whereby He *in righteousness* could save! "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). "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom" (Job xxxiii. 24).

The substance of the foregoing was spoken to an elderly man, who was entertaining infidel thoughts. In closing my remarks, I said, "Mr —, it will be an awful thing for you to go into eternity rejecting this threefold testimony from God."

After a considerable pause, he deliberately said, "*I'll chance it!*"

It was a solemn moment. There he was, an aged man, his hair and beard perfectly white, with a lifetime of mercies behind him testifying of God's goodness to him, with the light of God's threefold testimony shining on him, and God's entreaty for him to be reconciled to Him,—and yet, all most deliberately rejected!

A good while after, he died without much warning. They say that he was heard to cry for mercy. It is to be fondly hoped that he was heard, and answered. God only knows. But how fearfully solemn to treat the living God in the way he did!

Beloved reader, follow not in his steps, but, without delay, be reconciled to God, trust in the blood of Jesus, and be saved.

E. A.

TWO MEN: A CONTRAST.



HERE is a most striking proof in the book of Acts of how infinitely stronger Divine power is than Satanic power. We there read of the result of God's man (Paul the apostle), and of Satan's man (Elymas the sorcerer), being face to face.

One man was filled with the Holy Ghost, and the other was full of the devil.

One power was all for *good*, and the other was all for *evil*. When the Church at Antioch had fasted and prayed, Paul was separated and sent

forth by the Holy Ghost to preach *the Word of God*. When Paul reached Paphos, in the island of Cyprus, he found the governor, Sergius Paulus, under the influence of Elymas, the tool of Satan.

This deputy of the island, however, was *prudent* enough to call for the *right man* (Paul), and to desire to hear the *right thing* (God's Word), for it is written—"Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul (who is also called Paul), filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, and said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness, and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, *believed*, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord" (Acts xiii. 8-12). Thus the *hand of the Lord* in judgment was upon the obstructing sorcerer, but the prudent deputy, being astonished at the *doctrine of the Lord*, believed and was blessed. Now, generally speaking, every one in the universe is, more or less, either under the power of God, or under the power of Satan. Satan appears very anxious in preventing those who may be called *prudent* people from hearing and believing *the Word of God*, lest they

should get their souls saved, and that he should lose them for ever.

God's Word says, "The god of this world (Satan) hath blinded the minds of them which *believe not*, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto *them*" (2 Cor. iv. 4). Our common enemy uses various means of blinding people according to the tendencies of the natural heart. The very powers that filled Paul and Elymas are in force in this world to-day, and should not the question arise with all our readers—"Which of these powers am *I* now under or influenced by?" From time to time, and in various ways, God is pleased to show the strength of His arm, and to cause His voice to be heard to arouse souls. But *the Gospel* alone "is the power of God unto *salvation* to every one that BELIEVETH" (Rom. i. 16).

Nothing short of the Gospel will suffice. It took an earthquake to bring the Philippian jailer to his right mind, but the earthquake did not save him. Under Satan's power he would have committed suicide, but evidently feeling himself lost, and in need of a Saviour, he cried out in his distress, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" He was at once answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." He did believe, was saved, and rejoiced in the Saviour, who loved him, died for him, and who rose again.

Dear soul, if you are awakened, this is the way you may be saved.

To awaken Saul of Tarsus the Lord Jesus had to speak to him straight from heaven. Saul, who was ignorantly going against God and His saints, then believed, and received a commission direct from the Lord Jesus Himself to go to others, "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified, by faith that is in me" (Acts xxvi. 18).

Dear reader, has *your* soul yet been arrested? If not, may it please God, in His rich mercy and grace, and for His own glory, to grant that your arrest, deliverance from the power of Satan, and the salvation of your priceless soul, may be the very next things that happen to you! Our one word of warning to you is, Do not withstand God's Word, nor remain unmoved until you find yourself in Satan's prison-house—hell—where, rest assured, you will have to remain for ever and for ever!

We beseech you also to bear in mind that the *unbeliever* and the *sorcerer* alike shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone (Rev. xxi. 8). Do be encouraged not to rest till by faith you receive the blessed Saviour of sinners, who conquered Satan at Calvary's cross, and came forth mighty to save the lost. Then why not receive Him now, and ere long dwell for ever in His own blessed presence—even in the unclouded sunshine of His unchanging love and joy?

“WHAT WERE YOU THINKING OF?”



OME travellers in the desert found an unfortunate man dying of thirst. They gladly gave him water, and carefully nursed him until he had recovered. Afterwards one of his benefactors said, “Tell me, my friend, what were you thinking of as you lay alone in the desert, dying of thirst?” “*Oh!*” replied the man, “*I thought of the many drops of water which, during my life, I had thrown away.*” No doubt the poor fellow spoke the truth. It was but natural that in his distress his thoughts should revert to the time when he had enjoyed an abundant supply.

Now the Gospel offers to men and women the water of life, which will satisfy the thirst of the soul. The Lord Jesus says, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.” But let us remember that the water of life is offered only on this side of the grave. No Gospel is preached in hell to the spirits of the damned. What then will be the anguish of the man who, having passed into eternity a rejecter of Christ, finds himself shut a prisoner in the dismal chamber of despair. How will he reproach himself, as he thinks of the many times the water of life was offered him, and he refused it! Could we but descend to the gates of hell, and listen for a moment to the lamentations of the lost, we should hear the bitter but unavail-

ing cry, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." See to it, reader, that this position be not thine. Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids, until thou hast fled to Christ, and art able to say, with all believers, "We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

Perhaps the reader is saying to himself, "Salvation is what I earnestly desire. Gladly would I drink of the water of life, but I fear I have no right to do so." What is there to hinder thee? Thy sins? It is sinners that are invited. A thirsty traveller sees a fountain erected by the wayside from which flows a stream of pure water. A cup, attached by a chain to the fountain, invites the thirsty one to drink. He gazes eagerly at the water, but has he a right to drink? Looking narrowly at the fountain, he espies the words, "FOR THIRSTY TRAVELLERS." He needs no further bidding, but drinks, and is refreshed. Can you not apply this illustration to your own case, dear reader? Here is the fountain of the water of life, and you are thirsty. It bears an inscription, written in letters of gold. Come, let us read it. "WHOSOEVER WILL, LET HIM TAKE THE WATER OF LIFE FREELY" (Rev. xxii. 17). What more canst thou need? The Lord Jesus says, "I will give unto him that is athirst." Stoop down, then, and drink, if thou art thirsty.

GOD'S SALVATION AND SATAN'S COMPROMISES.



WE little realise the greatness and extent of God's salvation. It is not merely a salvation from wrath, but a salvation from sin's power. It includes clean deliverance out of the world, as well as bringing the believer into the heavenly places in Christ. It includes the past, the present, and the future, and is only complete as to the body when the Lord returns. But oh, how blessed to know that all is of grace (the free favour of God), not of works, lest any man should boast (Eph. ii. 8). As to the body we are saved by hope (Rom. viii. 24), but He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident (2 Cor. v. 5, 6). We are to be as certain of the future as of the past and present; we have boldness even in view of the day of judgment, because as Christ is, so are we in this world (1 John iv. 17).

Having said so much I desire to say a few words on two parts of this great salvation. First, as to the blood of Christ sheltering the believer from God's wrath and judgment; secondly, as to the death and resurrection of Christ delivering from sin's power, and bringing clean out of the world with all that we possess. I take as an illustration

Israel's history in Egypt (Exod. i. 15). The generation of Israelites at the time of which I am speaking was born in Egypt, under the power and dominion of a king who knew not Joseph (Exod. i. 6-8). This king oppressed them like a tyrant, wanted to throw all their male children into the river, and put the grown men under taskmasters to build for him store cities. In this state the children of Israel groaned and sighed under bitter bondage, and cried to the Lord (Exod. ii. 22-25).

Now, my reader, let me ask you, does not this picture to you the state in which you and I were born? We were born, not like Adam in the beautiful garden of Paradise, but outside the garden—exiles from God—in a world that hates Christ, and hates His people, yea, where Satan rules; in fact, we were born under the power and dominion of sin, that rules over us like a tyrant. Have you ever sighed and groaned under this bondage? Have you ever cried to God for deliverance? Alas, sinner, if you have not, you are fast asleep in your sins; slowly the serpent is winding his coils around you, whilst fascinating you with his terrible wiles; and sooner or later the death stroke will descend, and, alas, if you should awake for the first time in hell!

But to return. Besides being born under the dominion of Pharaoh, the Israelites were sinners as much as the Egyptians. Moses was raised up by a miracle as a saviour of the people. He was drawn out of the water by Pharaoh's daughter, and

adopted as her son. Thus he was a fit type of the risen Jesus raised out of death to be the Deliverer of His people (Exod. ii. 1-10). Having been rejected the first time (vers. 11-15), he flees into Midian, meets Jehovah in the wilderness, who makes Himself known to him, and sends him back into Egypt to reveal His name to the people, and to deliver them. But in what condition does he find them? They are idolaters as the Egyptians (Ezek. xx. 5-10; Exod. iii., iv., vi. 1-9).

And what is your condition, my reader? You are not only born in sin and under the power of Satan, but you are guilty because of the commission of a multitude of known sins against conscience, against the law of God; having had also the Gospel of Christ preached to you, you reject it.

Oh, how terrible is man's condition! Born in sin, committing sins without number, with the full knowledge of the day of judgment coming; and when the true Moses comes and tells of deliverance, the eyes are veiled and there is no understanding the message (Exod. vi. 9; Mark xii. 6-8).

Pharaoh refuses to let the people go, and plague after plague is sent. But as each judgment is removed, his heart is hardened more than ever. But at last he must give way, and Israel must be delivered. The question now comes in, How is this to take place? Israel is as guilty as the Egyptians, Jehovah is righteous and cannot pass over sin. If Egypt must lose her first-born by the sword of the destroying angel, so must Israel.

Else Jehovah is not righteous. But Moses is again summoned into His presence. The word is (Exod. xii.), Let each family take a lamb, kill it, take of the blood and sprinkle it on the lintel and door-posts of their houses. Then Jehovah says, When I see the blood I will pass over you, and will not suffer the destroyer to come near you. And so the lamb was killed, the blood was sprinkled, the Israelites got under the shelter, Jehovah saw the blood and passed over them, and thus they were saved from the wrath and judgment of the destroying angel (Exod. xii. 12, 13).

Sinner, are you thus saved? Have you as a poor guilty creature, seen God's Lamb slain for you? Have you seen His blood carried into the very presence of God? and have you by the acceptance of that blood, got under its shelter, so that now you know from God's own Word that you are passed over, that you are saved from wrath and judgment, through that Christ?

This is the first part of God's salvation. The sinner finds in the blood of Christ the full answer to his guilt. God's justice is satisfied; yea, His righteousness now is declared in forgiving and justifying the vilest sinner who believes in Jesus. (See Rom. iii. 23-26.)

The blood of the passover lamb set Israel right with Jehovah. He could now act righteously for them in delivering them out of Egypt. It is remarkable that the word *salvation* is not used till Exod. xiv. 13. Israel is not fully saved till brought

out of Egypt. The blood indeed had saved them from their guilt, and averted the righteous judgment of God, but Pharaoh still ruled over them, and they were still in Egypt—the land under God's judgment. The passage of the Red Sea completed their deliverance. The question now was, not how to be right with Jehovah, but how to be delivered from the condition in which they were born. The Red Sea is the answer to this. When they got to its shore, the dark waters shut them in in front, Pharaoh pursued them behind, and they had nowhere to look to but to Jehovah as their Deliverer. The latter, by opening a passage clean through, saved them. They passed on dry land right through the waters; themselves, their wives, their children, and their cattle, and stood on dry ground on the other side of the Red Sea. Pharaoh and his hosts were destroyed, and Israel sang the song of salvation (Exod. xiv., xv.).

Now this completes the picture of a sinner's salvation. Besides being guilty, he is under the power of sin. Sin has entered into the world, and death by sin. Sin reigns unto death, exerts dominion over man, pays him his dread wages, which is death (Rom. v. 12, 21, vi. 14, 23), and the anxious soul cries out for deliverance, and finds it in God through the death and resurrection of Christ (Rom. vii. 24, 25). God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by a sacrifice for sin, has condemned sin in the flesh (Rom. viii. 3). By the death and resurrection of Christ

the believer is clean delivered from Satan, sin, and the world. Christ risen is God's gift of eternal life to him (Rom. vi. 23). He stands in spirit on the resurrection side, of death, that life which he now possesses being the life of Christ who has passed through death. He reckons himself to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Jesus Christ the Lord (Rom. vi. 11).

And now, my reader, let me ask, Are you rejoicing in this full salvation? Do you understand what it means? That it means not only forgiveness of sins, but clean deliverance out of the world, as also from the power of sin and Satan? Sin is in you still, but, blessed be God, it is not on the believer! Yea, more, he stands outside it in spirit; Christ risen being now his life. Blessed be God for such a salvation, which will actually be completed as to our state only when we get bodies of glory like Jesus. But this is as certain as that we have got it by faith now. Now we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Now we are accepted. Now we are justified. Now we have everlasting life (Eph. i. 6, 7; Rom. v. 1; John iii. 36). By grace ye *are* saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God (Eph. ii.).

Now, whilst God is working in this way for the deliverance of souls, Satan is trying to hinder and, when he cannot actually stop God's power working in a soul, he makes compromises. Pharaoh made four, or tried to make them, with Moses.

First, he said, when pressed, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land (Exod. viii. 25). Jehovah's object in saving the people was to have a worshipping people. Pharaoh says, Oh, yes, worship Jehovah, but let it be in the land. If Satan sees an anxious soul he will give way a little and say, Oh, yes, it is well to be religious; you can worship God by going to church, look at the numbers that go. And he gets a poor soul to make a compromise, and instead of taking the three days' journey of the death and resurrection of Christ into the wilderness, he joins the church perhaps as an unconverted worshipper, worshipping Jehovah in the land. But Moses knows this will not do. The lamb was an abomination to the Egyptians, as Christ, the material of worship, is an abomination to the world. The worship of Jehovah could only go on outside the bounds of the Red Sea. The waves of that sea must roll between the saved people and Egypt, ere they can worship Jehovah acceptably. Ah, sinner, take care, Satan will make this compromise with you, but know this that the Father can only accept you as a worshipper on the ground of the death and resurrection of Christ. You must come to God through Christ, and so be separated from a world on which judgment is written, and it is only then your worship can be accepted. (Comp. Exod. viii. 25-28, with Heb. x. 19-25.)

Now Pharaoh makes his second compromise, Yes, go, he says, but don't go very far away. Let

your worship be as near me as possible; worship Jehovah, but have a little bit of my dominion too. Sometimes we meet a professor who has taken this bait. He professes to worship God as a saved sinner, and all the week through he is serving sin. Professor of Christianity, beware! Alas, how little power must Christ have over your heart to allow you to do this (Exod. viii. 28).

In Exodus x. we have Pharaoh's last two efforts to keep the children of Israel from altogether leaving Egypt. In verse 8 he says, Go, serve the Lord. But who are they that shall go? Moses said, We will go with our young and our old, with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds, will we go, for we must hold a feast unto the Lord. And he said unto them, Let the Lord be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones, look to it, for evil is before you. *Not so*, go now, ye that are men, and serve the Lord, for that ye did desire. That is to say, Pharaoh would let the men go, but keep the wives in Egypt, knowing perfectly well that soon the men would return if their wives and children were left behind.

And now, anxious sinner, I implore you to make no compromise with Satan in regard to this. If you are a married man and have children, it is the Lord's purpose to save all. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house (Acts xvi. 31). If you are determined to be saved, make no compromise with Satan; put your wife and children on the same ground as yourself, by faith.

I knew a man in Paris who received Christ, and his first thought was, "I have left my wife behind in London, and she is unconverted. It will never do for me to be going one way and she another." And so back he started to London, arrived at his house at about three A.M., got his wife up, told her of his conversion, got her on her knees with him, and they read together and prayed together, and on the third day her heart bowed to the name of Jesus. Oh, man, be in earnest, eternity is in question, and if you were to make a start, and your wife remained in the world, the next thing might be you have given up Christ for the wife, and have been dragged back to the world. God's salvation is not only for you, but for your wife and children. See that you get them all on the platform of God's salvation, through the death and resurrection of Christ, if not actually, yet by faith, and let nothing keep you in a world on which God has written Judgment.

Pharaoh's last compromise we read of in Exodus x. 24-26: "Go ye, serve the Lord," he says, "only let your flocks and herds remain; let your little ones also go with you." Satan must give way before the power of God acting in a soul, and his last trap for a man is, "Oh, yes, go and be saved yourself; no harm too, if your children are, but the business of the world must go on in the world's way. Let your cattle and your flocks be in the world, and yourself live outside it." Ah, wily tempter, well have you succeeded in many a poor soul in this way. They have run well for a time,

they have professed to be saved by Christ, but their property was not put on a death and resurrection platform; it did not go out with them through the way of the Red Sea, and sooner or later they cast a longing eye back to Egypt. It is no harm, say they, to make money, put it out at the highest rate of interest, speculate as the world, get rich in the world's way, advertise, and tell lies in their advertisements, blazing their names abroad in large letters for the world's patronage. Ah, worldly professor, what is the secret of this? You have professed to come out of Egypt, but your shop, your business, your herds, your cattle are in Egypt. Satan has well succeeded with you: and there you are with all your profession, a server of God and mammon. Oh, may God awake you.

If you are a real Christian, see that henceforth you do your business on the platform of a dead and risen Man. Devote your property, your all to God. Devote it for your own need as a pilgrim, and for the need of the other pilgrims journeying along with you to the heavenly Canaan, and to the service of the Lord; then shall you know and enjoy the full extent of God's salvation, you will enjoy your heavenly Leader, who can make no compromise with Satan; and you will be sheltered from the fires of Sodom, which must burn up your sons and daughters and property, if you, as a Lot, cleave to the world, though you yourself should be saved, yet so as by fire (Gen. xix.; 1 Cor. iii. 18).

THE UNSEEN WRITER.



WHEN Bishop Latimer was on trial for his life, while speaking in self-defence he heard the scratch of a pen behind a curtain. At once it flashed across his mind that every word he uttered was being written down by an unseen penman.

It is thus with us. Though we see no writer, with pen in hand and inkhorn by his side, yet every idle word we speak, and every sinful action of our life, are recorded in God's books with unfailing accuracy. When the unblessed dead stand for judgment before the great white throne, each person shall find to his dismay that every sin has been taken account of by God.

Well might David pray, "Blot out my transgressions." But can sins be blotted from God's books? Yes. The Scripture saith, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." Does the reader inquire, "How is this possible?" "Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." He suffered, the just for the unjust. "The blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin." When the guilty sinner trusts the atoning work of Christ, God says, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sin" (Isa. xliii. 25).

C. H.

"REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE."

(GEN. xix. ; LUKE xvii. 28-37.)



HE 32nd versè of Luke, xvii. "Remember Lot's wife," is the Lord's solemn comment on Genesis xix.; and there is something intensely grave about this word of the Lord's.

"Remember Lot's wife." What about Lot's wife? She stands the everlasting witness of the folly of not obeying the word of the Lord, the folly of a sort of middle path, when God's word has declared what is coming on the scene. Lot's wife is the picture of many souls: they would like to be saved, but they have not reached the point of safety, have not reached the spot where there is safety. The Lord says to such, "*Remember Lot's wife.*" Did she not want to be saved? Yes. Did she not wish to escape destruction? Yes. Did she not make a show of escaping it? Yes. *Did she escape it?* No! "*Remember Lot's wife.*" She *might* have been saved, but she was not saved, and yet she was not overtaken by the judgment of the cities; not one drop of that liquid fire fell on Lot's wife: no, she was cut off, but not by the judgment which fell on the cities.

There are two points, I believe, come out about Lot's wife: she was *unbelieving*, and she was *disobedient*; and, dear unsaved reader, is not this what *you* are? Have you believed God? Have you

obeyed the Gospel? You know you have not! "Remember Lot's wife."

Because of her indifference, because of her cold-heartedness, she was turned into a pillar of salt. She was not real: she appeared to leave the city, she appeared to be going to the mountain, but her heart was in the city: she did not really believe in the judgment coming; she said in her heart, "I see no sign of judgment coming: I will look back and see if what those men said is true." She looked back, and was turned into a pillar of salt.

Did the judgment come? Yes! Lot's sons and the cities of the plain were all destroyed. God is not mocked! And the Lord says, that "as it was in the days of Lot, so shall it be when the Son of Man is revealed." This is not the Lord's coming into the air for His people, but His coming with them to the earth for the pre-millennial judgment.

The last act of the world towards Christ was to nail Him on a cross between two malefactors. The last the world saw of Christ was, *dead* between two thieves! Did they not see Him when He rose from the dead? No! Did they not see Him in resurrection? No! Have they seen Him in glory? No! Faith has; but the world *last* saw Him on the cross, to which, with wicked hands, they had nailed Him; it will see Him *next*, in the day of which Luke xvii. speaks, when He comes again in judgment, when He puts His hand to His strange work of judgment.

Do you know, my friend, there is judgment

coming? The world is like a murderer between the passing of his sentence and the execution of it; and what is such? A condemned felon, only waiting the moment when, on the scaffold, the red-handed murderer shall expiate his crime. The world is like that. Its condition is fixed. But what comes in between the sentence and its execution? A way of escape! You who have not taken that way of escape, "Remember Lot's wife." She was one who knew there was a way of escape, and did not take it! The angels dragged her even out of Sodom, but that did not save her from the judgment of God. She was dragged out of Sodom, but she never reached *the mountain*. Half way will not do; there is no safety half way, either for Lot's wife or for you.

We bring the message of judgment, judgment coming, but before it falls there is a way of escape for you, if you will take it; for judgment is coming, surely coming.

You may say, "I do not think I shall live to see the world judged." Very likely not, because the Lord may do with you as He did with Lot's wife, cut you down, before the judgment comes. The Lord does not say, "Remember Sodom," but "Remember Lot's wife," the woman who might have been saved but for her own awful folly, and who was very nearly saved, but—*she was not saved!* Cut down by God's hand in judgment, because she did not believe the message, how solemn is the word, "Remember Lot's wife."

Did she not *hope* to be saved? Yes! Did she not expect to reach a safe place with her husband and daughters? Yes! Did she reach it? *No!* She was cut down, because there was no faith, either in the judgment coming, or in the way of escape.

We read in Genesis xix. 12, "And the men said unto Lot, "Hast thou here any besides? Son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place." Are you the only one of your family? Have you any still unsaved? "Bring them out, says God; "get them out of the world, break the fatal spell that binds them to the world of the dead, loose the chain that holds them, bring them out to Jesus." He wants your faith to pierce the clouds, wing its way to the very throne of God, and there leave your loved ones at the feet of Jesus.

The evangelist's desire is to drag you out of the world to Christ. "Out of the world?" you say: Yes, right out, for if your heart is out of the world, you are morally outside the scene. A Christian brought to know Christ, having the joy of the Lord's love in the heart, is entirely outside the present scene, or if occupied with it, is only so in order to get souls out of it.

How do I get my heart out of the world? I get a glimpse of Christ. I see Him before the day of the execution of the coming judgment doing a work for *me*, whereby *I* can escape from the coming judgment, and then going back to the glory; my heart gets attracted to Him there, where He is, and

drawn completely away from the world. Home, *then*, is the place where He is who has won my heart, and this scene becomes a wilderness to me, because He is not in it.

Before God judges He always warns; and have not *you*, my friend, had many a warning note falling on your ear? Look at the grace of God in this chapter. The angels find their way to Sodom, they are, if I may so speak, evangelists to the house of Lot, and while declaring what is coming on the scene, they point out a place of safety.

And what has God done? Before the day of judgment falls on the world, His own Son has stepped in, and done a work on the cross, whereby the sinner may escape.

There *is* a way of escape, a spot of safety, and God works, and the Holy Ghost works, and His servants work, to try to get you on the road that leads to that place of safety.

The very fact of God's sending a Saviour is the irrefragable proof that man needed salvation, and how shall we escape if we make light of Christ, if we "*neglect so great salvation*"?

Have you not heard the message often, and yet you are unconverted? I would fain, like the angels, lay "hold upon your hand," and bring you forth, for you are, like Lot, a lingerer still. You do not deny that judgment is coming, and yet you linger. What has seized you, to be *any* longer careless about your soul? Put the Bible in the fire, and I could understand your conduct; but

tell me you read the Word of God, tell me you believe Scripture—believe the tale of the blood-shedding and death of the Son of God—tell me you believe the tale of the day of judgment coming, and I cannot understand you. Oh, wake up, wake up, be no longer careless! If you merely say you believe Scripture, and are in the world and of the world, depend upon it, the world knows very well who belongs to it, and God knows also. God knew that Lot did not belong to that defiled scene—Sodom, and “delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked.”

The angels said to Lot, “Up, get you out;” and to you, unsaved soul, I say, “Up, get you out.” Men talk of the progress of the world. Where is the progress? “Oh,” you say, “look at science.” Yes, I grant it. “And look at the inventions, the improvements.” I grant it, but are children more dutiful? Are servants more faithful? Are masters and mistresses more considerate and careful? Are husbands more tender? Are wives more prudent? No! no! The world *is* making great progress, but to what? I will tell you. To judgment! To judgment! Did not Sodom progress? Yes! and all of a sudden it was judged; and “As it was in the days of Lot, thus shall it be in the day that the Son of Man is revealed.” Then, in fancied security, they reared their heads proudly aloft, and defied God, and so they do now. But the judgment came *then*, and it will surely come on this scene in which you are.

But that judgment is not what I now press so.

Lot's wife never saw the judgment; she was cut off, but not by Sodom's judgment; and you, halting, unbelieving sinner, "*Remember Lot's wife.*"

Lot's sons-in-law did not believe the word about coming judgment; they seemed to say, "If you are going to leave the city—give up the world—we are not;" and they remained, and tasted the judgment they courted.

"Up, get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city," says Lot. But what thought the sons-in-law? They thought he was a fool, and was playing the fool for their amusement: he seemed to them as one that mocked. It was not they who mocked him, but "he seemed as one that *mocked* unto his sons-in-law." The very idea of *their* city being overthrown was ridiculous, for Sodom had never been more busy, never more prosperous; the sun was shining, and there was no sign of coming judgment. They refused the message that told them of the way of escape, and perished in its overthrow. It was sheer unbelief, and many a time has not the preacher seemed to you as one that mocked? But search the Scriptures, and see if these things are true or no.

I am not mocking you, I am warning you, delivering my own soul too, and if you sink into the lake of fire—you *will* if you do not come to Christ—you can never say in its depths that you were not warned. Oh, flee to Jesus, flee to the mountain, "escape for thy life."

Perhaps you say, "I would rather stay where I

am." Very well, but you can never say you were not warned. Do you say, "Christians are not consistent"? I own it; but are God's words true? It will be no consolation to you by and by, that you did not believe because Christians were not consistent.

Arise! flee for thy life, flee to the Lord now, lest thou mayest never have another opportunity.

"Oh, but," you say, "you do not expect the Lord so soon, do you?" I do expect Him every moment, and I will tell you what, if He comes *to-night*, to-morrow you will believe. "Believe what?" Believe the devil's gospel, for the devil has a gospel. Oh yes, you may yet be a believer, but you will believe a lie. "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. ii.).

I have no doubt part of the devil's gospel to you will be, "You are all right." Satan will say, "You are getting on all right, now you have got rid of these troublers."

The troublers are taken up to meet Christ, and the world will go on just as before, but no more troubled by these preachers. Sons and daughters no more troubled by converted parents, brothers no more troubled by converted sisters. No! the troublers are gone, the fools, the madmen in your eyes, are all gone; and you are left to enjoy a Satanic, balmy calm, untroubled by anything about your soul—*till, till* one day the bubble of fancied security bursts, and swift destruction falls, and there is *no* escape.

Oh, arise! flee now! now while you may. Have you lingered long? delay no longer. The Lord would lay His hand on you and bring you forth. *Can you linger still?* You that have hesitated—have not decided—have not been in earnest about your soul hitherto, oh, hesitate not, linger not, lest you taste judgment, before the day of judgment. "Remember Lot's wife," lest the mercy of God be too long disregarded, and He show no longer mercy, but judgment.

Thank God you are still in life, still here where the Gospel is preached; if you had died yesterday unsaved, you would have been *in hell to-day!* You that are undecided, impressed about the truth, half decided, but not quite, oh, "Remember Lot's wife." Will you refuse the Lord's hand, that would touch you, and drag you now to Jesus?

Look! the angels drag them outside the city, but outside the city is not safety, out of the world is not *safety*, to have broken with old habits is not safety, to make good resolutions is not safety; you must get to the *mountain*, get to Christ.

The mountain, I take it, is the same place where Abraham had communion with God (*see* Gen. xviii.). I believe it typifies Christ—Christ the only place of safety, Christ God's salvation, Christ risen from the dead, Christ the sinner's friend. Hear God's exhortation to you, O soul—"Escape for thy life." Hear also God's warning word to the unsaved soul, "Remember Lot's wife." Who bids thee be warned

by her—take warning by her solemn end? The Lord! They are His own words.

She started on the road, but she never reached the mountain. Nothing can save your soul but Christ; anxiety will not save you, desire to be saved will not save you. She got out of the city, but she never got salvation. She turned round to see if there was any truth in what she had heard, and if she might not yet get back to Sodom, and she stands the witness of the righteous judgment of God on a soul that was not real, was not true, did not with her heart believe the message; and tell me, shall it be with you, Christ and the mountain top, and safety, or judgment on the plain, *eternal* judgment? Do you say, "I will think about it, I will think over what you say"? Then to you I say again, "Remember Lot's wife," one that looked back when God had said, "Escape to the mountain."

Reach Christ you must; it is not how near have you got, but have you got *to Him*? I do not know how near Lot's wife was to Zoar; she might have been just outside the gates, and her husband going in, but she never went in; never, never.

And I do not know where you are: you may be but two inches from Christ, but let me tell you, if you are but one hair's-breadth from Christ, that hair's-breadth will ensure your eternal damnation; you and Lot's wife will be in the same case, eternal monuments of the righteous judgment of God on

the outrageous folly of vacillation—you *might* have tasted salvation, but you *did not*.

God lingers over you, calls you, would drag you forth, points you to the mountain top, points you to Christ; "Stay not," He says, "do not halt or hesitate, there is no place of safety, peace, or security, till you have got to that spot, the risen Christ in glory." You say, "Did not Lot get to Zoar?" Yes, and he got safety there, but he did not get *tranquillity*; he had *security*, but he had not *peace*, he had doubts and fears in Zoar, so, soon, he went up to the mountain.

Going into Zoar is like people who desire to be saved, but who want a little bit of the world too. "Is it not a little one?" says Lot, *i.e.*, he is half-hearted. Must I make a clean cut? he says.

It is a sorrowful thing to be in Zoar. Zoar is a kind of ditch, into which the devil likes people to fall, who really are converted. He likes them to take a bit of the world with them. "It does not do," he tells them, "to be too true, too out and out for Christ."

Oh, my friend, escape for thy life and flee to the mountain; never rest till you reach Christ. *Look not behind*, "Remember Lot's wife." Smoking corpses, a burning city, and ashes throughout all the plain, were the only things that remained to speak of the utter folly of disbelieving the warning of God. I said the *only* things, but there was yet another. Had a traveller drawn near to Sodom that day, a strange sight would have met his eye

—a pillar of salt! Charred? No! Blackened? No! No sign of Sodom's fiery judgment had touched the Pillar of Salt. No! Calling attention by its whiteness, it stood the witness of the folly of going half way, of being *half persuaded, almost* decided, but only *almost*. "Remember Lot's wife."

What turned her back? Love of the city she had left. Oh! whoever you are, decide for Christ now. Supposing the Lord were to shut the door to-night, where would *you* be? You, who think you would like to be a Christian *some day*,—think it is a good thing to be a Christian,—mean to be one *some day*,—to you, I say, "Remember Lot's wife."

Ye halters, ye undecided, ye who know the claims of the world, think of her, on her way to salvation but never reaching it—having her back for a moment turned on the world, but turning round again. Let me beseech you, decide *now*: the way is open, the Lord calls thee, the evangelist beseeches thee, the Church urges thee, God would welcome thee; turn round, own your sin, confess your guilt, acknowledge your danger. Come to Jesus!

He will receive you, pardon you: you shall know now His salvation, know security, and tranquillity likewise. There remains but one thing for you to do, get to Christ, reach Christ, believe on Christ.

Oh, couldst thou bear, through the long, the morningless night of eternity, to be the counterpart of Lot's wife? And what is that? A person

who was lost within sight of salvation, who went down to the pit passing by the open door of heaven on the road. Oh, do not risk such a fate! Come now—turn now, believe in Jesus now!

May this lead you who are unsaved, so to remember Lot's wife, that you shall never be like her. If I remember her, I shall take good care never to be like her. The Lord give you to hear God's word to you, and to believe on His Son.

And for us who are Christians, if there is but one day more before the return of our Lord, may we know what it is to act like these angels, to seek to drag those whom we know out of the world, and to draw them to Christ.

Unsaved reader, wouldst thou "remember Lot's wife"?

"Then linger not in all the plain,

Flee for thy life, the mountain gain!

Look not behind, make no delay!

Oh! speed thee, speed thee, on thy way.

Haste, traveller, haste!"

If thou slightest the warning of that "pillar of salt," thy future is thus solemnly pictured:—

"'Almost persuaded,' harvest is past!

'Almost persuaded,' doom comes at last!

'Almost' cannot avail;

'Almost' is but to fail;

Sad, sad, that bitter wail—

'Almost' *but lost!*"

“GOOD-BYE, JOHN;” OR, SEPARATION FOR EVER.



POOR, old couple was obliged in their last days to enter the workhouse. Fifty years they had lived together, and loved each other. Happy had been their married life, and now all their pleadings were, that they might end their days together. But no, the workhouse rules were like the laws of the Medes and Persians—unalterable; so they were separated.

In the morning, when the warder went to the old man's ward, he found him still sitting in the chair he had left him in the night before—his clothes untouched and unremoved. But a closer look into his face revealed the solemn fact, that he was dead. The separation from his loving wife had broken his heart.

Meanwhile, in the female ward sat the old woman unconscious of her husband's death. Working her body backwards and forwards, insensible to everything around her, she was repeating—as if in imagination she was still parting from her old husband—“Good-bye, John; good-bye, John;” all the while endeavouring to shake an invisible hand. Reason had tottered from its throne. There she sat doting, moaning, and fretting, day and night, saying, “Good-bye, John.”

Oh! dear, unsaved reader, it is hard to part

company *now* with our nearest and best friends, but to part company *hereafter* is worse. Oh! the everlasting separations, that will then take place, no pen can describe, no tongue declare.

Eternity with its abundant harvest of joy or sorrow is the end of every man's course. We are not left to speculate about it, but must bend to the truth of God, and acknowledge Him to be the only-wise God—King of eternity (Jer. x. 10).

As it is His exclusive prerogative to know the future, so plainly has He spoken about it. Hear His challenge, "Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods" (Isa. xli. 23). As for Himself, He can say, "I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning" (Isa. xlii. 9).

Be not deceived, I beseech you; eternal realities are stamped in every page of God's blessed Word. Nothing can demand more solemn thought than the graphic drawing back of the curtain of eternity by the hand of the Son of God, as depicted in Luke xvi. It does not suit the theology of the day. Men would extinguish the flames of hell, to-day, *if they could*. Christ not only depicts the poor, beggar-man, Lazarus, in heaven, but also his rich neighbour, who never cared for the poor at his gate, now in hell, and in torments. You may say, It is only a figure. Ah! it is the awful figure of a fact, and facts are stubborn things. Think not, that the lips of the incarnate Son of God used the philosophy of language merely to excite

curiosity. Christ, the Son of God, with His own hand has drawn the picture. What memories crowd in upon the mind of the lost in hell! No drop of water is granted them—the awful gulf is fixed for ever.

Oh! you, who are living godless lives—religious it may be, but without Christ—beware. There may be those, whose eyes you closed in death—you wept at their grave may be—who are now tormented by memories of the guilty past, you spent together, and filled with longings that *your* soul might be saved.

There is *now* pardon, peace, and eternal life to be found in Christ. Oh! trust Him, and trust *now*. Soon all must be settled and time shall be lost in eternity, and, if unsaved, you will then know the reality of the loss of all the blessings of the Gospel of Christ now preached to you.

W. N.

A SAVIOUR FOR ALL.



N Matthew ix. 1, we read that Jesus entered into a ship, passed over the sea, and came into His own city. Then follows the account of several remarkable instances of the Lord's wondrous mission of mercy among men, setting forth many of the blessed truths of the Gospel.

Firstly, men bring to Him *a poor, helpless, palsied*

man; and, *seeing their faith*, the Lord said, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." What a precious word of encouragement for the Lord's servants to-day to bring poor helpless sinners in the depth of their need before Him! He always meets faith. Here it was more than met. They looked for *temporal* healing for the palsied one. That he received, but something far better first, *the plenary forgiveness of sins*. The Son of Man had power on earth to forgive. The Son of Man in glory has power to forgive to-day. Are *you* forgiven? Would that all the Lord's people were more earnest in bringing sinners *without strength* into the presence of the Lord Jesus. It is "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6). Faith will always be occupied in this blessed work. And what joy for the one who hears *His voice*—"Thy sins are forgiven" (Luke vii. 48).

Jesus passed from thence, and *He saw a man*. This was one *Matthew*, occupied at his daily work. "*Follow me*," says a new Master. And without a moment's hesitation, he arose and followed Him. It is a beautiful instance of faith. Matthew neither reasoned nor asked questions. The Master's voice called with authority. It spoke with power in his soul. The sheep heard the Shepherd's voice. "Follow me." That was enough. It was a call of grace, and it met with its immediate response in the soul of Matthew, and he left his daily toil as a tax-gatherer to follow One who was hitherto a perfect

stranger to him. That Stranger was the Son of God! Blessed call! Blessed pathway! Sinner, have *you* heard that voice? Have those words of the blessed Son of God sounded from the heights of glory in the depths of your soul, "*Follow me*"? You have followed the world long enough, and if you follow it another step, it may prove the fatal one, and hell be your portion for ever. But if you hear His voice, and follow Him, your certain goal is glory with Himself.

Surrounded next with publicans and sinners, the Lord spake those memorable words, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Alas! how many to-day, as then, know not that they are sick. Content with a form of godliness, and their own righteousness, they have never learnt their *need of Christ*. But He came not to call the righteous, but *sinners to repentance*. These are they who learn their need of Him. It is the sick who want the physician. Never did *He* leave a sick one unhealed who came to *Him*. Sin-stricken sinner, your disease is deadly. Every human remedy is valueless. It is the healing virtue of the precious blood of Christ you need. Through *faith in His blood* you may be healed to-day and for ever (Rom. iii. 25). Will you trust therein?

In verse 16 our Lord shows plainly in figure that what *you* are is past all mending, and past use. Put a new piece of cloth in an old garment, and the rent will be made worse. Put new wine into old leathern bottles, and the bottles perish. Man has

gone away from God since the fall, and his case is beyond remedy. Patch him up as you may, he still goes to the bad. The flesh is past mending, and utterly useless. "*Ye must be born anew*" (John iii. 7). New wine is put into new bottles. We *all* need a new bottle. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. We need a new nature; God gives it. Thus it is that we receive all the blessing and joy connected with His kingdom.

Thereafter comes a certain ruler to Him, and worships Him. The poor man's little daughter is dead. His heart is full of grief. But he has heard of Jesus, and in simple faith he comes to Him. She is "*even now dead*," says he, "but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she *shall live*." Such faith as that was never misplaced. The blessed Lord is at once at his disposal. He arose and followed him.

But ere He reached his house, the healing virtues of His blessed Person flow out to another. A poor suffering woman, whose life for twelve long weary years has been going from her, comes behind, and touches the hem of His garment—"For she said within herself, If I may but touch His Garment, I shall be whole." Jesus knew what she thought, and that she had touched; and she hears His gracious voice, "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole." And she *was made whole* from that hour. Is there less virtue in His glorious Person to-day? Is there a sinner to-day,

who is sinking rapidly into the grave, who longs for the healing of his soul? Touch, oh, touch but the hem of His garment in faith, and *thou too shalt be made whole*; whole of the awful plague of sin. His is no half-and-half remedy. Your faith may be small, but it is not *the strength* of your touch. Nay, but *if you do but touch*, all the virtue that is in yon blessed risen Saviour is yours. He has wrought the mighty work of redemption, and lives to make sinners whole. Come to Him in simple faith, and *you shall be made whole*.

And Jesus came into the ruler's house. The minstrels and people make a noise. But all they may do can neither wake the dead, nor hide the deep solemnity of death. But the Lord of life and glory has entered the death chamber. "*Give place, for the maid is not dead but sleepeth.*" Give place to Jesus, the Son of God! Ah, no, there is no place here for Him in the eyes of a blind world. And in the presence of death, and in His own blessed Presence, He who is the life, *they laughed Him to scorn*. But when they were put forth with their minstrelsy and noise, *He went in*, and took her by the hand, and *the maid arose*.

Sinner, *give place*! The Son of God has been refused, but He is seated on the throne of God to-day. He alone can bestow life. An ungodly world with its minstrelsy and noise may laugh Him to scorn, yet does He give life to the dead to-day. Dead *we all* are, dead to God. But He came that we might have life, and that abundantly. "Verily,

verily, I say unto you, He hath 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).

And Jesus departed thence, and *two blind men* followed Him. They were blind, but in earnest to get sight. "Son of David, have *mercy* on us," they cry. It was the cry of a deep felt need. Did ever the true cry for mercy fall in vain upon His ear? Impossible! But as yet He answers not. Their faith is tested. He went into a house, and there they come to Him. Then said He to them, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" They said unto Him, "Yea, Lord." Then touched He their eyes, saying, "*According to your faith* be it unto you." And their eyes were opened.

Reader, are you one blindly following after Jesus, feeling your need of sight, and crying for mercy? Come face to face with Him, now while you may. He says to you, "*Believe ye?*" Do you answer, "*Yea, Lord?*" No one can answer thus in faith, and remain blind. He has divine power and He opens sinners' eyes, and He turns from darkness to light *all who believe on Him*. How blessed the portion of him who sees beauty in Christ in the midst of this poor blind world!

As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a dumb man, *possessed with a devil*. And the devil was cast out, and he spake. The Son of God has *power over demons*. No power of the enemy can withstand Him. Whether it is the soul's need

of forgiveness, the body's need of healing, death, or the devil, He is superior to all, and has power to meet every need. Some stray reader of these lines may have been led on for years by the devil, loud in blasphemy and wickedness, but dumb in all praise to God. In Jesus you will find One who can meet even *your* need. No case is hopeless, whilst Christ is ministering grace. *We would bring you to Him.* You have found Satan's service hard bondage, we doubt not. Christ *can* deliver you, and *will* deliver you, if you only have to do with Him. Now is the time. Delivered by divine power, by faith in His blest name, your mouth too, like tens of thousands, will be henceforth opened to praise His ever-gracious name.

And Jesus went far and wide, preaching, teaching, healing, and compassionating the multitude.

Reader, what is your need?

Are you longing for forgiveness?

"*Through this man* is preached unto you forgiveness, and by him *all* that believe are justified from *all* things" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

Are you occupied with your daily toil?

Jesus says to you, "*Follow me.*"

Are you sick of sin?

Christ, the great Physician, healeth now all who come to Him.

Are you trying to put yourself right?

"Ye must be born anew" (John iii. 7).

Are you trembling, with life rapidly leaving you, eternity before you?

Believe on Him, and you shall be made whole
 Are you aware that before God you are dead?
 If you hear the voice of *the Son of God*, you
 will pass from death unto life.

Are you blind, and needing mercy?

"Look, ye blind, that ye may see," says the
 prophet (Isa. xlii. 18); "*Look unto me*, and be ye
 saved" (Isa. xlv. 22).

Are you trembling under Satan's power?

Christ has vanquished him. *Have to do with
 Him*, and He will make you free.

And if the Son shall make you free, then are ye
free indeed (John viii. 36).

Whatever your case, none can meet it but One,
 Jesu, the Son of God; and He will meet it per-
 fectly, now, and for ever.

E. H. C.

YOU MUST MEET GOD.



HERE are but two places where God can
 be met by the sinner. The first is the
 cross of Calvary, and the second the
 throne of judgment. If you meet Him
 at the first, you are, like the dying thief,
 fitted for His presence on high; if at
 the second, the great white throne, you are con-
 demned for ever.

God is met in richest grace at Calvary; He is seen
 in the execution of eternal judgment when seated on

the throne. Now, the cross, or rather He who died thereon, is the point of contact, the meeting-place, between an infinitely holy God and a poor guilty sinner. It is there that His judgment against sin is borne, there that the sinner is saved.

And so we read in Rom. iii. 26, "That he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." At one and the same place these two mighty acts are accomplished. There the blessed Lord Jesus drank the cup of wrath against sin to its deepest depth, exhausting it completely and draining it to the satisfaction and glory of God in such a way, that, *in perfect justice*, He can bless the guiltiest soul that, through grace, believes in Jesus. We may well thank God for this.

Now, the claims of justice must necessarily be first settled. Apart from that an act of clemency would be one of injustice. Debt must be paid before an acquittal can be, correctly, given.

But the death of Christ has met those claims, and paid those debts, so that justice may sheathe her sword, or, better still, keep it drawn in defence of "him that believeth in Jesus." God, in strictest justice, needs no more than the *blood of Jesus*; and the sinner, in greatest guilt, is cleansed from all sin by faith in the same.

It is He whom God "hath set forth to be a propitiation (a mercy-seat, or a meeting-place) through faith in his blood" (Rom. iii. 25).

Hence it is that precious blood, which at once quenches the judgment fire, and cleanses the guilty

conscience, leaving God just, and the believer justified.

What a victory! How divine the scheme! How perfect the result!

That is the first meeting-place. Dear reader, have you met God there? If not, be assured of a present welcome. Bring all your guilt to that blood, and find in God your blessed Justifier.

Failing the cross, there remains but "the great white throne" as your dread place of meeting God.

There time is over,—the dead are raised; the throne is "great," for the issues are enormous; it is "white," for the verdict is unimpeachable. The sentence is, "the lake of fire—the second death." No blood can quench the fires of that judgment; no resurrection relieve from the bonds of that second death. The issues are eternal!

It may serve people nowadays to deny the eternity of punishment, and to minimise the gravity of sin; to assert that the death of the Son of God was not atoning, and that love could not punish for ever.

Yet sophistry or assertion, or sentimentalism of this nature, is a culpable trifling with truth, and only a spreading of falsehood.

He who died under judgment, was the Son of God. He died for sins atoningly. The sacrifice needed to be infinite, because the demerit of sin was infinite.

Infinite demerit was met by an infinite sacrifice —God's own blessed Son, become a Man that He

might die. Failing that infinite sacrifice (and faith in it), the doom of the sinner is eternal.

The three hang together—infinite demerit, an infinite sacrifice, or an infinity of judgment.

Flee, dear reader, from such a doom.

J. W. S.

THE TWO WAYS TO ETERNITY.



READER, thou art hasting to eternity, as swiftly as time can carry thee. On which road art thou travelling? There are two. Art thou with *the many*, treading the broad way leading to destruction? or art thou with *the few*, on the narrow way leading to life? The end

of the broad way is the lake of fire—hell,—with all its unutterable woes and anguish, its weepings, and wailings, and gnashings of teeth, its never-dying worm, and its torments day and night, for ever and ever! The end of the narrow way is glory; heaven, with its fulness of joy and its pleasures for evermore!

Dost thou reply, "I hope I shall go to heaven. I hope the many will be there, and the few in hell?" Reader, *be not deceived*: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and *many* there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way,

which leadeth unto life, and *few* there be that find it" (Matt. vii. 13, 14).

Hoping will not do; eternal issues are at stake; thy safety, the salvation of thy soul, is in question. Dost thou say, "I am doing the best I can"? If that be thy hope of salvation, thou art on the broad way. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. xiv. 12). Thou can'st *never* get to heaven by thy doings. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight" (Rom. iii. 20).

Conversion is a *reality*. Thou art a *sinner*: "All have sinned" (Rom. iii. 23). Thou art *lost*: "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are *lost*: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4). Dost thou confess thou art a *sinner*? There is a Saviour for thee: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*" (1 Tim. i. 15). Dost thou feel thou art *lost*? "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was *lost*" (Luke xix. 10). Art thou *ungodly*? "Christ died for the *ungodly*" (Rom. v. 6). Hast thou laboured to get right; is thy load of sins heavy? "Come unto me," says the blessed Lord Jesus, "all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28). Art thou thirsting for

salvation? "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isa. lv. 1). "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17).

There are two paths, as it were, along the broad way—the dirty path and the clean path. Some tread the one, and some the other. It may be *thou* art not on the dirty path,—openly wicked, a liar, a drunkard, a thief; but on the clean path of the broad way—the more fashionable and popular in these days—a lover of the pleasures of the world, its balls, its theatres, and its thousand allurements; but withal *religious*; thy seat seldom vacant at church or chapel, a Sunday school teacher, a district visitor, a patron of religion—*yet unsaved, without Christ*.

Remember, at the end of the broad way is a precipice, and who shall say how near thou mayest be to the brink, and that another step may not plunge thee into the very vortex of eternal torment! Think of it; put it not aside. God pleads with thee. Thou mayest never have another opportunity. "He that, being often reprovèd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. xxix. 1). Mark, "*suddenly*."

THE CENTENARIAN.

A WORD TO THE AGED.



T is comparatively rare to meet with any who exceed the allotted span of three-score years and ten, for even when four-score has been attained, "their pride is labour and vanity." The few exceptions to early mortality only prove how death reigns, and that the days of the creature are "few and evil." When sojourning one summer on the Mainland of Orkney, we heard of a very old man, said to be over a century. Our host made mention of him as he helped us with our baggage to his farmhouse, and I at once asked, "Is he on the Rock?" The farmer, however, could not answer for that, neither could he answer for his own security from the wrath to come; so we felt a great desire to see and probe the ancient sinner. By the way, dear reader, are you like unto the wise man who digged deep and founded his house upon a rock, which, when the floods came and the wind beat against it, stood firm because it had a sound foundation? (Matt. vii. 25.) Christ is that foundation, who passed through death for you (1 Cor. iii. 11). One who had lived only for self and this poor earth was heard to cry out, when in the grasp of death, "Oh, for a foundation!" God grant that it may not be so with you, but the rather that your confession may be even now—

"On Christ the solid rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

One clear summer afternoon we set out to find the old man. His dwelling was in a humble farm building close by the Bridge of Bugar, a stone bulwark dividing the Loch of Stennis from the Loch of Harris, and leading on to the isthmus upon which stands the mysterious circle of the moss-covered stones of Stennis. These mark the spot where the heathen of by-gone ages offered their victims to their idols, who represented the host of the heavens. Gross darkness then covered the land, but darker far is that which covers the heart of every unsaved sinner even in these days or lands of favoured Christendom. As we neared the dwelling we descried a bent form reclining at the house-end, leaning Jacob-like upon a staff. "That," said my friend, "must be the object of our search." As we approached he saluted us in answer to my salutation, and we could not but feel respect as we looked upon him. "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man."

What an object of pity! Dim eyes, toothless gums, bent shoulders, and trembling limbs. He was a native of the island of Sanday, and was by repute one hundred and two years of age. Yet he had been both healthy and active. Until the previous winter he could walk to Stromness and back, a distance of eight miles, but he had fallen and broken his leg, and save for being confined to bed for that he had never known sickness. But his

days were numbered now, and my comrade urged me to put an all-important question to him, so I shouted, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "Aye! aye!" was the response. "Do you know Him as your Saviour?" The dull ears caught the glad sound, and never can we forget the answer, as with the tears welling from his almost sightless eyes, he cried, "Blessed Jesus, what would I do without Him?" The tears started to my friend's eyes, as he exclaimed, "There is no doubt about him."

After shouting some scriptures into his ears to cheer up the aged pilgrim, he cried out, "Thank you, thank you, for these words; nobody speaks to me about Him here." We bade him farewell till the day when we will meet him in the presence of the Lord Jesus at His coming.

Old man, old woman, how is it with thy soul? The wise king wrote that "the hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness," but what a crown of shame when found in the way of sin and death. Alas! my reader, for you if hoary in the service of the devil, and white in the pursuit of the baubles which the god of this world has been setting as his lures before you. Oh! haste then to Jesus, while yet your lamp of life holds on to burn. He died for you; His blood avails even to cleanse your mountains of transgressions. The very God whose grace and mercy you have spurned or neglected "gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever" (and that means you)

"believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life." "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might *live* through Him." You need not die because Jesus died *for* you; you may begin this very moment to live by believing on Him, for it is written, and these are the very words of the Truth Himself in John vi. 47, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that *believeth* on me *hath everlasting* life." If you look within you can only see sin, guilt, and unbelief; if you look around you can only find vanity and vexation of spirit; but if you look back to the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, and up by faith to heaven where He sits, you will behold the One "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

As a result, being justified by faith, you will have peace with God, and access by Christ into grace, in which you can stand rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. The sweet testimony of one aged brother to me last time I talked and walked with him on earth was to this effect, "I can never thank Him enough; I want for nothing." Speaking of one of his sons, he said, "Tom is all for this world; maybe I think too little of it, for it never gives me a care." Oh, what peace the Christian has, peace *with* God—the peace of God to keep his heart and mind through Christ Jesus, and the God of peace to be with him when he thinks upon and does those things which are well pleasing to Him.

"LOOK NOW TOWARD HEAVEN."

"The word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram : I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me? . . . And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them : and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord ; and he counted it to him for righteousness. And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another : but the birds divided he not. And when the fowls came down upon the carcases, Abram drove them away."—GEN. xv. 1-11.

"If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."—ROM. iv. 2, 3.



OMANS iv. is the Divine comment on Genesis xv.—"Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." *He believed God.* Now there is not one person who has not thought at some time in his or her

history that he or she had something to *do* to be saved. Christian, did not you think so? "Yes," you answer ; "I always thought I had something to do, until I saw that Christ had died, and *done everything* for me." Yes, He has died and done everything, and therefore if the Word of the Lord comes to me and tells me the work is finished, I have nothing to do but to believe it. When God's

Word appeals to you—addresses you—be like Abraham; *believe it.*

God first says to Abraham, "*Fear not.*" And why? Because, He says, "I am thy shield." Is it not a blessed thing to have God for your shield? The soul that has God for its shield is securely sheltered; though Satan let fly his most fiery darts, they fall harmless to the ground—they cannot touch it.

God is coming to Abraham in *grace*, in this chapter, and Abraham is before God in *need*; and if you, dear unsaved one, are to get blessing you must take the place of a sinner in need. And what do you need? You need pardon, you need salvation, you need grace, you need to be washed from your sins, you need just what God has got for you. And God is ready to GIVE you just what you need. God Himself is the Fountain, the Source of the supply; the Gospel comes out from the heart of the Eternal God. Peace is preached unto you, but where does that healing stream rise which sweetly soothes the troubled conscience? It rises in the bosom of the Eternal God.

Well wrote the poet:—

"The Father's boundless love we sing,
The fountain! whence our blessings spring;
How great the depth, how high it flows,
No saint can tell, no angel knows.

Its length and breadth, no eye can trace,
No thought explore the bounds of grace;
The love that saved our souls from hell
Transcends the creature's power to tell."

"Fear not," is the word which He loves to speak to the heart of the empty, troubled one. Do you ask, "What will He say to me?" "Fear not." "But I am afraid." "Fear not." "But I am unfit for God." He knows it well. "Fear not." He seems to say, "I will throw my sheltering wing over you." And oh! what can give the sense of protection like that? The moment you know God is on your side, though the devil may accuse you and man may upbraid you, and your own conscience may convict you, you can go to God, and say, like Abraham, "Lord God, what wilt *thou* GIVE me?"

Abraham takes his true place, that of a needy soul before God. It is the picture of a thoroughly upright soul who takes the place of nothingness, and goes to God with its need. Then the Word of the Lord came to him again, and God brings out Abraham, and there towards the starry firmament He points, and says, "LOOK NOW TOWARD HEAVEN, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them. . . . So shall thy seed be. AND HE BELIEVED IN THE LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness." And what, dear friend, does your soul stand in need of? And where are you bid to look for all the blessings you need? Toward heaven. Is it Look within? No, Toward heaven. "*Look unto me,*" He says, and faith, sweetly responsive, pierces the cloud; yes, faith unfolds her wings, soars aloft, and never droops her pinions till at the feet of Jesus she calmly rests. Faith says Jesus

has died for me. He has done it all, and I trust Him. Oh, dear one, "LOOK NOW." God never says, "Look to-morrow." To-morrow is not thine; to-morrow may find thee no longer on earth, but thy guilty soul plunged for ever in an everlasting hell.

"Abraham *believed God*, and it was counted unto him for righteousness," and if you believe God you will get this blessing too. "If we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead," blessing is ours. God calls you now to believe, to look, not as Abraham to the stars—you are to look beyond the stars. God bids you look at that precious Saviour once on the cross for sins, but now alive and in the glory, to look to Him and be saved. His heart lingers over thee in love now. He will bless thee now if thou wilt take thy true place, a ruined, wretched sinner, at the feet of the Lord. If a soul takes its true place in need, God comes out in grace, calling on it to "believe on Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for *our offences*, and raised again for *our justification*."

Abraham was called on to believe what God was *going to do*. You and I are called on to believe what God *has done*. "Abraham *believed God*." Everything was against him, but he believed God, and I think there are not three finer words in Scripture recorded of any soul than these three. There was Abraham in his littleness, and God in His greatness, but there was an indissoluble link

formed that day between Abraham and God—a link that could never after be snapped asunder, the link of faith he believed.

Another thing comes out then in this 15th of Genesis—not merely 'blessing, but *inheritance*. "The stars" tell of heavenly blessings. When I know that Christ bore my sins in His own body on the tree, I can look up and see Him by faith at God's right hand, and enjoy all that I possess in Him.

"Abraham believed God," do you? The great point of the first part of Romans iv. is that you count God worthy of being believed—you credit what He says, and you stand before God, linked with God, and justified by Him. He espouses your cause, because you trust Him. First, I get unfeigned confidence in what God says, then God enables me to know why I am so sure of blessing. It was the grace of God that gave Abraham the blessing, and it is the grace of God that gives you pardon to your soul. Then Abraham gets the perfect knowledge of the ground of the blessing. *Sacrifice*. Why do I draw near to God? Because of the sacrifice. How are my sins put away? By the sacrifice. A sacrifice that I have made? No! but which God has provided. God's Word is what reaches my soul first of all. Then I want to know upon what ground I can know my sins are forgiven. And He says, "Take me an heifer," &c., *i.e.* because of the sacrifice. Peace springs from the work of Jesus. He "made peace by the blood of

his cross." The *WORD of God*, and the *WORK of Christ* are the pillars of my peace. The *work* was completely done by the blessed Jesus, and with His dying breath the last *word* for us He left on earth was "Finished." But rising from the dead, what was His first word? "*Peace.*" His last word was "Finished," His first word, returning to bless, was "*Peace.*" What a solid foundation for faith to repose on!

But Abraham inquires, "Lord God, whereby shall I *know* that I shall inherit it?" And He said unto him, "Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove and a young pigeon." You ask, Why the five; would not one have been sufficient as a sacrifice? I believe it would; but each of these expresses the difference in the grasp souls get of the value of the work of Christ. I look back at the cross of Jesus, and I may have a very feeble view of Christ,—that would be the pigeon; but I might get by the side of a saint who has a stupendous grasp of the value of the work of Christ,—that would be like the heifer. Which is the safest, the cleanest? the one who has the feeble grasp of Christ and His work, or the one who has the mighty grasp of it? You reply, I should think the one that has the largest grasp of Christ. Then you think perfectly wrong, because it is *Christ* the soul has hold of; however feeble your faith may be, one look at Christ links your soul with Him, and that link can never be broken. Heaven may

be shaken, and earth shall be shaken, but you shall never be shaken who have put your trust in Christ. Heaven and earth may pass away, but His word shall not pass away; "he that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life."

But most likely you will answer, I have such doubts and fears. Listen then, "And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses Abram drove them away." The fowls are figures of Satan, and Satan's powers, and he will always try to disturb your view of Christ. "Abram drove them away," and that is what you must do. Do not allow Satan's suggestions a place for a moment; his one object is to prevent your eye being fixed on Christ. Rest simply on what Christ has done, and God has said, and what is the result? Peace, peace about the past because Christ's work is so perfect that I cannot add to it. God has accepted that work for me, and I just rest in it, and the Saviour that did it, and I have peace with God; and more, I am a justified soul. If I look at the past all is peace. Peace about my sins because they are cancelled by Christ, and I believe it, and my soul has a link with God; the sins that used to come between God and me have been borne by Christ, and now God has nothing at all against me. "Being justified by faith we have *peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this *grace* (or favour) wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the *glory* of God."

Think of it, I pray you, how blessed it is to know

you stand in the favour of God. You stand according to the acceptance of Christ. You have a right to the presence of God; the blood of Christ gives you that right. God's favour rests upon you, because you trust Christ, and you "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Hope never means uncertainty in Scripture. We are not uncertain as to whether we are saved or not, we know the glory belongs to us, because the gift of God has made it ours. Oh! believe now—listen to Jesus' words, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one." It is a gift. How do I know that I shall be in the glory by-and-by? Because it is my Saviour's gift to me. How do I know my sins are washed away? Because my Saviour died for me. How do I know God's favour rests on me? Because I stand accepted in Christ. The moment you come to Jesus, His blood cleanses you from all sin, and that moment you are as fit for the glory of God, as the blood of Christ can make you. I get peace, deep peace about the *past*, grace for the *present*,—I know His love for me and rejoice in it,—and glory for the *future*, my Saviour's gift to me.

Beloved reader, let me beseech you to decide to be the Lord's now. If you still persist in unbelief, never expect to hear the Gospel again. Halt! If you are cut off in your sins and damned for eternity, will you not deserve it? Oh! look to Him now—believe on Him now, and do not be

ashamed to confess Him, and to own to all that He is your Saviour.

Is not God worthy of being believed? Surely. Is not the Lord Jesus worthy of your heart's affections? Most surely. Shall He not have both your confidence and affection? Would to God that I could hear you respond again, Surely, most surely; "I believe God."

W. T. P. W.

THE LAST CHANCE.



Of all the millions who have passed out of this world since the time of Adam—so few of them even remembered by name—it can be said, *They had their last chance.*

For one hundred and twenty years Noah preached righteousness to a wicked, godless, antediluvian world. That world closed its ears to the earnest warnings of that man of God, despite the great object-lesson he taught them, when, side by side with his warnings, he built an ark on dry land,—a way of escape. Their last chance came—the last message was given—the last note of warning died away upon hard, hard ears, only raising a laugh, or a scoff, maybe.

Quietly God called Noah and his family into that ark. Perhaps in that busy, marrying, planting, building, enterprising day, the fact was not

even noticed, nor did they know that *God Himself had shut the door.* Yet so it was.

There seems to have been an appalling calm just before the awful storm. No last great effort to raise their fears, and quicken their steps into the place of safety, was made. The last message was just the same as had resounded in their ears so monotonously for so many years. The aged man might have said, "As long as I can remember anything, I remember that old fanatic telling the same idle tale; I remember that ark building years and years ago."

Without a sign—save the completion of the ark—the last day came and went—the last message was preached and heard. They knew not that now there was absolutely no escape. The flood came; the rain deluged the earth; the foundations of the great deep were broken up with an appalling roar. Quickly the highest hills, the topmost peaks, were covered, and that antediluvian world lay dead, covered by the waters of judgment.

So with the inhabitants of the cities of the plain. Their wickedness was so unblushingly great that it cried aloud to the God of heaven for judgment. The angels of the Lord warned Lot, Abraham's nephew; Lot warned his sons-in-law, but he was as one that mocked. The inhabitants of Sodom saw nothing in the visit of the angels, to the sojourner in their city. They used their presence as an occasion to attempt to add a still more awful depth to their guilt. Stricken by blindness, so that

they failed to find the door into Lot's house, so insensate, so hardened in crime were they, that they did not perceive, even in that strong warning, the least cause of apprehension.

Lot, his wife (the type in her judgment of a miserable professor), and his two daughters, were hastened out of the city, and fled to a place of safety.

Nothing unusual warned those sinners that their last chance had come and gone. They had filled up their cup of wickedness; they had had their last opportunity. The sun rose hot upon Sodom—that favoured city of the plain—as heretofore; but quickly judgment fell. As our Lord says, "The same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all." Before the sun rose again the scene was absolutely desolate.

The news of this great judgment must have been spread from land to land. In a later day the neighbouring nations must have heard of the God, who marched a horde of delivered slaves across the trackless, waterless, hungry desert. How the Red Sea parted at His rebuke! how the Jordan made a way at harvest's flood-time for His championed people! And to the world's then untutored children these were profoundly impressive lessons. Yet, for the most part, they lived as they died. In the economy of Israel room was made for the stranger, yet they lived and died in darkness: they had their last chance. The power and wisdom

of God was preached to them silently and eloquently every day of their lives in the rolling river, the mighty mountains, the everlasting hills; His interest in the affairs of men was preached to them by the dealings we have described.

Good sir, let not your patience be exhausted, but read on, while we seek to bring our lesson home. You live in no far-off heathen land; you live in no dim and distant age of barbarism. What a bright golden opportunity is yours! Neglect it not. "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke xiii. 48).

You live in a day when the story of the cross is told, of God's declared hatred of sin and the judgment—an everlasting hell—it deserves. You live in a day when the love of Jesus is preached: the message of forgiveness, without money and without price, proclaimed. *We* know how God is satisfied, and atonement has been made.

Now, sir, this little book is put, maybe, into your hands in a railway train, in your walks, by the hands of a stranger, or with the earnest solicitations of a friend. Oh! it may be *YOUR last chance*.

I sometimes say, if I were an artist, and could paint that beautiful, memorable scene in Luke xviii. 35-43—could paint Jericho, with its palm trees, in the background; the hot, dusty road; the crowd moving along, with Jesus as its centre; the poor blind beggar-man, Bartimæus, with his bronzed face and sightless eyeballs, with his parted lips,

uttering the piercing cry to the only One who could heal him,—“Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me,”—do you know what title I would give my painting? I will tell you,—“THE LAST CHANCE.” Jesus never passed by that way again, for He was on His road to death and shame at Jerusalem.

Blessed importunity on the part of the beggar,—wise decision and earnestness. He might have said to himself,—“Here is a grand chance to reap a harvest of charity. A crowd like this does not pass by every day; their hearts will be tender when in the company of the compassionate prophet; I will cry, ‘Pity the poor blind man!’”

Ah! no such thoughts filled his mind; but despite the attempt of the crowd to stop his cry, he rang the claim of faith upon the Saviour’s ear, “*Have mercy on me!*” And, blessed be God, he got more than he asked for. True, his eyes recovered their sight, but his soul was saved as well.

Now, friend, in conclusion, let me seek to urge you to your best interests. Trust Christ. Take this chance; you may never have another. Jesus is coming quickly; and when once the Master of the house has risen up, and shut to the door, although you may earnestly say, “Lord, Lord, open unto us,” He will have to say, “I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity” (Luke xiii. 25-27).

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts xvi. 31).

TWO METHODS.



BELIEVER in the Lord Jesus once met with a scoffer who jeered at his Christianity, and called him a Methodist.

The Christian replied, "You are as much a Methodist as I."

This the scoffer denied, and pressed for an explanation.

"Well," said the Christian, "there are but two methods—the method of salvation and the method of damnation. I leave you to judge in which of these you are."

It is well for us to remember that the Word of God speaks to us of two roads, and of two only. There is the narrow road that leads to heaven, and the broad road that leads to hell. In one of these the reader must be travelling.

As each day draws to a close it is a solemn thought that we are a day nearer to the bliss of heaven or to the horrors of hell.

The Lord Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He also says, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Again, we read, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36).

See to it then, dear reader, that thou art in the narrow way that leads to life everlasting.

"FEAR GOD. HONOUR THE KING."



N 1 Peter ii. 17 we find the exhortation to "Fear God. Honour the king." We also read in Psalm cxi. 10, that the "fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." It is certain there can be no true blessing apart from the fear of God.

It is indeed the first mark of the Christian (by Christian I mean the true believer, one whose sins are forgiven). And to "Honour the king" is surely one mark of the Christian who is going on with God, and walking in subjection to His Word.

If my readers will turn to 2 Peter ii. 10, they will see how despising government, and speaking evil of dignities, is a sign of the last days, a mark of extreme ungodliness (comp. Jude 8). How sad it is to see and hear so much of it even among those who "fear God," but who forget it is also written, "Honour the king." I take it that the great difference between a true Christian who is following Christ, and a Socialist is this, the Christian is willing to humble himself and to exalt his neighbour, while the Socialist tries to exalt himself and to humble his neighbour.

A day is coming when every one's profession will be judged, and only what is real will abide.

If the reader will turn to 2 Samuel xvi., he will find the history of a man who professed to fear God and honour the king for years, but who was

at last detected and punished. Our history opens at the time David was fleeing from Absalom, his son, who had usurped the kingdom.

Shimei (see verses 5 to 14) takes this opportunity of not only falsely accusing David, but of cursing him, showing plainly that at that time he neither feared God nor honoured the king, for the man who takes God's holy name in vain, does not fear Him; and the man who falsely accuses or speaks evil of those in authority, does not honour the king.

It is beautiful to see how David takes it. He does not revile again or defend himself, but commits himself to Him who judges righteously. Compare Psalm vii., which, I believe, gives his prayer at this time. Now turn to 2nd Samuel xix. 16-23, where we find David returning to Jerusalem after the overthrow of Absalom.

Shimei comes to meet him, apparently repentant, in fact he takes the place of one who does fear God, and does honour the king. David takes him on his profession, and for years he lived at Jerusalem as one who feared God, and honoured the king. Now turn to 1 Kings ii. 8, 9, and read David's charge to Solomon. It is plain he did not believe in Shimei's repentance or profession, and it is clear from what follows (see verses 36-46) that if Shimei had really feared God and honoured the king, he would not have been punished. Solomon very wisely sent for him and made him swear by the Lord (verse 42) that he would not leave Jeru-

salem; he also commanded him not to leave it (verses 36, 37, and 43). Now had Shimei really feared God, he would not have failed to keep his oath; and had he really honoured the king, he would not have disobeyed his commandment. As it was he passed muster for three years as a God-fearing, loyal man, till his self-interest became involved. When it was a question of keeping his oath and obeying the king, or suffering the loss of his two servants, he did not hesitate a moment, but went off to recover his lost property, and at once showed himself to be only a false professor, viz., one who neither feared God nor honoured the king.

All this comes out in verses 42, 43, when he is brought before Solomon; and now that he is a detected hypocrite, all his wickedness to David is brought up against him. Note how Solomon says in verse 44, "All the wickedness which thine heart *is privy to*"—not "*was privy to*"—"that thou didst to David my father." And so the punishment overtakes him at last, and the man who had lived for years at Jerusalem as a professed God-fearing, loyal subject, is put to death as one who not only did not fear God and honour the king, but who had all those years been acting the part of a hypocrite.

Reader, has the history of Shimei any voice for you? If your profession is not publicly tested as Shimei's was, be sure of this, that "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccles. xii. 14).

"THIS MAN RECEIVETH SINNERS."



THESE words are from the well-known fifteenth chapter of Luke: "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." They were the words of the proud, self-righteous Pharisees, those enemies of Christ, and despisers of the grace of God. They had never found out that they were sinners, and therefore had no sympathy with those who had, nor with Him, who came from God to tell of His love, and save by His grace those who could not save themselves. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. i. 15).

When the Saviour was here, and walked the earth as a man, though He was the mighty God, the Father of eternity, the mighty Creator and upholder of all things by the word of His power, yet could He be approached by all—high and low, rich and poor,—for all alike needed Him, for all were sinners, and all needed a Saviour, *and He was that*. Though He were King of kings, and Lord of lords, yet the meanest and vilest could gain access to Him, could speak face to face with Him, could look upon His face, meet the tender gaze of His eyes, and receive pardon from His lips.

On this occasion we read: "Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him."

And this drew out the murmurings of the scribes and Pharisees: "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." Thank God, that it was, and is so, for if it had been otherwise, where would we have been?

A woman once said, "I am too bad for any but Jesus." She was wise in her discovery.

A man once said, "I have got down so low that God Almighty can't pick me up." Dear man, he was measuring the grace of God by his own degradation. He needed to know the meaning of the charge of the Pharisees: "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

Yes, Jesus (Jehovah, Saviour) was a man, a real man, a perfect, sinless man, the most accessible of men, and by Him "grace and truth came," and, therefore, the vilest can approach Him, and be "picked up," and saved eternally. But be it remembered, that He not only became a man, the God-man, but He, as man, died on the cross, *the just one in room of the unjust, that we might be brought to God*; and His being a divine Being, as well as man, gave infinite value to His sacrificial death, and thereby God's righteous claims were satisfied, and our need met. And therefore it is gloriously and righteously true that "this man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." That is, He saves them, and they have communion with Him. Salvation, communion, satisfaction. Neither the world, on the one hand, nor Phariseism, on the other, could give these; but, blessed reality, "this

man"—Jesus—will give them to any poor, sin-burdened soul, that comes to Him. He will be as true as His word: "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37); "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28).

But let it be well remembered, that it is *sinners* that He receives. Not *good* people; for there is none good, but one, that is God (Luke xviii. 19). Not *righteous* people; for there is none righteous, no not one (Rom. iii. 10). Not *innocent* people; for the descendants of a fallen Adam are not innocent, but guilty (Rom. iii. 19). Not *upright*; for the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; or, in other words, man is morally crooked (Jer. xvii. 9).

Not people who can save themselves, but the *lost*, He came to save (Luke xix. 10).

Glorious news for a world away from God, was that which the angel announced at His birth: "Fear not; for, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke ii. 10, 11).

He receiveth sinners. Mark it well, dear reader; and He died for the ungodly, for sinners, for His enemies (Rom. v. 6, 8, 10).

It is not the good, the righteous, the innocent, the upright, the blameless, those who think they can gain admittance to heaven by their merit, but **SINNERS.** Are you one? Has that word *sinner*

got a deep, awful significance, to you? You ask, What is a sinner? A sinner is one under the sentence of death, and deserving of God's judgment. Are you that, *consciously* so, in your own conscience? Head work will not do. God awakens the conscience. Are you convicted then of being a sinner? If so, you are the one Jesus came to save. Hasten to Him without delay; for, "this man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

Let me set before you some whom He received and saved. Saul of Tarsus, *the chief of sinners*, is in heaven. He was received by Jesus, and saved. He was religiously lost; but, thank God, he was awakened to the fact that he was a sinner, trusted Jesus, and was saved; and for many long years was a devoted servant of the One that he once hated, and whose people he persecuted.

The woman of the seventh of Luke was another, a known sinner in the city in which she lived. She was a dissolute sinner: but she was awakened; light divine flashed into her conscience; her sins lay like a mighty burden on her soul, and she longed for pardon and peace. She heard where Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, and she came, and stood at His feet, behind Him, weeping. Jesus turned to her, and said: "*Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.*"

Oh, the triumphs of divine grace! The vilest, as well as the best members of society, as men speak, are taken up by God, washed in the Saviour's

blood, and thus made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

Lastly, there is the dying thief, hanging by the Saviour's side. The truth, like the lightning's flash, darts into his soul, he sees himself a sinner against God, and at the same moment he discovers who it is dying by his side, and he cries out, "Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom." The Saviour, as it were, said, "I will not wait until I come in my kingdom, but, verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke xiii. 39-46).

Thus, through the matchless grace of God, he exchanged the horrors of the cross for the unutterable joys of paradise that very day.

But let it be well understood that this is no excuse for putting off salvation until the dying hour. It is a solemn fact that this is the only deathbed conversion recorded in Scripture, and as another has said, it is given that none might presume, and that none need despair.

Blessed fact then, "This man (Jesus) receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." He receiveth sinful men. Satan told the truth that time, though he meant it as a sneer, and thought to bring the Saviour into disrepute; but, it is His everlasting glory that He "receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

Beloved reader, have you come to Him? If not, will you not come? How, you say? Why, just as you are, a sinner, vile and lost, and He, blessed

be His glorious name, will receive you, will pardon you, will save you, will give you peace, and will eventually take you to paradise with Himself.

Let no thought of merit hide from you your real condition, or cloud the blessed grace of God, but come just as you are, and He will receive you.

"Just as I am—without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—and waiting not,
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—Thy love I own,
Has broken every barrier down:
Now to be thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come!"

E. A.



"BEHOLD THE BRIDEGROOM."



WAKE! awake! the Bridegroom is at
hand,
That cry resounds throughout this
favoured land,
And multitudes which slept, are now
awake,
And with their lamps, oil in their
vessels take.

But many too, awake, `alas! to find,
Though having lamps, they've left the oil behind,
Their loud profession but an empty name,
A lamp, a wick with but a dying flame.

But startled now, they to the wise repair,
And seek that they with them their oil might
share :

Not so, each must the gift direct receive,
Each for himself must on the Son believe.

"To them that sell," go there at once and buy,
To Christ, the Lord, the Source of grace draw nigh,
Nor price, nor money, in your hand dare bring,
Take freely life, and pardon of your sin.

And while they went to buy, the Bridegroom came,
Why did they not at once trust in His name ;
One look of faith at Him upon the tree,
Would cancel all their guilt, and set them free.

"And while they went,"—it seemed a short delay,
But oh ! what issues in these moments lay ;
The door once shut, they call, and knock, in vain,
They hear His voice, but never entrance gain.

From His blest presence they for ever go,
And find their portion in unceasing woe,
Where they must meet the sinner's awful doom,
Wrapt in the darkness of eternal gloom.

"A THOUSAND GUINEAS IF YOU'LL TAKE ME IN!"



HE steamship "London," Captain Martin, sailed for Melbourne on Saturday, the 6th of January 1866. On the 7th and 8th it blew fiercely; on the 9th the ship lost foretop-mast and royal mast. The large spars were springing to and fro with such violence that the crew were wholly unable to secure them; but as yet no person felt much anxiety.

About 3 P.M. a tremendous sea struck the ship and carried the port lifeboat clean away from the davits. All that evening and through the succeeding night the wind blew a very heavy gale, and the sea ran high, but the screw was still kept steaming easy ahead. At 3 A.M. on Wednesday, the 10th, Captain Martin sent for Mr Greenhill, the second engineer (the chief engineer being ill), and informed him of his intention to change the course, and ordered full steam to be got up directly. This was immediately done.

Half-an-hour after the ship's course had been altered, she was again struck by a tremendous sea, which carried away the starboard lifeboat, and the same sea stove in another of the boats. At noon on this day the ship's position was lat. $46^{\circ} 48' N.$, long. $8^{\circ} 7' W.$ A very heavy sea was running, which caused her to roll heavily. But no danger

was even now anticipated; and all through the evening of Wednesday, and long after midnight, the ship continued to steam slowly ahead, the captain and his officers remaining steadily at their posts, and the passengers appearing to have full reliance in Captain Martin.

At 10.30 P.M. on Wednesday, the ship still rolling deeply in a heavy cross sea, and the wind blowing a full gale, a huge wave suddenly fell heavily into the waist or middle of the ship, falling right upon the main engine-room hatch, measuring 12 feet by 9 feet, which it completely demolished, letting tons of water down into this portion of the ship. Instant endeavours to repair the hatch were made with promptitude and vigour. Every spare sail, and even blankets and mattresses from all parts of the ship, were thrown over the aperture; but the sea soon tore away the frail structure, and poured down the hatchway, and in ten minutes the water had risen above the furnaces and up to the waists of the engineers and firemen below. The lower decks were also soon flooded. The engineer remained at his post until the water had risen above his waist, when he went on deck, and reported that his fires were out, and his engines useless. Captain Martin, with calm conviction, remarked that he was not surprised; on the contrary, he had expected such a result.

Finding his noble ship at length little more than a log on the water, Captain Martin ordered his maintop-sail to be set. This had scarcely been

accomplished when the force of the wind tore the sail into ribands, with the exception of one corner, under which the ship lay-to throughout the remainder of the night. The donkey-engine was supplied with steam by a boiler upon deck, and all the deck pumps were kept going throughout the night, and the passengers of all classes, now roused to a sense of their imminent danger, shared with the crew their arduous labours. Notwithstanding every effort, the water still gained upon the pumps, and the gale continuing at its height, cross seas with tremendous force were constantly breaking over the vessel. At a quarter after four o'clock on Thursday morning, she was struck by a stern sea, which carried away four of her stern ports, and admitted a flood of water at that end of the ship also.

From this time all efforts were useless, and at daybreak Captain Martin, whose cool intrepidity had never for a moment forsaken him, entered the saloon, where all classes of the passengers had now taken refuge, and, responding to a universal appeal, announced that "all hope was gone." This was solemnly received—a resigned silence prevailing throughout the assembly, broken only at brief intervals by the well-timed exhortations of the Rev. Mr Draper, a devoted Wesleyan minister, whose spiritual services had been incessant during the previous twenty-four hours. There was no good screaming, or shrieking, or rushing on deck. Dismay was present to every heart. Mothers were

weeping sadly over the little ones about, with them, to be engulfed; and the children, ignorant of their coming death, were pitifully inquiring the cause of so much woe. Friends were taking leave of friends, as if preparing for a long journey; others were crouched down with Bibles in their hands, endeavouring to snatch consolation from passages, long known, or long neglected.

At this crisis the port pinnacle was got over the ship's side, and Captain Martin, always at hand, addressing Mr Greenhill, under whose command this particular boat was placed, said, "There is not much chance for the boat; there is none for the ship. Your duty is done; mine is to remain here. Get in and take command of the few it will hold." Thus prompted, Mr Greenhill, with his fellow-engineers, and some few others, numbering only nineteen men and passengers, quitted the ship, with only a few biscuits in the shape of provisions. The men shouted for the captain to come with them, but, with that strong sense of duty which was his chief characteristic, he declined to go with them, saying, "No, I will go down with the passengers; but I wish you God-speed and safe to land." This wish was granted.

The boat then got away. She had scarcely cleared the wake of the vessel, upon the poop of which upwards of fifty of the passengers were seen grouped, when a tremendous sea broke over this doomed circle, who, when the ship rose slowly again, were discovered to have been swept into the surg-

ing waters. Shortly afterwards the vessel herself began to settle down stern foremost, and soon threw up her bows in the air, and sank beneath the waves.

Some heroic sacrifices were made. One of the passengers in the boat, Mr John Wilson, went down into the cabin the last thing, and endeavoured to persuade a friend, Mr John Hickman, from Ballarat, to attempt to save his life by going into the boat. "No," he said; "I promised my wife and children to stay by them, and I will do so. Good-bye, Jack," and then parted.

When the boat was about full, one of the seamen cried, "There may still be room: fetch a lady." Mr Wilson then sprang on to the deck in search of a lady whom he knew; but not seeing her, and knowing that every instant was precious, he said to a young girl, "Will you go?" Seizing her, he took her to the bulwarks; but when she looked over the rails and saw the distance which she must spring, she said in despair, "Oh, I cannot." There was no time for persuasion; and Mr Wilson was obliged to drop the girl, and jump from the steamer to the boat, into which he got safely. The ship was being carried over on to the boat, towards which it lurched heavily.

The captain, who continued to walk calmly up and down the poop, just before the boat put off, gave those in the boat their "course." He told them that it lay E.N.E. to Brest. Before the boat could be got off, it was in great danger of being sucked down with the ship, which was rapidly

settling beneath the water. The swirl of water round the stern that precedes the foundering had already begun, so the boat was hastily cut away.

Just at that moment those in the boat were piteously called upon by a lady, who, with a face livid with horror, shrieked out, "*A thousand guineas if you'll take me in!*" An awful scene, never to be forgotten. But in that solemn hour millions of money were accounted valueless. It was too late! One was lost through rejecting the offer of escape, and another could not buy it.

Hundreds were hurried into eternity. Were they ready to meet their God? Some were; some were not. Would *you* have been?

We have often heard of God's mercy to an unsaved soul on a dying bed. Possibly *some* may have found the Saviour, in that watery saloon during these last few hours, just in time; but remember, the Bible tells of *but one* dying thief saved at the twelfth hour—this that none might despair, but also surely of *but one*, that none may presume.

Many times a thousand guineas would have been offered before this, if with the dying breath salvation could have been bought. Reader, without money and without price you may be saved, and saved *now*. Salvation is so simple, for it is God-given. Christ the sinless One, gave Himself for *you*, the sinner. Through God's Holy Spirit may your eyes this moment be opened to recognise in Him your Substitute, and from your heart may you just thank Him, who thus gave Himself for you.

"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).

"Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, . . . who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. i. 18, 19, ii. 24).

ANON.

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?



WHAT think ye of Christ? Does the question offend you? Surely not. You live in a Christian country, and should any one say you were no Christian you would consider it an insult. Why yes, you willingly adopt the name of Christ; it is a badge of respectability. But do you know Him? Is He your Saviour, your Master, and your Lord?

But what think ye of Christ? "The question surprises me, I hardly know how to answer you." Indeed! the child of God should be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason concerning the hope that is in him. But can it be, I just suggest it, that in you there is no hope? that you are without God, and without hope in the world? that for you the future is a dread uncertainty, and death a leap in the dark? Can

you go on eating, drinking, and making merry, with this great question still unsettled, "Where shall I spend eternity?"

And what think ye of Christ? Well, you think there is a proper time and place for such subjects. On Sundays and in church it is all very well, but you don't occupy yourself with matters of religion at other times. In fact, though of course you would not own it, your religion is a mere ornament, almost a superfluity, which you keep for Sundays, funerals, and solemn occasions.

What think ye of Christ? "Oh, I never trouble myself about these things. It always makes me feel uncomfortable when people speak about Christ. I mean to enjoy life while I can," &c. Stop, my friend, would you cease to enjoy life if you knew your sins were forgiven? Would it fill you with sorrow to call Jesus "my Saviour," and God "my Father"? Would it blight your happiness to know that an eternity of pleasures at God's right hand awaited you; that a Father's welcome and a Father's kiss would greet you? Would you find no satisfaction in the thought that the sorrows of earth would soon be exchanged for the joys of heaven? Think over these things, I pray you, and see if you have not got a false idea of what Christianity is.

What think you of Christ? "Why, if you must know, I have never honestly thought about the matter. I look on such subjects as womanish, and I don't care to give my attention to them." And is

that the way you treat the Gospel of God? is that the value you set on God's offer of mercy? If it were the Queen of England, instead of the King of heaven, who sent you the message, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," you would not treat the summons with such careless indifference. Oh! no! You would rise with alacrity, and hasten to welcome the royal guest, with many humble apologies for having kept your distinguished visitor waiting. But the Gospel message you can afford to treat with contempt.

Maybe you have heard, times without number, how God with amazing condescension stoops to bid your acceptance of His priceless gift, how He even deigns to beseech you to be reconciled to Him; you have heard often enough the loving story of pardon and forgiveness through faith in the Saviour's blood. But it is all as nothing to you. You care for none of these things. Say, then, how will this end? Do you mean to go to hell with your eyes open? Do you *prefer* eternal torments to everlasting bliss? No, I have it,—you are asking God to wait your convenience a little longer. You know you would have to forsake your unholy pleasures, and your ungodly friends, should you open the door of your heart to the Saviour, so you are waiting until the "season" of sin's pleasures is ended, and your friends have left you to end your days alone, and then you will respond to the oft-repeated summons, and open the door to the waiting Saviour, with some show of repentance for a wasted life, and

some slight apology for having only a worthless old age to offer Him. What folly to try to outwit God! what wickedness thus to take advantage of His long-suffering goodness!

What think ye of Christ? Hush,—a whisper—“I know Him as my Saviour. His death has saved my soul, and the love which brought Him to it has won my heart. However, I keep my own counsel. I don’t speak of these things where they are not appreciated. I would not cast my pearls before swine on any account. I am naturally of a timid disposition, and do not like to be thought peculiar.” Dear friend, you are on the wrong tack. It is your privilege to be a witness for your Lord; to ask of Him in simple faith the needed courage, and to fearlessly confess His name whenever you have opportunity. He was not ashamed to bear the ridicule and abuse of the Jewish rabble when He suffered for you. He endured the hatred of man, the opposition of Satan, and the wrath of God for your sake. He did not consider whether it was “peculiar” to be the gazing-stock of a thousand un pitying eyes, or whether it was “respectable” to die a malefactor’s death. Nay, “he endured the cross, despising the shame.” And cannot you bear the polite contempt; or the vulgar ridicule of the world, for *His* sake?

Do not forget the scripture—“With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. x. 10).

S. E. M’N.

THE TWO SIDES OF DEATH.

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day."

"There was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table."



UCH is life. Probably this unnamed man of wealth was the envy of many. But few are indifferent to property, purple, and princely fare. This is no mere parable. "There was a certain rich man," &c., said our Lord. The thoughts of his hearers would doubtless

revert to well-known circumstances, especially as he continued, "and there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus," &c. One can easily picture the scene. The magnificent palatial residence in one of Jerusalem's busy streets; the familiar gate to the eastern court; the poor helpless beggar, clothed in rags, and full of sores, thankful when some well-clad servant brought him a few crumbs from the rich man's table, to keep the poor weak body and soul together; even the passing dogs licking these sores, which the eye of the rich man apparently beheld with indifference.

Now, we do not read that this rich man was worse than many others. No long list of black deeds, exposing him to the reprobation of his fellows, is charged to his account in our Lord's plain, short, and faithful narrative. It was more

what he came short in, than what he was guilty of. He was a Jew, under the law of God, enjoying wealth, a sign of God's favour; but the same law taught, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and thy neighbour as thyself." But there is no sign whatever that he even sought to do either the one or the other. Surely, if he had been *rich towards God*, poor Lazarus, his neighbour, would never have lain, full of sores and misery at his gate, waiting with uncertainty for crumbs.

He was a sample of many to-day. Tens of thousands cleave to the law, but where is the love to God and the neighbour, that the law enjoins? Whether rolling in wealth, or enjoying or earning a moderate competence, a man can be rich towards God, and care for the poor. It is not the amount, as witness the Lord's estimate of the poor widow's mite (Luke xxi. 2). And, "She hath done what she could," in reference to another, is a word for all (Mark xiv. 8). There stands the solemn record, to reach our consciences, from the lips of the Lord Himself. He contrasts two well-known cases,—wealth, gorgeous array, and sumptuous fare, on the one hand; poverty, misery, and hunger, on the other. This is one side of death,—*life here*, life as it is in the world, away from God, and out of course; but life, where the Word of God comes in, and gives light, and shows His claims on men.

But the scene soon changes. This is a world full of change, and one event is very common, as all

well know—*men die*. Sin is here, and its wage is death (Rom. vi. 23). Hence, a second solemn statement follows from our Lord's lips, "And it came to pass that *the beggar died*, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; *the rich man also died*, and was buried." Apparently the beggar died first. Whether or no, his death is mentioned first. Nothing is said about his burial. It is not to be supposed that many thought much about that. A beggar's death in Jerusalem was probably too much of an everyday occurrence. May be the dogs fared better, getting some of the rich man's scraps, instead of Lazarus. The rich man's house went on as usual. But if Jerusalem was indifferent, God was not. God knew Lazarus died, and where he was buried. And angelic messengers came from His lofty throne to carry him into the bosom of Abraham. No more weakness and misery, crumbs and sores, in that happy rest.

But death visits palaces as well as hovels. Prince or beggar, rich or poor, purple-clad or rag-clad, well-fed or ill-fed, healthy or sore, when death knocks at the door, none can refuse. And death knocked at the door of the rich, pampered Jew. No doubt he would have been glad to bid death begone. But his summons had come. He must pay the debt incurred by sin. "The rich man *also died*." And then the Scripture adds significantly, "*and was buried*." No doubt the funeral pageant was magnificent. One can picture the vast throng on the streets, as the cortege went slowly by to

the burying-place. And no doubt there was much interest in the will; though probably but little, if any, was left for charity after death, where so little, if any, was doled out before. But where were the angels, to carry his soul?

But this is not all. Something else happened; something that men would gladly have left out, that they do not like to think about, that they would gladly ignore; that some with unblushing infidelity deny. "The rich man died, and was buried, and *in hell* (hades) he lift up his eyes, *being in torments*," &c. Ah, reader, you may listen to Satan's lie, and seek to banish the awful truth from your thoughts, but still it remains *truth*. The Lord said it, and means what He said. All the unbelief and scepticism in the world never did, and never will, alter a single statement of the Word of God. Jesus said, "in hell," "in torments." The rich man went to hell. He lived for himself, died in his sin, was buried by his fellows, and went to *hell*. He is in hell, now in hell, in *torments*. Do you *dare* deny it? Do you dare give the lie, lost sinner, to the blessed Son of God? And his portion is misery for ever. There is no escape. The Lord said, "He lift up his eyes, *being in torments*." And the Lord said that the rich man owned, "*I am tormented in this flame*" (ver. 24). And the Lord states that Abraham said, "*Thou art tormented*" (ver. 25). This is the other side of death.

He sees Lazarus in bliss, he cries for *mercy*, he

implores for a *drop* of water, the smallest mitigation of his misery, but all in vain. Callous to the misery of his neighbours, in the days of his prosperity in time, he reaps what he had sown, in *misery eternal*. "Son, remember," answers Abraham to his vain appeal, as he reminds him of the past, for there is *memory in hell*. And then adds, "And *besides all this*, between us and you there is a *great gulf fixed*, so that they which *would* pass from hence to you *cannot*, neither *can* they pass to us, that *would* come from thence."

A GREAT gulf, a FIXED gulf, an IMPASSABLE gulf.

There is a way from earth to hell, but no way from hell to heaven. There is a short, easy way from life in this world, to the place of endless woe, but all the wisdom and all the artifices of unbelief can never devise a way or a plan, for one sinner, who dies unsaved, to escape from the eternal consequences of neglect, sin, and unbelief.

Men may speculate on the meaning of this and that, in this and other awfully solemn statements of our Lord; but whether in our weakness we may, or may not, rightly interpret every detail, and every figure, yet is the language so plain, so unmistakable, so emphatic, so convincing, that it is only wilful unbelief that can deny the awful character of its teaching. Hell, torments, flame, a place of torment, no mercy, no water, a great, fixed, impassable gulf, memory of the past, &c., is language which speaks for itself, and tells you, a careless sinner, of the fearful consequences of your

carelessness or unbelief. Hear now the warning voice of the Son of God. He has drawn the curtain of the future aside that sinners may take warning ere it be too late. Salvation is offered now, full and free, but there is no salvation in the future.

There is a great gulf now between every unconverted one and God, but blessed be His name, not yet fixed and impassable. There is a way across. Christ is that way, and *the only way*. He has bridged the gulf through His finished work, and you may now cross it, through faith in His Name. Soon will that bridge be removed. No one knows when. Sinner, cross while you may. To remain where you are is to perish in your sin—to follow the rich man to hell. But bow to the testimony of God against you, confess your guilty, lost condition in His holy Presence, and you may have salvation free. *The blood of Christ* has been shed, and has met every claim. The risen Saviour on the throne of God is a Saviour for all. As a self-judged sinner, believe on His blessed Name, and thy sins are forgiven (Acts xiii. 38). God justifies the ungodly who believe on Him (Rom. iv. 5). Boundless grace is there to save, now and for ever, *all* who believe. God gives His word, and you may rest upon it in perfect peace. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with him through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. v. 2).

Saved, whether rich or poor, you can serve God till the return of His Son. If death come, you will not be carried by angels into Abraham's bosom (which is Jewish in character), but be absent from the body, present with the Lord (2 Cor. v. 8). But your glorious *hope* will be His coming to change us into His own blessed image (Phil. iii. 20, 21). No hell, no flame, no torment, no lack of water, no awful gulf for you. But Christ, heavenly glory, ineffable bliss, an eternity of joy, in the presence of God.

Finding there was no escape for himself, the rich man in hell prays Abraham that his five brethren still on earth may be warned by Lazarus. He who had neglected Lazarus in his life would gladly be beholden to him for himself, and also for his brethren, after death. But his request is in vain. Abraham says, "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them." "Nay, father Abraham," he replies, "but if one went unto them from the dead, *they will repent.*" And he said unto him, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke xvi. 31).

An infinitely greater one than Lazarus rose from the dead, *even Jesus*, but the unbelieving Jews, who professed to trust in Moses and the prophets, neither heeded their own Scriptures, nor Him, of whom they all speak. So is it to-day. There stand the warnings on Scripture's page from end to end of the Word of God. Christ also is

risen, and warns men from the glory, as He warned when on earth ; yet pass they on, and hear not ; yet are they *not persuaded*.

Sinner, knowing the terror of the Lord, *we persuade men* (2 Cor. v.) ; therefore we write these solemn lines. We would persuade you, "Be ye reconciled to God."

The writer remembers the bedside of an intelligent, well-read man, who, after treating lightly all that was told him about the blessed Lord, said, in a careless way, "But nobody ever came back to tell us."

"Oh ! yes, indeed, one came back," was the answer.

"Who ?" said he, with a look of surprise.

"The Son of God. He came back, and He testified to the truth."

Startled by this unexpected reply, he turned right over in his bed, with his face to the wall, completely silenced. In three weeks he died.

Yes, reader, Christ came back from the dead. Will *you hear Him* ? "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). Now is the moment for decision, lest death should overtake you unprepared, and you should share for ever the awful fate of that wealthy unnamed Jew. E. H. C.

"SUCH A LIE!"



HE slanting rays of the western sun were shedding a soft radiance on moor and hill, and in the dreamy atmosphere of declining day sat two young people enjoying the balmy air and beauty of the scenery. A few days before they had been united in holy wedlock, and had exchanged the noisome din of the city for the calm solitude of a rural retreat.

At the base of the hill which they had climbed nestled a lovely village, with dainty cottages straggling up the slope, and a silvery stream winding its pebbly way beneath mossy banks.

"Hasn't that tent in the glen below a sort of gipsy appearance?" said the young man, breaking an anything but irksome silence.

"The Gospel Tent, I hear, they call it; I wonder what sort of entertainment they provide the villagers?"

"Suppose we go and see," said he gaily; "the people are congregating about it."

Hand in hand down the springy turf they hastened, treading at each step a wealth of wild flowers, each one perfectly finished, fashioned, and perfumed by the God of nature.

Clear and full did the itinerant preacher tell out the old yet ever new story of Jesus and His love. Earnestly did he press on his hearers the necessity

of the new birth, the danger of remaining without God, and therefore without hope, and of the joy and peace of believing in Jesus; but our young friends listened as though they heard him not. The pleadings of grace, and warnings of coming judgment, fell alike on their unopened ears.

"Are you saved?" asked the evangelist of the young man as he was leaving the tent.

"Yes," he returned, in a matter-of-fact tone.

"Have you found Jesus? is He your Saviour?" queried the lover of souls at the young woman.

"Yes," she replied, borrowing her husband's answer.

"Oh, George, such a lie we told the preacher!" said the young wife after they had got clear of the tent.

"No doubt it was," he replied, "but it was the most suitable way to answer him. I am not saved, as he terms it, but if I had said so he would have hammered at me about the awful doom hanging over me, and I wish to take life easy, and not pry too closely into the future."

"But it was a lie all the same," insisted his wife.

"Well, never mind," he said, "there is no use of annoying yourself about such a trivial matter," and he drew her arm into his, and endeavoured to turn her attention to some more pleasing theme. His efforts were unavailing. The Spirit of God used the lie she told to awaken the sleeping conscience within. What about the past? What of her sins? How was she to meet God? These were questions

she could not answer. Her husband reproached himself with having taken her to the Gospel meeting, but she answered that he too was in the same lost condition. Her anxiety of soul was communicated to him, and the stern reality of his need of a Saviour flashed on him. They had satisfied the preacher by assenting to his words, but how was God, who knoweth the hearts of all, to be answered? They took up the Word of God, which both knew well, and, as they turned its pages, passage after passage proved them to be guilty before God. "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." "The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and *all liars*, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." They had told a lie, and liars were classed in the same category as murderers: no difference in God's sight. The Spirit that convinced them of sin, and laid their hearts naked and open before God, also showed them that God had laid their iniquities on the head of His spotless Son; that Christ had suffered for their sins that He might bring them to God; Christ had made peace by the blood of His cross, and by simply believing in Him they would have peace with God.

Something of the magnitude of the love of God impressed itself on them, as they thought of the love they bore each other, and how impossible it would be for either to renounce the other, yet God

so loved the world that He gave the dearest object of His heart, His only Son, to shed His precious blood and make atonement for them. What other effect could such wondrous love have than to make them bow their hearts and knees before God, and, owning their own unworthiness, accept the pardon and peace He offered. Thus together they repented, together obtained mercy, together they cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light. Happy portion! to enter on the vicissitudes of married life joined to the Lord, one spirit with Him.

M. M.



GOD'S WELCOME TO THE SINNER.



E read in the book of Esther that whosoever ventured uninvited into the presence of the sovereign of Persia was put to death, unless the king held out the golden sceptre to him; this was the signal of his safety. On a certain occasion Esther, the queen, at the peril of her life, approached the king unbidden, who graciously extended the sceptre towards her, and thus delivered her from death.

When one thinks of the holiness, majesty, and glory of God, and the wretched ruined state of man, it seems impossible that the latter should ever get into the Divine presence, yet the Gospel

reveals that the sceptre held in the hand of the King of heaven is favourable to the sinner. He holds it for the purpose of giving life and peace to every one who seeks an interview with Him.

None could enter the presence of the Eastern king uninvited without incurring the penalty of death; but inspiration assures us that none can come to God to-day without obtaining eternal life; that instead of holding aloof from man, and leaving him to perish, His invitation has gone out to every sinner beneath the sun, "*Come,*" and "*Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out,*" is His Son's statement.

If it be strange news to you that God gives a hearty welcome to a sinner, know that the explanation is found in the fact that He is seated on a blood-sprinkled throne; the blood of Jesus is before Him in all its untold value and preciousness, the sign of a perfect, sinless life offered up for the salvation of a ruined world; and while this is so, it is impossible that He could do other than extend the golden sceptre—signal of acceptance—towards every perishing sinner that flees to Him. Do you not know, beloved reader, that Christ's blood was shed to enable God to do this, and that He is acting righteously towards His Son in receiving and forgiving sinful men?

The mighty monarch, whose kingdom reaches from India to Ethiopia, sits upon his royal throne, in the royal house, on the *third* day.

In her apartments Queen Esther sits troubled

and perplexed, her own fate, and that of her nation, trembles in the balance, for the king's commandment has gone forth for the destruction of the Jewish nation, of which she is a member. An audience with the king is absolutely necessary, yet how shall she obtain one? The inflexible law of the Persians condemns to death whosoever enters the royal presence uncalled. What shall she do? If she goes not in, she dies; if she enters, she dies, unless—and here is a gleam of hope—the monarch exercises his prerogative, and pardons the intrusion. Her mind is made up; she will venture into the august presence unbidden. "If I perish I perish," she says, and rising up she enters the royal house, and draws near to him. The king's eye falls upon her. 'Tis a fateful moment; shall she live or die? Her eager gaze is fixed upon the sceptre in the king's hand. Will it move towards her? Ah, yes! see! he stretches it in kingly condescension towards the trembling intruder. She touches it; all is well. Esther is safe.

Sinner, *you* need not hesitate to go into the presence of heaven's great King; *there* the question of life or death has not to be decided. There is no uncertainty as to the issue of *that* interview; *life only is to be found there.*

'Tis true that Sinai's law pronounces a terrible and eternal curse upon every transgressor. 'Tis true also that you have violated that law, and merited the curse. But come with me for a moment to the place where Jesus died. There, on that

accursed tree, the Son of God bore the curse that you might live and not die.

Men looked at that cross, and saw a man dying the death of a criminal. God looked, and beheld His beloved Son suffering shame, and enduring judgment, in the room and stead of sinful man. Then from that cross went up to heaven a mighty plea for sinners; it reached the ears of the God of light, and was forthwith answered by the rending of the veil; the gates of the heavenly paradise were thenceforth opened to the lost family of the man who was driven out of the earthly one.

The throne of judgment is converted into a throne of grace. From the lips of the God of love proceeds the sweet word "COME." Its sound reaches to the uttermost parts of the earth; it penetrates the hearts of myriads of fallen men and women; hope springs up where despair had reigned. It is life instead of death, blessing instead of cursing, salvation in place of judgment. Wonderful news—GOD RECEIVES SINNERS!

Oh! my dear reader, believe it, you will never perish by going to Him; *you will perish if you do not go.* Esther had only a faint hope that Ahasuerus might spare her life; there is a Divine certainty that *you* will be accepted by God. His truth and righteousness stand pledged to receive you. However much you may have merited His wrath, you will find nothing but mercy. Though your sins are as scarlet, you will leave His presence whiter than snow.

Yes, wonderful as it is, it is perfectly true that to-day the presence of God is the only refuge and place of safety for the sinner. An earthly law may guard the presence of an earthly potentate from the intrusion of unbidden subjects, but the holy presence of the King of heaven is open to all. *This dispensation is God's great reception day*; sinners are invited to approach Him. Have *you* had an audience with Him yet? Have *you* drawn near and touched the golden sceptre held out so lovingly to you by the hand of the God you have so sinned against? Have *you* ever come to Him in the quiet and privacy of your closet, and told Him what a poor ruined wreck of a sinner you are, but that your hope was in the Saviour's blood? If you have, then the sign of life has been made; you have touched the sceptre, and are saved.

But, alas! millions still distrust God, and avoid having to do with Him as they would avoid death.

Oh! ye trembling, despairing, anxious sinners, did ye never read those wonderful words in 2 Cor. v. 20, "*Be ye reconciled to God.*"

Who is the speaker here? Is it one who prays that God may be reconciled to him? Ah! no; it is one who in God's name, and on God's behalf, beseeches the sinner to be reconciled to God! It is not the rebel seeking reconciliation with the offended King, but the insulted King beseeching the rebel to be reconciled to Him. Wonderful, is

it not? But this is *grace*, dear reader—the grace of God towards a lost world. Have *you* obeyed the gracious call? If you have not, be persuaded, and come at once. “My sins! my sins!” you exclaim. Ah! you forget the BLOOD. “The holiness of God is so infinite and unchanging,” you say. True, but the BLOOD is before Him, that precious blood whose value is equal to the infinite claims of His holiness. He whose righteousness demanded such a sacrifice ere the great sin question could be settled, has delivered a mighty testimony to its value in the gracious welcome He accords to every returning prodigal.

Myriads have fled to that place where, but for the blood, judgment must have met them; but instead of judgment they found the sceptre in God's holy hand pointing towards them, blessed symbol of all-powerful mercy, and forgiving love exercised in righteousness. *The blood of Jesus is seen there*, and the blessed God finds His happiness in extending that sceptre towards every sinner who approaches Him, hating and confessing his sins, while simply trusting to the blood of Jesus.

Queen Esther came before the king attired in her royal apparel; she stood before him in what belonged to her. She appeared before the throne in her proper character. She knew the haughty Ahasuerus well, and had evidently weighed over in her mind what was likely to touch his heart, and the sequel proved how wisely she had acted. As the lovely intruder stood there, robed in the rich

attire of royalty, Ahasuerus looked towards her, "Ah! that is my beautiful queen," said he, and the sceptre made the longed-for movement.

You, my fellow-sinner, if you desire salvation, must come before God in your proper character—*that of a sinner*—you must appear before Him in what belongs to you—*your sins*. Do not seek to be what you are not. Go not in the way of Cain, who came before God with a gift, ignoring the fact that he was a sinner, and that Divine righteousness demanded satisfaction. Make not the mistake of the Pharisee, who, when he came into Jehovah's dwelling-place, thanked Him that he was not as other men. Come to Him this moment, just as you are, a lost one, with nothing but your sins and your need, and God will look at you, and say, "That is a poor sinner for whom my Son died," and pardon will be instantly yours. W. H. S.

God delights in blessing. Judgment is His "strange work." But for sin He would not be a judge. It is our sin which has forced Him on to the judgment seat. But He loves the sinner, while hating his sin. This the cross proves. There He judged His own Son—a sinless man—that He might righteously save the sinner who trusts in His Son. After we had sinned, and before the appointed day of judgment, Christ steps in to bear that judgment, and deliver the guilty man who will confide in Him. How simple, yet how profoundly blessed and effectual is God's Gospel! W. T. P. W.

THE RURAL POSTMAN.



— J — was an orphan, brought up by his father's relations, who, after giving him a very few years of schooling, made him work for himself. He came to us as yard-boy when about twelve years old, and proved so honest and industrious, that he afterwards got the appointment of telegraph messenger. For several years he thus lived about us, and was what any one would have called a "good boy," not only doing what he had to do well and satisfactorily, but showing an interest in better things—a regular attendant at our little Sunday school, where he was approved of for his attention, and the correctness with which he committed Scripture to memory. But he had a very quiet, reserved, unsatisfactory manner, and did not gain much on our affection, though we had no reason to find fault with him.

When about seventeen he was appointed as rural postman to ———, a place six miles distant from my residence. In this situation he gave the greatest satisfaction to all concerned. No complaint was ever made against him, and when he was obliged to retire from bad health, the people whom he had served with letters gave very kind proofs of their sympathy by getting up a collection, which greatly helped him in his long illness.

Still during the eight years of his postman's duty we saw with sincere sorrow a gradual decline of interest in all spiritual matters, till at last he openly declared that he "cared for none of these things," and would not even receive tracts or little books from me (which at first he had gladly done), and utterly refused to come to the Gospel meetings, not even giving any kind of excuse, but answering the invitation with a surly "No, I will not," till at last I could not bring myself to ask him. For some time I continued to strive with him in a gentle way, letting him see my sorrow about him; but he contrived to avoid all private conversation, and got out of my way whenever he could.

About four years before his last illness, he had a bad attack of lung disease, which kept him off duty for some months, and we all thought he would never recover at that time; but he would not allow any one to say so, and always said, he "would get well enough," and did not at all like to be spoken to, as if seriously ill. That illness did not seem to make the least impression on him, and he was more ungodly than ever, when he recovered, and was able to resume his duty. But we did not know how fast bound by Satan he was, as his willing slave, till he told us himself after his conversion.

I remember well the last Sunday he was on duty. I had been observing with true sympathy and deep pity, his failing health, the never-ceasing cough, which sometimes was so violent that I feared he might suddenly burst a blood-vessel, and go

straight into a lost eternity. But the blessed Lord had better things in store for poor dear W——, than my weak faith anticipated. His ways are not as ours, nor His thoughts as our thoughts.

On Sunday, the 24th December, I happened to be alone in the office when he came in with the evening letters. Every other person in the house was out at a meeting. He asked me for some stamps to put on a letter he had brought in, and I did not give them just at once, but took the opportunity of saying a few words as to the awful consequence of his having turned his back on the Lord and His people, and going on headlong to destruction. I remember well I ended by saying, "Dear W——, I know you are very ill, and you don't know how soon you will be called on to meet God, and what will you do then?" His only answer was, "Please, ma'am, give me the stamps, for I'm in a hurry." I gave them, and he left, and was out, as usual, on Monday; but on Tuesday his aunt came down to say he was unable to go on duty, and a few days after he sent home his postal uniform, saying the doctor had said he would not be able ever again to resume his work.

Reader, this time must come to every one sooner or later. It is but a question of a few years, months, days—may be, a few hours. This is all nothing compared with eternity, which man's mind cannot grasp, but into which he must go, prepared or unprepared. What a solemn word is ETERNITY! Here life is but a span, long or short, with its

duties, its pleasures, its objects; then it is over; then the judgment, if not in Christ, with its results for ever! How precious is Christ's death for us! for He having died, the believer will not go into judgment (see John v. 24, xi. 26; Heb. i. 3, ix. 27, x. 18).

The next day, not being well myself, or at all able to go to his house, I sent a girl who sympathised with us in the case, to say to W—— that I was very sorry for him, and would be glad to do anything I could for him *in any way*. He said, "Well, tell her I know she would, but I don't want anything at present, only some little books that she thinks would fit me."

When I got that message I thanked God and took courage. I remember well looking to the Lord for guidance as to what would "fit" him. I sent him some small Gospel books and cards. A few days after I asked a friend to go and see him, as I did not feel able. He went, and when he returned, I anxiously asked, "Well, what state is he in?" My surprise was great when he replied, with evident satisfaction, "Oh! it's all right with him; he is very happy." I rejoined, "How can it be all right with him?" And then he said, "Well, I think if *you* try and go to him, he will satisfy you better than I can."

That night I went up, and as soon as I entered the little bedroom, and saw the youth's happy, beaming countenance, I knew, indeed, that it was "all right" with him. He held out his hand,

and said, "Missis, dear, aren't you glad about me? I knew nobody would be as glad as you."

"Yes, dear W——, of course I am rejoiced, but tell me, how did it all happen?"

"Well, you know, dear missis, what I was—just as you said, going straight down to hell. I had first been led away by foolish company, and got into their ways, and then I got into worse company, and was past the common wicked, and I hated to hear any one speak a good word, and, as you know, I always kept out of your way for fear of you speaking to me, and when I knew of you or Mr —— coming up to —— to read or talk to her, if I had been in her house, I was sure to go out of it before the time I knew you were coming. I liked no reading but bad, foolish novels, and many a shilling I spent buying them, and I drank and swore, and did everything displeasing to God, and it never cost me a thought that I was ill, though many a day it was all I could do to walk the road, and I used to get lifts on passing carts along the way, or I could never have kept my place so long.

"At last one morning I found I could not go out, and my aunt went for the doctor, and he told me the truth, that I would never be fit to go again, and that nothing would be of any use to me. Well, I believed him, and then came the thought of what was before me; and, oh! I was as if I were shut up in a dark room—no light at all. My heart felt hard, and black as a stone; I could not think about anything. I could not even frame a word

or two to ask God for mercy—nothing but blackness and darkness all round me. It was then I asked if you would send me some little books to ‘fit’ me. You did, and I tried to read them, but I could not understand them. (I can understand them now, but could not then.) At last I took up the wee card, with four verses of a hymn on it, and I read it, and just while I was reading it, all at once the hard black darkness seemed to go away, and light came instead. I saw how Jesus had died to save me, and all I had to do was to go to Him and take salvation. Then two verses of Scripture that I had learned long ago came to mind—‘Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;’ and the other was, ‘Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.’ So then, dear missis, I just did go, and told all to Him, and asked Him to do as He had promised. I tried to make a clean breast of it, but He knew far more of my sins than I could tell Him, and I just cast myself on Him for pardon and peace, and He forgave me all, and filled me with light and joy, and never a dbubt crossed my mind as to my salvation, either then or since; and, oh! I knew how glad you would be to know that I was saved after all. Oh! the goodness and love of God to me.”

And so the dear lad went on in this happy strain, and we rejoiced together, not only on that occasion, but many times after.

It pleased the Lord to allow him to linger for three months, and during that time he grew won-

derfully in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not only was he remarkably clear as to Gospel truth, but the Lord taught him out of the Scripture what he never had been taught by any one—the principle of separation from evil, and the true ground of the Church of God. Indeed, it was wonderful to see how much and how truly he was taught of God; and yet why should it be wonderful? Who teacheth like Him?

What a comforting and encouraging case of God's abounding love and grace to one who seemed so hopelessly given up to Satan is this. You, my reader, can imagine the deep joy and thankfulness of the hearts of those who had once watched over him with hope, and then almost given him up in despair, as they were allowed to witness day by day his growth in grace, and his full unmixed peace and joy for three months, and then, *at his own request*, to follow his dear remains to their last resting-place, and speak beside his open grave, to those assembled there, of the love and grace that had sought and found him. He died on the 21st of March, aged twenty-four.

"Is He precious to you, do you know Him?

The Lover, the Saviour of men—

Who came from the throne of His glory

To bring back His lost ones again.

He loved you, He gave Himself for you;

Oh! will you believe it is true?

Nay, doubt not, believe it, accept it,

The love—and the grace—are for you!

You have not to seek Him, He sought you,
Far down in the depth where you lay ;
Now hear the bright message of mercy—
Believe it, receive it, to-day.

To-morrow ! Oh ! what of to-morrow ?
The judgment may come by delay ;
Now hear the good news of salvation—
Believe, and be saved while you may."

L. T. S.



MAN'S VIEWS OR GOD'S !

"Oh ! how unlike the complex works of man !
Heaven's easy, artless, unencumbered plan."

—COWPER.



S I walked with two ladies to the L—
Hall, where I was about to preach the
Gospel, one of them said to me, "What
lovely views there are in this town !"
At the moment my mind was travelling
far away from the parks, and museums,
and handsome streets, to which she referred. I
was thinking at the time of the few minutes
I was about to spend in seeking to persuade
men and women—immortal souls—to think about
their eternity.

But her exclamation brought to my mind an
incident. A lady, dying of consumption, was very
anxious about her soul. She had asked many
persons their *views* of salvation, and had received
different replies.

One told her "to pray"; another "to work," and so on.

A Christian visited her in her dying hour. She earnestly inquired, "What are your *views* of salvation?" "I have no views," was the reply. The lady was amazed.

"You seem astonished," said the visitor, "but supposing I had, what good would they do you, seeing they would be but the *views* of a fellow-mortal? I can, however, give you something better; I can give you *God's views*."

The conversation resulted in the dying lady finding peace to her troubled soul by learning, that the question, "What must I do to be saved?" was divinely answered thus, "**BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved**" (Acts xvi. 31, 32).

Reader, do thou likewise, and thou shalt be saved. Is salvation of works? No! "To him that *worketh* NOT, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 5). Believers can say, "NOT by *works* of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy *he saved us*" (Titus iii. 5).

It is evident from these and other passages of GOD'S WORD, that no one can be saved through works, prayers, church attendance, or religious observances—these are *men's views* of salvation. Oh! accept *God's view*—simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.



HE Scriptures abound with allusions to the blood of Christ, and show conclusively that none but those cleansed therein can enter the glory of God. The human heart, deeply stained with sin, clings to a thousand false remedies, but to trust in anything else but Christ and His precious blood is utterly vain. The whole of the redeemed in glory will sing with one heart and one voice, "Thou art worthy, . . . for thou . . . hast redeemed to God by thy blood," &c. (Rev. v. 9).

We would present to our readers *seven* things that the Word of God says about the blood. May every troubled soul that reads these lines be brought to know its infinite value, and go in peace!

1. It is precious blood.
2. It is shed for many.
3. It makes atonement.
4. It is the means of remission.
5. It is the ground of justification.
6. It cleanseth from all sin.
7. It gives boldness before God.

1. *It is precious blood.* "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but

with *the precious blood of Christ*, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. i. 18, 19). It is the Spirit of God that calls it *precious*. It is God's own estimate of it. Peter had learnt its preciousness for himself. It is precious to God as the blood of Jesus, His Son, shed for His glory, and to remove the awful blot of sin. It is precious to every believer as that which removed our guilty fears, purged our conscience, and gave us peace. When conscious of our awful danger as lost, guilty, and hell-deserving sinners in the sight of a holy God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, we learned that Christ had made peace through the blood (Col. i. 20). Only those who have realised their deep need, and the vanity and folly of all human resource and effort to meet it, know its preciousness.

"Precious, precious blood of Jesus!
Shed on Calvary;
Shed for rebels, shed for sinners,
Shed for me."

Reader, is it precious to you?

2. *It is shed for many.* When Jesus instituted the supper on the night of His betrayal, He took the cup, and, speaking figuratively of the wine, said, "This is *my blood* of the New Testament, which is shed for *many* for the remission of sins." Need we say, our sins are not remitted through the Lord's Supper, but through the blood of which the wine is a figure. "*My blood!*" "*Shed for many.*" What precious words of comfort for the soul!

There is no limit here. The Jew was privileged, but the blood of the Lamb avails far beyond the middle wall of partition; it was shed for *many*. Gentile, as well as Jew, are included here. None are excluded. Sinners of few or many sins, of every nationality beneath the sun, are welcome to trust therein. Christ died for all. His sacrifice is a world-wide propitiation. His blood was shed for *many*. However great your guilt, *you* are included. Will you trust therein?

3. *It makes atonement.* "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11). How vain then every effort of man to make an atonement in any other way whatever! Yet how many thousands are daily striving to meet the claims of God's holiness through their own religious efforts. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. viii. 8). The soul of the sinner is steeped in guilt. Nothing but blood can atone. The moral and religious need the blood as well as the ungodly and depraved. The Jew had to bring his half-shekel of silver as an atonement (Exod. xxx. 11-16). We have nothing that we can bring. There is no need. Christ gave Himself for us. His precious blood has been shed; atonement has been made. He is a *propitiation* for all; not for our (the believer's) sins only, but *for the whole world*. Sinner, without an interest in the atonement made by the blood of Christ, your soul will be irremediably lost.

4. *It is the means of remission.* "Without

shedding of blood is *no remission*" (Heb. ix. 22). What could be plainer, or simpler? You may weep and pray over your sins from year's end to year's end; you may be amongst the most devoted in religious exercises; you may seek to shut yourself off from the world in a priory or convent; you may be baptized, and take the sacrament as a means of grace, but all is in vain to cancel sin. Repentance exercise of soul, baptism, prayer, the Lord's Supper have their place in the ways of God, but it stands indelibly written in God's imperishable word, "*Without shedding of blood is no remission.*" Neither one, nor all these things put together, ever did, or ever will, put a single sin away. Remission of sins to the vilest sinner is full, free, and eternal, but wholly and solely through the precious blood of Christ.

5. *It is the ground of justification.* "Now justified by his blood" (Rom. v. 9). This is true for every believer. God is for us; and is just and the justifier of Him which believeth in Jesus (Rom. iii. 26). The ground of this grace is that Jesus died. His precious blood met every claim of God. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*" God who gave His Son for us, displays His righteousness not only in pardoning, but in justifying us on the ground of the shed blood of Christ. The moment we believe on Him, we are forgiven, and reckoned

as just persons, as though we had never sinned. It is His own work, perfect, and eternal; every possible charge has been met, and the believer in Jesus is as clear as God can make him. He is *justified* by God Himself. "It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? 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" (Rom. viii. 33, 34).

6. *It cleanseth from all sin.* As water cleanses from dirt, so the blood of Christ cleanses from sin. Such is its infinite efficacy and cleansing power, that the sinner who believes is whiter than snow in the presence of God. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Every sin of which our souls have ever been guilty is blotted out for ever. Not a spot, or stain, or speck remains. Without a single sin-stained addition of our righteousness, we are once and for ever perfectly cleansed before God. The infinite efficacy of the precious blood of Christ abides before Him for ever. We never need to be cleansed a second time. We need to cleanse our practical ways by the water of the Word; but the blood—the precious blood of Christ—abides in all its priceless worth as that which has eternally cancelled all our mighty debt. The whole power of Satan can never impugn the glorious statement of the everlasting Word of God, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 9).

7. *It gives boldness before God.* With sin upon

the conscience, the sinner is unhappy, and afraid to draw nearer to God. Sin is an impassable barrier. Nothing but the blood can remove it. But such is the value of the blood of Jesus, that it gives to those who trust therein boldness to enter the holiest—liberty in the presence of God Himself. All fear is taken away; the soul is at peace and free, and no longer seeks to worship and serve God with slavish fear, but draws near with holy boldness, in blessed liberty in His presence, knowing the value of the blood before Him, and that he is welcome there. How vast the change! How perfect the provision of God in the precious blood of Christ! How great the blessing and privilege of every soul, who, in self-judgment before Him, bows to Him, and believes on His Son! The blood of Jesus is the new and living way into His presence. Every sinner cleansed with the blood is privileged to be there.

Beloved reader, how is it with you? Have you entered into the value of the blood of Christ for your own soul? Are you cleansed therein? Without the shedding of blood is *no remission*. Every moment you may spend on the earth, trusting in anything short of the blood, you are in danger of the eternal judgment of God. You may be the greatest religionist, and the most highly respected citizen where you dwell, but without an interest in the blood of Christ, your state is hopeless before God. If you die in your sins (and you may die to-day), you are beyond the reach of its cleansing

power. Now is the only time to find shelter and cleansing. After death comes *the judgment* (Heb. ix. 27). Then it will be too late. No one can avail himself of the blood then. There is no gospel but in time. We entreat you therefore, troubled soul, *trust in the precious blood*. Delay is dangerous. Now is the moment for decision.

“Trusting in that precious blood,
There is perfect peace with God.”

If sin is burdening you, this is what you need. No good work can you do, acceptable to God, till you are first cleansed therein before Him. May you get solidly hold of the precious truth that “the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

E. H. C.

ETERNITY.



E are born! We live! We die! We enter life through the door of time, we quit it through the portals of eternity. Man—fool that he is—knowing well that time's short day will soon have run its course, gives no heed to eternity, but prepares everything for the present, and lays up no store for the eternal future. “A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself, but the simple pass on and are punished.”

Time flows on like a rapid running river. The child starts from its source, and infant days are spent in its tiny stream. At youth the small craft begins to glide merrily onward, fresh attractions begin to appear, and new scenes meet the eye on every hand along its shores. At manhood the vessel rides nobly upon the bosom of time; the tiny rivulet has now become a deep, swelling river, its waters flow swiftly onward toward the mighty ocean, and faster still its traveller is borne onward toward the gulf of eternity.

As old age begins, and grey hairs make their appearance, the bank of the river still widens, its shores stretch far away on either side.

Carried on swifter than ever, the traveller begins to feel the swell of the tide, and now and then a wave dashes against the vessel's side, filling him with fears as to her safety. Onward still he speeds his way, and as the allotted threescore years and ten are passed, the river merges into the mighty ocean. Friends bid the traveller farewell, the shore now fades from sight, its dim outline is no longer to be seen, and as the silver cord is loosed, and the golden bowl is broken, the old man passes out of time into eternity.

Traveller to eternity! whither bound? Onward you are speeding your way, soon you will have left time behind you for ever, then, *what of eternity?*

Are you hastening thither with a lifetime of sins behind you, the wrath of God hanging over you, and the judgment of God on before you?

Oh, be wise, we beseech you, and consider your ways ; " for God shall bring every secret work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil " (Eccles. xii. 14).

To-night you may enter eternity, to-night your doom be eternally sealed, for if you enter it unsaved, nothing but the great white throne awaits you, and the lake of fire for ever.

Youth, hastening to eternity ! " Remember, NOW, thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not." Come they will, *remember !*

Man, hurrying on to eternity ! " Remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many." Eternal darkness awaits the lost in hell ; be wise to-day, *remember !*

Old man, nearing eternity ! remember, " God is not mocked." If you still slight His offered mercy, and reject Christ and His salvation, those grey hairs will surely be brought down with sorrow to the grave, and your hoary head bring down the awful judgment of a holy, sin-hating God for your long life of sin and wickedness. For " God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy head of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses." God has said it, and will surely bring it to pass, therefore *remember !*

" Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord : Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow : though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool " (Isa i. 18).

"THEY MUST BE GONE."



WAY, in a small village in Warwickshire lay an old man upon a bed of sickness. The hand of disease had laid him low. When first I visited him, he seemed to have little concern about his soul, and appeared very much in the dark as to

the way of salvation. After many repeated visits I called one day to see him, and set before him God's way of salvation through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and sought to press upon him the wondrous fact, penned by the Holy Ghost, in the First Epistle of Peter, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (chap. ii. 24). Before I left he requested his wife to take notice of the chapter, that she might be able to read it again after I had left.

The next time I called to see him, I read part of the 15th chapter of Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, dwelling mostly on the third verse, "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures"; and then went on to tell him that Christ had not only died, but had risen again; that in dying He had borne our sins, and suffered the judgment of God due to those sins; and having finished the work He had been raised again, and was now seated on high at God's right hand; the full proof that the sins He bore on the cross were

put away for ever. But not only so, the resurrection was one proof they were all gone; but there was another. By the Holy Spirit sent down, God now declares in His Word that the sins and iniquities of those Christ died for He will remember no more. "*Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more*" (Heb. x. 17). As I went on to tell Him the good news of Christ's death on the cross, and God's satisfaction in that precious death, the old man broke out, "*Why, according to that, they must be gone!*" His soul seemed to lay hold of the truth of those words, "I will remember NO MORE."

Dear reader, is it a fact to you—treasured by you in your inmost soul—that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures"?

"But," says some doubting soul, "I only wish I could feel my sins were gone." Or, says some one else, "How can I know for certain that all my sins were borne by Christ?" The answer is simple. God declares in His Word "Christ died for our sins," and faithful will He ever be to His Word—"I will remember no more." Not by feelings can it be known or enjoyed, but by simply taking Him at His word, and believing what He says.

The believer can say, "Upon the cross my sins He bore. Victorious out of the tomb He arose, having overcome death and all Satan's power. Upon the throne of God in glory He now sits. "This man, when he had offered one sacrifice

for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. x. 12). There He sits to-day, blessed be His name! the full proof that all is done, and, as the old man said, "according to *that*, they must be gone!"

Would you be the happy possessor of forgiveness of sins? Then trust in Him, dear friend; let your doubts, fears, and feelings go, and take God's Word instead. "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe *are* justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 38).

May you, dear anxious one, be led to see in Him, "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," the full answer to your fears to your sins, and thus may you be able to exclaim, like the old man, "Why, according to that, they must be gone!"

E. E. N.

"PEACE ON EARTH."



T the time of our Saviour's birth, we read in Luke ii. 14, that a multitude of the heavenly host praised God, and said, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and goodwill towards men."

Now, many centuries have passed since then

and in their course the doctrines of Christianity, and the softening influences of civilisation, have been widely spread, but yet it is said that in Europe to-day there is an armed force of some twenty-two million men ! That sounds strange. Where, the infidel might ask, tauntingly, is this promise of "peace on earth" ? Things look as warlike as ever ; Christianity has not turned the sword into a ploughshare, nor has civilisation taught universal love and kindness—the rather it has led to weapons of destruction far more terrible than those of old, and has succeeded by the science of the day in compassing wholesale slaughter as was never dreamed of by conquerors of ancient times.

All true. Then "peace on earth" is a misnomer, for such a thing does not exist.

Quite so. Nor will the modern political idea of "arbitration *versus* war" come to anything ; yet, if Christianity were to continue as long again, and education to be spread still further, the war-loving nature would remain, and the science of mutual destruction would increase. But how is that ? The heavenly host could have made no mistake. Their lovely anthem must have been correct in its every sentence. Then how comes it that peace is not on earth ?

Further on in the same göspel, chap. xii. 51, we read, "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth ? I tell you, nay, but rather division."

Whatever, then, the host meant in Luke ii., the Lord Himself tells us in chap. xii. that He had not

come to give peace on earth. That was not the object of His coming. There is neither clash nor contradiction.

The heavenly host did not specify the period when their announcement would be made good in public. They simply stated the glorious result of the incarnation of the Son of God. That result will assuredly be accomplished with "glory to God, peace on earth, and good pleasure in men," as the consequence of His life, and death, and humiliation here. Nothing of that will fail.

On the other hand, the Lord said that He had not come to give peace on earth. He came to give no general pacification. The earth, as such, was not *now* to be the sphere of the blessings of peace. True, He came to "make peace by the blood of his cross" (Col. i. 20), and thereby to reconcile sinners, enemies, who were alienated from God by wicked works, so that they, through faith in Him, should have peace with God. But this peace is inward and spiritual; it is real and deeply precious. May I pause to ask my reader if he has this precious, inward peace with God? If not, you may have it through simple faith (see Rom. v. 1).

This is the only divine peace to be found on earth to-day, and it dwells in the bosoms of the children of God. Public peace is by no means guaranteed to-day by the Word of God. No doubt God may hold in check the forces of evil, but that is simply a matter of mercy on His part. Other-

wise things run their course, and division instead of peace is the present result of the first coming of the Lord.

In point of fact, the rejection of the Lord made the establishment of peace on earth impossible. Then, has peace no home? Indeed, she has! Turn on to chap. xix. 38 of our gospel, and read another anthem, sung albeit by lowlier lips, "Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest."

That peace, if without a home on earth, has always one on high. The trail of the serpent, the untiring activity of sin, the clash of conflict, is all unknown in these peaceful abodes. There the truth, the love, and the will of God are paramount. Happy home of peace! Happy, too, for this poor groaning earth when, by-and-by, in God's own good time, His will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven, and when the wide creation shall witness, verified, the sweet declaration of those hosts of heaven—"Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and goodwill towards men." God makes no mistakes, and His Word contains no contradictions. He is the wisest and happiest who, by grace, rests on all that God has said. If there be no peace on earth, there is peace in heaven, and also, thank God, in the heart of the believer.

"Lord, while our souls in faith repose
Upon Thy precious blood,
Peace like an even river flows,
And mercy, like a flood."

CHRIST'S TREASURE.

MATT. xiii. 44 ; EPH. v. 25-27.



We are Thy treasure, Jesus,
 Thy Church Thy chosen bride,
 For us Thou hast in mercy
 And love exceeding died.
 We are Thine own, Lord Jesus,
 Thy Father's gift to Thee,
 Thou gav'st Thyself for us, Lord,
 On Calvary's cursed tree.

We are Thy treasure, Saviour,
 What joy for us to know
 Thou lovest us, Lord Jesus,
 Poor pilgrims here below !
 Now gloriously exalted
 At God's right hand on high,
 Thou liv'st to cleanse and keep us
 To God Thy Father nigh.

Soon Thou wilt come in glory,
 And take us hence away
 To realms of joy and gladness,
 Of never-ending day.
 Then, Lord, Thou wilt present us
 A glorious Church to Thee,
 Nor spot, nor stain, nor wrinkle
 In Thy fair bride Thou'lt see.

Pages for the Young.

THE DOLLS AT THE WINDOW.

A STORY FOR GIRLS.



WHEN in a Scotch town lately I saw a strange sight. Four dolls set up against a window, staring right before them with their sightless eyes at what was going on in the street.

"Oh!" you say, "there is nothing very curious in that, for we girls often leave our dollies where they may see and be seen. No doubt their little owner was at dinner or tea, or having a good game, and had forgotten them."

No.

"Then perhaps she had gone to bed, and left them there until she returned."

Yes, my child, she had gone to bed — her narrow bed — never to return; the dear little owner lay in the dark cold grave. Her body had returned to dust, and the spirit to God who gave it. Her hands will never more handle, or her eyes behold, her four pet dolls. The sorrowful mother could not bear to remove them from where her darling child left them. So there the dolls stand, all in a row, leaning one against the other, gazing wistfully out of the silent chamber day by day, and week after

week. There is a big lady in a black gown and fair hair, with her hat hanging over her shoulders; next stands a little fellow in a blue sailor suit, edged with gilt; then there leans upon him a fair maiden in a light blue costume; and last appears the smartest of the lot, in a Gainsborough hat and fashionable fawn dress. Oh, would you not like one of them? But perhaps you have similar delights.

These pretty treasures had all to be left behind. God called the owner, and she *had* to go; and so must you, sooner or later, leaving everything in this bright world behind. And oh, how dreary, how awful, if you have nothing before you but a long, dark, suffering eternity! To live without Christ is to die without Christ, and to have a part with "the fearful, and unbelieving, . . . in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death" (Rev. xxi. 8). If not a believer in, and a follower of, the Lamb, you *know* you are unpardoned and lost. God's Word condemns you as such, being even by nature a child of wrath (Eph. ii. 3). But He also in that same Word bids you "believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John iii. 23), who as Son of Man came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke xix. 10). Only trust Him *just now*.

The four dolls that I saw were the much-prized earthly treasures of a little girl between three and four years old. I wonder if she knew and loved the Lord. She had to leave her toys, but if she was saved she will be "far better" with Christ.

God loves you so well that He gives a present of His Son, the "unspeakable gift." No tongue can describe His preciousness. Will you *take* Him by just *believing* Him? He lives in heaven now, and wants to come into your heart. Do let Him in.

Once I took the present of a set of painted China cups and saucers to the little daughter of a sea captain. She was sitting quietly in the drawing-room when I entered, but when I told her what I had brought she *believed my word*, and *took the gift*. She kissed me, and fairly danced with delight at the sight of her tea set. Every one had to see it.

Oh, how your heart would rejoice if you only took Jesus! for God so loved you that He gave His only-begotten Son, and if you only accept Him you shall have everlasting life as yours now, and heaven for your home, where is fulness of joy, even pleasures for evermore. Oh, take the gift of God, which is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Take Him now, and you will never regret it!

"There's a *robe* for little children,
Above the bright blue sky,
And a *harp* of sweetest music
And a *palm* of victory
And, all above is treasured,
And found in Christ alone
O come, dear little children,
That all may be your own."

EUROPE'S FIRST CONVERTS.

PART I.

(ACTS XVI. 6-40).



THE events related in this sixteenth chapter of Acts have a peculiar interest for us as Gentiles, because, you will observe, this was the first time that the Gospel got into Europe. Oh, what infinite mercy, that God has sent us the Gospel of His grace. The way in which it comes out is exceedingly interesting. The apostle Paul is going on with his work in Asia: he tries to go this way, and is hindered, and then he tries to go in another direction, and is hindered again, and he does not know what to do. God sends him a vision in the night: he sees a man of Macedonia beckoning to him and saying, "Come over and help us." Nothing could be plainer than this: here was a man who felt his need. He does not say, "Come over, and I will help you," but, "Come over and help us." It is the language of a needy man.

Paul wakes up, and evidently he understands the vision: "Assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them." He was now at Troas, a large maritime city of Asia. He gathered assuredly that the Lord would have him preach the gospel in Europe. Immediately he goes down to the harbour, and he finds a ship ready to take him over. And God gave him a fair

wind, for he got across in a day and a half, whereas you will find that when he is coming back, it takes five days (chap. xx. 6). The Lord loves to send the Gospel to sinners, and I think the Holy Ghost delights to record God's readiness to meet the needy soul. There was a hungry heart in Macedonia, a needy sinner, and God orders everything so that His messenger with the Gospel may reach him speedily. Is there a needy soul reading this? I have glorious news for you, my friend. I delight to tell you this: there is not a need in your heart that my Saviour cannot meet; there is not a need of your soul that the Son of God cannot supply, and therefore you need be no longer wretched, peaceless, joyless, if only you will believe God's message.

Well, the voyage is made—Philippi is reached; Paul and his company go into the city, and they look all round for the man, but they do not see him. They found quite a number of women going to a prayer meeting, but the men evidently thought that a waste of time. Most young men think it rather a poor and contemptible thing to go to a prayer meeting. Well, never mind, you young women, if you want salvation God has it for you just now, if the men will not have it. No wonder a blessing came when we see these earnest women constantly going to prayer. I believe if we could trace it out, we should always find that where there is a real work of God's grace, it has been preceded by prayer. I do not think there was any set

preaching to these women. From the words which the evangelist Luke uses, it would seem that they had just a little free conversation : " We sat down and spake unto the women which resorted thither."

I do not know anything better than that. I believe there are far more people converted by sitting down by their side, and having a talk with them, than by an evangelist preaching from a platform. The Gospel in Europe begins, I do not say with an after-meeting, but with that which has the character of an after-meeting. Sit down by the side of a needy sinner, and tell what you know about Christ. That is what Paul and Silas and Luke did here.

The next thing we read is that Lydia's heart was opened. Clearly she received the Gospel. I have no doubt that Lydia was an anxious soul, an enquiring one, who knew herself a guilty sinner, but anything she had ever heard up to that moment had not met her soul's need. And if you, beloved friend, have never met the Son of God the Saviour if you do not personally know the Lord Jesus Christ, there is a want in your heart that nothing but Himself can satisfy. For be sure of this, let men have what they will here, if they are without Christ, they are unsatisfied. The fact is, your heart is too big for the world to fill ; money will not fill it, and pleasure will not fill it. No doubt many go on in a careless untroubled sort of way, but there is a need, a want, a void, in the soul which is never met till Christ is known. Such a void no doubt was in Lydia's heart, and, oh, with what

gladness does this simple anxious woman hear the glad tidings of the blessed Saviour: His coming into the world, His life, His death, His resurrection, the descent of the Holy Ghost, and the joyful news of forgiveness, and pardon, and peace, through His name? Her heart was opened: she drank in the good news, and when her heart was opened, her house was opened too. She received the Gospel of Christ into her heart, and she received the servants of Christ into her house (verse 15). She came boldly out for the Lord: she put on Christ: she was not ashamed to own the Lord: she took the shilling, as we may say, by the river bank, and she put on the red coat immediately after. With her household she takes her stand as being on the Lord's side. It was a beautiful start for the first follower of Christ in Europe.

She was only a woman, but very often the women are ahead of the men, and very likely my reader is a young man, utterly unconverted, who has converted sisters, and a praying mother. The father, perhaps, is unconverted too, busy making money, and getting on in the world, but thank God if he has a praying wife. May the father be converted to-day, and the boy too! Don't you look down upon a pious, earnest, prayerful woman: you ought to thank God if you have such in the circle of your acquaintances. And perhaps your getting this paper may lead to your conversion to God, and all in answer to the prayers of such a woman. Do not make light of it, for mark, if you are not converted

to God, you will, you must be, damned, for all eternity. I do not mince matters, God does not, for your soul is at stake, and the truth is at stake.

What did God send Paul to Europe for? To show the way of salvation. Lydia had learnt the way of salvation, and she immediately ranks herself on the side of the Saviour. She is real; she has the courage of her convictions: would to God you had. If you are a converted man or woman who has never confessed Christ, the Lord give you grace to do so now. She not only confessed with the lip, but, we read, "She besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there." I think the heart of the apostle Paul was exceedingly happy when he found himself under Lydia's roof. Thank God, he could say, I have got the first convert in Europe and the work will now go on.

But the devil does not like that sort of thing, and if he can hinder the work he will. First he tries to spoil the work by what I may call patronising the apostles. He puts a poor girl, the slave and tool of Satan, upon the track of the apostles, and day after day she goes after them saying, "These are the servants of the most high God which show unto us the way of salvation." The devil tries to mix himself up with God's work. It is always so: wherever you find God working, be sure Satan will come in and try to spoil it. I am afraid most of us would have accepted this testimony, it sounded so fair. But the apostle says, No, no, I will

not have Satan's help in proclaiming the truth of God.

Lydia had been manifested by the Gospel at the river's side, and now this poor slave must be manifested by the word of the Lord. Paul "turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour." Now there is no end of a storm, and why? Because the masters of this poor damsel saw that their money-making had been stopped. When you touch a man's pocket he begins to wince; nothing shows sooner where a man is. The moment these men see the hope of their gains is gone they are in a rage, and they stir up the people and put the whole city into a tumult.

I do not doubt Satan thought he had put a stopper on the Gospel in Europe, when these two servants of the Lord were taken, stripped and beaten, and handed over to the tender mercies of a brutal callous man, the jailor, who is commanded to keep them safely. They are put into an Eastern dungeon, not at all like the prisons of the nineteenth century, but a damp loathsome place, such as Roman prisons were. The jailor takes a sort of brutal pleasure in thrusting them into the inner prison, and making their feet fast in the stocks. But that is the man God is going to save; that is the man who is going to be truly converted to God. Having secured these servants of the Lord, and left them in this horrible dungeon, with their feet fast in the stocks, he retires to sleep. No doubt the enemy

thought that the work of the Lord was arrested. But you cannot check the grace of God, or the energy of the Spirit of God, and what looks like a great defeat, becomes really the opportunity for a higher display of divine grace.

Now midnight comes on, and what is heard in that prison? These two men, Paul and Silas, are praying, and singing praise. If any one had been passing by outside that night who did not know the circumstances, he would have concluded "They are having a good time in there"; but what was the fact? Their feet were fast in the stocks, their backs were sore and bleeding from the stripes they had received, they were hungry and cold and comfortless, and yet they were not only praying but praising. They are in the character of holy priests, and royal priests. As royal priests they were turning to God in prayer and intercession, and as holy priests they were offering up to God praise and thanksgiving. They were able to thank and bless the Lord in the most adverse circumstances.

Now see what follows. God steps in. It is midnight now, and as the other prisoners hear what is going on, these songs of praise going up to God, we can imagine their astonishment. The particular nature or character of their prayer we are not told, but it strikes me very forcibly that it was connected with the testimony of God which they had come to render at Philippi. While others might be buried in slumber and darkness, the cry of prayer was going up from these two devoted

servants of God for the testimony of Christ, and God heard them. He heard their prayer and He answered it in this remarkable way: "And suddenly there was a great earthquake so that the foundations of the prison was shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed." God answers the faith and confidence of His servants in this instance by an earthquake, and not only one earthquake, I think, but by two. There was a physical earthquake which shook the prison to its very foundations, but this became the means of a moral earthquake in the soul of this poor godless heathen jailor, and he wakes up to find where he is, and what he has been doing. God has stepped in, the prison is shaken, the doors are opened, the bands are loosed: "And the keeper of the prison awakening out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself."

Have *you*, my unconverted reader, ever been wakened up? If you have been going on hitherto listlessly and quietly in view of eternity, and if you have travelled so far without the forgiveness of your sins, without the possession of salvation and of peace with God, you are really asleep—asleep on the very verge of eternity, and I should thank God if anything you might read this day should awake you. I should like to do to you just now what the shipmaster did to Jonah, when he came and put his hand on him and said, "What meanest thou, O sleeper?" I would say to every careless, uncon-

verted, unsaved soul that peruses this page, "What meanest thou, O sleeper?" Awake to the reality of your state as a sinner, to the holiness of God, to His righteousness, to His claims upon you, to the realities of eternity. Awake if thou wast never awake before. It need not be by an earthquake. No, no, it may be by the still small voice in which God often speaks.

W. T. P. W.

(To be continued if the Lord will.)



"SHEFFIELD HARRY;" OR, THE DANGER OF DELAY.



N the days of Noah and of Lot we find, that though warned of coming judgment, people were so mad as to go on with their ordinary business, as if nothing whatever were going to happen, and so it is to-day. On all sides we see a sad indifference to the warnings of the Gospel, and a tendency to use the very words of the scoffers of the last days, "All things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

Is there one who reads this paper in careless indifference as to his soul, then let him give me all his attention as I relate the story of Henry Burkinshaw. He was an navvy, and was well

known by the name of "Sheffield Harry." He was working at a large reservoir some miles outside of Sheffield at the time of which I write—the time of the great Sheffield flood in 1864—that terrible flood whereby in a few brief moments, about 240 precious immortal souls passed, most of them without the slightest warning, into eternity, and into God's presence.

Harry was working at a reservoir higher up the valley than the Bradfield reservoir, which burst its bank, and on the day in question, a terribly stormy day, 11th March 1864, he was told by one and another that the bank was cracked and unsafe, but he only laughed at the idea ; had he not passed and repassed that huge embankment day after day as he went to, and returned from, his work ; he did not believe it would break—not he, and spite of his warning he went to bed at his usual time ; he was not going to be frightened by such tales. An hour or two later, those in the same house with him again sought to arouse him, but he still persisted that it was a false alarm, and refused to get up. In a very short time after, the first symptoms of the flood showed themselves, and water began to pour down the valley. Again Sheffield Harry was urged to escape for his life ; men shouted and women screamed, but he only said he did not care. He realised, however, now that there was some cause for alarm, so he got up from his bed and had put on one of his stockings, when the flood came down in all its resistless force and swept away the

house and its contents, the other inmates having escaped to higher ground just in time.

Thus perished Sheffield Harry, his body being found the following day some way farther down the valley. There was not any real cause for his perishing, save that he persistently refused to believe the warnings given to him.

Now, dear reader, you have been warned more than once of God's judgment coming upon this guilty scene, and that you, if unconverted, are under sentence of death, and after death comes the judgment. Why will you neglect any longer. "Beware lest He take thee away with His stroke." You will one day be in earnest; oh, be so now, while there is the chance of escape! Turn to a gracious Saviour, and turn NOW.

A. F. R.

A YOUNG CONVERT'S CONFESSION.



DEAR mother, I know you will be overjoyed when you read this letter, to know that what you have so often prayed for, my soul's salvation, has come to pass.

"After writing to you on Monday night, I sat down to play my violin, but I could not get on, so I took up the volume of 'God's Glad Tidings' that I brought from home, and started reading it.

"I got very interested in it, and when I closed the book, I knelt down and asked God to show me the way of salvation. I found, though, that was no use, for He has shown us the way of salvation, so yesterday I read on through the book, and found, that to get salvation, I was to own myself a guilty sinner, and ask God to *save me*, not to *show* me the way; so I just knelt down, and told the Lord what a sinner I was, and cried to Him to save me.

"I felt much better after that, but could not say I was saved, and then I lay thinking over the plan of salvation, and I asked myself these questions,— 'Do I believe that Christ died for guilty sinners like myself; and by His death opened up a way to heaven?' Yes, for God tried man by the law, and he failed utterly to keep it. Then Jesus Christ satisfies the claims of God by taking all the judgment due to man, and dying in his stead. Well, I thought to myself, I must be saved, for it says, 'He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life,' and then it dawned on my mind that I had nothing to do but simply trust God, and all would be right; and then I felt so happy, because I knew my sins were all washed away, and 'blotted out.'

"I could only thank God for His marvellous grace and goodness." But, oh! how Satan works; the difficulties he tries to put in my path, but I keep 'trusting in God,' and asking Him to keep my mind fixed on Himself, and then all the clouds disappear. What a privilege it is to take every-

thing to God, and tell Him all our troubles. Satan cannot touch us when we are on our knees. Pray for me, mother, for I shall have a struggle, I know. Satan spreads all the world's pleasures before me, but what are they compared to the blessings Christ can give.

"May the Lord give me strength to confess Him here. I feel I would rather die than go back to the old ways. I am earnestly praying to God to make me proof against all the devil's assaults, for I find my thoughts are apt to stray very easily. . . . It has all been of God's gracious ordering my coming to C—— to get with Christian schoolmates. . . .—Your loving son, H——."



A FINE BIT OF REASONING.



NE of the simplest and commonest logical forms or methods of reasoning is called a syllogism. A reliable dictionary gives the following definition:—A form of reasoning or argument, consisting of three propositions, of which the two

first are called the *premises* (*major* and *minor*), and the last the *conclusion*, the conclusion necessarily following from the premises, thus:—A plant has not the power of locomotion; an oak is a plant; therefore an oak has not the power of locomotion.

Now let me give you a very beautiful syllogism. I was visiting in some of the slums of the city where I live, and came across a poor woman. I found her in a room, whose only furniture was a little straw, and a tattered blanket. Her *only* clothes were a worn, black dress, and a pair of big shoes, much the worse for wear.

We helped her, and got her work. With a woman's tact, and a Scotchwoman's never-say-die, she went to work with a will, and soon her little room began to look home-like. A few almanacs on the wall—a table—a couple of chairs—a fender—a decent little bed, &c., soon changed the aspect of things.

This had been going on for some months, when one day on calling I found her in great trouble. She had complained of pains in her chest, and a cough, and she at last had been compelled to go to the parish doctor, who had told her both lungs were affected, and that she had not long to live.

I felt it was a solemn time, and I was anxious to hear, in a moment like that, a clear, distinct testimony as to her hopes for eternity. So I said,—

“Well, Mrs A——, this is solemn. The doctor puts your death-warrant into your hands. Tell me, what is your soul resting on? Remember sandy foundations won't do.”

Never shall I forget the solemnity and joy of that moment. I can recall as yesterday the tears starting to her eyes as she earnestly said, “Christ

died for sinners; I'm a poor sinner, therefore He died for me."

Oh! how much lay in these earnest words, not uttered with the glib tongue of one whose conscience has never been convicted of sin; whose heart has never been touched by the story of God's love, of Christ's work; whose life has never been altered by the regenerating influence of the Holy Ghost.

Let us dissect this piece of faith's reasoning—this charming syllogism.

(1.) The *major* proposition or premise, "Christ died for sinners." The blessed Son of God upon the cross died for sinners—not for a certain class, for all are sinners. The sweep of His finished work upon the cross embraces all—whatever nationality, age, or sex—whether Pharisee or publican, priest or sinner. Yet we do not and cannot preach universalism. That is one of the devil's soothing opiates that paralyses the fervour and power of the preacher, dulls the conscience of the sinner, and is not supported by Scripture. How plainly does the Son of God put the truth, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark xvi. 16). Ah! He Himself speaks of the worm that never dies, and the fire that is never quenched. Man, face the truth. Let God's words mean what they say. To wrest them to suit your own pleasure, is to insult the Writer of them, and make your everlasting doom sure.

What good will our *major* proposition do you, if you do not obtain the blessing for yourself?

(2.) The *minor* proposition or premise, "I'm a poor sinner." Oh! what a mercy when a man faces the truth about himself in God's presence! The bankrupt had better by far face the accountant and his books, than plunge deeper into the morass of bankruptcy. And so with you. You are spiritually bankrupt. What a debt you owe to God! And there is all the more reason why you should face this matter, in that our *major* proposition is so gloriously true, "Christ died for sinners." Christ pays with liquid gold—His precious blood—the ransom price of the believer's soul upon the treasury bench of heaven. Oh! guilty, undone sinner, can you say honestly and truly, "I'm a poor sinner"? If so, will you in simple faith draw the conclusion from our two propositions?

(3.) The *conclusion*,—"THEREFORE He died for me." The *major* proposition you may believe to be true, the *minor* proposition you may admit to be correct, but it will avail you nothing unless in simple faith you take God at His word and claim the blessing. Look at that beautiful word, "*Therefore*." With such a *major* proposition it can stand the test of the vilest sinner's sins. Can you not utter it? "*Therefore* He died for ME."

The word "sinner" will cover the great sinner as well as the little one. Christ is a *great* Saviour. He must get all the credit, for He has done all the work.

A. J. P.

Pages for the Young.

BLIND MAGGIE; OR, "HE MAKETH THE BLIND TO SEE."

A STORY FOR CHILDREN—BIG AND LITTLE.*



DEAR children, you know that when Jesus was on this earth He opened the eyes of the blind, and did many wonderful things, and now though he has ascended up into heaven, His ways of acting with people are different, but no less wonderful, for He is the same Lord, and through His Spirit He opens dark, blind hearts, to see the light of the glorious Gospel, and to receive the gift of eternal life, which is more precious than the sight of the eyes.

Did you ever think how sad it would be to be blind, never to see the sun or the trees, or the grass or sweet flowers; always in darkness, never to see your father's or mother's face? You might hear the bird's sweet song, and might wonder what the songster was like, but you would never see its bright feathers, and its sparkling eye. You

* This simple tale by our earliest and much-valued contributor "K," was found among her papers after her departure to be with Christ. Truly by it she "being dead yet speaketh."—[Ed. G.M.]

might smell the sweet flowers from the garden, but you would never see their gay petals, all would be darkness and night to you. Oh! it is sad to be blind!

Now, I am going to tell you the story of Maggie, the blind girl. All day long she sat by the fire, or, when it was fine, on the stair leading up to her house, in the sunshine. She loved to feel its warm rays, but she could never see all the bright things that God had made, for she was blind. Poor Maggie!

I was asked to go and see her one day. It was a long way off—farther than I could walk—but I found an omnibus went near the place, and I was able to walk the rest of the way. I was not very long in finding out the house of poor, blind Maggie. It was up a great many stairs, and a bird sang sweetly in a cage at the door, and often cheered Maggie as she sat in darkness.

But few went to see her, and as I knocked at the door, she started up quickly from the low stool on which she sat by the fire, and said, "Who is there? Everybody is out."

"Oh!" I said, "but I came to see *you*, Maggie, though you cannot see me. I have heard of you, and thought you might like me to read to you sometimes."

Poor Maggie smiled, and looked pleased. She was the child of drunken parents, and seldom heard a kind word, as she sat day after day in darkness. No one had ever read to her, or spoken to her of

Jesus, and her face was sorrowful and dark. Her eyes were sightless, and no ray of divine light had ever entered her soul. No kind word was ever spoken to her as her days passed on sorrowfully, so she listened gladly, as I opened my Bible and read to her the story of blind Bartimeus in Mark x., and of the love and grace of Jesus, who gave sight to his blind eyes, as he sat by the high-wayside begging. Maggie was much interested, and wanted to hear more of this wonderful Man, who could cure blind people, so I promised to go very soon again to see her.

The next time I went to see poor Maggie, I heard the angry voice of her mother scolding her as I went up her long stair, and, dear children, what do you think she was scolding her for? Shall I tell you? She was scolding her because she sang, as she sat on her low stool by the fire; for now, in place of sitting all day long in darkness, and silence too, her heart and lips had been opened to sing of Jesus, who cured the blind man as he sat by the wayside.

Poor Maggie! It was such a new thought to her to hear of any One who could open blind eyes, and to be told that it was all true, that her heart was cheered, and she sang about it, as she sat hour after hour, seeing nothing, and doing nothing, all day long. Her parents were too careless to take the trouble to teach her to do anything useful about the house, and so the poor child had grown up from a baby ignorant and useless; nothing to

cheer her but the song of her little bird in the cage, and nothing else to call her own, but the little wooden stool on which she sat all day long.

But now a new joy had lightened her dark mind. She had heard of One who could, and who did, cure a blind man, and the name of Jesus became dear to her as she thought of His love. And so, dear children, I found her singing, and anxious to hear more. I had brought her the Gospel of Mark in raised letters for the blind, and there her delicate little fingers, which had never been hardened by work of any kind, could trace out the story she so loved, and many others in the same Gospel that made her heart bound with joy. Even at night she would sit up in bed with her new found treasure, for the day and the night were alike to the poor blind child, and she was then undisturbed by those round her, who could neither share her joy, nor did they like to see her happy.

I read to her the fifteenth of Luke, and tears rolled from these sightless eyes. Not tears of sorrow now, but tears of joy, as she heard of One who was ready to receive her just as she was—a sinner—and make her His own child. Soon that sad face lit up with joy. She received Christ into her soul, and the heart of the blind girl was dark and sad no longer. Often I went to read to her, and teach her to knit, and it was delightful to see from day to day how God in His grace opened the heart of blind Maggie to receive the truth.

One day I went in and found her very bright.

"Oh!" she said, "I have been anxious to do something for Jesus, who has done so much for me, and so, as I sit at my knitting, I try to make up some little hymns to tell of his love. Perhaps, ma'am, if I say them to you, you will write them down, and read them to those you meet from time to time, for I wish to speak of His love to others. He saved me, and how can I, a poor blind girl who never gets out, tell of His love?"

Dear children, you are not blind, and you can get out, and you may be converted too. Have you ever really in your hearts desired to tell others of the love of Jesus, like poor blind Maggie?

She had not, like you, learned to read and write, but her heart had learned to love Jesus, who gave His life for her, and from that blind little girl, who sat all day long on her wooden stool, He got that which was joy to His heart. Would you like to hear some verses of the hymns she composed to tell to others the love of Jesus? I got them printed and often gave them away. They are very simple, but tell of a heart that had joy in Christ. You may have some hymns that are better in your many hymn-books, but remember that this little girl had never been taught anything, yet her heart could tell of the work and love of Jesus in these little verses, so I write out a few for you.

This little hymn tells of her own joy at having found the Saviour:—

"I have found the Saviour,
I have found the Saviour,

THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

And feel His precious love in my soul ;
A new song I will raise,
To my great Redeemer's praise,
And His name I ever will extol.

I was a wanderer,
I was a wanderer,
From Jesus my Saviour and my Lord ;
I took my evil way
And from Jesus I did stray,
Nor would I be guided by His word.

I was once a stranger,
I was once a stranger,
And far from my Shepherd and my God ;
But now I know His voice,
And He makes my heart rejoice,
And I'm washed in His own precious blood.

I am bound for glory,
I am bound for glory,
And Jesus the Shepherd is my guide ;
Nor will He ever leave
Those that in His name believe,
So long as they in His love abide.

Jesus is my portion,
Jesus is my portion,
Now I have found redemption in His name ;
I know that He is mine,
And I feel His love divine,
Hosannah ! for ever to the Lamb.

Jesus has ascended,
Jesus has ascended,
Our glorious mansions to prepare ;
In yonder happy land
Where there's joy at God's right hand,
And fulness of pleasure shall be there."

This, dear children, was one of the first hymns she ever repeated to me. Perhaps you will think you can repeat some much nicer ones, but I love Maggie's hymns, for they tell of a heart's love for the Lord. The next one I shall write for you she called

"TRUST IN THE SAVIOUR."

"While in this vale of tears I roam,
'Mid cares, and toils, far from my home,
I'll trust the Saviour's love divine,
For I am His, and He is mine.

While gazing on that blest abode,
Where dwells the spotless Lamb of God,
Fain would I leave this world below,
And soar beyond the reach of woe.

But, Lord, I would my all resign
To Thee and wait Thy gracious time,
Yea, Lord, I know Thou wilt set free
The contrite soul that trusts in Thee.

Though now exalted on a throne,
Thou hast not left me here alone,
But in the new and living way
Thou guard'st my footsteps, day by day.

O Thou, my God, and Saviour, still,
Teach me to do Thy holy will,
And on my heart write all Thy laws,
And help me to defend Thy cause.

What though the careless world revile,
'Tis only for a little while,
I soon shall reach the blissful shore
Where pain and grief are felt no more.

And when from this vile house of clay
My happy soul shall soar away,
I'll see Thee, Jesus, as Thou art,
And praise Thee ever with pure heart.

Mine eyes, though now in darkness sealed,
Shall see Thy glory when revealed,
All tears be ever wiped away,
And darkness changed to endless day.

By faith I now with joy survey
The glories of that happy day,
When Jesus, our High Priest, shall come,
And take His waiting people home.

Amid the cares and troubles here,
This hope my drooping soul doth cheer,
That I shall then my Saviour see,
And praise Him through eternity."

Dear children, such is a poor blind girl's song of praise. She repeated it slowly to me, as her little fingers did her first large piece of knitting. Shall I tell you what it was like? A very clever person, whose name was Whytock, invented a very curious and pretty sort of knitting, done from a very large ball of wool. The number of stitches for the first row is given, and then a knot is put where every row ought to end. In this way a beautiful bouquet of flowers is worked out, without trouble by the careful and regular knitter. It was a pleasure to see the blind child work with perfect regularity this large piece of knitting, feeling for the little knot which must mark the end of each row, and as I told her of the beautiful flowers her little fingers were working out, and which her sightless eyes

were never to see, she would laugh with childish merriment over and over again. Ah! she could laugh now; she no longer had the sad dark face of hopeless sorrow, but a bright smile which told of peace within lit up her features, and made her sing for very joy.

Another day she repeated a little hymn to me as we sat together. "This one," she said, "is to ask poor sinners to come to Jesus." She gave it this title:—

"WHY WILL YE DIE?"

"To the ark of refuge flee,
All that heavy laden be,
God is still beseeching thee,
Why will ye die?"

Jesus is the living way,
Come! for this is mercy's day,
None shall e'er be cast away,
Why will ye die?"

All that ever to Him came,
Found redemption in His name,
And the Lord is still the same,
Why will ye die?"

For the guilty world He bled,
And for sins atonement made,
'It is finished,' Jesus said,
Why will ye die?"

He, the pure and spotless Lamb
Tasted death for every one,
Finished the redeeming plan,
Why will ye die?"

Come to Jesus as thou art,
He will bind thy broken heart,
And eternal life impart,
Why will ye die ? ”

I am afraid I may tire you, dear children, by giving you so many of dear Maggie's hymns, so if you are so very tired, we shall not read them. I have a great many, but only two more short ones I shall give you, and then we shall close our story of dear little blind Maggie. This one she named

“THE SINNER'S REFUGE.”

“Take refuge in our gracious Lord,
He on you yet doth wait,
And be instructed by His Word,
Before it is too late.

He that made the deaf to hear,
And to the blind gave sight,
Can also all your burdens bear,
And fill your souls with light.

He that conquered death and hell,
And Satan's fiery darts,
Can also lead you to that well,
That heals the broken hearts.

Then to the blessed Saviour flee,
While yet He may be found,
For He can set at liberty,
The soul by Satan bound.”

Since the day dear Maggie was converted, and her heart was opened to see Jesus, she seldom spoke of her sightless eyes. In the following little hymn she just mentions them in contrast with the

joy the Lord has given her in Himself. I shall quote it for you, as it is very short—

"I in the Lord do put my trust,
On Him I do rely,
My confidence, O Lord, is placed
In Thee who reign'st on high.

I am afflicted sore, O Lord,
Yet will I praise Thy name,
With all my soul, and heart, and strength,
While I in life remain.

My eyes are sealed in darkness, Lord,
My sorrows seldom cease,
Yet will I praise Thee, heavenly Lord,
The God of love and peace."

Dear children, could you say, like blind Maggie, I know God as the God of love and peace, He has manifested His love to me in Jesus, and I know what it is to have peace through His perfect work upon the cross for me ?

K.

"A MAN WHAT NEVER TELLS NO LIES."



HE speaker was only a mite of four years old. When he heard of the grave illness of his elder brother, aged eight, he said, "Well, he'd better make haste and ask the Lord Jesus to forgive him his sins, or he'll go to hell, but if he asks Him to forgive him, he will live with Him in heaven for ever and ever."

The dear little brother fell asleep on the 29th of July, confessing his faith in, and love to, the blessed Saviour who had died for, and washed him in His precious blood.

Wee Noel was greatly relieved on hearing this, and soon after said to his aunt, "I asked Annie to tell me words that I might ask the Lord to forgive me my sins, and she did, and I said them, and He *has* forgiven me."

"How do you know that, baby?" said aunty.

"'Cause the Lord Jesus is a Man what never tells no *lies*, and He promises to forgive if we ask Him, and I asked Him, and so He *has*."

Dear children, I wish you could all say this from the heart. Have you ever yet gone to the Lord Jesus to get your sins forgiven? If not, go at once. If you were to die as you are, where would you go—to hell, or to heaven with Jesus? Little Noel knew and said the truth regarding his brother, and it is equally true of you. If you do not go to the Lord Jesus, and get your sins forgiven, and washed away in His precious blood, you could not be with Him in heaven were you to die. You are not any of you too young to die, remember that; Oh, do come to Jesus now. He loves little children, and delights that they should trust in Him. Come to Him now, and let Him save you.

EUROPE'S FIRST CONVERTS.

PART II.

(ACTS, XVI. 6-40).



OD has various ways of waking up a soul.

Here is a man whose course had been one of ignorance of God, and brutal harshness in the exercise of his prison duties, but God had set His eye upon him for mercy. The intervention of the earthquake was undoubtedly a testimony that God was pleased to give in connection with the Gospel of His Son coming into Europe, but it was also His direct interposition to reach this man. First, he is rudely awakened, and finding the doors open, and every one's bands loosed, he immediately inferred, "The prisoners are all gone, and my life is not worth preserving." The rule that applied to Roman jailers was that the jailer's life went for the life of the prisoner whom he had lost. He concluded that the prisoners were gone, and his own life therefore forfeited, and he was just on the verge of committing suicide. We are told in history that Philippi was notorious for the number of its suicides. It was quite a common thing for men to hurry themselves into eternity, without thinking what they were about. Here was this wretched jailer about to hurl himself into eternity in all his guilt and godlessness, but how

quickly and beautifully the grace of God interposes. The voice of God's servant, whom he had treated so rudely and cruelly a few hours before, is heard saying, "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here." See the effect upon this man. It was the earthquake that woke him out of his sleep, but I do not think it was the earthquake that touched his conscience, but this, that he heard a man whom he had so lately treated in the most brutal manner calling to him in the most tender, loving way, and preventing him from taking away his own life, which he otherwise would have done. Is not that a lovely word for every sinner to heed, "Do thyself no harm"? How many of my readers are doing themselves harm, fighting against God, fighting against the truth, refusing to bow to Jesus?

This word of affectionate pleading went to the heart of this poor wretched jailer; his conscience was reached; he called for a light and sprang in, and came trembling and fell down before Paul and Silas.

It was in the darkness that Paul had spoken, and the jailer must have thought within himself, "How in the world could that prisoner know that I was going to make away with myself? How could he know what I was about in the darkness?" He got a sense in his soul that God was there. Had he not heard of the preaching of these men? Had he not heard of such and such a one being converted? Had he not heard it proclaimed, "These are the servants of the most high God, which shew

unto us the way of salvation"? He had, and now really convicted, he called for a light.

When a man begins to think seriously about the concerns of his soul, he always wants light. And I will tell you another thing: I never knew a soul that came out of nature's darkness into the light of the Gospel that, as the truth began to dawn upon it did not say, "I begin to see it." A young man said to me very lately on the top of Cave Hill, as I was seeking to put the Gospel before him, "I cannot see it." What a soul wants is light from God, and thank God He gives light. You have no need to call for it, it is shining before you. The precious Word of God is effulgent with light, both as to the ruin of man, and as to the salvation of God. It unfolds your lost condition, and it unfolds the Saviour and His finished work. The darkness is past, and the true light now shines. The light of the Gospel is now for anybody and everybody, it is for whosoever will.

No doubt this poor man was in a great state of trepidation. He came trembling; he was in real exercise; he was an awakened sinner. A little while ago he was a careless sinner doing Satan's work, but now by the grace of God he is an exercised man, a man in the throes of the new birth at this very moment: he is convicted. Have *you* ever been convicted? Have you ever gone to God in this condition, seeking light, and trembling with the sense that you have sinned against Him? If not, I beseech you to

hear the voice of God's Word now declaring that you have sinned ; and I too have sinned, for "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." But, thank God, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Into the very scene of our sin and ruin, and misery and degradation, God has stepped, and brought salvation to us in the Person, and through the work of His own beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

This awakened jailer, now a convicted man, brought out Paul and Silas, and put to them the most momentous question that a man could ask : "Sirs, what must I do to be saved ?" He had heard before, no doubt, that these men showed the way of salvation, but those words had no meaning for him. Now his eyes are opened, his conscience is aroused ; he sees that up to this point he had been on the road to eternal damnation. You must remember that up to this point he was a poor dark heathen, who had never heard the Gospel, who had never heard of Jesus, or of the loving God, but now awakened and convicted, with a sense of his sins pressing on his soul, he cries out, "What must I do to be saved ?" Let me inquire of you, Have you ever in your soul's history passed through a moment like this ? Have you ever got into God's presence bowed down with a sense of your sins, your guilt, and your need, and put this question that the jailer asked of Paul and Silas ? I confess to you that nothing gives me greater delight and joy than to hear this question,—the question of an agonised

sinner, the expression of his soul's desire to get salvation. And you may depend upon it, it was with gladness of heart that Paul and Silas heard this question from the jailer. "What must I *do*?" he cries, because when a man gets awakened, he always supposes there is something he must do, something which must be performed or brought forth by him, to put things right between his soul and God. But let us distinctly get hold of this, that nothing which you or I can do can ever repair the breach between our souls and God. Then can it not be repaired? Yes, thank God, He repairs it from His own side. It is the One who has been sinned against who repairs the breach, and bridges over the distance, so that we can be brought near to Him.

You remember when our Lord Jesus Christ was on earth that certain Jews came to Him saying, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" (John vi. 28.) And do you remember His answer? "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." The doing is not on our side, it is on God's side; it is Christ's doing, not ours, which brings salvation. In Romans iii. this question, what a man is to do to be saved, is exceedingly simply answered: "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Then the apostle passes on in chapter iv. to speak of Abraham: "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for

righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt. *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*" I know of no more remarkable statement in the whole compass of God's Word than that. Works and grace are in absolute contrast. If it be works, that is something on my side; if it be grace, that is something from God's side.

But one of my readers says, "I do not believe in sudden conversions." Do you not? I do. And very likely you never will believe in sudden conversions till you are converted yourself. Was not this jailer converted suddenly? He puts his question plain, and he gets his answer straight: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Salvation was not for himself only, but that his household should likewise come in for the blessing was God's way.

See what an immense difference one word makes. "What shall I *do*?" cries the jailer. He is not told to do anything but believe. I know that people have got in their heads the idea of being saved by works, but you will find in Scripture that men are not saved by *works*, but by *words* — not W-O-R-K-S, but W-O-R-D-S. Faith rests on God's Word, faith comes by hearing. Take the history of the conversion of Cornelius the centurion, as related by Peter in Acts xi. Cornelius is told to send to Joppa for Peter, "who shall tell thee

words whereby thou and thy house shall be saved." You see, beloved reader, works are what spring from our side, and by works was no man ever justified: words are from God, and it is on God's Word that faith rests: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." "Hear, and your soul shall live," says the prophet Isaiah (lv. 8). Therefore the answer to the jailer's question is most beautiful: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

But you might say to me, What did this man know about the Lord Jesus Christ? I do not think he knew anything whatever about Him, and therefore the next verse is very important: "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." They did not stop with merely saying, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," but unfolded the Gospel to him: they brought out the glorious truth of the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Observe he was not told to believe on Jesus merely, but on the *Lord Jesus Christ*. This is very important, because this full title sets forth what the Saviour is: He is Lord of all. His name is Jesus, which signifies Jehovah the Saviour, and His character is that He is the Christ, the Anointed One of God. From this it follows that He is more than a mere man. Yes, indeed, were He not more than mere men, He would be no Saviour for you and me. If He were not very man, He could not meet God's claims *on us*; and if He were not the Eternal Son of God, He could not

rise to the height of God's claims: and therefore when I come to look at what is connected with salvation in the Scriptures I find it put in a very significant way.

I will now ask you to turn with me for a moment to the Old Testament Scriptures, for I wish to show you that the One in whom I want your heart to confide, while truly a man is much more than a man. Look at Isaiah xlv.: "Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." If you are to be saved, it must be by looking to Him. And the next verse shows that every knee will have to bow to Him because He is God: "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." Now, when I turn to the New Testament, I find that what is so distinctly applied to God, as God, in Isaiah xlv. is with equal distinctness applied to the Lord Jesus Christ, as man, in Philippians ii.

As man "he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in

heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." He became a man in lowly grace, and He was a contrast to the first man. The first man wanted to be like God; the second man was in the form of God, it was not an object of rapine to Him to be on an equality with God, but He emptied Himself, and became a man. What was apostasy in man or angels was perfection in Christ. Adam wanted to rise from manhood to Godhead! Christ emptied Himself, made Himself of no reputation, came down to this earth in a servant's form, and as man in death accomplished a work by which God is glorified and sin put away. What happened then? God raised Him from the dead, and glorified Him, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. Every created being, angelic, human, or demoniac, must bow to the name of Jesus, and confess that He is Lord.

Paul told this poor jailer of the Person of Christ, of His life, of His death, of His resurrection, of the value of His blood, as well as to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Does any one ask, "What have I got to do to be saved?" Romans x. furnishes a very simple answer: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Are you going to receive God's gift just now? Will you yield your heart now to

this precious loving Saviour? The jailer heard the Gospel, "Believe . . . and be saved." He believed, and he was saved. "He took them *the same hour* of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his straightway." He did not wait till the morning. That man wanted salvation, and got it. He asked how he could be saved, heard how he could be saved, and the same night he "rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." He had been told to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ: Scripture here tells us he believed in God, for he had heard who the Lord Jesus Christ was, as well as what He had done.

Now he was a converted man, a rejoicing man, a saved man, through simply believing God's message through His servants concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. And there is no way for you and me to be saved, but the way in which that man was saved. Thank God, through His grace, I can say with joy of heart that I am saved, I have not had a doubt about my salvation for thirty-two long years. You may receive that same salvation as your own this day, and I would urge you not to defer, not to put off, but rest your soul on Christ this very hour. Tell me not that you cannot receive the Lord, that you cannot be decided for Christ now. You may miss salvation, you may despise it or neglect it, you may put it from you, you may refuse to receive the Saviour now, but you do so at your peril. Come to Him now!

W. T. P. W.

TWO DEATH SCENES.



H! just what I thought; another yarn about somebody dying; another religious tale to frighten silly, weak people."

Stay a moment! There is one thing certain—*death lies before you.*

You may pick up your morning newspaper, and scan over the column of births, deaths, and marriages, and say, as you see that an acquaintance or business friend has passed over to the great majority, "*Ah! another gone,*" or, "*Poor fellow, how sudden!*"

Well, it won't be so commonplace when death knocks at *your* door. Though millions have trodden the path from the death-chamber into eternity, it will be *new* ground for you. It must be faced. "The wages of sin is death." The reality will be a little more alarming than the usual "religious tale" that you are wont to grow so sarcastic over. Dear, unknown friend, you may do without Jesus in life, but can you do without Him in death? What! no Saviour to whisper joy and peace to your soul—no Saviour to smooth the dying pillow—to take you by the hand into His own blessed presence.

And how *mean* it is—*awfully mean*—to live a life of forgetfulness of God and self-gratification, and then expect to go to heaven when you die!

Oh! sir, be in earnest. The question demands it. Think not that the worn-out sinner can patch up an agreement with God at the last moment. It has been well said that there is one instance in Scripture of salvation received at the eleventh hour—the dying thief—that none may despair; and one, and *only* one, that none may dare. Run no risks. Presumption in your case may be fatal. By this printed page God is warning thee.

Let me then relate to you two narratives, which will contrast a Christless deathbed with a Christian's deathbed.

An evangelist visiting Manchester was asked to see a young man in the last stage of consumption. He sought to read God's Word and pray with him, but he refused to allow him. A second time he called upon him, but he waved him away impatiently with his hand. "Well," said the evangelist, "as eternal things are all my business with you I must go; but I warn you, you are dying, and soon to meet God, and you are unsaved."

The young man, who till then had only spoken in a whisper, gathered together his little stock of strength only to shout in a loud, fierce way, as he once again imperiously waved the servant of God away, "I'm as much saved as either you or anybody else."

The visitor left with a heavy heart. Well did he know that the young man's manner—his refusal of the Word of God and prayer—the scant cour-

tesy, if it deserved such a name—all told unmistakably that *he* was far off from the kingdom of heaven.

Two or three days passed, and the unhappy youth's spirit was among the deathless realities of eternity.

Oh, how one's heart aches again and again as one thinks of such scenes! When souls about to thirst for ever in the dreary lake of fire spurn the cup of living water, which the blessed God presses into their unwilling hands. In eternity that young man would have given worlds, we feel sure, for one such another chance—only *one*, only *ONE*. *But never again could it come, NEVER!!*

The same evangelist, visiting Southport, made the acquaintance of a young man, twenty-eight years old, and his young wife, only twenty-two, dying in the same room of consumption.

The wife was already a Christian—the husband still a stranger to the Saviour, who smooths the pillow, and floods the chamber of death with glory.

Across the room from one bed to the other the loving wife whispered into the ears of her dying husband a precious verse of God's Word, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, *thou shalt be saved*" (Rom. x. 9). Thank God, he received the message, and rejoiced with his wife in God's salvation.

The husband was expected to be the first to go, and their visitor said, "Now, if he is taken very ill, send for me any time of the night or day."

One Sunday morning an urgent message was sent for him to come. A Christian doctor, who accompanied him, waited outside. He entered to find the young wife very near "home"—the room filled with sorrowing relatives and friends.

"I'm glad you've come; now tell me something," said she.

He read softly and tenderly, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

"Another," she said.

He read, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 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. 1-3).

"Another," again fell from her lips.

Once more he read, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first," &c. (1 Thess. iv. 16).

"Another," eagerly fell from her lips once again.

He read, "For our conversation (commonwealth, R.V.) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall

change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. iii. 20, 21).

"Now, that will do; will you pray?"

After a brief season of prayer, she burst into triumphant shouts of praise. The evangelist was silently praising God for such a holy triumph—the relatives awed and astonished. A heavenly smile lit up her wan face, and in a strangely sweet way she again and again exclaimed, "Praise Him, praise Him, He's going to give me a body like His own, He's going to give me a body like His own."

Her breathing suddenly changed. Our friend quickly went to her side, and put his hands into hers. She drew a heavy breath or two, and was gone, where there is no death, no pain, no sighing.

The doctor outside had only waited a quarter of an hour when he was rejoined by his friend, who said, "Well, you've missed it. I never saw a sight like that."

At night the evangelist stood up in a densely crowded hall to preach the Gospel. At the outset the audience were impressed and awed as he described the scene he had beheld but a few hours previously. To him it seemed as if he had had the privilege of conducting a soul to the very gates of heaven, and felt the chill of earth on returning.

Reader, let these two narratives, told plainly and without varnish, speak to you in loud tones, and do not rest till you settle the important question of your soul's salvation.

A. J. P.

A LETTER ON ASSURANCE.



Y DEAR ———, —Controversy on points of religious belief I should not be at all disposed to take up, but when the soul's *present* happiness is in question, and, above all, its eternal safety, I should be most earnest to try and

give any one to see from Scripture where they are wrong. I know it is considered "presumption" by most people to say that *certainty* is the language befitting the lips of one who believes in the "testimony of God," but I am amongst the number who would say that if God gives to me a *lost* sinner by nature and practice, a position or rather place of safety, by believing His testimony, and what Peter calls "the present truth" (2 Pet. i. 12), it would be presumption on my part to deny it. It may seem humble and modest to say otherwise, but really the humblest place is to be where God places me as *lost*, and to own it; and then, on the other hand, to be where He places me, as saved, and own it, to His praise and glory.

Does He, the blessed God, give me a place of divine certainty, or does He not? If He does, His greatest delight is to hear me confess it before men, angels, and devils, as it should be my greatest joy so to do. It is the devil's supreme effort to hinder this, and nothing so brings out his malice as to hear his once willing servants confess their eman-

cipation from his hard and cruel bondage, and to boast in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, for giving them a place before Him *in present peace, and certainty* of future blessing. This could never be known before the incarnation of Christ, nor indeed till after His death and resurrection.

By His death and resurrection *Christ has* "destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who through *fear of death* were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. ii, 14, 15). The Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. His first work was to alienate man's heart and separate him from God: God has given His Son to undo this, and bring us back *to Himself* in peace and righteousness, so that all that believe in His testimony concerning His Son Jesus Christ may not only be sure of salvation, but cry "Abba, Father."

"Abba, Father, Lord, we call Thee,
Hallowed name from day to day;
'Tis Thy children's right to know Thee,
None but children Abba say."

Now to your question, "What about the voice on Mount Sinai? and what did that voice say?" A *terrible voice* was that for guilty man, a constituted sinner. The only Man—and I speak reverently—that ever fulfilled it was the Man Christ Jesus, and He could do nothing else, for He was holy. We can do nothing but break it, for we are sinners and unholy. Here let me say, the law was never given to save a man, or give life; it was given to prove

to man what he was when tested by the law, and failing as we know in *one* point, we are guilty of the whole (Jas. ii. 10). Why, then, did God give it? Holy, just, and good, as it is, His object was to discover to us that we are unholy, unjust, and bad, and measured by it we are proved to be lost. It is as *lost* men that we must be saved, since Christ came to *seek* and to *save* that which was lost; "not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance," and there is now joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance.

Now hear what the voice that spoke, and claimed righteousness and obedience from Mount Sinai, says at this moment from heaven, "For as many as are of the *works* of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in *all* things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that *no* man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. *Christ* has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being *made* a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ" (Gal. iii. 10-13).

A blessed voice for Paul was that which awoke him to the spirituality of the law. Thenceforth, instead

of boasting as a Pharisee on the ground of law-keeping, he boasted in Christ Jesus, and had no confidence in the flesh. After returning from Damascus he never spoke of law-keeping, but of Christ, who magnified it and made it honourable, and that now every thought was to be brought into captivity to the *obedience* of Christ—a far higher standard than law-keeping—a standard for those who *are saved*, and not to be saved by it. On that ground we should be lost too. Believers are sanctified, or separated unto Christ's obedience and *blood*. His blood propitiates God, and cleanses from all sin. His obedience is the pattern of the *new man*, for, if we are born again, we are created anew in Christ Jesus—not made better, but new created. Therefore to dwell with God, and to be like Christ in any measure, *we must be born again*.

One great point with Satan is to connect redemption with safety for heaven, and then to raise the question of the rightness of our speaking with certainty. Now the blessedness of the glad tidings of God lies not so much in giving divine certainty of a place in heaven, but divine certainty that we are now "*brought to God*," which is far more than having a title to be where God is in eternity. To be with God now, and say "Abba, Father," in the blessed consciousness of the relationship of a son, is the highest conceivable blessing. The wonder to me is that in the presence of such love I am careful about the bread that perisheth; but with me it is

frequently the fear of bringing any reproach on the precious name of Christ, who is my peace before God, my life, and my righteousness. *He* Himself is that, and much more.

Well, I have written you a somewhat long letter; it may, and I hope will, be helpful to you now, and may be at some future time to others.—Yours truly,

J. M. R.

ONLY THIRTEEN MINUTES.



“**H**E time that elapsed between the occurrence and the disappearance, was only about thirteen minutes,”—so runs the official report of Rear-Admiral Markham, concerning the sinking of H.M.S. “Victoria.”

The sea was smooth, the ships were steaming in two lines, each line headed by its admiral; then came the fatal signal, thus the collision, and in thirteen minutes the “Victoria” had sunk to the bottom with twenty-two officers, and 336 men.

God makes no mistakes in what He permits, or in what He does, directly from Himself. “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal. vi. 7), is as true of a nation as it is of an individual. “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” The hollow boast

that "Britannia rules the waves," has received repeated rebukes from God in that which is England's chiefest boast. Within the last few years three or four of her finest war-ships have gone to the bottom, carrying with them hundreds of her brave sons. The last—the "Victoria"—the finest of her fleet, the chiefest of her boast, in thirteen short minutes passed beneath the mighty waters, with all her strength and glory. Thus God speaks to a proud and haughty nation. Will she heed the voice of God?

Only thirteen minutes and all was over! About 356 souls had entered eternity, and it was with either a lifetime of sins upon their souls, or as washed in the Redeemer's blood. God only knows. Would that it were the latter with both officers and men.

Only thirteen minutes, beloved reader! Supposing that you were to be called to face death and eternity in thirteen minutes, how would it fare with you? Where would you spend it? On which side of that fixed and impassable gulf would your lot be cast?

Take out your watch, and ask yourself the question, "If I were to pass out of time into eternity in thirteen minutes, how would I meet God? where should I spend eternity?"

Only thirteen minutes, and it may be for you, as it was with the majority of the "Victoria's" crew, eternal happiness or eternal woe, eternal glory or eternal darkness, the joy of paradise or banishment

from the presence of God ! Which would it be, beloved reader ?

If unsaved, there is a way, thank God, by which you can be saved, and that *now*. You need not wait until to-morrow. *Now*, is God's time to be saved ; with you, to-morrow may not be.

The Son of God has died for sinners, and therefore *you* can be saved. He then finished the work whereby God in divine righteousness, as well as grace, can save those who in repentance turn to Him, and trust in Jesus and His blood. *Won't you turn to God now ?* and won't you trust in His Son who died for us while we were yet sinners ?

There is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved, but the name of Jesus. There is no other way in the universe of God whereby we can escape the eternal judgment of God, but by the death of the cross. There is no other ground of pardon, peace, and reconciliation, but the precious blood of Christ. And it is written for our admonition, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation" (Heb. ii. 3).

Let your heart's decision be made, *just now*, to turn to God, to trust in Christ, and be saved ; then whether you live thirteen minutes, or thirteen years, let your life be to His praise.

"O haste ! O haste ! make no delay,
At once to Jesus come ;
Remember now's the accepted day,
O enter while there's room."

FOUR QUESTIONS.

“What will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?”—ISAIAH x. 3. “What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?”—MARK x. 51.



AS the reader ever answered these questions? Let us consider the first one. “What will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far?” Things have been going on smoothly with you, it may be; you have been gliding down the stream of life happily enough, have managed to keep unpleasant thoughts far from you. And as you look back on many a bright hour, you smile complacently as you think of what a good time you have had, how your business has prospered, what mercies have strewn your path, “But if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all, yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many” (Eccles. xi. 8). As you read these lines, let me ask you, “Have you remembered the days of darkness?” Have you ever answered this first question, “What will ye do in the day of visitation?” The long day of God’s grace, with the sunshine of His mercy, is drawing to a close; the stormy night of judgment is rapidly approaching, when the wrath of the Lamb will take the place of the message of salvation. When men are calling on the rocks and on the mountains to fall on them and hide them, when

the desolating wrath of the Judge bursts upon you, *what will you do?* God's message of grace has visited you over and over again. What *have* you done with it? Slighted it, turned a deaf ear to His entreaties, and put from you the Spirit's pleadings.

Friend, beware! Those who know not the things which belong unto their peace, who know **not** the time of their visitation, when that visitation is one of grace, will find it hard to answer this first question when it is the visitation of judgment. "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Thess. v. 8).

Help yourself, then, you cannot. Hence next comes our second question, "To whom will ye flee for help?" *To whom?* Jesus, the One who bears the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, sits then upon the throne as Judge, His eyes are as a flame of fire, His voice as the sound of many waters, carrying despair into the souls of the lost, as He pronounces the awful sentence, "Depart from me." To whom will ye flee for help? Above, beneath, around, you search in vain. *Then* a great ransom cannot deliver you; *then you shall not escape*. And as you realise the awfulness of your position, and the eternal misery of the future stretching out before you, you will answer, if you have never done so before, the third question, "Where will ye leave

your glory?" All you valued, all that ministered to your joy, the world and its pleasures, the accumulated wealth of years, the boon companions, gone, and gone for ever. Oh, reader, where will you leave your glory? Are all your joys, all your interests, bounded by the limited horizon of time? If so, when time has for ever passed away, and eternity in all its immensity stretches out before you, is it to be an eternity of weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth? Fancy an eternity without hope; everything you valued left behind for ever. And such it will be most assuredly if you pass into eternity without Christ. "Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain" (Isa. x. 4). Oh, may that cry of need go up from your soul to Him who alone can meet your case, "What must I do to be saved?" and then you will be in a position to answer the fourth question, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" (Mark x. 51.) As you think of judgment to come, and realise your own impotence, and how vain it is to look for help from man, with what power should these words of our Lord Jesus Christ fall upon your ears, "What wilt thou that *I should do unto thee?*"

Reader, have you ever answered this question, so full of tender grace, asked by Him of whom it is recorded, "This man receiveth sinners"? This question is, as it were, a blank cheque upon the Bank of God for faith to fill up. What wilt thou? Pardon? "Through this man is preached unto

you the forgiveness of sins" (Acts xiii. 38). Peace? He has made peace "through the blood of his cross" (Col. i. 20).

Reader, what wilt thou? Only let Jesus hear your cry of need. He has glorified God about the very question of sin upon the cross. He has finished the work; has risen the mighty Victor over sin, and death, and Satan. Doubt not His power—"The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand" (John iii. 35). None can deliver out of His hand as Judge, none can pluck out of His hand as Saviour. And doubt not His love, that love that led Him to the cross.

"Love that no tongue can teach,
Love that no thought can reach—
No love like His."

His is love that would plead with you once more through this little paper, declaring that "him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Come then, like Bartimæus of old, who, in spite of the voice of the many who sought to deter him, came, casting away his garment, a poor sinner, with the deep sense of his need pressing upon him, to the feet of Jesus, there to find not only his need met but his eyes opened, to see in the One who had met that need an object for his heart to delight in, and his feet to follow. "He received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way" (Mark x. 52).

Reader, is this your case? Have you, casting away every rag of your own righteousness, found in the Lord Jesus Christ the One who meets your

need and satisfies your heart? If not, let me entreat of you, ere it be too late, to answer God's questions—the first three warning as to the future that awaits those without Christ, and the last telling of that grace of His which ever delights to meet the needy soul.

L. H. F.

“ETERNITY!”



H! *once* I feared that solemn word,
That now brings thoughts of home
and rest;
It shadowed over every joy,
And blighted all I loved the best;
Like funeral knell, it seemed to me
An *awful* word—Eternity!

The days fly past, the years roll on,
Youth, joy, and hope must pass away—
Those earthly treasures cannot last,
Moth must corrupt and rust decay;
When time is o'er, what will it be
To enter then—Eternity?

Now, to the sad and weary heart,
Some little ray of hope is given;
May not the deepest grief depart?
May not the darkest cloud be riven?
But *hopeless, rayless, black* will be
The Christless soul's Eternity!

But look above! On heaven's throne
 There sits a mighty Victor now,
 Once He laid down His kingly crown,
 And thorns deep-pierced His holy brow;
 Yes, He laid down His life to be
My life for all Eternity!

He gave me—what? A few brief years
 Of riches, honours, worldly ease—
 All the delusive joys of earth?
 Ah, *no!* He gave me more than these,
 The wealth of *God's* own treasury—
 A blessed, bright Eternity!

Yes, *priceless* are the gifts He gives,
 Though "without price" these gifts are given;
 'Tis but the simple "*touch*" of faith
 That makes a sinner heir of heaven!
 Come life, come death, full sweet will be
 The trusting soul's Eternity!

O Christless heart, just weigh it well,
 To *you* belong the *world* and *time*,
 To *me* a portion *sure* above—
 Which is the better, yours or mine?
 When time is o'er what then shall be,
 O sinner, your Eternity?

"WILT THOU BE MADE WHOLE?"

(Read JOHN v.)



THE reason why the Lord draws attention at the end of this chapter to the four-fold witness to Himself is very beautiful—"These things I say that ye might be saved." He sought to turn the thoughts of His hearers to Himself, by telling them that John the Baptist, His own works, the Father, and the Scriptures all bore witness to the truth, that He was the Word of life. He would have every eye centred on Himself, and every ear listening to what *He* had to say.

He still wants, *now*, as then, the attention of His hearers. Why? Because the eternal destiny of every one hangs on the word of Jesus. Gross sins doubtless will condemn a man, in the day of the Lord, but one sin will rise above all other sins, and that sin is, that the word of Jesus was not heeded. There will on that day be an overwhelming testimony to a godless life, that will rise in condemnation of the unsaved soul; but the fact that the word of Jesus was slighted, and the grace of God refused, will crown all other sins, and consign the sinner to a hopeless eternity in hell.

This, my reader, is what makes your listening to the Gospel such a very solemn matter. You hear the Word of God, the word of grace, and if you go

on unconverted, you go with the added guilt, that you have refused Christ. "These things I say that you might be *saved*" (ver. 34)—not *interested* merely, or your ears tickled, but "*saved*"; and so free is the grace of God, the love of Christ, that on the spot, where you read this, you may be turned from death to life.

What a rapturous word is this for an anxious soul! The Lord is speaking to you just now with the very desire that you might "be saved." This is His definite object. He pleads with you, and salvation depends on your listening to what Jesus says.

The point of the fifth of John is the power of the Word of Christ. In chapter i. the Person of Christ is presented, and so also in chapter ii. In chapter iii. it is *life*, its source in God from heaven, and the necessity of receiving this before there can be entrance into the kingdom of heaven. "Ye must be born again." In chapter iv. we get the "Water of Life," and in chapter vi. "the Bread of God"; but here in chapter v. it is the power of the word of Jesus—"the Word of life." The moment you receive the word of the Lord, and believe it, eternal life is communicated to you. "The hour is coming and now is, when *the dead* shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that *hear* shall live" (ver. 25). The sinner, dead in his sins, and this life-giving Saviour are brought into contact the moment the unsaved one hears the word of Jesus. That word calls him forth from the grave

of his sins; he has heard the voice of the Son of God, and "they that hear shall live."

But we must look at the beginning of our chapter, where Jesus meets the impotent man at the Pool of Bethesda. "There was a feast of the *Jews*, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." It is not called "the feast of the Lord," as you find it in Old Testament Scripture, but the "feast of *the Jews*." There were those then, as now, who kept up the form of religion, but God was not in these things. Israel had forsaken God, and Jehovah had departed from them. This poor impotent man lay at the pool. There should have been no impotent sick folk, for they were Jehovah's people. Had they walked *with* God, they would not have required a physician, for in Exodus He revealed Himself as "Jehovah Rophi"—"I am the Lord that healeth thee" (xv. 26). But we know their history: Israel sinned, and Jehovah retired into thick darkness: things took their course, sickness prevailed, and at Bethesda's pool there lay a multitude of sick folk, evidencing they were a God-forsaken people. Like the prodigal, they were in the far country, and it was long before they saw their need of the grace of God. Jesus went to this feast, in the grace of His heart to meet this poor man, who had so long waited for some one to take him to the healing water; and, reader, He would meet you just now, go into all the deep requirements of your case, and cleanse your dreadful sins. Will you hear His word?

The blind lay round Bethesda's pool that day,—a picture of man in his unforgiven state, for Paul when receiving his commission from Jesus in glory, was sent to the Gentiles “to *open* their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins” (Acts xxvi. 18). Are you blind, or do you see beauty in Jesus? Does He command your heart? Are your ways controlled by His wishes? Is your soul engrossed by Him? Do your lusts, pleasures, and sins bind and detain you? Then you see no beauty in Christ—you are blind. What a sight met the eye of blind Bartemeus, when he opened it on the lovely form of Jesus the Son of God. He had tasted His power, and his eyes opened to behold His beauteous person. No wonder he left *all* to follow Him. And the Lord looks for this, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and *follow* me” (Matt. xvi. 24). What a wondrous change, when the eyes of the blind are opened! Think of a blinded man led to the edge of a chasm, into which another step would plunge him. His eyes are opened, he sees the brink on which he stands, and the yawning gulf below! Would he not recede from his danger? And yet people say, “I do not believe in much emotion.” Do you not? I do—when people see their danger they must be stirred.

But, further, the halt lay there—those unable to walk, stumbling by the way—the withered too, those yet further gone in decay—all figurative of

the inability of man to meet the claims of God; but verse 25 reveals what God sees man to be since the cross of Christ—"dead." The hour cometh and now is when the *dead* shall hear." *Dead*, that is your condition. Do you believe it? No! I am alive, not dead, you say. Alive to what? Not to God! You are alive, but it is in your sins, and at a *distance* from God. Can that be called life? Could I for a moment transplant you to that scene where eternal life for ever blooms in the presence of God,—know you what you would then say? I am unfit for this scene! Yes, for your life has come from a corrupt source—you inherit it from a fallen parent. The spring is false. It is not life according to God's estimate, but life alienated from God (Eph. iv. 18). *He* calls you dead, and God does not trifle with you. Dead! yes, that is your true state.

Let me feel your pulse. Have you thought much of Jesus to-day? A strange question! But I want to see if there is what God calls life in your soul. Is He your boast? I do not like such questions. Oh, I see you have no pulse of divine life. When Jesus is known, it is sweet to talk of Him. He is the theme of our conversation. I once asked a dying girl, "Do you know Jesus?" The eyes that seemed closed in death slowly opened, and rested on me, and the pallid lips with a sweet smile replied, "He is my Saviour." This soul, on the verge of eternity, smiled in breathing out a true testimony to Him who had bought her. That

pulse beat rightly. That name—the sweet name of Jesus—charmed her, and drew out what no other question could. His praise she must utter. Are you dead to the power of that name? dead to its wondrous charm, its life-giving efficacy? Oh, hear Him now. “They that hear shall live.”

But Jesus drew near to the impotent man. At certain seasons there was a miraculous display of God’s power, when the angel descended and troubled the waters of Bethesda; but it was no angel now that drew near, but Jesus, the Son of God. He draws near to you now. He has Himself been plunged in the waters of death,—not that one only may be healed, but that *all* who will hear His words may have life. *Jesus* saw the impotent man lie, he did not see Jesus. When Jesus looks on one, then the soul’s history begins. He sees you to-day, *dead* in your sins. You have *tried* to be good, tried many a remedy, but all in vain. The devil has many remedies for the poor sinner to try, that he may keep him from coming to the Saviour.

Now to this impotent man a perfect cure is proposed, as Jesus said, “Wilt thou be made *whole*?” He puts this question to you now. Listen to His word. The impotent man said, “I have no man to put me into the pool.” The pool is a figure of the law. It would have cured him could he have got into it. The law would not cure you even if you kept it. But this you have not done. It condemns your sin, and you too, for you have not kept it.

"What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh," Christ did. Christ has done all. The law could not save a man because of his sins. Christ bore all the condemnation of sin, and now in righteousness God saves the one that puts his trust in Jesus. The law was good, but man could not meet its requirements. It provoked sin in man, brought out the evil that was in him—showed man what he was. The impotent man lacked a friend to put him to the pool, but Jesus said, "I will heal you outright, if you will let me." Often before had the impotent man tried to reach the healing waters, but as often tried in vain, and hope deferred had made his heart sick. Now he lay powerless, and had given up even the desire to try. He could do *nothing*—a fit state for Christ to deal with! Have you, sinner, given up your efforts, and do you hear what Christ says to you, "Wilt thou be made whole?" When you cease to struggle, and bow to God's judgment of your case, then Christ is your Saviour, able and ready to meet your utmost need.

Thus was it in this case. Jesus saith unto him, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And *immediately* the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked." What a change! All the effect of the word of Christ. Does the man wait to think if he is able to rise? No! "*Immediately* . . . he took up his bed and walked." You hear people say, "But I wonder if I am saved, I do not feel it." Jesus did not say "*Feel*," but "*Rise*," and "*im-*

mediately . . . he took up his bed." God does not bid you *to feel*, but to obey the voice of Jesus. "RISE." He heard the voice of Jesus, and rose immediately. It is the same in principle with us. What could be plainer? "He that *heareth* my word, and *believeth* on him that sent me, *hath* everlasting life, and *shall not come into judgment*; but *is passed* from death unto life" (ver. 24). Oh! the power of one word from Jesus. *Immediately*, without looking at his paralysed limbs, but with his eye on the blessed Saviour—that lovely stranger-visitant at the pool—the man obeyed, and was cured, because he *believed* His word. For thirty-eight years had his bed supported him, but now he carries his bed. What a transformation scene! So let it be with you. Instead of your sins, lusts, and passions carrying you captive, when you really believe in the Saviour, you will have power through faith in Jesus to control them.

This is a lovely picture of a delivered soul! You are to know that you have life in Christ, you are a victor *in Him*, and are possessed of new power—you carry your bed! What a sight! I do not believe in a conversion where there is no change in the life of the person. There ought to be a great change in the soul that has passed from death unto life. True, "the Jews said unto him that was cured . . . It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed." There are Jews now. A soul believes the Gospel, receives pardon, obtains eternal life, is filled with joy, and goes simply forth and confesses that

he is saved, and he is told, "That is impossible, you cannot be sure you are saved." This is only, "It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed," over again. Believe it not. You may be sure that you are saved, and you ought to be, if you simply rest on Christ.

Be like the man that was cured, fall back on the Word of God. He said, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk." He, as it were, said, "I am only doing what my Saviour bade me." And, young soul, who may be this day, for the first time, saved by faith in Jesus, you take this word, "He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life" (John xi. 47), and may you become a shining witness for Jesus. Your testimony will be questioned, but fall back on the Lord's own word, as your warrant and security. "He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life." That is a present portion for the soul *now*! "And shall not come into condemnation"—a future security. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are *in* Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1). He has been in death for you—you who believe *the Word* of Him who says "Rise." You have two things to fortify your soul—*the Work* of Christ *for you*, and *the Word* of Christ, which the Holy Ghost brings *to you*. The Word gives you to know the actual reality of the work done for you, and it bids you go forth and be a witness for Him who died for you.

But we read of another question. "What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk? And he that was healed wist not who it

was." There are many souls to-day like this man. They hear the Word, and are glad in the sense of sins forgiven, but they wait not to gaze on the One who healed them, and thus are little able to give the reason for the hope that is in them. "Why are you so bright?" is the question put to such. "Oh, I am saved." Are you sure? I want a good intelligent answer, and they cannot give it. Why? They did not stop to hold intercourse with Jesus; but they are His, and *He* will find them, and reveal Himself more fully to their souls. It is all pictured in the narrative before us. "*Afterwards* Jesus findeth him." Where? Not now by the pool, but in a new place; the man has left his old associations and is found in the temple—the place, then, where he would hear most of God—where *the name* of the Lord was set. There is much teaching for us now in what this indicates. Where is the spot where the Lord would have His people found? Gathered to the name of Jesus. Listen to the lovely confirmation service, which the Lord soon puts him through. "Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, *Behold, thou art made whole*: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" (ver. 14). As if He said, Doubt it not, that thou ART MADE WHOLE, but He adds, Be careful now how you walk. I expect a very different life from you now; go and sin no more. Grace picks up the worst, but God looks for the fruits of the new life. The members once yielded as servants to iniquity God now expects to be

yielded as servants to righteousness unto holiness. (See Rom. vi. 12-23.)

"The man departed, and told the Jews it was Jesus which had made him whole." There is more done by converts going and boldly witnessing for Jesus, than by all the set preaching from pulpit and platform that ever obtained. A good deal of the cloudiness in many souls arises from this, that they are ashamed to speak of Jesus. "It may raise enmity," is the excuse. Never mind that. The Lord is magnified by the testimony of a man converted, and going about everywhere among his friends telling of the Jesus who died for him. What a herald of God's grace! "The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole." He did not need to be questioned. Out of the abundance of his heart he poured forth the praises of Him who had healed him.

Beloved fellow-believer, may the Holy Spirit stir us up each one to be more bold for our blessed Lord, remembering He looks for testimony from those He has redeemed to Himself. He has made us "a peculiar people, that we should show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Pet. ii. 9, 10).

"E'en now let my ways, Lord,
Be bright with Thy praise, Lord,
For brief are the days,
Ere Thy coming again."

“I'M LOST! I'M LOST!!”



FYOUNG and beautiful married woman, about the age of twenty-two, a daughter of one of the leading business men of Melbourne, was visited by a Christian lady who spoke to her about her soul, and pressed upon her the necessity of becoming a Christian. She replied, “I don’t believe in half the Christians of to-day, and it will be time enough to be a Christian when I am on a death-bed.”

Twelve months after, a severe surgical operation had to be performed upon her. Under it she sank. During the few days she lived she realised she was dying, and that it was now too late to be a Christian, and that she was lost. She then declared loudly it was too late to be saved, that she was *lost*, and could see hell.

On one occasion she clung to her husband’s arm, crying out, “Oh, I’m lost! I’m lost! Cannot you save me? Oh, can nobody save me?” The distressed husband went for his mother, who read several portions of Scripture to her, but without avail. She still cried, “Can nobody save me?” A minister was sent for, who declared that whilst going to the house the Lord told him to let her alone. On arriving at the house, he felt that he had no power to speak or pray, and that the Lord had given her up. So awful was the scene, that the nurse said that if she, herself, did not find

Christ in a few days she would go mad, as it was a dreadful thing to die without Christ. The doctors stated they had never witnessed a more awful death.

Her mother-in-law had often previously read and prayed with her, but she only laughed at her, and was glad when she left. This poor soul's history stands out as a terrible illustration of that passage, "He, that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. xxix. 1). What terrible language! Tens of thousands have proved its truthfulness, and the eternal wail of millions is, "I might have been saved, but I spurned the offers of mercy." Thank God, there is still mercy, and a Saviour mighty to save.

Were I commissioned to enter the caverns of the lost and tell them of a Saviour, and then to ask who would accept Him, there would be but one united terrific cry, louder than ten thousand thunders—a cry that, if it were possible, would shake the very foundations of those deep, dark caverns, and that cry would be the truthful utterance of *every* soul, "*I will.*" But they cannot! Their eternal doom is sealed, sealed for ever.

Oh, dear reader, mercy is still offered to you, but it is *now*, not to-morrow. To-morrow may never dawn upon you; it must be *now* or *never*. Oh! delay not, for time is short, and life is uncertain.

REFLECTIONS OF A LOST SOUL.



REMEMBER how I used to hear Gospel sermons. I REMEMBER they warned me of hell, but I heeded not. They told me of Christ who died for sinners, but I *despised Him*.

"Some told me there was *no* hell, and no torment—that it was all a farce. No one had come back to tell us, no one had seen it. I began to persuade myself it was absurd to talk of a God of love putting people in hell, so I lived a comfortable and gay life. Few clouds crossed my path. I fared splendidly, tossing away the idea of eternal judgment. I REMEMBER I had my good things in *life*. I *rejected* Christ. The devil *whispered* his lie in my ear. 'When a man's dead, he's done with.' But, oh, he is not! Oh, that I had been wise, that I had considered my 'latter end'—while it was summer—but 'the harvest is past, the summer is *ended*, and I am NOT SAVED!'"

Reader, these are thoughts which a poignant memory in hell will produce. You ask, how do *you* know? Well, they are grounded on God's Word, and are stated by the One who *knows all things* (John xxi. 17), and who *created all things* (Eph. iii. 9).

Do not toss this little paper aside, I earnestly entreat you, till you have read it. Listen! "Son, REMEMBER that thou in thy *lifetime* receivedst thy

good things, but *now* thou art *tormented*." These are the words of the Lord Jesus (Luke xvi. 25). It is not imagination, but a most solemn reality. There is *no* forgetfulness in hell. There is no cooling draught in the "burning lake." No solace, no peace.

Do not let riches keep you from Christ. Poverty need not. The pomp and luxuriance, the gaiety and pride of this life cannot follow you beyond the grave, and you must go naked and bare into eternal shame, for "he that believeth *not* the Son, shall *not* see life; but the wrath of God *abideth* on him" (John iii. 36).

Look for a moment at the "burning lake," that you may fear its pain; then turn and gaze upon the suffering of the blessed Christ of God on Calvary's cross, when Jehovah forsook Him in the midst of His intensest suffering for *sin*. Listen to His words of life—forgiveness, peace. Because these are earnest realities, we would warn you against *neglecting* God's salvation.

You are on the very threshold of everlasting perdition. Stop, stop *now*! Stay this moment thy reckless feet, lest thou plunge into eternal fire. *Hasten*, vile and sinful though thou be, to the Lord Jesus Christ. "He receiveth sinners"—none else. He *waits* for thee. He *died* for thee, sinner. *Look* at once to Him and learn how God loved the world in giving His beloved Son. Trust Him *now*, and *here* in this world, and thy sins, darker than the deepest scarlet, shall be "whiter than snow."

"PLAIN SAILING."



N. a Highland village an old woman lay on her death-bed. She was a Christian, but Satan had taken advantage of her weakness to make her forget her title to glory. Deep, indeed, was her distress; so deep that a well-known and trusty visitor who came to cheer her stood unrecognised by her bed, and her own words may tell us the rest of the story. "She took no notice of my presence, seeming not even to see me, so absorbed was she in her distress. She seemed not to see anybody in the room as she said, 'Oh, my God! Oh, my God! My sins, my sins! Oh, my God!' I said, 'Oh, Mrs S——, Jesus is coming for you. He'll soon be here.' She murmured something about 'the mountain.' I said, 'He's coming *over* the mountains.' 'Of provocation,' she replied. I added, 'The blood of Jesus has put them all out of sight, the blood of Jesus has hidden every one of them.' She strained her eyes to get a sight of me, and said, 'The blood of Jesus, the blood of Jesus, the blood of Jesus—aye, that's it. The blood of Jesus—aye, the blood of Jesus, that is it—it is the blood of Jesus.' The gloom cleared from her countenance, and she said so brightly, 'Aye, it is the blood of Jesus, and it's plain sailing now.' Without another spot of darkness her spirit fled."

Reader, if a saint's distress be so great when the blood of Christ is for a moment forgotten, what

will death be to those who have never known its power ?

“ A sinner vile, what but *the blood*
Could calm my soul before my God.”

E. E. M.



THE SUM TOTAL OF THIS WORLD'S GLORY.



IN the 2nd of Daniel, from verse 31 to verse 44, we have a picture of the four great Gentile powers that were to hold sway from the time of Nebuchadnezzar until the Lord appears, and “ the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ ; and he shall reign for ever and ever ” (Rev. xi. 15).

The golden head was the empire of Babylon ; the breast and arms of silver, the Medo-Persian empire ; the belly and thighs of brass, the Grecian empire ; and the legs of iron, and feet part of iron and part of clay, the Roman empire. Then after that “ a stone cut out without hands,” smiting the image on the feet, destroyed it, and became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. That “ stone ” is Christ, into whose hands all power, all things, and all judgment, is committed. His kingdom displaces the four great Gentile kingdoms, will be universal, “ and it shall stand for ever ” (Dan. ii. 44).

So in a few short verses we have a prophetic panoramic view of Gentile domination lasting already nearly twenty-six centuries. What a mighty stretch! seen by the eye of God, and given with unerring precision in the inspired words of Daniel ii. 31-44. Let "higher criticism," or rather down-grade-ism, say what it pleases, on no other ground can this be the case than of divine inspiration; and inspiration is the mind of God communicated to us. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (1 Pet. i. 21). In this remarkable scripture, in which is caused to pass before us these mighty empires that hold sway from Nebuchadnezzar until Christ takes universal dominion, we have the fullest display possible of the greatness, the wisdom, the power, and the glory of man, and like a dream of the night it all passes away before the "sun of righteousness," who comes to judge and to reign.

From the "golden head" of the image, to the "feet of iron and clay," or from the first until the last of these Gentile powers, what has it been but a repetition of human pride?—the self-exalting pride of man, that breaks down in everything entrusted to his care, and whose wisdom ends in confusion.

Beloved reader, if still ensnared in the vain show of this poor world, you are solemnly invited to look upon *the sum total* of human greatness, wisdom, and glory, and the ignoble end of it all at the

hand of the Son of God when He comes to reign, and to ask yourself the question, "Am I content to be a part of that world which is not of the Father, going on under the popular delusion that things are progressing, when the opposite is the truth, and all is ripening for the solemn hour of Divine judgment?"

When the Son of God was here, in view of His death at the hands of the world, He said, "*Now is the judgment of this world*;" and the death-knell of this world has been sounding ever since.

Until that hour of judgment arrives God, in the Gospel, is proclaiming to this world, which has murdered and cast out His Son, pardon and salvation. Those who turn in repentance to Him, and trust His blessed Son, who died for sinners, *are saved*, and henceforth are of the company redeemed by His precious blood.

This company will reign with Christ for ever and ever, when "the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold" of Nebuchadnezzar's image, and all that it represents, will have passed away for ever.

Beloved reader, are you of that redeemed company, the kingdom and glory of which will never pass away, because they are for ever associated with the Son of God?

It is said of Christ, "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows," or companions (Heb. i. 9). And

who are these companions of the Lord of life and glory? They are the redeemed company. They share His rejection *now*; they will share His glory *then*. Who can utter the blessedness of such a place and position? Companions of Him who will reign universally! Such is the portion of the feeblest, the most unlettered, child of God.

The sum total of human glory when compared with this is as nothing; when weighed in the balances of faith, it is as the small dust of the balance. "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John ii. 17).

Beloved reader, ere we close, we make one more appeal to you, Are you for the world, or for the Son of God—earth rejected, but heaven accepted? Are you saved or lost? Are you in your sins, or cleansed from them by the Saviour's blood? Are you holding to the phantom—the passing dream—of this world's glory, or have you got eternal life, and are you looking to be a sharer in the kingdom and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, which shall never pass away?

Remember, *now* is the time to repent and turn to God; to-morrow may bring the grave, and the judgment of God. *Now* is the time to get forgiven and saved; to-morrow you may be lost in hell for ever. *Now*, while the door is open, is the time to enter in; to-morrow it may be closed for ever, and your knockings will never open it.

Let the death wail of the sinking crew of the

ill-fated "Victoria," but serve to enforce upon your soul the necessity of being saved now. *Now! now! now!!* is the time to be saved.

Farewell, reader. Shall it be Christ, or the world? pardon, or your sins? the passing pleasures of this world, or fellowship with the Father and the Son? the light of God's favour, or the outer darkness? the salvation of God, or the damnation of hell? You must spend eternity somewhere. Where shall it be?

E. A.

HAVE YOU REPENTED?

"God . . . now commandeth all men everywhere to repent, because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that *he hath raised him from the dead.*"—ACTS xvii. 30, 31.



OD now commandeth all men everywhere to repent. Have *you* obeyed? Have you repented?

Who commands? God.

When does He command? Now.

Whom does He command? All men.

Where does He command? Everywhere.

What does He command? To repent.

Why does He command? Because He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world (this habitable earth) by *that Man* whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance

unto all men, in that *He hath raised Him from the dead.*

All this is unmistakably plain. Every one who reads these lines will do well to look this matter seriously in the face. You may reason about it and about your state, &c., but the fact remains. God has spoken, and His word abides. He is going to judge this world—the habitable earth (Acts xvii. 30). You dwell on it, and if you go on impenitent, you expose yourself to judgment. God is swift in mercy, slow to judgment; it is His strange work, and therefore He commands men, and *you* amongst them, *to repent*. There is no other way of escape. It is utter foolhardiness to proceed another step, regardless of His command. God made you for His own glory, but you have failed to glorify Him. You are a sinner, and have sinned against Him, and He *commands you to repent*. He, and He alone, has the right to command, and it is your place to obey. Men reason, and shirk, and close their eyes, but God commands. Woe to the disobedient! Woe to all who turn a deaf ear to His voice.

Who is it that commands? *God.*

And note it well, He commands *now*. The heart of man is always for putting the matter off. Satan cries, "Time enough yet." Reader, there is not a moment to be lost. Life is far too uncertain for such an all-momentous matter to be delayed. Delay may mean too late. The voice of the living God commands you "*now*." If you do not obey *now*, *you may never* have another opportunity. Your

future is in His hands. You may have a lease of a house or a field, but you neither have nor can obtain a lease of your life. And "to-morrow" has no place in God's gospel warnings and promises. He says, *repent now*. Obey, and you will escape *now* from the judgment, and be saved *now* through grace.

When does He command? *Now*.

And whom does He call upon? *All men*. It matters not what your state, you are amongst the all. God now commands *all men*. Not merely the openly irreligious and profane, the immoral and the ungodly, but *all*. The moral and religious, the respectable and the upright amongst men, all need to repent before Him. God says *all*, and means all. There were vast moral differences among men in Paul's day, but all were commanded to repent. There are vast moral differences to-day, but the command applies equally. *All* means *all*, and therefore means you and me and everybody else. The question is, Have you obeyed? Have you repented?

Whom does He command? *All*.

And all *where*? The Word answers *everywhere*. All men everywhere. This is of deep moment. Some may reason, that refers to the known world in that day, which was in a very bad state. What does it say? All men *everywhere*. Who gave you permission to limit it? The Word of God is every whit as binding to-day as it was then. *Everywhere* means everywhere. That means England and America to-day, as much as Greece, or Italy, or Palestine in that day. In these words all men in

every country under the sun are included, and there is no exception. All men *everywhere* takes in from pole to pole in both hemispheres. Enlightened Europe and North America, benighted Asia, darkest Africa, all are included in "everywhere." Jews, Turks, heathen, infidels, heretics, professing Christians, are encompassed in the word *all*. God now commandeth *all men everywhere to repent*.

Where does He command? *Everywhere*.

And what does He command? To repent. Not to reform, but to repent. There is a vast difference between the two. Men often mistake one for the other. Thousands *reform*; thousands see their danger from the open Bible, and desiring to flee from the coming wrath, turn over a new leaf. Christendom is full of reformation. Moral church and chapel goers may be counted by millions. If God had commanded all men everywhere to reform their lives, and to live respectably and religiously, hundreds of thousands might pass muster to-day. But this He did not command, *but to repent*. To repent is to judge myself. Not to reform and justify myself, but to give up self-justification for self-judgment. Not to own that I am a sinner, but to seek to put myself in order before God, is but a sinner turning Pharisee. Every Pharisee will be judged. The poor tax-gatherer in Luke xviii. repented, when he took his right place before God, and cried, "God be merciful to me the sinner." The prodigal repented, when he came to himself, and said, "I have sinned; I am no more worthy," &c.

God now commands all men everywhere to repent, *i.e.*, to *judge themselves*. Obey, and you will never be judged.

What does He command ? *To repent.*

And why does He command ? "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained ; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Wondrous grace ! Yes, the judgment, the Judge, and the day of judgment are appointed. Nothing could be plainer. Jesus, the Son of God, will judge this habitable earth at an appointed moment, known alone to God, and all Scripture shows that day is at our doors. But till judgment comes, the Judge is a precious Saviour. God has given assurance to all that He will judge all by Him, in that He hath *raised Him from the dead.*

But that same resurrection is for the justification of every sinner who repents and believes God's testimony concerning Him. The resurrection of Christ is a witness before the universe that God's claims were met and satisfied, and that He was infinitely glorified in His death ; and on the ground thereof He pardons, justifies, and reconciles every sinner who takes his place in true self-judgment before Him, and believes Him. But as surely as Christ is risen, has God appointed Him to judge all who refuse to bow to His all-worthy name, and continue in their course of impenitence without Him. The death and resurrection of Christ secure

light and blessing for the penitent soul, but ensure darkness and misery for the impenitent.

Why does He command? Because of judgment.

Now we read that Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to Him for righteousness (Rom. iv. 17-22), and then it adds, "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. iv. 23-25, v. 1). Here, dear reader, is what you need. Obey God, repent, judge yourself and believe on Him that raised Jesus. What is the result? Judgment is gone from you for ever. The Judge bore it. The Judge becomes your Saviour, before the day of judgment, and *now* gives you the enjoyment, without let, of His full salvation. You can apply the above blessed scripture to yourself individually, and say, "Who was delivered for *my* offences? who was raised for *my* justification?" I believe, I am justified by faith, I have peace with God. How? Through my own self-improvement reformation, or what not? Far be the thought. Nay, but wholly and solely THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Now, when the Athenians heard Paul speak of the resurrection of the dead, we read, some mocked, others said, we will hear thee again of this matter, but certain ones *believed*. As has often been re-

marked, the Lord's faithful messenger found three classes of hearers—mockers, procrastinators, and believers. To which of these three classes do *you* belong? The mockers will be judged at the appointed day; the procrastinators will reap the fruit of their folly and delay at the same moment; the believer will appear with Christ in glory to judge and reign.

God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent, because He is going to judge. Once more, ere we close, we would appeal to you in view thereof. Have you repented? Are you delivered from that dread future? It is coming on this poor world with railroad speed. A moment more may be too late. Now, *now* is the time to repent. Now, *now* is the day of salvation. Sinner, repent, and believe the Gospel.

E. H. C.

ON THE EDGE OF THE PIT.



ONE winter's day, a minister was taking a walk in Yorkshire, when the snow was lying thick upon the ground. Being unacquainted with the district, he did not know that there was just before him, in his pathway, a deep pit, the mouth of which had been covered by snow.

He had reached the edge of the pit, and was about to take a step, which would probably have

plunged him into eternity, when he was stopped by a young woman, who eagerly told him of his danger.

Seeing the great peril he had narrowly escaped, the minister's heart was full of thankfulness to God, and at the same time, he felt not a little gratitude to the person who had given him the timely warning.

The minister was at the edge of a *deep* pit; but the sinner that has not fled to Christ stands at the brink of a *bottomless* pit. The woe of hell is such that it cannot be fathomed, but of its infinite depths the lost, during the unnumbered years of eternity, will ever learn more and more.

This paper comes to the unconverted reader with earnest and friendly warning. Life is, as we all know, uncertain. Death may meet thee suddenly through accident, or may visit thee as thou sleepest quietly upon thy bed. At any moment the Master of the house may arise, and shut the door of mercy. Thou standest a guilty sinner upon the threshold of eternity. But thou hast now a timely warning.

Though thy sins have brought thee to the brink of hell, thou needest not descend into its depths, for the Saviour, whose precious blood cleanseth from all sin, is still saying, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth" (Isa. xlv. 22).

Christ gave Himself a ransom for all (1 Tim. ii. 6); and if, as a lost sinner, thou dost come to God in the name of Jesus, God will say, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom" (Job xxxiii. 24).

C. H.

JAMIE, THE ENGINE-DRIVER; or, "ISN'T IT GRAND TO BE READY?"



NE September night, in 1884, two engine-drivers parted company in the city of Perth. They had not spent the evening, as too many railway men are apt to do, in folly and ungodliness, but had been searching the Scriptures together in one of their lodgings. Those who love God's Word will ever be blessed in so doing, and be amongst those who by the Holy Spirit are called "more noble, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." And there was, and is, still a certain result from such exercise, "*therefore many of them believed*" (Acts xvii. 11, 12).

The subject these brethren had been reading that night was the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven to receive His redeemed Church, to be for ever in glory with, and like, Himself. They read that He was coming "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." "Surely, I come quickly," and "I will come again and receive you to be with myself, that where I am ye may be also." They were filled with hope through the Holy Ghost.

Just as they parted, Jamie ran back to his friend, and said, "Oh! Archie, if the Lord comes when we are on the foot-plate, will it not be a surprise for some to see only our greasy clothes

left?" These two never spoke to one another again. Archie drove a train to Aberdeen, and Jamie went to Inverness. Jamie was a happy man, because a believing man. He had experienced that he was "a sinful man," but that Christ Jesus had made him whole, and was his Righteousness, Wisdom, Sanctification, and Redemption. In faith he was simple as a child, in confession as bold as a lion. Many taunts and jeers he had to bear for Christ's sake, and many temptations; but the joy of the Lord was his strength, therefore he could be bold and very courageous. Amongst those who tormented him was one man, conspicuous for his hatred of the truth, and who boldly professed infidelity; but through mercy that wicked, unbelieving demon was cast out, and that by a very unexpected event.

The day Jamie arrived north, his locomotive was standing with the brake off, and he in front of it. There was some shunting-work going on along the line. A pointsman by accident opened the switch of the line where the engine was standing; the consequences were that a detachment of empty waggons came, unwarned, in collision with the locomotive; the impact drove it onward, throwing down Jamie, the ponderous mass of metal passing over his prostrate body. He was quickly extricated by some of the appalled bystanders. Although nearly every bone was broken, he had complete consciousness; a placid smile suffused his face, as he said to his hearers, "Isn't it grand to be ready?"

He shortly afterwards fell asleep in Jesus. Amongst those who witnessed his tranquil passage into eternity, stood the scoffer to whom I have alluded. The scene so touched his heart that he could not remain, but rushing to his room, he fell on his knees, crying, "There is a God! there is a God!" Jamie's calm death could only have been the result of God's mighty power; for there was no sting—only calm, conscious victory.

When Archie arrived he was astonished to hear of his chum's sudden call, but could console himself with the blessed consolation that he was now with Christ, "far better." His work was done, his warfare accomplished, and he had entered into rest till "the trump of God" bids him arise, and "the voice of the archangel" gathers together "the dead in Christ" (1 Thess. iv. 14-18; 1 Cor. xv. 51-58; Rev. xx. 4-6.)

"O happy morn! the Lord will come
And take His waiting people home
Beyond the reach of care :
Where guilt and sin are all unknown,
The Lord will come and claim His own,
And place them with Him on His throne,
The glory bright to share.

The resurrection morn will break,
And every sleeping saint awake,
Brought forth in light again.
O morn, too bright for mortal eyes !
When all the ransomed Church shall rise
And wing their way to yonder skies—
Caught up with Christ to reign."

Christian, awake! thy "Lord is at hand." "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Lifeless professor, awake! say not in thine heart, "My Lord delayeth his coming," for He shall come in a day when thou lookest not for Him, and in an hour that thou art not aware of, and appoint thee "a portion with the hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Unsaved sinner, *believe*, "lest ye be condemned, for the judge standeth before the door." He is a Saviour now; but ere He enters in judgment, oh let Him in grace. All judgment is in the hands of Christ, because He is the Son of Man. Now He lingers before He sits in the judgment seat. He suffered once for sins, He died to save you, His shed blood cleanses from all sin. He is the very Saviour for you, and he says, "Look unto me, and be ye saved." "Salvation is of the Lord," you cannot save yourself. Jesus saves just now.

T. R. D.

FIVE DIVINE THINGS.



OD speaks to us in His Word. The Word of God will stand for ever. Heaven and earth will pass away, but God's Word will abide for ever.

Every morning and evening what a sight you see! Everybody, nearly, has a newspaper in his hand, and with what eager-

ness is the paper read! You would think that it was a matter of life or death. Yet it is not; it is simply man's report of what has transpired during the past few hours. It is man's testimony, it may be true, or it may not be. "*If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater*" (1 John v. 9). "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true" (John iii. 33).

A DIVINE DECLARATION.

"There is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 22, 23).

Nothing could exceed the solemnity of this divine declaration, which is of such individual and universal application. It applies to the great and the small, to the moral and the immoral, to the learned and the unlearned, to the religious and the profane, to the teacher and the taught; in fact, it applies to *all*, of every class and colour under the whole heaven. Every child of Adam comes within its solemn application. "All have sinned."

It may be that some have not gone to the same depths of sins as others, *yet all have sinned*. All may not be murderers or thieves, yet all have sinned. Like the great and small fishes in the ocean, they are all in the same element, though some live in deeper depths than others; so with the human family, they are all in the same element—sin—though some have not gone to the same excess as others.

Then observe the consequences of thus being a sinner before a holy God. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "The wages of sin is death." "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after *this* the judgment" (Rom. vi. 23; Heb. ix. 27).

A DIVINE COMMAND.

God is the moral governor of the universe, the judge of heaven and earth. He has sworn by Himself, that every knee shall bow to Him, and every tongue confess to God (Rom. xiv. 11, 12).

God sends forth a command to every child of Adam under heaven. God "*commandeth all men everywhere to repent*" (Acts xvii. 30). This divine command applies itself to all; yea, *to you*. God declares that *you* have sinned, and commands you to repent and turn to Him. Have you obeyed this command from the living God, the Judge of the Universe? He gives this command, and in His divine goodness leads sinners to obey it; but woe to the man, or woman, that does not repent, for the Son of God said, "*Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*" (Luke xiii. 5).

Reflect for a moment on that word, "*Repent.*" There is nothing more morally right than when a sinner repents; when he, without guile, stands in the presence of God, and says, "I have sinned"; "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke xviii. 13, 14). It is said twice over in Luke xv. that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth (vers. 7, 10). God commands him to repent, He

proclaims repentance and remission of sins, His goodness leads to repentance, and He rejoices, and fills all heaven with His joy, when a sinner does repent.

Repentance is the proper estimate a sinner forms of himself, in the light of the Word of God, which convicts him of being a sinner, and leads him to take the place before God of self-judgment, and self-abhorrence. God then can minister relief because Jesus, His blessed Son, died for sinners. Repentance is the proper condition of the sinner before God, and the death of Christ is the only meeting-place where God and the sinner can meet, and the latter escape His divine judgment. To meet God at the great white throne, a throne of pure judgment, is to ensure damnation at His hands. Beloved reader, have you repented ?

A DIVINE SALVATION.

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts : and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him ; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isa. lv. 6, 7).

In this divine exhortation the sinner is exhorted to seek the Lord, to call upon Him, to forsake his way, and his thoughts, and to return unto the Lord, with the assurance that he will find mercy at His hands, and abundant pardon.

Could anything be more blessed or sweeter for

the poor sinner? When conviction is wrought in his conscience, his whole moral being is set in motion Godward. His spirit, soul, and body are all active with interest, the whole man is awakened, and the sheer necessity of his case impels him Godward. "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son" (Luke xv. 18, 19). The next thing was, "And when, he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell upon his neck, and kissed him." It was a wonderful moment, and it ended in the prodigal being decked with the best robe, the ring, the shoes, the fatted calf being killed, and the father and the son sitting at the table within the house, and the whole house rejoicing over the son's return. Thus does the Saviour picture to us the Divine delight in the repentance, reception, and everlasting salvation of the sinner.

A DIVINE ENTREATY.

Nothing can exceed the interest that God has in the eternal well-being of the sinner. God through the prophet, said, "*All day long have I stretched out my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people*" (Rom. x. 21): When the Son of God was here, as He beheld the city Jerusalem, He wept over it, and His yearning heart expressed itself thus: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto

thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matt. xxiii. 37.) And how often has the insulted Spirit of God to turn away from the sinner who will not heed Him, and the sinner thus left perishes in his sins, and is lost for ever?

"Come! for angel hosts are musing
O'er this sight so strangely sad:
God beseeching—man refusing
To be made for ever glad."

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. v. 20).

Wonderful words these! Are you reconciled? and have you peace with God?

A DIVINE WARNING.

God follows man to the end with His declaration, command, exhortation, entreaty, and warning. To the grave does He follow him; but when the sinners closes his eyes in death, as one who has unheeded all this, his doom is fixed for ever. What more can be done? All has been utterly neglected and despised, and the grace of God trampled under foot, and nothing is left, but for him to go "unto his own place"—the outer darkness for ever.

In Hebrews ii. 3, we read, *"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"* And in Acts

xiii. 40, 41, it is written, "*Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.*"

Beloved reader, God means what He says, and says what He means. We entreat of you not to let these divine realities pass by unheeded, but without delay obey the Gospel, be reconciled to God, believe in Christ the Son of God, and be the happy possessor of eternal life, the gift of God (John v. 24).

E. A.

DOUBTS REMOVED.



WHILE travelling one day in the west of Ireland, I was greatly interested in a fellow-passenger, who was rather a noble-looking gentleman of three score years and twelve. We arrived at a station where all the other passengers had gone out, leaving us alone. I made free to offer him a gospel book, which he thankfully accepted. This at once drew forth his interest, and led to his asking me some questions, which I was pleased to answer. My way was now open to ask him if he was travelling to heaven, to which he replied, "I believe I am, but my heart is very cold, and my faith is very weak."

"Well," I said, "God is not now saving people on the ground of weak faith or strong faith. The question is, *In whom*, and *on what*, is your faith based? Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?"

"Yes, I do."

"What do you believe about Him?"

"I believe He died for me."

"For you?"

"Yes, for me."

"And was His death upon the cross a sufficient ransom for your soul?"

"I believe it was."

"Has God been satisfied?"

"I believe He has."

"How do you know God is satisfied?" Here the dear man seemed in a maze, so I at once tried to help him by asking,—"*Where is Christ now?*"

"In heaven, of course."

"Wasn't He once on the cross making atonement for sin?"

"Yes."

"Didn't He then suffer for sins, the Just for the unjust?"

"Yes."

"Didn't He say, '*It is finished,*' before He bowed His blessed head and died?"

"Yes."

"Wasn't He taken down and laid in the grave?"

"Yes."

"Tell me now, How did He get out of the grave?"

"He was raised from the dead by the power of God."

"Why did God raise Him from the dead?"

"Because He vindicated God's righteous claims, and satisfied Him about all the sins He bore."

"And yours along with the others?"

"Yes."

"That's it," said I; "rest on that. God is satisfied with Jesus and His finished work. Nothing more is needed, and because He is satisfied He raised Him from the dead, and has taken Him up into glory, and there He sits in proof that His work is done."

"Well," said the old gentleman, "I am glad I have met you. Your conversation has made the truth clearer and simpler to me than I have ever seen it before. My faith is greatly strengthened."

"I am very pleased to hear you say so," was my reply, "but now a word about your faith. There are a great many people who almost make a Saviour of their faith. I don't say you are doing this exactly, but still what you have said leads me to think you are not clear of it. Do not think for a moment I make little of faith; on the contrary, I press the need of it. Faith receives God's testimony, and thus honours Him. It is the hand held out to receive what God puts into it. We are thereby put into the place of receivers. Which, then, let me ask you, is the strongest faith?"

"I am sure I could hardly say," he replied.

"Did it never strike you that a child's faith is the strongest as well as the simplest faith? Are you the father of children?"

"Yes."

"Did you ever promise to bring your child a toy from town when you were leaving home?"

"Well, yes, of course, who hasn't?"

"Haven't you noticed how eagerly the child was watching for your return?"

"Yes."

"And before you had time to sit down the child bounds forward and looks into your face with beaming eyes, and says, Father, did you bring me my toy? And to the great delight of the child the toy is presented. Now, let me ask, What gave the child such confidence? Was it not that it believed your word?"

"Yes, to be sure, and it is so like it."

"But had you forgotten what you promised, or not kept your word, what grim disappointment that child would feel."

"Well, sir, I must say you have helped me very much," he exclaimed, and by this time his joy was unbounded, his heart had been warmed too by being reassured of God's unchanging love.

"God commendeth his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8). It never changes. We may and do change, our hearts may grow cold, and, alas! sometimes even indifferent, but His love is always the same. By this time the train had brought him to his destina-

tion, and what a beaming countenance he had as we shook hands together, perhaps never to meet until the land of faith is exchanged for that of sight.

Reader, are you occupied with the coldness of your heart, and the weakness of your faith. Look not within yourself, look not around at others, but look right up to Jesus on the seated throne, and see the Mighty Victor there, who was once, amid all the gloom, and shame, and suffering, and untold agony of Calvary, "made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. v. 21).

"I want no other argument,
I need no other plea,
It is enough that Jesus died,
And that He died for me."

P. W.

THE BLIND BEGGAR OF JERICHO.



WHAT could be a more blessed sight in this sinful world than to behold Jesus, the Son of the living God, at the disposal of a blind beggar, shedding light into his poor sightless eyes, and spiritual light into his still darker soul! Such is the wondrous scene brought before us in Luke xviii. 35-43. The Lord of light and glory in human form, the holy Son of the Blessed, and a poor sinner of Adam's fallen race, in blindness and beggary, face to face.

The scene lies near the well-known city of Jericho, the city of the curse (Josh. vi. 26, 27). What fitter spot could be chosen for such a meeting. Surely this was no mere chance. The loving heart of Jesus was set for the blessing of that deeply needy one. It is a beautiful instance of the response of love to a felt need. We doubt not that hundreds had passed that way before, and as they descried that pitiable object by the way-side, sympathetically or carelessly handed him their mite. But never before had hope sprung up in the poor beggar's breast, that any could do more for him than relieve his temporal need. But there came the memorable day, when an unwonted stir, the hum of many voices, and the tramp of many feet, told the poor sightless one that something unusual was occurring. And *he asked what it meant.* And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth *passeth by.*

That was enough; and in a moment his cry was heard above the bustle around, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of David to him, and the hope of mercy sprang up in his heart. One can scarcely doubt but that he had already heard of the wondrous deeds of Jesus; that His name had struck a chord in his heart, and that the thought had arisen, what He had done for others, He could do for him. Now the moment had come, when his hope might be realised. "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me?" Did ever such a cry fall unheeded on His

ear? *Never.* They which *went before* rebuked him, but it was all in vain. It only increased the vehemence of his cry. Mercy, mercy! a blind beggar cries for mercy. The Author of mercy, in whose heart it reigned as in none other, was there, and an object aptly suited for it before Him. Jesus of Nazareth never passed such a one by.

"And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him; and when he was come near, he asked him, saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" (vers. 40, 41.) Wondrous grace! Jesus stood, Jesus commanded, and when he was *come near*, Jesus asked him, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" Hear his answer, "Lord, that I may receive my *sight*." Openly before all had he already confessed Him as the Son of David, now he addresses Him as Lord, and asks for sight, will his request be refused? Impossible.

But let us pause a moment to seek our reader's profit from this marvellous scene. What is *our estate*? Where is there one of Adam's lost and guilty race, who is not in the same plight morally as the poor blind beggar of Jericho? We are citizens of this Jericho world, that lies under the awful curse of an offended and insulted God; we belong to a scene devoted to His richly merited judgment; to a world that spat in the face of, and crucified His Son. We, too, are in blindness and beggary on the world's highway—a way that leadeth to death, the broad way that endeth in eternal

woe. What is our hope? That of the blind beggar was centred in One alone. Where is yours? As the busy throng of this world passes by, have you ever learnt that Jesus is nigh, and nigh to answer the heartfelt need of all who cry to Him. Have you ever *come near* to Him?

The ignorant and indifferent world leave the troubled sinner in his blindness and beggary, rebuke his cry, and let him perish in his sins. But once let a soul wake up in earnest to his condition and need, and all the voices in the world will never drown the soul-cry to the Son of David, now glorified on high, the Saviour of the guilty and the lost, "*Have mercy upon me.*" The world may tell that one Jesus of Nazareth *passeth by*. But He never did, and never will in this day of grace, pass by a poor blind sinner in his beggary, that has felt his need of Him. Reader, have you felt your need? Has your heart ever poured out its need in earnest in the ear of Jesus, the Son of God? Have you ever been face to face with Him, a sinner in your sins, in blindness and beggary, confessed? Are you longing for sight, for the darkness in your soul to be dispelled, and for the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ to shine in your poor, dark heart?

Jesus is here; will you have to do with Him? He was the light of this poor dark world (John viii. 12). Now seated in the glory, the moment you own Him Saviour and Lord, the light will flow into your soul, and you will be for ever de-

livered from the power of darkness. Hear His blessed answer to the poor blind beggar of Jericho! Jesus said unto him, "Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God." His word is with power. "Receive thy sight," and he received sight forthwith. "Thy faith hath saved thee." Precious words! And he followed Him, glorifying God.

Are *your* eyes opened? Have you *looked* to Jesus? Have you spiritual sight. Have you *believed* in Him? Thy faith *hath saved thee*. For, "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that *God* hath raised him from the dead, thou *shalt be saved*," (Rom. x. 9). To confess Jesus, Lord, and to believe on Him who raised Him, is *salvation* for the guilty and the lost. We are delivered from our blindness and beggary, and blessed with sight, salvation, and eternal wealth in Christ. Have *you* undergone this blessed change? Do you know what it is to be the rejoicing recipient of mercy, spiritual sight, salvation, Christ, and to follow Him, glorifying God. This is the evidence of our faith before all, *to follow Him*, the One who has met us, blessed us, saved us, to whom we henceforth belong, the purchase of His own precious blood.

What a change! Blind beggars, helpless, useless, miserable, brought to rejoice in the sunshine of eternal light, enriched with every spiritual and heavenly blessing, happy in the enjoyment of per-

fect love, useful to Him who saved us, as following in his steps (John xii. 26), and glorifying God, the Author of this great and everlasting salvation. This is His blessed answer to the sinner's cry for mercy.

"And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God" (ver. 43).
E. H. C.



THE NAME OF JESUS.

TUNE—"Art Thou Weary?"



PRECIOUS Name! the Name of "Jesus,"
Son of God most High,
Who in love to ruined sinners
Came to die.

Precious Name! the story telling
Of His humble birth;
Of His pathway, meek and lowly,
Here on earth.

Precious Name of Him—the Saviour,
Come the lost to save;
In His grace for ruined sinners,
All He gave.

Precious Name of Him who suffered
On the shameful tree;
Laid His life down as the victim,
E'en for me.

Precious Name of Him enthronèd
 Now in glory fair ;
 Precious Name ! that name of " Jesus "
 Bears He there.

Precious, peerless Name of " Jesus,"
 None can tell its worth ;
 Sweetest Name there is in heaven
 Or on earth.

E. E. N

CORNELIUS.

(See Acts x.)



HERE dwelt a Roman centurion at Cæsarea—a pious, godly man. As the early part of this tenth chapter of Acts tells us, he was "a devout man, and one that feared God, with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway." He was a converted man—quickenèd by the Spirit of God ; but he had not received the Holy Ghost, and as yet he had not peace with God. He was a type of thousands of souls to-day—awakened, quickened souls, with godly desires ; devout, generous, benevolent, prayerful people, and yet they are without peace. They do not know what pardon is.

While this truly-awakened, peace-seeking man is *in prayer*, God sends an angel to him, telling him

to send for Peter. While Peter is on the house-top, also *in prayer*, the Lord gives him a vision of heaven opened, and a vessel like a great sheet, knit at the four corners, let down to earth; "wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air." Then comes a voice, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat." This Peter refuses, but the voice says, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." This is repeated three times, and at length, while he "doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean," the Spirit says to him, as we read in verse 19, "Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing, for I have sent them." These men give him their message, and Peter goes with them the next day. Cornelius is waiting for him, with his kinsmen and near friends. When he hears from God that His messenger is to come, he immediately desires that others should participate in the blessing. I do not think it is possible for a person to be born of God, and blessed of Him, without a desire springing up that those around him should share in this grace.

Cornelius tells Peter why he sent for him, and closes what he has to say with, "Now, therefore, are we all here present before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." That was a very earnest audience gathered in the presence of God, and little wonder that there was deep blessing that day in Cornelius's house. Peter now

knows the truth : he has learned the lesson of the great sheet, as he says, " Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons. But in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted (or, as it should be, " acceptable," or, " well pleasing to him"—acceptance is on totally different ground, as we learn from Eph. i. 6) with him." A new lesson entirely was this to Peter.

It is manifest that God's call had not gone out to a pagan idolater, and Peter only speaks of those who feared God, and wrought righteousness. This is exactly what Cornelius did, and the Lord had signified his acceptability to Himself by sending His angel. His was no mere hollow profession, but a real state of soul. God-fearing, pious, and prayerful, he was born again, converted, but not yet what Scripture calls " saved " (chap. xi. 14), a term implying the fullest blessing, in the knowledge of association with a victorious risen Saviour. But in going out to the Gentiles, how wise the way of God to begin with this man, whom not even the most opposing Jew could deny was godly ! Thus you see a man might be godly, and yet not know the privileges of Christianity. These he is now to be brought into. " The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all), that word ye know," says Peter. Cornelius was not ignorant of it. He had evidently heard what had gone on with regard to Jesus. He had heard, moreover, that God was preaching peace through Jesus Christ, but it was

"to the children of Israel." Now, why did Cornelius not get peace? For a beautiful reason. He was just and upright, and he knew he was not in the favoured circle of Israel: Consequently he judged it was not for him. He desired to get peace, but it was for Israel, and he was not in that favoured company. While deeply desirous of blessing, he felt himself unworthy of it, and that he had no claim to it. Here it is, then, that the grace of God comes in so sweetly.

Peter goes on, and tells how Jesus "went about doing good," how the Jews slew Him, how God raised Him, and how He was seen, after His resurrection, by many witnesses. He concludes his testimony by saying, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. While Peter yet spake these words, *the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.*" What had they heard? Ah! this is wonderful news for you and me, for we are Gentiles. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, *whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*" Do you wish the remission of your sins? You are welcome to it. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, *whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*" Ah! but you may say, 'What about repentance?' God says nothing about it here. I doubt not they had repented. There was no need to press it on those who were so deeply anxious. What they

needed was the simple, beautiful Gospel of Jesus. "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." If you are still in your sins, and desirous to have them remitted, *i.e.* forgiven, let me tell you this good news of the Saviour of sinners, "through his name, whosoever believeth in him SHALL RECEIVE REMISSION OF SINS."

Forgiveness of sins is now preached to every creature, Jew or Gentile, bond or free, through the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. By the work which He has accomplished, sins are put away from before God, and whosoever believeth in Him receives forgiveness thereof. But who does He mean by "whosoever"? Does He not mean you? Yes, surely it means you as well as me. If you can truly say, I believe in Him, you receive remission of sins. But I do not *feel* it, you may argue. It does not say, "Whosoever believeth in him shall *feel* the remission of sins." No, it says, "Whosoever believeth in him *shall receive* remission of sins." I forgive, says God, the soul that cleaves to My Son. It is due to Christ that God should pardon and bless the soul that believes in Him.

Reader, let not 1893 pass into eternity and leave you still in your sins. Nay, come to Jesus now, and receive the forgiveness God so loves to bestow on whosoever believes in His Son. Are not these charming words? "WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHALL RECEIVE REMISSION OF SINS."