

## “Fellowship in the Gospel.”

**W**HAT a blessed fact it is that God is still sending out a message of glad tidings into this lost world, and that He gives His people the privilege of being bearers of that message. It comes *from God*, from His very heart of love, and it comes *to* the sinner just where and as he is.

If we turn to the epistle to the Philippians we shall find that this word “gospel” (or glad tidings) is used no less than six times in the first chapter. Like the words “joy,” or “rejoice,” either or both of which occur in every chapter, it was one of the great subjects which occupied the Apostle’s mind, though he had now been a prisoner for three or four years.

But, trying as his position must have been, and apparently injurious to the progress of the work, it could not in any wise diminish or take away from the preciousness of Christ to his soul, and his wholehearted interest in the message of life. Thus he speaks of the “confirmation of the gospel,” “the furtherance of the gospel,” the “defence of the gospel,” of that which “becometh the gospel,” and the “faith of the gospel.” And, instead of being cast down by all that happened to him, we find him filled with confidence in God, and a joy which carried him above his trying circumstances, so that he can say that even these things “have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel.”

And for us to-day: how encouraging to know that God is above everything that takes place in this world, so that we can always count upon Him. And what a message we have to carry to poor sinners!—a message of life, of peace, of salvation through a once crucified

but now risen and glorified Christ. A salvation which brings, not only peace to the conscience, but lasting joy and satisfaction to the heart.

Let us not be weary in well doing. There are, it is true, many difficulties and things to discourage on account of the prevailing indifference, etc.; but faith looks at God, not at the difficulties. There are many souls around us looking for peace and satisfaction, vainly trying to find it in the resources of this world, or, it may be, in what are called the consolations of religion. Let us endeavour to come in contact with them, either by personal visiting and distributing gospel literature, by preaching the Word, or in any other way we can.

We believe it will be found that God will always give His messengers *some* encouragement, and perhaps use His word far more than we know. We were speaking to a young man quite recently who is dying of consumption, and, on inquiring as to his spiritual state, were glad to find that he had found peace and salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. This, he said, was through some meetings held in a hall near where he lived, about four years ago. Whether the preacher ever heard of this young man's case we know not, probably he did not, but God used His own Word through him. Surely such cases are an encouragement to us.

F. G. B.

### Prayer.

**T**HE need of prayer among Christians is very great. Still, it would be a mistake to suppose that it was more needed at one time than at another, for we are in an enemy's country and we need the protection and guidance that our call will always bring.

The Lord Jesus tells us to "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation." The snares are laid for our feet, but by prayer we can be preserved from them. Prayer is not only the call for help, but it is the attitude of dependence. The Lord set the example before us as recorded in the gospels, and at the close of His ministry here, when the shadow of the cross was upon Him, it is said in Hebrews, "He was heard in that He feared." Prayer, beloved Christian reader, puts all our matters into the hands of One who can certainly accomplish what we cannot accomplish, owing to hindrances in ourselves, and our circumstances, and the opposition of Satan.

Let us look at some of the instances of "earnest, fervent prayer" brought before us in the Scriptures of truth, and the answers to those prayers. Such a view will, I think, be a great encouragement to us, if we are simple before God, and teachable.

Psalm xc. is called "A *prayer* of Moses the man of God," and this is the first instance I would call attention to. It commences in eternity, "Before the mountains were brought forth," and it passes along down the thousands of years of the wonderful dealings of God with man, into the time when His work and His glory will displace all the attempts of human energy to obtain blessing apart from God. We have here God's work, God's glory, God's beauty, and God's people, established in a scene that shall be everlasting (verses 16, 17). This was the man (Moses) who fell down twice before Jehovah in intercessory prayer for God's failing people. Love, as well as need, leads to prayer. It seems to me that prayer measures the amount of love we feel for our brethren, and for all others who are in need.

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The next example is one of importunate prayer, and its answer. It will be found in 1 Sam. i., Hannah (grace) pleads for a son. The narrative says she prayed unto the Lord and wept sore. She was a woman of a sorrowful spirit. But she was in earnest, and in spite of the provocation of the enemy, and of misunderstanding on the part of Eli, she clung to Jehovah for the desire of her heart—a son.

At the close of the chapter the answer—a son—is given. But mark, this is not the only result of her prayer. The marvellous outburst of praise, thanksgiving, and prophecy in the second chapter, concurs in sounding forth the glory of Him who will “keep the feet of His saints,” and “the wicked shall be silent in darkness,” also “Who will judge the ends of the earth.” Then, looking on to the end, “He shall give strength unto His King, and exalt the horn of His anointed.” Yes, Hannah gets the son, and what a son! The one raised up by God to carry Israel through the stormy days of the wars with the Philistines until David ascended the throne, who, with Solomon, wrote the prayers and praises and wisdom that was to be food for believers for all generations.

I have spoken of David, and he is the next one who comes before us—the sweet psalmist of Israel. And now let us notice this: prayer and praise are inextricably mingled in the Scriptures. God Himself says so. The close of the second book of Psalms reads, “The PRAYERS of David the son of Jesse are ended.”

Until Saul was removed, David's life was in constant peril, as he says, “There is but a step betwixt me and death.” But this cast him upon God, and he found strength and consolation in pouring out his soul to God in prayer. He is also used as the prophet in

Psalms xxii. and lxix., to shadow forth the sufferings of Him whose steps have been from of old, from everlasting, David's Lord and God's beloved Son.

The strength that is made perfect in weakness is obtained when we are on our faces at His feet. There the reality of a humbled heart and a contrite spirit are manifested. There our tears may flow forth, fellow-believer; and there we may break the alabaster box of ointment at His feet, and wipe them with the hairs of our head. He will accept our worship, poor as it may be, and He will hear and answer the unuttered, as well as the uttered, prayers of a broken heart that seeks the shelter of His love.

One more example of prayer, acceptable to God, is found in Daniel ix. The prayer itself, the answer to it, and the reason for the answer, are all remarkable. Do you think, beloved Christian reader, that we can all have such approval of ourselves, and of our prayers, as is contained in verse 23? Why not? There is no ground for expecting revelations such as were given to Daniel, but we are as greatly beloved as he was, and our voices are pleasing in His ear (Sol. Song ii. 14).

*Much prayer* is needed, not only for our needs and for the needs of the saints of God, and of the world; but that in all the discouragements incidental to a state of utter ruin in the last days, we may be able to say with the prophet, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Hab. iii. 17, 18).

H. B. W. (*New York*).

## Short Meditations—1.

The body of the one who is redeemed (1 Cor. vi. 15-20).

THE Apostle takes care to bring before us in this passage, in contrast with the corrupting principles of paganism, that it is not only the mind and soul of the Christian, but *his body*, which is a member of Christ. "Know ye not," he says, "that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid."

What holy respect, then, the Christian should have for his body, keeping it from all contact with *moral defilement*, because this body is a part of Christ! "Know ye not?" repeats the Apostle for the third time, with particular emphasis. Such a fact as this should be always present to my memory, in order to preserve me, in my conduct, from all intercourse with that which would defile. My body does not belong to me any more than my spirit and my soul. All these together have been bought with a price—and what a price!

Then the Apostle adds a word which has struck me much. "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God?" I ask myself: Do I sufficiently take into account the scope and extent of such a blessing? What!—the Holy Spirit, this *divine Person*, has come to dwell *in me*! I have received the Spirit "from God." As of old Jehovah came to dwell in His temple at Jerusalem, He has been pleased, each Christian can say, to come and take up His abode *in my body*!

It is not only that God's people as a whole, as being the church, are the temple of the living God (Eph. ii. 21; 2 Cor. vi. 16); but the Spirit has formed it (the

body), sanctifying it in virtue of the blood of Christ, to become His habitation—a habitation worthy of this divine Person. Let us remark that there are two words translated “temple” in the New Testament: *Hieron*, which represents the building at large, and *Naos*, the house, properly speaking. My body is, then, the *Naos*, not the *Hieron* or sacred building at large. It is the *sanctuary* where the divine Person of the Holy Spirit dwells, as Jehovah did of old at Jerusalem. It is not even necessary, as formerly under the law, to offer a sacrifice in order to purify this sanctuary, for this has been done in God’s eyes once for all, by the sacrifice of Christ.

And as for me—should I consider or desire it to be otherwise? Do I not know that my body is the *Naos* of the Holy Spirit which is in me, which I have from God? The Spirit is “in me,” but my body is His sanctuary as the temple was the sanctuary of Jehovah who sat on His throne between the cherubims. It is from thence that the Holy Spirit, this divine Person, gives forth His infinite resources, all His activity, all His power, in order to help me, to guide me, to instruct me, to lead me into all truth, to bring me into touch with heavenly things; and for many other purposes besides—for His functions are infinitely diversified.

How have I acted hitherto towards this divine guest? Have I treated Him with the godly fear and veneration which are His due? When the Spirit has spoken to me of my body as His temple, have I listened to Him? Have I brought down the Spirit to One whose sole office it is to strive against the flesh, in order to hinder me from practising the things that I would naturally desire? Or rather, knowing well who dwells in this temple, have I been careful to avoid every act

of my body which would dishonour Him? What answer do I give to these questions?

Guide then, O God, my thoughts, my words, my pen, by Thy Spirit, in order that Thou mayest be continually glorified in my body, which is His temple!

H. R. (Vevey).

### The Virgin Birth.

IT was stated from one of the pulpits in Montreal some time ago that "*the acceptance of the virgin birth is a non-essential, and that there may be an open mind on the exact method of the incarnation.*" Apart from creeds, which neither decide nor establish anything for the average Christian, we have positive Scripture for what is, and has been, generally accepted as the "method" referred to, both in the Old and New Testaments. The statement quoted above has been a grief of mind to a large number of God-fearing sincere Christians, as coming from one hitherto highly respected and esteemed.

The Apostle Paul charges his son Titus to speak "the things that become sound doctrine . . . sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed" (chap. ii. 1, 8). Such utterances as the one before us only tend to disturb and unsettle, in the place of edifying and leading the souls of men and women who love God into closer communion with Him and with His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. And further, such utterances are not only not constructive but, on the contrary, completely destructive of our most holy faith. Now the written Word is the expression of the mind of God and the sure foundation of our faith. The more spiritual the study of it

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the deeper will be our conviction of its truthfulness, its depth and beauty, its divine inspiration, and its perfect sufficiency and suitability to fully equip the man of God to every good work. Then why do preachers try to turn the edge of this blessed Word by introducing that which casts a doubt and a slur upon the clear and unmistakable testimony of the sacred writers ?

In Matthew i. 18 we read that the Virgin Mary was found with child *of the Holy Ghost*, and in verse 20 it states that that which was conceived in her was *of the Holy Ghost*. In the Gospel by St. Luke (i. 34), when the Virgin Mary questions the angel, mentioning the absence of the natural cause of the Lord's birth, she is quieted by the answer given in the following words : "*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee ; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*"

Here we have solid ground, a divine certainty, the authoritative statement that *God the Holy Ghost* was the instrument of this miraculous conception. The Virgin Mary does not seem to have understood how this conception could be, as it was outside the natural order ; this was the reason why she put the question. Had it not been for this question we might not have had such a clear revelation of the miraculous conception. But in this we see unquestionably the wisdom of God in telling us that the Holy Ghost should come upon her, should act in power on this earthen vessel, without its own will, or the will of man. As another has said, "*God is the source of the life of the child promised to Mary, as born in this world and by His power.*" And again, "*Holy in His birth, conceived by the intervention of the power of God acting upon Mary*

—a power which was the divine source of His existence upon the earth as man—that which thus received its being from Mary, the fruit of her womb, should even in this sense have the title of Son of God.”

How different when we leave this solid ground and step on to the shifting sands of human speculation ; and if there is anything that marks the work of the so-called higher critics of to-day, it is the *uncertainty* which attaches to their theories and ideas.

One feels the solemnity of approaching and discussing so profound and inscrutable a subject as the origin and existence of this wonderful Person of whom it is written, “No one (not even angels) *knoweth* the Son, but the Father.” The word in the original here representing “knoweth” has the force of an absolutely certain apprehension—“fully knoweth”—not merely a casual acquaintance. We cannot know anything hidden from our mental or intellectual view, but by the power of God. To bring our poor, puny, finite minds to discuss and dilate upon this wonderful conception, beyond what Scripture plainly states, is a presumption that is liable to bring down upon our heads the judgment of God.

And truly this is ground upon which we must walk with unshod foot—it is holy ground. The ark in Israel’s day—a type of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—was considered so superlatively holy that when a man put forth his hand to steady it when the oxen stumbled, he was struck dead ; and when the men of Beth-shemesh had the temerity to look into it, God smote seventy of them. These incidents are related in 2 Samuel vi. 6 and 1 Samuel vi. 19. We are told by the Apostle Paul that “Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning.” What,

then, do these manifestations of God's jealous care for the holiness of that which typified Christ teach us in our day? Is it not that we should refrain from searching into what it has not pleased Him to reveal? "The secret things," it is stated by the inspired writer, "belong unto the Lord our God." The nature of the conception referred to is *unrevealed*, save that it was "of the Holy Ghost," and it is one of those things we dare not pry into. If it is permitted to have an open mind upon a subject so vital as the Person of our Lord, which forms the very foundation of Christianity, and which Scripture carefully guards, as that upon which the whole truth of the gospel and of our salvation rests, where are we going to end? Those who make statements in public, such as that which we have felt bound to challenge, may not realize the harmful effect it has upon the unestablished; but, as the psalmist says, "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

J. P. (*Montreal*).

### State of the Assemblies of God's people—1.

**T**HIS is the title of a paper in the October (1921) number of WORDS OF HELP, and a correspondent in that issue raises the question, "Is there not a remedy, or are we beyond the reach of help?"

But there may be another way of considering this matter. We are surely in days when the ruin of the church, as a responsible witness for Christ, and as seen in the aspect given us in 1 Cor. iii. 10-17, is far advanced. The apostasy foretold in all the later epistles is nearing its completion. We each and all are found amidst this ruined state of things, and we should feel it deeply

before the Lord, along with the supreme consideration of what is due to His name.

We know the Lord takes a deep interest in His people, and His grace is always active for us now on high. The godly Remnant in the days of Malachi "feared the Lord and thought upon His name," even though found amidst the demoralized state of Israel in that day; and so they *sanctified* "the Lord of hosts Himself," and found in Him a "sanctuary" (Isa. viii.). The resources which the Remnant thus found were great; and that, too, in a day when there was no remedy for Israel as a whole.

May we not learn from this, whilst feeling the state of our assemblies to-day; and may we not find greater resources in God, who is now *fully* revealed—*redemption* having been completely accomplished, and, in consequence, the Holy Spirit dwelling in and with God's people? The word of the Apostle, "God is faithful," is the *rock* for our hearts; this we may prove in lowly confidence in Him, along with repentance; His "goodness" leading us to it. Thus, resources for faith abound.

The prophet Habakkuk was given to know this in the word, "The just shall live by his faith." In this is contained what is well expressed in the words of one who wrote, "The object of faith is the power of life"; and this was given to the prophet at a time when his faith was much tested. Still it is *in faith* he can say, "O Lord, how long shall I cry," etc. In chapter ii. he is given to see things from a truer standpoint than he does in chapter i. The goodness of God towards Israel in verses 2 and 3 is comforting; and then he is told, "The just shall live by his faith."

Now this same truth is introduced in Rom. i. 17, in connection with God's righteousness being revealed in

the gospel. Thus the believer has a ROCK to stand on. Then again, this truth is also applied in Gal. iii. 11, to set aside "law" as a principle of justification; and in Heb. x. 32-38, to establish and encourage us to go on in "confidence" in spite of "afflictions" or any other opposition. Thus, in these three places in Scripture, is this soul-sustaining principle of faith in God found in different connections.

The prophet Habakkuk, unconsciously, illustrates the principle of *faith*: (1) to *live* by, in chapter iii. 18, and (2) to *walk* by, in verse 19—and this, too, when Israel was in a desperate state (verse 17), and he himself having to say, "*rotteness* entered into my bones." What rich resources he found in "the Lord . . . the God of my salvation"!

The Apostles Peter, John, Paul, and Jude all announce the ruin of the professing church in their epistles; and they also give us great resources for our encouragement.

Now let us notice the call to "repentance" given in Rev. ii. 5, 21, and iii. 19. These two chapters (Rev. ii. and iii.) give, prophetically, an outline of the history of a *fallen* church; just as the history of man begins with the fall of man in Gen. iii. The word to Ephesus, "Thou hast left thy first love," marks the beginning of the failure and ruin of the church. No remedy or restoration appears here; but the *fallen* church develops more and more through each successive phase, till at length it is utterly rejected as God's witness here (Rev. iii. 16)—a solemn lesson for us all to-day!

Then again, Rom. xi. 22 and 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, show us that the professing church ends in apostasy and is "cut off." Even the warning given in Rev. ii. 5, as to the removal of the candlestick, avails nothing to stay the ruin. And if it could not *then*, it is not

likely it would do so *now*, at the end of its history. But Rev. iii. 19, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous, therefore, and repent" *does* apply now, and should appeal to us. This latter is said to "as many as I love." The love of Christ in this connection is most touching, and in keeping with the word found elsewhere, "The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

Next month we hope to say a little on the encouragements found, for faith, in the second epistle to Timothy and elsewhere.

A READER OF "WORDS OF HELP."

## Standing and State.

**M**ANY simple believers lack settled peace and assurance of salvation because they do not see the difference between these two things. Not that we want to contend for the mere words "standing" and "state"; but it is not easy to find suitable words to express what is meant, more plainly and clearly than these.

The believer's standing is IN CHRIST; this is unchanged and unchangeable. Let us remember what GOD SAYS, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1); and faith re-echoes the words "*no condemnation.*" How could there be condemnation for those who are before God in a risen Christ? Again, "As He [Christ] is, so are we in this world" (1 John iv. 17); what room for doubt or fear if we stand before God "as He is"? Then, as if to crown all, we read in Ephesians i. 6 that God has "made us accepted [taken us into favour] in the Beloved." Does God look upon His own beloved Son with perfect

delight and satisfaction? Surely He does. Well, He looks on the believer, as viewed in Him, with the same favour and complacency. Wondrous and ineffable grace!

And now as to our "state." By our "state" we mean our practical condition before God—our walk, our conduct, our acts, our thoughts. Alas, it is sometimes far below the level of what a Christian should be, is it not? But does this change or alter our acceptance in Christ? Certainly not. Even if God has to chasten us as His children, to use the rod, as He must necessarily do if we go on in an evil course, yet we are still His children. The relationship is not broken by our failures, though our communion with Him is broken and needs to be restored by self-judgment and confession.

Not that there is any excuse for the believer sinning and grieving the Spirit of God by whom he is sealed to the day of redemption—truly there is not. And indeed it is the very consciousness of the wonderful GRACE of God which causes the repentant one to feel all the more keenly that he has allowed that sin which it cost the sufferings of the blessed Son of God upon the cross to atone for, and that he has also allowed that evil nature to be active which He had "condemned" by His death.

But let us never forget that it is our privilege, as well as our responsibility, to walk consistently with the grace which has saved us, and to so order our path that our practical state may be in keeping with our high and holy standing before God as "in Christ." This is our unchangeable position before Him—accepted in His own beloved Son.

F. G. B.

## “Changed in a Moment.”

“We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,  
in a moment” (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52).

ONE moment here, the next with Thee in bliss,  
Oh, what a glorious prospect, Lord, is this!  
Changed in a moment, from the flesh set free,  
Caught up together with Thyself to be.

One moment here, where sin and grief abound,  
The next, uprising at the trumpet's sound;  
With all Thy saints to meet Thee in the air,  
Thy face to see, and Thine own image bear.

One moment here, amid the toil and strife,  
The next, rejoicing in the perfect life;  
Oh, what is sorrow, suffering, conflict, woe,  
Compared with all the bliss we then shall know!

One moment here, in weakness and in pain,  
The next, uniting in the joyful strain  
Of praise and blessing to the Lamb once slain,  
To Thee who worthy art o'er all to reign.

One moment here, perhaps in loneliness,  
The next with Thee in perfect blessedness;  
Yes, blessed Saviour, evermore with Thee,  
When we shall love and praise Thee perfectly.

E. L. W.

*Fragment.*—UNITY.—Popish unity attaches Christ to unity, and hence may and does legalize with His name every corruption and evil: Christian unity attaches unity to Christ and therefore gives it all the character of grace and truth that is in Him—gives it all His excellence.—J. N. D.

## The Good News.

**T**IDINGS which reach us from various parts of the world lead us to believe that the Spirit of God is working in the salvation of souls in many places. This is encouraging indeed.

But there is an aspect of the gospel which is perhaps somewhat overlooked, and which is referred to by a correspondent, from whose letter we quote, as follows:—

“I see more than ever the necessity of presenting Paul’s gospel, the ‘Gospel of God,’ which is concerning the Person of the Son. It embraces three great facts—His cross, His resurrection, and His coming again.

“The apostle, in writing to the young converts at Thessalonica, states how they had turned to God from idols ‘to serve the living and true God, and to *wait for His Son* from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivered us from the wrath to come.’ As I said before, if in our preaching these *three* great facts are not presented, it is not the gospel in its fulness, nor as Paul preached it.

“The second coming of the Lord is a great power in effecting conviction; but this fact has too often been relegated by us to *special occasions*, such as Lectures on the Lord’s Coming, etc., divorcing it from the Gospel of God, of which it forms a part.”

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In the Acts of the Apostles we have Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost, when about 3000 souls were converted; as well as his addresses on several other occasions. We have also Paul’s sermons at Antioch, at Athens, before the Jews, before king Agrippa, etc. What strikes one about these is, how admirably suited each was to the audience and to the circumstances of

the occasion. God guided His servants as to what they should say. For this reason, we believe that no one can lay down a formal rule as to what should be preached on any particular occasion.

At the same time we do well to take earnest heed to what our correspondent has said ; for a fuller presentation of the truth has the effect of establishing the soul, in giving us to see our complete deliverance, not only from the guilt of sin, but from its *power*, in virtue of the death and resurrection of Christ. And this is not all ; for since we have died *with* Christ and are risen “ *with* Him,” we are freed from bondage to sin, to the law and to the world.

The blessed hope of the coming of the Lord, as it was presented to the Thessalonians of old, is also found to be an immense help to awaken the sinner as well as to cheer the young Christian. It stimulates him in service, and sends him forth with the earnest desire filling his soul, that others, too, should be “ delivered from the wrath to come.” Besides this, it animates his whole life and being, by occupying the heart with a *heavenly* Saviour, who is not only the object of his affections, but his hope.

May all the Lord’s people be stirred up afresh to carry forth these blessed glad tidings, in all their fulness, to a lost world !

W. M. R.

## Short Meditations—2.

*The Night, the Dawn, and the Day (Psalm xxii.).*

PSALM xxii. describes the three phases of a symbolic night and day, embracing the night, the dawn and the day ; all being filled up with the person and work of our beloved Saviour. The first phase is the

night (verses 1-21); the second is the dawn (verses 21-24); the third is the full mid-day (verses 25-31).

In the first part we see Christ—the *holy* Man of Psalm xvi., the *righteous* Man of Psalm xvii.—forsaken by His God, by the holy God in whom He had trusted. The world is shrouded in the darkest shades of night (Matt. xxvii. 45); this Man, the perfect Man, is seen as the rejected One, and in outer darkness. Having taken the place of the humbled and defenceless One, He is overwhelmed with the most terrible suffering, so acute that His heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of His bowels, and that His utter humiliation is like even to the dust of death.

And yet, not even for an instant does His trust and confidence leave Him. “Deliver Me,” He cries, in the midst of His distress, “Deliver My soul from the sword”—from the sword of judgment unsheathed against Him by the hand of God Himself (Zech. xiii. 7). “Deliver My only one from the power of the dog”—from the company of brutal and violent men, without pity, without shame, who had risen up against Him. “Save Me from the lion’s mouth”—from Satan himself, who seeks to swallow Him up. Such is the picture of His expiatory sufferings. Only such an One—an infinite Being—could understand and fathom the depths of this abyss in all its horror.

Thy sufferings, O Jesus, Saviour, Lamb of God,  
 'Tis Thou alone, The Infinite, could sound;  
 Thy soul, then, bowed beneath the awful load,  
 Bore—and for us!—those sufferings so profound.

He dies, He reaches the extreme point of suffering, “the horns of the unicorns.” But His God answers Him; not in order to save Him *from* death, but *out of* the midst of death, in order to bring Him forth, in

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resurrection, fully and entirely out of death. Redemption is accomplished, the night is ended, the dawn has risen over the horizon (verses 21-24).

What a contrast! A wonderful panorama now unfolds itself before our eyes! The heavens are without cloud, of a clear freshness to which there is no parallel, of unmingled purity; the earth is lit up by the splendour of the dawn. "I will declare Thy name unto My brethren"—such are the heavens! The first-born of a heavenly family presents Himself with them *in heaven* before His God, who is their God; His Father, who is their Father. "In the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee"; He associates Himself with this family *on earth* to give voice to the song of deliverance which He alone knows in its full extent—He, the risen One from amongst the dead! His voice finds an echo in the heart and in the mouth of all His beloved ones.

And see, already the sun is rising (verses 25-31), a day without cloud, the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings! The earth is flooded with His glory as the bottom of the sea is with the waters which cover it. A new feast is celebrated. It is the feast of tabernacles, the only one which could be called a "solemn assembly," the feast of the eighth day, where are gathered the *great congregation* (Levit. xxiii. 36; Ps. xl. 9-10). His people recognize Him, the families of the nations bow down before Him. His praises ascend from earth to heaven throughout the ages!

And yet there is a thousand times more freshness in "the bright and morning star"—that star which brings in the *heavenly* glory and which speaks to us of *grace*, of the privileges that are ours as those caught up to meet the Lord in the air before the day of glory dawns—there is, I say, more freshness in it for the heart than

even in the full light of the millennial day—the triumph of *righteousness* which will reign in that day of glory over this now sin-cursed earth.

H. R. (*Vevey*).

## Adoption.

**T**HERE appears to be, amongst Christians generally, a good deal of confusion of mind in connection with this subject. The word translated “adoption” is only used five times in Scripture, and there is no one word which represents it in our language unless “sonship,” with, of course, the added thought of bringing one into that position.

The common principle of adoption is one with which we are all more or less familiar, and the meaning of the word, as given in Murray’s dictionary is, “The action of voluntarily taking into relationship, especially taking into sonship.” Yet there can be no doubt that the Scriptural use of the word “sonship” conveys a meaning far deeper and more in keeping with the position into which God in His ineffable grace brings the believer, than the word “adoption.” The latter has a coldness and formality about it which falls far short of that which grace confers.

Let us trace, in the New Testament, the use of the word rendered by our translators “adoption” (*huiothesia*). It occurs five times, viz., Rom. viii. 15, 23; ix. 4; Gal. iv. 5 (where it is translated “adoption of sons”); and Eph. i. 5 (where it is rendered “adoption of children”). What does the word really mean? It is a compound word and is made up of the noun *huios*, son, and the verb *tithemi*, to put, to constitute, to make.

It means, then, simply to make a son. But in divine

things everything the believer is said to be—whatever the relationship into which he is brought—ininitely surpasses and excels what such would be in natural things. In Rom. viii. 15, sonship is contrasted with the bondage in which we once were : *now*, as believers, we have received the spirit of sonship. It is the Holy Ghost, who indwells us, and characterizes the new position into which we are brought ; giving us also to know and enjoy this relationship and to cry “ Abba, Father.”

Then in Gal. iv. 6, because we are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying “ Abba, Father.” We are no longer in bondage, but, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, we are privileged, by the Holy Ghost, to give utterance to the cry, “ Abba, Father.”

It is remarkable, too, that this word of which we have been speaking, is only used by the Apostle Paul. The Apostle John uses another word in speaking of our relationship to God, namely, “ children ” (*teknoi*).\* This word, from *tikto*, to bring forth, has as its root-idea a *birth-tie*. We are brought into the family of God by birth, by being “ born again.” And so we read, “ As many as received Him (Christ), to them gave He the right to be children of God, to those who believe on His name ; who *have been born*, not of blood nor of flesh’s will, nor of man’s will, but of God ” (John i. 12, 13, New Trans.).

The only way, then, to get into the family of God is by new *birth*. And what a close and intimate relationship we have here !—it is a word that speaks

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\*John never uses the word “ sons ” in his Gospel or Epistles, although it is so translated in the A.V. in John i, 12 and 1 John iii, 1, 2. It should be “ children.” Paul uses both.

of grace, of nearness, of the intimacy proper to a *child*, and to a child of *God*!

Referring again to the word translated "sonship," an interesting remark has been made by a commentator to the effect that this word, first found in Gal. iv. 5, was probably formed by St. Paul himself: it is rarely used, if at all, by classical writers. And as believers, we wait for the consummation of our sonship, "the redemption of our body." Then, delivered from these bodies which now form the link with a groaning creation, we shall, in resurrection, enter fully into "the liberty of the glory of the children of God."

And now as *sons* before Thy face,  
With joyful steps the path we tread.  
Which leads us on to that blest place  
Prepared for us by Christ our Head.

Thou gav'st us, in eternal love,  
To Him to bring us home to Thee,  
Suited to Thine own thought above.  
As *sons* like Him, with Him to be.

J. P. (*Montreal*).

## State of the Assemblies of God's people—2.

**WE** now desire to say a little as to the encouragements for faith found in the second epistle to Timothy and elsewhere. This epistle gives us a striking picture of the ruined state of the professing church, and also of the complete and sufficient resources we have in God, "according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (chap. i. 9).

It is to be remarked in reference to the statement in chapter i. 15, "All they which are in Asia be turned away from me," that this shows—not the failure of

Paul's ministry indeed, but—*individual* failure, which led to that of the assembly also. And for this very reason, it appears, there is no exhortation to the assembly as such, to maintain its church state. But *individual* exhortation and encouragement is found all through the epistle, the faithfulness of Onesiphorus being first mentioned.

Then, chapter ii. 1, "Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus," is a great resource above the existing state of things. We have thus the grace that is in Christ Jesus—His *present* service on high; as one has put it in the hymn:—

"Sing without ceasing sing  
The Saviour's *present* grace."

Next, we have what the state of the individual servant should be, namely, "Take thy share in suffering as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (New Trans.). Here we have service in "suffering," and the one thus engaged in military service does not entangle himself with the affairs of this life. In the "athlete" (verse 5) we find *obedience*—he strives "lawfully"; and in the "husbandman" (verse 6) the *patience of hope*, he labours first, then waits to partake of the fruits. Then, in verse 8, "Remember Jesus Christ raised from among the dead," etc.—Timothy was to remember Jesus Christ *risen*, the true Servant. What an immense encouragement! And lastly, in verse 13, we read, "He (Christ) abideth faithful"; there are also many other resources throughout the epistle to sustain and help on "the servant of the Lord."

We would now draw attention to the following profitable remarks on this second epistle to Timothy:—  
"The 'promise of life in Christ Jesus' (verse 1) is the very starting-point of the epistle—what is livingly

(Continued on page 25.)

personal, not ecclesiastical. So as to the fulness of grace, as we have noticed (chap. i. 9); but, all through, *personal* responsibility is dwelt on; and hence, we are placed, not in the presence of privileged hopes, but of judgment, I mean even as Christians. For Onesiphorus, mercy is desired 'in that day.' Timothy is charged 'before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom.' So also as to the 'crown of righteousness.' "

Now *responsibility*, as well as *righteousness*, are referred to in this Scripture in connection with the Lord's "appearing"; whilst the "coming" of the Lord (which is our immediate hope—1 Thess. iv. 15–18) is referred to as the climax of *grace*—grace which reigns "through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. v. 21).

We must remember that, at the "appearing," or when we are "manifested at the judgment seat of Christ," the "things done in the body," namely, our whole course here in responsibility, will be fully taken account of. Those who have "tasted that the Lord is gracious," being delivered from the whole position and state in which they once were as men in the flesh, *would not have it otherwise.*

In conclusion; we need much to know the *superiority of grace over evil*, and to prove that "God is faithful"; and so, to "rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidences in the flesh" (Phil. iii.). Also, "simplicity as to the Christ" (2 Cor. xi. 2, New Trans. and note) is greatly needed now, when good and evil are not kept distinct, and are but imperfectly known; good being often mixed with evil, and thus mixed principles abound. But, what we have just referred to, "simplicity as to the Christ," gives spiritual intelligence and baffles the craft of the serpent.

Finally, "obedience," to which the apostle refers in Rom. xvi. 19, is doubtless found with many now, as it was with the saints at Rome, known to Paul, who says, "But yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil."

A READER OF "WORDS OF HELP."

### Antichristian Science.

**W**E make no apology for slightly changing the name, for so-called "Christian Science" is as antichristian as any religion could be.

"The discoverer and founder of Christian Science," as Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy called herself, was chiefly renowned in her youth for her ungovernable temper and frequent fits of hysteria. Her father said of her on one occasion, "The Bible says Mary Magdalene had seven devils, but our Mary has got ten!" When she grew up she became acquainted with P. P. Quimby, who advocated mental healing, and she was one of his most devoted pupils. She also claimed clairvoyant powers, and became a spiritualistic medium.

One can easily understand how a mind so susceptible to erratic and sentimental ideas, as well as metaphysical reasonings, became a suited instrument in the hands of Satan for the work he had for her to do.

To state some of the follies and evils of the system, is to refute them. For example—Mind is the only reality; the only existence is "Immortal Principle," which is variously defined as God, Spirit, Intelligence, Mind, Soul, Truth, etc. This theory compels her to deny a personal God. God is a mere thing, a principle, inseparable from, and non-existing apart from, the universe (*S. and H.*, 470, 477, 502).

But, in truth, the god of Christian Science is as far

removed from the true God as was Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, or Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites in Old Testament times.

As to Christ: the teaching is, that Jesus was only a man; not God manifested in flesh, and He did not really die (pages 44, 45, 473). Again, as "sin exists"—so we are told—"only as long as the material illusion exists," there is no place for the atonement. "Prayer to a personal God is a hindrance," it is "a misapprehension of the source and manner of all good."

A writer has truly remarked that, "If Christian Science beliefs were literally carried out by those who profess to hold them, they would never study the sciences, eat or drink, take medicine, or wash themselves. If this pseudo 'science' were universally believed and practised, it would mean the revolt of the human species against its physical existence and bring about wholesale suicide."

There are two classes of people to whom Christian Science specially appeals—those who are sick in body and who turn anywhere they can to get relief and help; and those who are sick in mind—persons of an erratic, unsatisfied and restless disposition. But, if alleged powers of healing were a guide to truth, the Church of Rome might very reasonably assert her claims, seeing the numerous miraculous cures which are alleged to take place at Lourdes and elsewhere. So might the vendors of quack medicines, who publish letters from persons who say they have been cured of all sorts of ills by these remedies.

But the Christian knows that God's Word is the only real test of truth. "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. viii. 20). And as surely as the prophet Micaiah revealed

the real secret concerning Ahab's fall (which the false prophets denied) when he said, "The Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets" (1 Kings xxii. 23), so surely Mrs. Eddy and her prophets and teachers have been under the power of a lying spirit also. The second epistle to the Thessalonians, chapter ii., shows us plainly that God, in His judicial dealing with Christendom which has not received the truth in the love of it, will send "a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." Solemn warning indeed! And there can be no question that we see in so-called Christian Science a dark foreshadowing of the total apostasy from true Christianity which will then mark that awful time.

F. G. B.

### "On this Fashion."

Mark ii. 12.

**I**N the narrative of the healing of the palsied man in Mark ii. we find that the Pharisees and Scribes who witnessed the miracle were so impressed with the manner of the Lord's acting that they exclaimed, "We have never seen it *on this fashion*."\*

There are many striking features in this miracle of our Lord's. Not the least of these is the marked earnestness of the friends of the helpless paralytic, who did not allow the multitude, or the over-crowded house to deter them from bringing their incurable fellow man under the notice of the gracious Healer and Saviour. The thrice told story of how they uncovered the roof and let him down in the midst before Jesus is familiar to every reader of the Bible.

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\* The word is usually translated "thus," but "on this fashion" expresses the meaning very well here. [ED.]

How many an anxious seeker after souls has been encouraged by the words, "When He (Jesus) saw *their* faith" [that is the faith of those who brought the man], He said, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." Their faith and determination to get him, in spite of the hindrances and difficulties, right under the notice of the Lord, earned its immediate reward.

Who amongst all that multitude had ever heard of a case of sickness being dealt with in such a fashion as this? What physician in Israel, or any other nation had so treated a hopeless paralytic?

But the religious leaders of Israel, ever ready to cavil, murmur at the Lord pronouncing forgiveness of sins. In ignorance of *Who* the One really was who wrought these miracles, they exclaim, "Who can forgive sins but God only?"

Jesus meets them in perfect wisdom and, without asserting His Godhead replies, "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (He saith unto the sick of the palsy) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house." Here we have a beautiful and striking illustration of the truth contained in Exod. xv. 26, "I am Jehovah that healeth thee."

But let us look a little deeper into "this fashion," which seemed so strange to them. It was, indeed, the inauguration of a new line of things. The One who was there had come from God to deal, not only with the effects of sin, such as sickness and death, but with sin itself, root and branch, by being "made sin." He came to deliver man from the guilt and power of sin, as from an oppressor who delighted to hold men in bondage without either the will or power to deliver themselves.

It might well be expected that now that Christ had come—the beloved Son of the Father—a measure of blessing would be known far fuller and deeper than in Old Testament times. *Then* forgiveness was obtained for a limited time—a day, a month, or even a year, as on the great day of atonement (Lev. xvi.), when the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy seat provided the ground of hope and mercy for another year.

But *now* Christ had come—we trace His path and see Him delivering individual sufferers from the effects of sin; and He was on His way to die as the Lamb of God, so that He might be the mercy seat, that through faith in His blood God might be just and the Justifier of all those who believe. We can also now see how God could righteously pass by the sins of all those who, in past ages, came in faith to Him. This righteousness is now made manifest and fully declared in the gospel in clear and ample terms, because based on the death and resurrection of Christ (Rom. iii. 24–26).

How precious to contemplate this full forgiveness resulting from the grace that led the Lord Jesus to thus humble Himself in obedience to death, even the death of the cross. Blessed contrast to all the race of the first Adam, which is ever ready to exalt itself, and even to boast in the gifts which God confers! “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name.”

But the height of the blessing and the completion of the story is only reached when we learn the purpose of God in relation to those so richly blessed in Christ, as we read in Rom. viii. 29, “For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

Well may this be said to be beyond all thought, as it has been expressed in the lines :—

“And is it so! I shall be like Thy Son,  
Is this the grace which He for me has won?  
Father of glory, thought beyond all thought,  
In glory, to His own blest likeness brought.”

Men dream of transformation into angelic forms, and such like, but where is the mind that ever conceived the total change from the condition described by God as “without strength,” “sinners,” and “ungodly,” to one of absolute conformity to Christ in glory? This “fashion,” if we may so call it, could only be brought about by Divine grace, and after God had sent forth His Son, in the fulness of time, to give effect to all the purposes of His own heart. When the Lord comes, this “body of humiliation” shall be changed into conformity to “His body of glory” (Phil. iii. 20, 21).

T. R.

## Questions and Answers.

*WHAT is the difference between the status and hopes of “the elect” in the Epistles (say Romans and Ephesians) and those named in Matt. xxiv. 22, for whose sake the tribulation will be shortened?*

\* \* \* \*

In the Epistles “the elect” (i.e., God’s elect) are those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, out of *all* nations, Jew or Gentile (Rom. viii. 33; Col. iii. 12; 1 Pet. i. 2, etc.). They include all true believers of this dispensation. They belong to the Church of God, they are not of the world as Christ is not of it. Their status and hopes are linked up with a glorified Christ, and their calling is essentially *heavenly*.

The “elect” referred to in Matt. xxiv. 22, on whose

behalf the tribulation will be shortened, are the elect of *Israel*. They are mentioned in Rom. ix. 27, Isa. x. 22, 23, and many other passages. The context in Matthew proves what we have said, because in the next verse the disciples are warned not to be deceived by false Christs, etc. Now these are just such as would be likely to deceive the Jews, who would be looking for the Messiah of Israel. The whole passage in Matthew refers to a future day when the Jews will be restored to their land in unbelief, and will fall under the power of Antichrist. The godly remnant, the elect, will, in that day, suffer much tribulation, until the Son of man appears for their deliverance. Their hopes are necessarily connected with blessing *on earth*, under the righteous rule of Christ, their Messiah.

### Scripture Notes and Gleanings.

“**A**T THAT DAY” (John xiv. 20 ; xvi. 23, 26). We find these words three times in the Gospel of John. It was the Holy Ghost’s “day,” the day when He would be come, a day which still continues. In the first of the three the Lord shows them that then they would know (1) that He was in the Father, that is, in the unity of the Divine nature, (2) that they were in Him before the Father, and (3) that He was in them down here before the world. In chapter xvi. 23 and 26 He shows them that although He would be gone, they would have the sweet and blessed privilege (the Holy Ghost being then come) of prayer to the Father pleading all the value of the Son’s name, for the Father Himself dearly loved them. Thus it is ours to know and experience the blessed intimacy of a Father’s love and solicitude, who bends His ear to hear our pleadings in the efficacious name of Jesus—and to know it by the *Holy Ghost*.

F. G. B.

## Revival.

**W**E hear much of revival work at the present time and we can be deeply thankful for it. Whatever instruments God may use, all true revival must be the work of the Spirit of God. Let us continue to pray earnestly for still deeper and wider blessing.

But there is one aspect of the question which it is well for us to consider seriously. We find frequent revivals in the book of Judges, and the one given us in the history of Gideon (chaps. vi.-viii.) will illustrate our point, as to which the following remarks, taken from a recent magazine, are instructive:—

“ ‘The Lord said unto Gideon . . . throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it ’ (chap. vi. 25). It is then that we find courage on the part of Gideon. Against whom was he to contend? Against the Midianites? No, but against Israel. Gideon demolishes the altar of Baal which his father had built: he does it by night, it is true, for he feared his father’s house and the people of the city. It needs more faith to reach the evil *within* than the evil *without*. For the people of the city, Gideon was the least in his father’s house, but he goes, overthrows the altar of Baal and takes away the evil from the midst of Israel in order that God may be able to be with Israel against Midian.”

For true revival and victory over the enemy there must be a right state *within*. Thus it was with Jacob when God said to him, “ Arise, go up to Bethel ”; he at once says to his household and to them that were with him, “ Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments.” So also with Israel in the warfare with the Philistines, Samuel says, “ If ye do return unto the Lord with all your

hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve Him only.”

We want revival and blessing, we want power and energy in service, we want victory over the enemy. Then let us begin at home, within, with the ‘idols,’ or objects which come in between our souls and God. Let us look to our households, our associations, and practical walk and ways. When we have done this we can go forward in the energy of faith, in believing prayer—not merely theorizing about what might be done in a dreamy kind of way, but laying ourselves out to do whatever little service the Lord has given us, counting on Him for blessing.

“No service in itself is small,  
None great, though earth it fill;  
But that is small, that seeks its own,  
And great, that seeks God’s will.

Then hold my hand, most gracious Lord,  
Guide all my goings still;  
And let this be my life’s one aim,  
To know and do Thy will.”

F. G. B.

## “The Knowledge of His Will.”

Colossians i. 9.

IT is a wonderful thing to think that it is our privilege to be filled with *the knowledge of God’s will*, and this in connection with His grace, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. It seems to the writer that the key to this beautiful letter, written by the Apostle Paul from his prison at Rome, is to be found in the 12th verse of the 4th chapter. There we find that faithful disciple and fellow-labourer of the Apostle,

Epaphras, a Colossian, whose heart is full of anxious interest, as his prayers are fervent, desiring that his brethren at Colosse might possess what he himself had acquired from fellowship with the Apostle upon his visit to Rome, and that they might stand firm in all the *will of God*.

This dear servant of the Lord had taken to Rome good tidings of the spiritual condition of his brethren at Colosse, so that the heart of the Apostle overflowed with joy, since hearing the good news, causing him to pour out his soul in prayer to God that they might be filled with "the *full* knowledge of God's will" (N.T.) in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. This would surely be the means of a worthy walk, well pleasing to the Lord, and it would produce fruit shown in every good work and in growth by the true knowledge of God.

This condition of soul in the believers at Colosse enabled the Apostle to put before them truth of an order he was not able to put before some other assemblies (see 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2). The truth that had found a lodging-place in the heart of Epaphras was, no doubt, in connection with the Person of Christ as the pre-eminent One, which is explained in a double character both as to Creation and as to the Church, in the first chapter of this epistle. Reconciliation is also stated in two ways; one as to *things* on earth and in heaven, and the other as to *persons* (verses 20 and 21). Then the ministry of the Apostle is referred to, first as to the gospel and next as to the Church, which is Christ's body.

The Apostle also brings out, doctrinally, the truth of the "mystery," which was to complete the word of God (chap. i. 25). The whole canon of Scripture is now perfect and complete, nothing more can be added to it. The mystery, in this epistle, is viewed somewhat

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differently from the way it is brought before us in the epistle to the Ephesians. Here, believers are viewed as upon earth, "Christ *in you, the hope of glory*" (verse 27). In Ephesians, we are seen in union with Him *in the glory*. We do not *hope* to be there, for we are seen as there already.

It was this truth of the mystery that found expression in the desire of Epaphras that his absent brethren might be filled with, and stand perfect and complete in, all *the will of God*. His earnest desire was that they should know more of the glory of Christ and of all that belonged to Him, not only as the Head of creation, but Head of His body, the Church, in resurrection. He who is to possess gloriously as Son, as one has said, everything that exists, for He created everything. All the vast system of this universe, those unknown worlds that trace their paths in the vast regions of space in divine order, to manifest the glory of a Creator-God, are the work of His hand, the divine Christ.

Dear reader, may it be our desire to be filled with the *full* knowledge of God's will, which is fully revealed in the Scriptures of truth. These should be our constant study and meditation.

J. P. (*Montreal*).

### Light from the Sanctuary.

**T**HE sanctuary is the place where God is made known, as well as the retreat He appointed of old, for a refuge, in certain emergencies. This accounts for the large place it had, and will yet have, in Israel's life and experiences as recorded in Scripture. The two Psalms lxiii. and lxxiii.—to go no further for the moment—provide us with striking instances of this:

the central object or keystone of both being the sanctuary.

As pointed out so beautifully in our November number, David, in Psalm lxxiii., looked around him "in the wilderness of Judah" and saw nothing but the desert, yet he was happy; but the writer of Psalm lxxiii. had the desert, so to speak, in his heart, and was most unhappy. To account for this great difference, we must look for the relative place the sanctuary had in the eyes of each. As to David—he wanders "in a dry and thirsty land where no water is," a place which was *not his home*, and which *could not produce anything to satisfy the longings of his soul*. Yet he vividly recalls a sight which would transmute even that wilderness and make him sing for very joy, could he but witness it once more; namely, "To see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary" (verse 2).

Is not this likewise the experience of every heart true to Christ in our day? *This world is not our home*. Its pleasures and interests lack the elements which can make us truly happy. For, as the effect of the cross of Christ and of our new position in Him in resurrection, we belong no more to this world than He did. Our home is above, for which reason we are designated "pilgrims and strangers" in Peter's epistles. Yet, while we live on the earth, there dwells in *our hearts* the knowledge that there exists one power which can transfigure the whole scene and fill us with joy and praise. That power is none other than Christ in glory.

"There all's unsullied light,  
Our hearts let in its rays;  
And heavenly light makes all things bright,  
Seen in that blissful gaze."

For—may we remark here for the sake of any who

have not yet grasped the fact—in so far as any and every spot or centre or house on this earth is concerned, not one exists which can be now called, on the authority of Scripture, either the house or the sanctuary of God. This is because the Christian's position is "in Christ" on high, and his place of worship, like his hopes and calling, are altogether heavenly (Heb. iii. 1). There was a house of God in the desert and in Zion, just as there will be one again in the day of the kingdom when Israel is restored; but in Christianity (that is during the present period of time between the rejection and the return in glory of the Messiah) this house is completely set aside, as well as the ritual or system of religion attached to it.

Not only is it helpful but essential that we should get a clear grasp of this remarkable truth, which is taught so fully in such epistles as Hebrews, Ephesians and Colossians. Without this we can never "rightly divide the word of truth." Some may not be aware that the secret of the great power and blessing which attended the study and ministry of the prophetic word in Dublin and in many other places a century ago was, mainly, the result of those engaged in it having first grasped this blessed fact of the believer's *heavenly* calling.

Although every *material* sanctuary on earth has been superseded for the time being, because of man's sin; the love and wisdom of God introduces, in its stead, Him who transcends everything—the blessed Person of His Son—as the Christian's food and joy and light, the centre of his gathering, the channel of his worship and the *consummation* of his hopes.

The following Scriptures are very clear as to this. He (Christ) shall be for a sanctuary (Isaiah viii. 14). Yet *will I be* to them as a little sanctuary, in the countries

where they shall come (Ezekiel xi. 16). Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, *there am I* in the midst of them (Matt. xviii. 20). Let us go forth therefore *unto Him* without the camp bearing His reproach (Heb. xiii. 13). For our conversation (or citizenship) is in heaven, from whence also *we look for the Saviour*, the Lord Jesus Christ (Phil. iii. 20).

Therefore, however dreary and desertlike the world may appear to the believer to-day, even as "the wilderness of Judah" did to David, yet having Christ before him as the object of his heart, and the subject of his testimony, it must follow that his experience will not fall short, at least, of David's in Psalm lxiii., "My lips shall praise Thee . . . I will bless Thee . . . my soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips. . . . In the shadow of Thy wings will I sing and rejoice. My soul followeth hard after Thee, Thy right hand upholdeth me."

When we turn to Psalm lxxiii. a vastly different sight is disclosed. Here is a soul who looks out on the world and sees it to be apparently a green and prosperous place, the very opposite of a wilderness. He beheld the wicked flourishing, the violent and ungodly growing rich and dying without pain, while to the righteous were dealt out copious draughts of disappointment and suffering. They were placed at a disadvantage, or thwarted at every turn, and had to content themselves with poverty, obscurity and toil. It was a sight that greatly plagued his envious heart. This is always the outcome when the believer measures things according to the natural conception of his own fickle mind, and is in great contrast to Psalms xxxvii. and lxiii.

But, at last, he too reaches the sanctuary and has to

say (verse 17), "Until I went into the sanctuary of God, then understood I their end." Here a change, as complete as it was sudden, took place. The scales dropped from his eyes, for, in the sanctuary, the will is silent and God is everything—all is seen in the light with God. Seeing everything thus in God's presence he is appalled at their deceptive, worthless and transitory character; also at his own folly and the blindness of his judgment. Proving it ever true that "in Thy light shall we see light" (Ps. xxxvi.) he now exclaims, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee and there is none upon earth beside Thee. . . . God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. . . . Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and after the glory, Thou wilt receive me." He so rises, in his vision, as to see that the believer's best portion, even in those days, was outside this world.

How true a picture this is of many a child of God in our own day! The tendency is on the increase to emulate the worldling, if not to envy him and his ways. And this always brings with it loss of tone as well as dishonour to the Saviour. But a sight of the glory of Christ's Person, displaces everything else as a source of attraction before the true Christian's eyes. "The world has nothing to propose that can attract the heart that is nourished with the perfection of Christ." Give me Christ in glory, let me gaze on Him and what the Father sets before me in Him, I can then rejoice and sing in spite of all that is untoward and adverse in the world; for in Him is cheer and comfort even in the darkest day. He has not left us to go to war at our own charges; for He has ascended on high to administer the riches of the glory for the blessing and strengthening of our feeble hearts; blessed for ever be His name!

However cheerless and trying our environment may

*(Continued on page 41.)*

be, these two Psalms teach us the secret of true happiness—how we may grow spiritually, and be full of God's praises. It is by abiding continually in the Lord Jesus, cleaving closely to Him and drawing on Him for our strength and joy. This and this alone can keep us in heart and walk separate from the course of this world, free from envy and discontent waiting and watching for His return.

W. M. R.

### Short Meditations—3.

*The Holy Spirit (Galatians v. 16-26).*

**I**F the present dispensation is the economy of grace, it may well be called also the economy of the Spirit. In fact this great truth, that the Holy Spirit was sent from heaven by an ascended Christ, overshadows every other which has taken place since the accomplishment of the work of the cross.

It is, however, a profoundly humiliating thing that there is no truth which is less recognized, both in theory and in practice, amongst the children of God. They pray for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit, thereby formally contradicting (however unconsciously) the fact that the Spirit of Truth has been given, since the Lord's ascension to the right hand of God, *to be with us for ever*. They ask for the Holy Spirit for each act of their Christian life, forgetting that their body is His temple, and virtually denying that He is in us in order to lead us into *all the truth*.

They replace, too, the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the assembly by human institutions which are its denial, and—what is still more serious—they ignore the presence of the Holy Spirit as the One who forms, *in*

*one body*, all the members of the body of Christ here below, so that there may be one body and one Spirit. Is it not the case that this immense lack makes itself felt everywhere in Christendom to-day ?

The presence of the Holy Spirit holds, nevertheless, the leading place in the testimony of God for our days (which so many Christians ignore or overlook) just as truly as justification by faith was a chief part of the testimony of the Reformation.

What power the possession of the Holy Spirit gives us ! What fruits it bears in us ! Into what liberty it introduces us—and that in contrast with what the flesh has to offer ! . . . And when, in divine grace, the change has taken place from our past life, by the gift of a new life, by faith in the blood of Christ, what a marvellous horizon opens before the delivered soul ! Truly it has then given up, once for all, every effort to improve the flesh. And it has found the divine power, not indeed to change the flesh, but to leave it where it is, in permanent and complete powerlessness ; so that the Christian, who has it still *in* him, and who will have it to the end, may not any longer practise the things that he would desire or that the flesh would wish for but that he may act in the power of the Spirit.

But, you will say, how comes it that he does, all the same, practise these things ? I reply : If he does so, he brings unhappiness upon himself. One day—it may be a long time after—the Spirit will lead him to say, like David, “I have sinned against the Lord.” Then God said, “The Lord also hath put away thy sin.” David could thus be purified from all iniquity. But the terrible consequences of his sin remained during all his life according to God’s governmental ways towards him ; “the sword shall never depart from thine house.”

Thenceforth this discipline, however bitter it might be, should bear blessed fruits during the king's long career.

How much happier it is when these fruits are borne spontaneously (Gal. v. 22), though it is happy also when they are produced through the daily care of the Father who purges the branches that they may bear more fruit. The "fruit of the Spirit" is a wonderful fruit, for the Spirit does not produce any but that which is excellent.

The first is *love*. All the others depend upon it, "The love of God is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us." How we should like to expatiate on the fruits of the Spirit! but shall we not do better to meditate upon them each one for himself, in a spirit of true humiliation? It is sufficient for me to say here that three of these fruits—love, joy, peace, are in relation to *God*: five—longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, relate to *men*; and, finally, one only—temperance—relates to *ourselves*.

And now, in what liberty the Holy Spirit sets us (2 Cor. iii. 17); for our *walk* (verse 16), and the *life* which directs it (verse 25); then for our *conduct* (verse 18)! There is no law which sets itself against walking in the Spirit; "against such there is no law."

Such is the law of the Spirit, the perfect law of liberty! Everything in it is good, beautiful, and worthy of Christ! Ah! let us only believe that this power of the Spirit is *ours*! Can there be any unbelief more sad than to doubt the *gift of God*!

H. R. (Vevey).

## The Deity of Christ—1.

**I**N view of the infidel spirit of the age, which questions everything and believes but little, the true Deity of our Lord is a subject of immense importance. Every other truth in Christianity hangs upon it and must stand or fall with it. The whole superstructure of the gospel is founded thereon.

For this very reason, as we might expect, it is the special aim of Satan to invalidate or undermine that truth. Whatever may be the differences between false religious systems, such as Unitarianism, Millennial Dawnism, Christian Science, etc., they all agree in this, that they are unsound as to the Person of Christ—His true Deity, and His holy humanity. And not only may we mention these systems, but the articles one reads by university professors and religious teachers, some of whom occupy pulpits in our land, contain doctrines and statements wholly incompatible with the truth of the Person of Christ—God and man in one person—and what is due to Him as such.

Once this truth is weakened or given up, every other truth sooner or later goes with it. Take, for example, the truth of the inspiration and authority of Scripture, which is so much called in question now. It is undeniable that our Lord fully accredited and placed His seal upon the Old Testament, such as we have it now, both before and after His resurrection. Those very Scriptures, the reliability of which the critics endeavour to shake, were acknowledged by Him as the veritable Word of God—a word by which He met Satan at the start of His ministry, by which He lived and acted, which *must* be fulfilled in every detail even at the solemn hour of the cross, and out of which He

instructed His disciples after He rose from the dead. We repeat the statement already made—the truth of Christ's Person and the truth of the Old Testament—indeed, we may say of the whole Bible—stand or fall together.

When Isaiah saw that wonderful vision of Jehovah sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, His train filling the temple, and the seraphims veiling their faces and crying, “Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory”—who, think you, reader, was this? We have New Testament authority for saying it was Christ; as we read in John xii., “These things said Esaias, when he saw *His* glory, and spake of *Him*.”

Yet though He, the living Christ, had done so many miracles before them, they believed not on Him: shall we, then, be surprised that men to-day do not believe on Him either, and endeavour to derogate from the truth of His Person? No: it arises, at bottom, from the alienation and hostility to God of the heart of fallen man, helped on by the power of Satan.

The prophet Micah, too, speaks of “the judge of Israel” who was smitten with a rod upon the cheek, and adds, in a remarkable parenthesis (chap. v. 2), “But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah . . . out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”

This was the verse quoted by the chief priests and scribes in reply to Herod's inquiry as to where Christ should be born (Matt. ii. 6). Though filled with malice and unbelief, they well knew the import of that Scripture, and rightly interpreted it. But what does the passage prove? It proves that the child born

there was indeed the Eternal, the One whose goings forth were from of old, from everlasting. And as we read down the chapter we see that this One would be the peace in the coming day when that terrible enemy "the Assyrian" should come into the land (verse 6); when he should overflow and fill the breadth of Immanuel's land (Isa. viii. 8).

Nothing is more remarkable than the way in which this great subject of the Godhead glory and divine attributes of the Christ, the Messiah of Israel, are brought out in Scripture—not as a theological dogma, but as we might say naturally, and in its suited place. We see an illustration of this in the very connection we are now speaking of. Who could withstand this mighty Power called "the Assyrian," breaking the yoke of his burden and the rod of the oppressor?

Hear the answer given in the majestic language of the prophet Isaiah, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever."

Zechariah too, in speaking of the One who was "wounded in the house of His friends," goes on to say that Jehovah's sword awoke against Him Who, though smitten with that sword, was none less than "the man, my fellow" (chap. xiii. 7). Christ was indeed a man, truly and really born in this world, but with a nature holy and unfainted by sin; yet He was none less than "Jehovah's fellow," His co-equal.

We might refer to numberless Old Testament passages in support of the truth we have been dwelling upon, but space forbids our going into further detail: next month we hope to touch upon the testimony of the New Testament to this same foundation truth.

F. G. B.

## Scripture Notes and Gleanings.

OUR HOPES.—I rejoice in the thought that every setting sun is bringing us nearer and nearer to a world where *suns will never set*—where we shall walk together for ever in an atmosphere of light and glory—where all the desires, longings, and hopes of our hearts *will be fully met!* How blessed to feel that we have SUCH A HOPE! How wonderful, that while the world around us is following after *shadows*, and walking in a *vain show*, we *know* and love the truth! That ours are hopes which will not, cannot deceive. SIR E. D.

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PAUL AS PREACHER.—“And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power” (1 Cor. ii. 3-4). This is what the man used of God, doubtless more than any other, says about his preaching. There was no attempt at eloquence, no parade of the remarkable gifts God had given him, nothing answering to the prefixes and suffixes—the D.D.’s, M.A.’s, and numerous others—which are so common to-day. But his very “weakness” was his strength, because it cast him over entirely on the power of God, by His Spirit.

Surely we need to pray the prayer, "Lord, keep us humble, dependent on Thee, empty vessels fit to be taken up and used by the Holy Spirit in whatever little bit of service thou hast given us to do. Amen."

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"THEIR SINS AND INIQUITIES WILL I REMEMBER NO MORE" (Heb. x. 17).—The will of God is the *source* of the work; Christ, the Son of God, accomplished it; the Holy Ghost bears witness to us of it. And here the *application* to the people, called by grace and spared, is in consequence fully set forth, not merely the fulfilment of the work. The Holy Ghost bears witness to us, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

Blessed position! The certainty that God will *never* remember our sins and iniquities is founded on the steadfast will of God, on the perfect offering of Christ, now consequently seated at the right hand of God, and on the true testimony of the Holy Ghost. It is a matter of *faith* that God will *never* remember our sins.

J. N. D.

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LORD, speak to me, that I may speak  
 In living echoes, of Thy grace;  
 As Thou hast sought, so let me seek  
 The lost, the erring, of our race.

Oh, use me, Lord, use even me,  
 Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where;  
 Until Thy blessed face I see,  
 Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy glory share.

## “Where is the Wise?”

**W**ERE we to be influenced by the changing ideas and theories now put forward by men of learning, many of them occupying leading positions in the churches, we should be like a man floundering in a morass without one inch of solid ground to place his foot upon. But God, in His word, has fully forewarned us, so that we should not be surprised or moved away from the truth by the rapid growth of the apostasy and the spirit of infidelity on every hand.

It is all the more solemn and serious in view of the light and truth which God gave afresh from His word within the last century or so. Amongst the blessed truths then recovered we may mention the place and calling of the Church of God, the present hope of the coming of the Lord, and a better understanding of the gospel bringing the knowledge of a complete and accomplished redemption, besides many others.

Thus God's purpose was that Christ Himself should have His rightful place in the hearts and souls of His people, and that His glory should be maintained as the central sun, the light, warmth and vitality of all truth. Indeed it was for this very purpose that the Holy Ghost came at Pentecost; “He shall glorify Me,” saith the Lord, and “He will guide you into all the truth.” What we need is, to “hold fast” that which God has given.

But the dark shadows of the increasing apostasy stand out in marked and solemn contrast to the light which Christendom has refused. Hardly a week passes without the issue from the press of some fresh semi-infidel literature or so-called “higher critical” attacks

on the truth. And most of these *new* works issue from the pens of accredited religious teachers of distinction in Christendom.

But when we take God's word as our sure and unerring guide, we find that He has written "folly" on all man's boasted wisdom. "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (1 Cor. i. 20). Learning is all very good and useful in its place, but it must be kept in complete subjection to God and His word.

Moreover, Christ is the true test of all. Christ crucified was, to the religious Jews, a "stumbling block"; and to the learned Greeks, "foolishness"; but to those who are called of God, the "power of God and the wisdom of God." Just so it is to-day: God will not allow that any flesh should glory in His presence. Hence the great, the learned, the dignitaries on whom men place so much reliance, depending on their own wisdom and learning, are stumbled and in complete spiritual darkness.

We see fresh proofs of this every day before our eyes. The "natural man" neither "receives" nor "knows" the things of God; he has not the capacity to do so, because they are "spiritually discerned." Those things are "made known," "communicated" and "received," not by human learning and cleverness, but "by the Holy Ghost." Hence the simple Christian, who depends entirely on God and the teaching of the Holy Spirit by the inspired Word, has ample resources to rely upon, no matter how serious the general departure from the faith may be.

F. G. B.

## Short Meditations—4.

### “His Promise.”

‘The Lord is not slack concerning His promise.’ (2 Peter, iii. 9).

**W**HAT is this promise? On the one hand it is the promise of His coming (of the *Parousia*—verse 4); on the other, it is that of “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (verse 13). It is not a promise of judgment but of unmingled and eternal blessing.

Now the reason why the Lord exercises patience, as large and as broad as His own heart, is because He is “longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (verse 9). This patience towards the world will never cease until it has reached its utmost limits. It is not we, it is the Lord Himself who is the judge when the moment of His patience should come to an end, but that moment will certainly come, “the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”

Let us, then, accustom ourselves to reckon, with the Lord, “a thousand years as one day,” when it is a question of His patience.

But we also need patience when it is a question of the day of His coming for us to take us to be with Himself, together with His beloved church, complete and entire. Let us accustom ourselves, in that case also, to wait in patience as Christ Himself waits. We do not know the moment of His coming, but we know the truth of His word, “I come quickly.” This should lead us to live *individually* as servants, constantly occupied in His service whilst waiting; with girded loins and burning lamps, like men who wait for their Lord.

But what a blessing we find also in *collective* waiting,

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in the attitude of the bride! Are we sufficiently conversant with this waiting attitude, in which the accomplishment of service is not so much in question. but in which it is only a question of *love*? Are we, I say, as conversant as we ought to be with this aspect of the matter, where the power and spring of waiting is found in the affections of the heart, by the Spirit, deeply conscious of the love of Christ; and giving to Him, in answer to His word, "Surely, I come quickly," the unreserved answer of our hearts, "Even so, Come, Lord Jesus"?

The Lord Jesus is Himself our true example of "patient waiting." As man He said, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark xiii. 32). As God, He knows all things; as Son of God, *become man*, He awaits the Father's will. He speaks to us in Rev. iii. 10 of His "patient waiting," praising His beloved ones for having kept it. We are called to the same patience as Himself, and the word is what encourages us, "Thou hast kept the word of My patience."

And, in truth, there is, in His heart, a far greater sensibility of love towards His church, than there is in ours for Him. Has He not been willing even to die under the judgment of God in order to possess His church? And is not this a powerful motive to hasten His coming so as to have His beloved with Himself, the fruit of the travail of His soul, and in order to celebrate His union with her? Yet He waits still, waits patiently, until the moment when the Father wills He should come.

Can the Lord express His satisfaction with *us*, as He did with the church at Philadelphia, that they had done as He did? Is *our* desire, as the bride, that which is

His also? Are *we*, in this respect, true Philadelphians? Alas, how often it is merely a desire to get away from the troubles of this world, and not to have to pass through death; or perhaps our thoughts do not go beyond being with Him in heaven. Has our desire *His person* for its object? Is it actuated by the thought of seeing Him and being like Him for ever? Ah, may our desires rise, without any reserve, to the moment of our reunion with the Lord!

Let us awake from our sleep! His coming draws nigh. The mystery of iniquity is being developed increasingly. "How long?" says the Psalmist. We know not; but we know one thing: our salvation is nearer than when we believed; the night is far spent and the day is at hand. Let us put on the Lord Jesus Christ and not make provision for the flesh to obey it in the lusts thereof.

H. R. (*Vevey*).

### "The Spirit, the Water, and the Blood."

(1 John v. 8.)

**T**HESSE three divine realities are in agreement concerning the doctrine of eternal life—the life that is in the Son of God. "They that bear witness are three, the Spirit, the water, and the blood" (New Trans.). The testimony of God is the testimony concerning His Son, in whom we have eternal life. This blessed Person is Jesus Christ, who came by water and blood, not by water only, but by water and blood, and it is the Spirit of truth that bears witness to the fact.

The author of this epistle stood by, when the brutal act of the soldier, in piercing the Saviour's side, took place before his eyes. He saw for himself what he has been able to record, the flowing forth of blood and

water (John xix. 34). The water, in its cleansing power, is figurative of the Word of God ; and the blood is needed to expiate our sins. The reason the Evangelist gives for writing these things is, that we might have the knowledge that we possess eternal life.

The Lord would have us know and enjoy the comfort of what His death has done for us ; “ Hereby we have known love, because He laid down His life for us ; and we ought, for the brethren, to lay down our lives ” (1 John iii. 16, New Trans.).

This, then, is the measure of the love that we should bear to one another. The blessed Lord has, in laying down His life, given us the example.

How greatly in advance is this of what we get in the law, where a man was told to love his neighbour as himself ; and even if he went so far, he went no farther. Take the case of Jonathan in 1 Sam. xviii. 1-4, where we read that he *loved David as his own soul*. That is as far as he went. It is true he stripped himself of much that was of value to him, but he did not give *himself*, but remained in the court of king Saul and was slain with his father (2 Sam. i. 4).

The blessed Lord gave His disciples a new commandment (John xiii. 34), “ A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another ; *as I have loved you*, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.” His love to us should be the measure of our love to one another. As another has said, referring to this passage of Scripture, His love had been like a strong central stake, which held up all the poles that met around it. He had been the bond of their union ; now, this same love in their hearts should bind them together, as poles that supported each other when the

central support should be taken away. And again, it is here, in our love to one another, we imitate the act of our Lord by washing one another's feet. If there should be some brother against whom we have taken up a breath of accusation, which we have whispered about to his detriment, let us fashion some kind thought in our heart towards him, and arm the mind with power to bear and forbear in love. Or there may be a brother or sister whose ways annoy us so that we avoid them. It is only as "dear children" that we can walk in love (Ephes. v. 1).

The love of God is manifested in the gift of Christ, to give us life and to make propitiation. "Herein is love, not that we loved God (as under law we were bound to do), but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

We have, then, before us, the manifestation of love in giving eternal life, and the light too in which we walk. In the Epistle of John the practical effect of this life is shown in us, it is the knowledge of the Father, and its immediate effect also is fellowship with the Father and with the Son. We have also the threefold unimpeachable witnesses to the truth before us as in the heading of this paper, "The Spirit, the water, and the blood."

J. P. (*Montreal*).

## Power.

"God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God" (Ps. lxxii. 11).

**T**HIS is a very comforting and strengthening thought for the believer, who, at times, is weighed down by the tribulations he is passing through. And the Lord Jesus before His ascension repeats this assurance to His disciples, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." Twice in this Psalm David speaks of

God as his defence; he calls Him also his salvation, expectation, glory, and strength. Human power has its limitations, and when the believer considers only the number and strength of the enemies that are round about him, he may well have misgivings as to the issue of the conflict in which he is engaged. The Apostle tells us (Eph. vi. 12), "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood. but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness [or wicked spirits] in high places." Still there can be no doubt of the outcome, because of the power, God's power, who holds *everything* in His hand (see Daniel v. 23. "the God *in whose hand thy breath is*"). and also because "greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world."

The pressure brought on God's beloved servant Job by the enemy, was more terrible than anything we have been called upon to endure: but in this wonderful narrative the heavens are opened to us to see that all the circumstances of earthly affliction are under the control of Him who "worketh all things according to the counsel of His own will," for His own glory, and for the believer's blessing. The *patient* endurance of trials is co-operation with God in the refining process (Mal. iii. 3), and the end of it will be double blessing. "Power belongeth unto God, *unto Thee also, O Lord, belongeth mercy*; for Thou renderest unto every man according to his work."

There seems to be much food for the soul in considering the way in which the blessed God exercises His power, the means He uses, and the widespread blessing that ensues like the enlarging circles after a stone is cast into a lake. As we have referred to Job and his trials, let us consider briefly whether his sufferings were not,

(Continued on page 57.)

so to speak, but an opening of the doors of his life into the enlargement of soul that humility always brings in its train : “ Before honour is humility ” (Prov. xv. 33, God’s work—xviii. 12, man’s work !).

Job’s wealth and honour and the love and respect shown to him are detailed in the 1st and 2nd chapters of the narrative ; and in the 29th, 30th and 31st chapters he makes them the ground of his righteousness and of his justification ! But, dear reader, between those chapters there has been an unveiling of the secrets of the heart, making manifest what the beloved patriarch had attained to and what he lacked.

Job could say, “ How should man be just with God ? ” (chap. ix. 2) ; again, “ He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease ” (chap. xii. 5). Then as to his friends, the mockers, “ They have gaped upon me with their moath, they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully ” (chap. xvi. 10). But, he would hold fast *his* righteousness ; he would not let it go (chap. xxvii. 6). Can we wonder, then, that in chapter xxxi. there should be a full recital of what is sufficient to call forth praise from his fellow-men, and place the crown on *his* head. But all this moral excellēce could not give peace, nor explain why God’s power had been exerted to bring Job low, when the natural heart would say he should have been exalted.

*But there is the place to which God would bring His creatures !* Job, I think, expresses it when he exclaims, “ I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear ; but now mine eye seeth Thee ; wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.” We may have had many useful thoughts, many good works, much head knowledge, but all apart from God, all only tending to

feed the pride of nature (and generally the selfishness) of the human heart. All this, too, is self-occupation. But when we look at our works, thoughts, knowledge, in God's presence, we find that the only place suited to us is on our faces, and we are led to cry with the prophet, "Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips . . . for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isaiah vi. 5). The power of God must humble us in the dust, before that power can raise us up and fit us for His service.

Dear reader, has the "live coal" from off the altar been put upon your lips; is the fire of affliction purging away your dross, so that if it should please the Lord to make you a vessel of intercession and of testimony; and, standing thus in His presence, you could say, "Behold now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, *which am but dust and ashes*" (Genesis xviii. 27). This is the only state of soul that will bring glory to God, and in view of which He can use His mighty power to accomplish His purposes through the vessels which He has made. Listen to what one of the workmen has to say: "And now, O Lord, my God, Thou hast made Thy servant king instead of David my father: *and I am but a little child*. I know not how to go out or come in. . . . Give therefore to Thy servant an understanding heart that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this Thy so great a people?" (1 Kings iii. 7, 9).

Thus, as we have seen, this power of God must be exerted to cast down imaginations and every high thing which *exalteth itself* against God. Then will the flood-gates of blessing be opened, and the man of God, the representative of His grace and truth and power, go forth to bless his fellow-men in ministry, in worship,

and in testimony (Job xlii. 7-17). "And the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. . . . So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning. . . . After this Job lived an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations."

"And after this"—after what? "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy" (James v. 11). After the 140 added years of his life, and the four thousand years following his departure from the scenes of trial and triumph, he is last seen in the Lord's company, waiting for the latter day, when He shall stand upon the earth! (chap. xix. 25).

H. B. W. (*New York*).

## The Deity of Christ—2.

**L**AST month we took up briefly the testimony of the Old Testament to this fundamental truth, and we now turn to the witness of the New Testament; remembering at the same time that our remarks must be brief.

In the very first chapter of the New Testament we have the Virgin's Son, named "Emmanuel, God with us." The name as given in a dream to Joseph also was "Jesus," who would "save *His* people from their sins." Though born in such lowly circumstances, yet, in the vision given to Joseph, the people are claimed to be His (Messiah's) people. Thus we have the double testimony—Jehovah, the Saviour; Emmanuel, God with us.

Mark—the gospel of His active service in this world—begins with, "Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Luke—the gospel which specially presents to us the man Christ

Jesus—begins with the titles spoken by the angel, “Son of [the] Highest” (verse 32) and “Son of God” (verse 35).

But John was the special instrument fitted of God, as the last of the inspired writers, to safeguard the personal glory of the Lord Jesus against the attacks of the Gnostics and other tools of Satan in that day. He begins with a statement so complete that there is no evading its force. As concerning the One designated “the Word”—not only was He “with God” as a distinct person, but He “was God.” Absolute Deity is predicated of Him; and when creation is introduced in verse 3, it simply, so to speak, bows obeisance to Him, and is then dismissed in a few brief words ascribing that creatorial act to Him in the most unreserved way.

In chapter v. we find that the Jews sought to kill the Lord because He not only broke the sabbath (as they said) but said also that God was His own Father, making Himself equal with God. The Lord does not at all deny that He meant this equality, but accepts the challenge, and goes on to say that, though He does nothing independently of the Father, He does whatsoever the Father does and in like manner. The Father raises up the dead and quickens; so also the Son quickens *whom He will*. But He is alone in judging, for all judgment is committed to Him as Son of man, and *all* must honour the Son as they honour the Father. Could any testimony to the truth of Christ’s Person be more complete and conclusive?

Passing on to chapter viii., we have the Lord’s answer to Jewish unbelief, which, as ever, stumbled over what He said. Not able to look beyond His comparative youth as a man, they inquire how He had seen Abraham. The answer was indeed a good confession, “Before

Abraham was [or came into being), I am.” He does not say “I was,” but takes the place of the Eternal, the self-existing One, the same who appeared to Moses in the bush, “I AM.”

But these truths are not brought out in the gospel simply as doctrinal statements: rather are they given in connection with some particular object the Lord has in view. Take chapter x. 30, “I and My Father are one.” Here it is in connection with the security of the sheep—no one could pluck them from His hand and from the Father’s hand; and then, as if to exclude all possibility that they could ever perish, He added, “I and My Father are one.” What an emphatic assertion of His equality with the Father; provoking, as it did, the murderous animosity of the Jews! It is a complete answer to all cavil, and means, as another has remarked, “one divine nature and essence.”

Again, we may take, as an illustration of what we have already observed, the words in chapter xvi. 15, “All things that the Father hath are Mine.” The key to these three chapters (xiv.–xvi.) is to be found in the words at the beginning of chapter xiii., “Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.” All that follows, and His provision for them when He would be gone to the Father, is the outcome and expression of *that love*.

This consideration sheds its light on the words just quoted, “All things that the Father hath are Mine,” and that, too, in connection with the blessed office of the Holy Ghost to take of the things of a glorified Christ and make them known to us. But who could say such words but He, the Son of the Father, His co-equal? Yet the object here is, to show that all that links itself up with the divine glory of His person as the Son

(truly man withal) is available for the comfort, help, and sustainment of "His own," the loved objects of His heart, the gift of the Father to Him. What a combination of divine glory and infinite grace!

We shall close this month's article with a brief reference to chapter xvii. of our gospel, in connection with the end of John's epistle. In the former, we have it stated of *the Father* that He is "the only true God," in contrast with the gods many and lords many of the heathen. In the epistle, we have the same words—"true God"—applied to *the Son*, the One in whom we are, and who is also eternal life. But, as has been remarked by others, in the epistle of Jchn, God and Christ are so united in the apostle's mind, that he frequently passes from speaking of the one to speaking of the other almost in the same sentence. No words could affirm the Lord's Deity more plainly than these, "the true (*alēthinos*) God." F. G. B.

### Supreme Authority.

**I**N the government of the world, there are rulers and authorities established by God over the nations, peoples, etc. But, more or less in all ages, men have been restless under restraint, and sought to set up their own wills and forms of authority. Thus, what is now called "Democracy" has developed, and still later, nations, choosing their own rulers according to the idea popularly known as "Self-determination," exclude God's authority and set up man's will as the dominant thing.

Self-will has reached its acme before our eyes, and has culminated in rebellion against God and His authority. And this self-will will yet set itself up, in the person of the Antichrist, to oppose God's Christ. But, after all,

self-will, or self-determination, only leads to anarchy and confusion, and men want some dominant will to take control. In that coming day, when Western Europe will be ruled by the Roman beast (Rev. xiii. 1-10 ; Dan. vii. 7-28), with the Antichrist as his representative in Jerusalem, all "Self-determination" will be put down, leaving to the ten kingdoms which compose the Empire nothing more than the semblance of power. Such will be the course of things in the world.

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Now what has happened in the professing church? Do we not see the same principles at work? God gave His Son; He gave to the church the gift of the Holy Spirit to dwell both in the church and the individual believer. It is the office of the Holy Ghost to lead us into all truth, and His very presence here is the proof to the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (John xvi. 8-11).

And God has given also to the church the written Word as the vehicle of the expression of His divine will. The very words which the Lord spoke were, as He says Himself, spirit and life: they were the Father's words. Now what is the place to which the church is called? It is surely to be subject to Christ, to do *His* will and obey *His* word. Yet every man seems bent on doing his own will and what is right in his own eyes. Where is the *obedience* which God claims from His children? "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

Such is the tendency of our times. There is, in the church, the same toleration of evil and the evil principle of self-will as there is in the world. It is not a question of obedience to a merely *human* code of rules and ordinances, but of obedience to the Lord, obedience to God

and His word. Let us remember what our blessed Lord Himself says, "I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." "I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me" (John vi. 38; v. 30). And if our only motive is to do God's will, this will greatly help towards the collective keeping of the "unity of the Spirit" of which the apostle speaks in Eph. iv. 3.

But God's Christ shall surely have the pre-eminence, all things in heaven and on earth being headed up in Him. And He shall be set over all things. May He have His place of pre-eminence in our hearts and affections *now*! God has even now made His saints more than conquerors through Him that loved us. In the end all the universe shall bow the knee in submission to His sovereign will, and His dominion shall never end. What a hope to cheer God's people in these days of apostasy! There will be no failure in the carrying out of God's purposes, and the Lord shall be set over all things as the Victor, God's Lamb who accomplished redemption on the cross, the centre and sun of all the glory of Immanuel's land.

*(Thoughts suggested by a note by H. T. Kenilworth, Canada.)*

"LORD, let me wait for Thee alone,  
My life be only this,  
To serve Thee here on earth unknown,  
Then share Thy heavenly bliss."

\* \* \* \* \*

"AND if our fellowship below,  
In Jesus is so sweet;  
What heights of rapture shall we know,  
When round *Himself* we meet?"

## Proving God.

(Malachi iii. 10.)

**I**N one sense God blames His people for proving Him ; when it is done in unbelief (see Deut. xxxiii. 8 ; Ps. xcv. 9). But, in another sense, He encourages them to prove Him. How wonderful His grace, which is ever ready to respond to any turning of the heart to Him !

The state of the professing people of God in the days of Malachi, the last of the Old Testament prophets, was bad indeed. What characterized them was indifference to Jehovah's claims, hardness of heart, unbelief, and even open infidelity. In some respects their condition answered to that of the last of the seven churches (Rev. iii. 14-22), Laodicea.

But even then Jehovah says, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. iii. 10).

Just think of God saying those words, "Prove Me!" It was as much as to say, "If you answer to My claims and respond, practically, to all I have done for you, there is no limit to the blessing with which I will bless you." What!—in the days of Malachi? Yes, even in such days as those.

Truly God might have said, "I will give you a blessing"; but how far His *grace* surpasses all our thoughts! He says, "I will open the windows of heaven and pour out such a blessing that there will not be room to receive it."

And how is it with ourselves—with the church of God—now at the close of the present dispensation?

Do *we* answer to the boundless grace of God which has blessed us so richly in Christ Jesus? Or are we so selfish and ungrateful as to take all the blessings He has given and forget the Blesser?

Oh, that Christians to-day responded better to the claims of Christ! Not indeed claims of law or obligation, but claims of love, of grace: claims which appeal to the inmost heart and soul of the redeemed. And we can surely count on the truth of His promise, that if we do so He will pour out a blessing, without stint and without limit.

And even if the mass of the professing people of God fail to answer to His claims, as they did in the days of Malachi, there is always blessed encouragement for the individual and for the remnant. Those who "fear His name," and "think upon His name," are known to Him and precious in His sight. God always encourages faith and faithfulness, no matter how dark the day may be.

### Luke xxiv.—Its Seven Opened Objects.

THE last chapter of Luke is remarkable in several ways. It records the final words of our Lord from the morning of His resurrection to His ascension, especially His walk with His disciples to Emmaus. But in addition to this, careful readers of the chapter must notice the many things which are opened up to us in it; and our present object is, to notice these very briefly, leaving it to the reader to fill in the details by further study.

(1) THE OPENED DAY (verse 1). The "mornings" of creation, when God made the worlds by His power, were remarkable; but this "first day of the week" and this

particular “ morning ”—“ very early in the morning ”—stand alone in the records of time and of eternity. Its sun shone for the first time upon Jesus as the risen Man, the One who had acquired new glories, in a new position, the leader of a new order of men, of whom He Himself was, in resurrection, the pattern, being Head of the new creation.

(2) THE OPENED GRAVE (verses 2, 3). The women “ *found the stone* rolled away from the sepulchre, and they entered in, and *found not the body* of the Lord Jesus.” He was risen—He had been “ raised from the dead by the glory of the Father ” (Rom. vi. 4). The empty tomb declares Him to be the Son of God with power (Rom. i. 4). Christ’s opened grave is the proof of His victory over death, over sin, over Satan; the witness also that God has committed into His hands the judgment of the world which once judged Him falsely at the cross. It is, moreover, the pledge that the same power which raised Him from the dead as the “ first fruits ” of the harvest, will also empty all the graves where His people lie; when they will be translated into the same glory, and bear the image of the living Christ—the “ heavenly One.”

(3) THE OPENED EYES (verse 31). Do we not ourselves sometimes prove that it is quite possible to feel things keenly, even things that concern the Lord, and be cast down and troubled as these two disciples were? And may not our eyes be shut to the fact that the Lord has drawn near, that He walks with us and cares for us? Then He must needs open our eyes as He did theirs before we can recognize Him in our trials or discern what His purposes about us are.

(4) THE OPENED SCRIPTURES (verses 27, 32, 44). Here the Lord names the three well-known divisions of

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the Old Testament, *i.e.* Moses (or the law), the Prophets and the Psalms. Each part contained many things concerning the Lord Jesus, but although the disciples were well acquainted with the letter of the Scriptures, they needed to have these opened and expounded by Himself so that they might understand them. The same thing is true in our case also (see 1 Cor. ii. 9-14).

(5) **THE OPENED UNDERSTANDING** (verse 45). We may possess the Scriptures and believe them to be divinely inspired from Genesis to Revelation, as we should do; but to understand them aright by any power of our own is impossible. For this we need the eyes of our hearts enlightened (Eph. i. 18) and our mind or understanding opened by God Himself (compare Isa. xxix. 10-12). Lydia is a beautiful example of a heart opened by the Lord (Acts xvi. 14).

(6) **THE OPENED HEAVENS** (verse 51). "While He blessed them, . . . He was carried up into heaven." The heavens were opened *upon* Him on other occasions, to express God's perfect satisfaction in Him as a Man on earth. Now for the first time they open to receive Him into glory in a new way, that is, as a Man. As the first fruits of the great harvest Christ has been raised; soon all the redeemed will be raised too, and will be received through the opened heavens likewise, to be forever with Him on high.

(7) **THE OPENED LIPS** (verses 52, 53). After parting with their Lord on Olivet, what seems to us at first sight a strange thing, took place. They rejoiced at the fact that he was gone. Then they worshipped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. But they had now grasped what His ascension meant, and instead of being filled with sadness, their lips were opened in continual worship and praise.

There is nothing so calculated to fill our lips with praise and thanksgiving as realizing what it is to have the Lord Jesus in the presence of God for us. It should be our joy also to witness to a *glorified* Christ.

Such are the seven opened things of Luke xxiv. They form seven golden links which bind the soul to Christ as the risen and glorified One. Let us ponder over their import.

W. M. R.

### Emmaus.

(Luke xxiv. 13-35.)

**T**HOU wouldst draw near and with Thy loved ones go,  
That with Thy love their hearts, e'en here, might  
glow ;

Those precious things of Thine wouldst make them see,  
That captives of Thy love their souls might be.

What if their eyes were holden—faith imparts  
Its inward vision, e'en to feeble hearts ;  
And if the understanding dull should be,  
Love can interpret, and the meaning see.

Yes, if we read, "Thou wouldst have farther gone,"  
That seeming purpose was of love inborn ;  
Not to forsake, but to Thee closer bring,  
Poor aching hearts, that feign to Thee would cling.

Thou wouldst abide ; Thy love would be constrained  
With stricken hearts to be—*that* love unfeigned.  
Thy precious grace and tender Shepherd care,  
Would trouble soothe, and every sorrow bear.

Thou wouldst abide ;—O love for ever true !  
Not for one hour, but all the journey through ;  
So that Thine own might ever deeper learn,  
The grace which first had made their hearts to burn.

Perfect Thy ways !—to tarry thus and bless,  
To still abide and calm their heart's unrest ;  
To gently ope their eyes, dispel their fear,  
Disclose Thy changeless love, so rich, so near.

Abide with *us*—Thou Source of love untold,  
 Thy words' deep meaning to our souls unfold ;  
 Tell of Thy sufferings, of Thy victory won,  
 Thy joy—our joy—in all that Thou hast done.

'Tis but a moment!—and Thy bride shall share  
 In every glory Thou, as Man, dost wear ;  
 Oh, what a hope!—to see Thee, Lord, above,  
 And know the *fulness* of Thy *perfect* love.

G. M.

### Individual Forgiveness.

**I**N reviewing that precious portion of Scripture the 18th chapter of Matthew, which has been, and still is, so erroneously interpreted by many believers ; it would be well to refer to the latter part of the preceding chapter, where the Lord Jesus not only discloses Himself as Creator but manifests His divine knowledge of what had taken place between the officers of the tribute money and Simon Peter by anticipating the latter with the question, “ Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute ? Of their own children or of strangers ? Peter saith unto Him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.” The blessed Lord then commands creation, and there is produced, miraculously, the sum demanded by those who received the tribute money.

Now we see the wondrous grace of the blessed Lord linking this poor ignorant and illiterate fisherman with Himself, “ That take and give unto them for ME and THEE.” Here the Lord is not only associating His own with Himself as to the tribute money but in the act of placing Himself on the ground of a stranger, and at the same time abdicating His rights as King in Jeshurun, for the time being.

Close upon the display of His creative power and the

exhibition of the most marvellous grace in coupling Peter with Himself in all the privileges that belong to Him, and His relationship with the Father, we find at the beginning of chapter xviii., fleshly ambition raising its head in the disciples' question, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" The Lord readily answers by placing a little child in the midst of them, and the following verses indicate that, to be great, we must become little, or as another has aptly put it, we must *backslide into childhood!*

From this on, it seems the Lord has in His mind what is consistent with our walk down here and dwells upon the necessity, first of humility, care and kindness to little children, and for one another; and then demonstrates the course necessary to regain an offending brother. The one offended is to go to the offender alone first; if he fails in gaining him he is to take others; and if the offender refuses to hear these it is to be mentioned to those with whom they are associated in Christian fellowship, who, no doubt, would follow the example of the one offended by withdrawing from the offender and treating him as a stranger.

It is beautiful to notice the extreme delicacy connecting verses 18, 19 and 20 of this chapter. To disconnect them, bearing unduly upon any one verse, in order to uphold some theory of our own, is to destroy the beauty and power contained in the three. Verse 19 presents to our spiritual intelligence the fact that there must be *agreement* in prayer, and *dependence*, and this attitude links most beautifully together verse 18 and verse 20.

We find Peter again to the front with the question, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus saith unto him,

I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven." In the language of another—"With respect to offences against oneself he was to gain his brother. If the latter would hearken, the thing was to be buried in the heart of the one whom he had offended; if not, two or three more were then to be taken with him by the offended person to reach his conscience, or serve as witnesses; but if these appointed means were unavailing, it must be made known to the church; and if this did not produce submission, he who had done the wrong should be to him as a stranger, as a heathen and a publican was to Israel. . . . If the offender bowed when spoken to even seventy times seven in a day, he was to be forgiven." And again, "Another element of the character proper to the kingdom, which had been manifested in God and in Christ, is pardoning grace . . . we must pardon *to the end*, or rather, *there must be no end*; even as God has forgiven us all things."

There is no doubt that the majority of individual offences is caused by word of mouth—some speech uttered in an unguarded moment. The tongue, as the Apostle James tells us, is an unruly member. It may be that unwittingly we have taken up a breath of accusation against some Christian and whispered it about to his detriment. "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin" (Prov. x. 19).

No doubt many of our readers have experienced the fact of how difficult it is to regain a brother whom we may have even inadvertently offended, "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city" (Prov. xviii. 19). Notwithstanding, where the divine order of our chapter is followed, as well as a spirit of humility and grace, remembering the Lord Jesus as the example,

*(Continued on page 73.)*

the writer has, in his experience of nearly half a century, never known it to fail. We cannot wash the feet of another unless we get down low enough to do it.

Then, again, we read, "If any man offend not in word the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body" (James iii. 2). How much the believer needs to be before the Lord, walking in grace, so that he may carry out the desire of Psalm cxli. 3, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth: keep the door of my lips." How glad many of us would be if we could recall words spoken in an unguarded moment. The writer remembers one of the stanzas of that beautiful poem, "The First Settler's Story," by an anonymous author, and it will be in keeping with our subject to relate it:—

"Boys flying kites haul in their white-winged birds,  
You can't do that way when you're flying *words*,  
Careful with fire, is good advice we know,  
Careful with *words*, is ten times doubly so.  
*Words* unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead,  
But the Lord alone can kill them when they've fled."

We noticed in the beginning of Matt. xviii. how pride got a foothold. It has been said that, "Pride is the subtlest serpent with the loftiest crest." The only spirit that is free from pride is the spirit of Christ. "God resisteth the proud but giveth grace unto the humble" (James iv. 6).

The following are wholesome words, "We may expect that we may have much to bear with from one another as long as we are in our complex state, as the Lord has much to bear with us all. Let us not make a brother an offender for a word, for the most careful express themselves very imperfectly. Let us not be too quick in attributing sinister motives to individuals whom we suspect, but rather let us seek grace to put the best

construction on their words. Brotherly love is a great witness to all of the power of divine life." The Lord help us to carry it out. J. P. (*Montreal*).

## Power for Service.

(Mark iii. 13-19.)

"**WE** are saved to serve" is an old evangelical phrase; but we must not suppose that this is *all* we are saved for. We are also saved to worship (John iv. 23), and we are saved for the honour and glory of His Name whom God is both pledged and delighted to honour. Still, we *are* saved to serve Christ in this needy world, ere we enter upon our eternal employ of praising Him, gazing upon His face, and serving Him above (Rev. xxii. 3, 4).

The desire to serve is implanted in every Christian's breast; with some it is a consuming passion, as is proved by our missionary literature and the records of whole-hearted servants at home also. Oh, that Christ may be so precious to each of us that we might experience a little more deeply the desire expressed in some of the last words of the late W. K., "Young man, cast away every frivolous pursuit, and identify yourself completely with the testimony of Christ"!

In the light of the cross and the glory, who can but acknowledge the justness of such an appeal as this? Moreover, in the passage referred to above (Mark iii. 13-19), we have an outline and a demonstration of our subject, given by the One whom we serve; and who therefore has the right to prescribe the way.

It comes in, too, most suitably here, for Mark's Gospel is the one which sets forth the Lord Jesus in His character as the diligent servant of God. We find Him

going up into the mountain—perhaps the very place where He often prayed—and calling unto Him whom He would. He is sovereign in His choice of men, the bestowal of His gifts, and the ability given them to serve Him. Indeed, in the measure in which we are blessed, we owe it all to His sovereign grace.

Having responded to His call, He ordained them to be with Him. When the blessing first reaches us, it is as those who are “called”; then He teaches us that to be “with Him” is needful ere we can do aught aright in His service. Oh, is not this where we often fail? How often, when one has been sitting at the Lord’s table and enjoying His love, has the feeling come to one that it would be so easy to preach the gospel *just then*.

We sometimes sing, “Oh, keep my soul then Jesus, abiding still with Thee. And if I wander, teach me, soon back to Thee to flee,” and we may well breathe out these words as a prayer to Him. We read of the Lord’s earliest servants—those who turned the world upside down—that the people took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. But He is just as available for us now as for them, where there is faith to count upon Him; and some are proving His sustaining power in a remarkable way. May the Lord add to the number of all such!

If we know what it is to sit at Jesus’ feet, to be in His company, He will then send us forth to serve Him, to preach the Word and to carry on the warfare against Satan and his kingdom. Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, to bind the strong man and spoil his goods. What a privilege and joy to serve our new Master! He has left us here to wage this warfare against the kingdom of darkness, and we have power

in the conflict just in the measure in which we have been *with Him* before the conflict begins.

Alas, in matters such as these, one has sometimes to plead guilty to being convicted by one's own words, yet it is good to face the truth and to be exercised about it.

And, lastly, the Lord here assumes the right to name, as He wills, those whom He calls, as in the case of Peter, James, John, etc. In Scripture the giving of names denotes complete lordship; as when Adam, set over creation as its lord, named the animals, etc. Power and authority was vested in him by the gift of God. What a comfort to know that all power and all authority is in the hand of the Lord Jesus!

Finally, we find in the last verse of our gospel, that the ascended Lord is still the Servant, as we read, "the Lord working with them"—still with His disciples although He had gone on high. May we be so with Him that, in these days when our opportunities for His work seem to be hastening to an end, we may hear His voice bidding us to go here or go there, as seems best to Him. " 'Tis love that makes our willing feet in swift obedience move."

P. W.

### The Deity of Christ—3.

**T**HE very fact that, even in apostolic times, the church was in danger of being drawn aside from the faith of the gospel by false teachers, gave occasion to the bringing out of those truths which have been such a blessing and safeguard in subsequent ages, as well as to ourselves to-day. We may find an illustration of this in the epistle to the Colossians, where the influence of gnostic philosophy on the one hand, and tradition on the other, was a danger to those believers.

For this reason the Spirit of God, through Paul, brings before them a very remarkable unfolding of the glory of the Person of Christ as Head of creation, and Head of the church in resurrection—having the first place in all things. He is said to be “Firstborn of all creation” (new trans.); and the word “firstborn” is used here in the sense of *priority*, not of time. All things were created *by* Him and *for* Him; and when He who created all comes into the creation which He has created, He necessarily and rightly takes the first place in it.

So far, then, from being in any sense inferior, or as the Gnostics taught, an emanation from the Godhead, all the fulness of the Godhead was pleased to dwell in Him (chap. i. 9). So also in chapter ii. 9, “In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,” and it is well to note that the word here translated “Godhead” is the strongest of the three words used in the New Testament, and means absolute Deity.

For other, but not less important reasons, the epistle to the Hebrews opens with a setting forth of the true Godhead of the Son, the Messiah of Israel. Those believers, who had not very long come out of Judaism, needed to have their faith sustained, for they were in danger of looking back again to things connected with that religion, which appealed so much to sight and sense. Hence the inspired writer brings before them the Son, who is the brightness of God’s glory and the express image of His person: the One who, not only created all, but upholds all in its order when created.

He is superior to angels, who are called on to worship Him. He is owned by God, as God (verse 8). But the title “God” had sometimes been used in a subordinate sense, as meaning judges, or those who represented

God's authority (see John x. 35) : there was, however, one name which never was applied to any but the supreme Being, and that was "Jehovah." And in this very chapter, Christ is owned by Jehovah as Jehovah (verses 10-12 ; Ps. cii.).

How appropriate and suitable that this epistle should begin with such a presentation of the glory of the Person of Christ, drawn from those very Old Testament Scriptures with which these Hebrew believers must have been familiar ! The infinite value and efficacy of His sacrifice, offered up once for all, depended upon the truth of His Person. Only an infinite Being, yet one who was truly man as well as God, could meet and satisfy the requirements of God's glory as well as the deep need of the poor sinner.

And not only this, but Christ's competence for every office he fills depends also on *who* He is. Has He offered a sacrifice ? Yes, and "through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God." He imparted, then, to His glorious work upon the cross all the value and worth of His divine Person. Is He a priest ? Truly He is—and being man He can sympathize with all the tenderness of a human heart—but how incomparably superior in every way is His priesthood to that of Aaron ! We (Christians) have "a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, *Jesus the Son of God.*" Let us note the title here, and pass on to look at the epistle to Timothy.

That epistle was written to Paul's son in the faith, that he might know what kind of conduct was suitable in the house of God, the church of the living God ; which was then, as it is still in spite of its fallen condition, the pillar and base of the truth. The church is responsible to maintain and confess the "mystery of godliness :

God manifested in flesh," etc. It is true that some MSS. read "He who" instead of "God" here, but this makes little difference, because, to say that one who was a mere man was "manifested in flesh" would have no sense; such an one could not be manifested in any other way. The wonderful truth is that the eternal Son, who was "with God" and "was God," should be "made flesh"—be manifested here as a man, in divine love and obedience to the Father's will. This truth we are responsible to confess at all cost, no matter what the opposition of the enemy or the broken and scattered state of the church of God may be.

F. G. B.

## The Word of God.

**I**N 1st Thessalonians ii. 13, the Apostle gives thanks to God that the Word, although it was not yet written but preached, had been received by them, not as the word of men, nor even as the word of an eminent Apostle, but as the WORD OF GOD in truth—a word unerring and divine. This gives me an opportunity of insisting afresh on the point. Let us adhere, in the most absolute manner, to the truth of the written word. What is given to us *in the Scriptures* is the very word of God. Where it had as yet been only preached, it was already recognized by believers as such. Has it lost this character since it has been written?

The foolish doctrine which is current to-day amongst a certain class of theologians (who, before they teach others ought themselves to take their place in the school of the Spirit of God) that the word of God is merely *contained* in the Scriptures, is diametrically opposed to all that God has taught us. When the Lord spoke to the Jews of the Word of God, He spoke of the Scriptures,

and it was the same with the Apostles. In a multitude of passages the Scriptures are presented as the true Word of God, in which we may have the fullest confidence. If it were not so, to what position would we be reduced to-day? We have no longer an inspired Apostle to present this word to us audibly; but we have, as our resource, the Scriptures, the sacred writings by which these words have been preserved and committed to us complete.

H. R.

### “Divers and Strange Doctrines.”

**N**OTHING is a plainer proof that the heart is not practically in possession of that which gives rest in Christ, that it does not realize what Christ is, than the restless search after something new—“divers and strange doctrines.” To grow in the knowledge of Christ is our life and our privilege. The search after novelties which are foreign to Him, is a proof of not being satisfied with Him. But he who is not satisfied with Jesus does not know Him, or, at least, has forgotten Him. It is impossible to enjoy Him, and not to feel that He is everything; that is to say, that He satisfies us, and that, by the nature of what He is, He shuts out everything else.

J. N. D.

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**T**HE heart that trusts, forever sings,  
 And feels as light as it had wings;  
 A well of joy within it springs:  
 Come good or ill,  
 Whate'er to-day, to-morrow, brings,  
 It is His will.

## “Thy Salvation.”

WE find in Malachi a faithful, though feeble remnant, who served and feared Jehovah, amidst the prevailing indifference to His claims on the part of Israel which marked the closing testimony of the Old Testament prophets. There was after this a long period of about 400 years during which the voice of inspiration was silent.

When we open the New Testament and turn to the Gospel of Luke, we get a bright picture of this same remnant, or at least of one characterized by the same things. Of these the aged Simeon and Anna are true examples of souls devoted to God and that which was nearest and dearest to His heart and thoughts at the moment: they come prominently before us in Luke ii. 25-38.

Simeon was “a just man, waiting for the consolation of Israel.” Afar from the deadening influences around, he walked constantly in the presence of God, and his heart was set on the coming of the Messiah, the Hope of Israel. Being thus as a godly man a suited vessel to bear testimony for God, we find him entirely subject to the guidance and leading of the Holy Spirit (see verses 25, 26, 27).

He came, by the Spirit, into the temple just at the *right moment*, and, taking up the child Jesus in his arms, he blessed God and said, “Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,” etc. No pomp or outward glory surrounded that child, such as the great ones of the earth were accustomed to; yet, lowly as were the circumstances in which He was found, He was, at that very moment, the central object of all

heaven's attention and the depository of all the purposes and counsels of God.

To Simeon, as taught of God, that Child was *everything*. His long expectations had had their fruition, his soul was satisfied, his heart's longings were gained, he could depart in peace. He had been privileged to behold the One he speaks of as "Thy salvation."

Thus, intelligence in the mind of God and the thoughts of heaven is found—not with the religious leaders of the people, who are either indifferent or bitterly opposed to God, but with the godly remnant.

So it was also with Anna. A woman habitually and wholly devoted in heart and soul to the interests of Jehovah, she was found continually in His presence in fastings and prayers. With her it was no formal duty or a tedious routine: it was her food and her joy. She, too, came in at that instant, and her heart overflowed in thanksgiving to God. And not only so, but she found kindred spirits, other devoted and waiting souls, with whom she enjoyed blessed communion, and to whom she spake *about Jesus*.

How is it with *us* now at the close of the dispensation? What is Jesus to *us*? Are *we* waiting and looking and expecting His coming as they were? The Lord grant it may be so!

### Short Meditations—5.

#### Power and Communion.

**I**N Mark ix. 1-8 we find that, as a special privilege, three disciples were invited to "see the kingdom of God come *with power*." This vision made such an impression on Peter that he refers to it in his second epistle, describing it as "the *power and coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ." When he says His "coming," it

is that coming by which He will establish the kingdom of God in glory; and he adds that the Christians "*do well to take heed*" to these things—things in which prophecy instructs us, being within its domain, and which we must not neglect.

In fact the coming and power of our Lord Jesus Christ will bring to naught all that opposes Him and the establishment of His millennial reign on the earth.

But what effect did the anticipatory view of this glorious power produce on the hearts of the three disciples? They were *dismayed*. It will not be so with us when we shall be present at its display, for we shall take part personally in it, when heaven will be opened and we shall go forth forming part of the King's cortege. For the same reason, this display of power did not affright Moses and Elias, who appeared with the Lord in glory.

In the same way we shall have a part in the display of this power, and this banishes all fear from our hearts when we think of the future day of its manifestation. Whilst waiting for that moment, another power than that of the kingdom has been given us, the power of the Holy Ghost, the "power from on high," that with which the disciples were to be clothed according to the Lord's promise, and which, from that moment, has become the portion of every redeemed one. This gift of the Holy Spirit was introduced with solemn and impressive signs of power, with a mighty impetuous wind, and parted tongues as of fire. Far from being overcome by these manifestations, the disciples who took part in them were filled with joy in order to bear testimony to the mighty power of grace.

We possess the Holy Spirit now as truly as the early disciples did, but why have we no longer a part in His

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power as they had ? The fact is that if we are entirely lacking in it, it is because of the complete ruin of the church's testimony, a ruin in which we have all, in a great measure, had our part. This lack of power is indeed, for us, a subject of constant humiliation ; but it is God's mind that we should preserve this attitude of humiliation without trying to change from it. It is the only right attitude for any faithful remnant who would have, in this day, the Lord's full approval.

In view of this state of things, for which we are responsible, let us be careful not to forget that there remains to us one thing which is infinitely superior to all the display of power ; that is *communion*. Moses and Elias, although forming a part of the scene in which the *power* of the kingdom was revealed, were not occupied with this, nor with their place in the glorious reign of Christ. Their enjoyment was of quite another kind ; they "were talking with Jesus." They held converse with Him concerning His death, concerning the sacrifice which, in His divine love, He was about to accomplish. The disciples who had just been eye-witnesses of His majesty were taught to seek after the same things of which Moses and Elias had just given them an example.

The cloud, the abode of Jehovah, descended and enveloped them as it did the tabernacle of old. Are they called now to *see* anything ? The entire vision of the glorious power of Christ had disappeared. They *see* nothing, but they *hear*. Whom do they hear ? *The Father*, who speaks to them of that which fills His own heart, in order that they may have communion with Him concerning His own Son. He does not say "See," but "Hear" ; and He adds, "Hear Him." But what does the Son speak to us of ? Of *the Father* ! The entire Gospel of John bears testimony to Him.

Thus, apart from the glorious display of power, our communion is with the Father and with the Son. There is no *fulness* of joy but that : the most marvellous display of power cannot give that joy. We have part in the love of the Father which the Son reveals to us, in the love of the Son which the Father reveals ; we have communion with the most intimate thoughts of divinity in the Father and in the Son.

Is this sufficient for us ? When a display of power no longer exists, are we content to “*see no man save Jesus only*” ? Immense blessing—for thenceforth no other object can distract us. What happiness ! Shall we not say : If power has disappeared through our failure, God brings good even out of this, so that thenceforth we should have no other resource but Himself ? It is not in the presence of glory or the display of power that our joy is made full, but in presence of the love of the Father and the Son.

H. R. (*Vevey*).

### “ But now, bring me a Minstrel.”

(2 Kings iii. 15.)

**I**T has been remarked that, in the chapter referred to above, the prophet Elisha enters upon the historical part of his ministry. Jehoram, the wicked son of a wicked king, though perhaps wicked in a lesser degree, begins to reign. In the reign of his father Ahab, a tribute had been laid upon the king of Moab, a nation which David had subdued and which had remained tributary up to this date (2 Sam. viii. 2). The king of Moab now revolts, and Jehoram king of Israel, seeks aid to subdue him from Jehoshaphat king of Judah, who joins affinity with him.

Jeshophat had been blessed by Jehovah and had become prosperous, but this very fact led to his getting

his eye off the Lord, thus impairing his spiritual discernment. Consequently, instead of refusing any alliance with Israel's wicked king, he falls into the trap Satan had laid for him, is flattered by the appeal for his assistance, and, instead of refusing, gives his consent. He replies "*I will go up, I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horses as thy horses.*" He not only fully identifies *himself* with king Jehoram but involves his people also.

What a lesson we learn from this unholy and worldly alliance. The moment prosperity enters our doors, the danger becomes great, unless there is watchfulness and the Word of God has its rightful place in our hearts ; as it is also written, "Keep the *munition*, watch the *way*" (Nahum ii. 1) ; also as the Apostle Paul, wrote to the Corinthian believers, "*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong*" (chap. xvi. 13). But few of us can bear prosperity. It has been said that, "Prosperous heights are giddy heights." Is it not often the case that a believer may be going on *outwardly* with God, and yet the heart be *in the world* ? This was the case with Jehoshaphat, and the next step carries him farther away, because of his not "*watching the way,*" for the way they took was "through the wilderness of Edom," which led to a compact with its king.

And now we come to the crucial test in this misguided campaign. For seven days these three armies encompass the land, when famine stares them in the face. Having made their calculations without consulting the Lord, they impute the origin of this dire calamity (the possible destruction of three armies), to the One who could alone help them out of it. Jehoshaphat, who had then in a measure come to himself, suggests *a mediator*, without the power of procuring one himself. It falls to

the lot of a *servant* of Israel's wicked king to give the required information, saying,—Here is Elisha, the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah” (verse 11).

Ignorant, indeed, the other two kings were, and callous also, as to any help coming from the source mentioned by the servant, but Jehoshaphat at once sees hope for their deliverance, for, mixed up as he was in these unholy alliances, he knew where Divine power was and he could truthfully say, “*The word of the Lord is with him.*” Then, without hesitation, the three kings went down to Elisha.

The prophet administers a scathing rebuke to the impious and profane king of Israel, which draws forth again the wicked imputation that the Lord was the origin of their unfortunate position. However, the presence of Jehoshaphat saves the situation. For while the prophet, as he himself declared, does not regard the king of Israel, Jehoshaphat is still something to him, and he seeks to abstract himself, so to speak, from the whole scene. He looks direct to Jehovah for aid, no doubt depressed in spirit on account of the condition of things, namely, the ungodly alliance of the three kings who stood before him. Unlike any previous occasion, he looks for something to enable him to rise above the circumstances of the case, and says “*But now, bring me a minstrel.*” The minstrel plays and the hand of the Lord comes upon him.

Thus in spite of the failure of Jehoshaphat, God comes in in grace, and the prophet is made a blessing; he is here the saviour of Israel. It is wonderful to note how the Lord always has an instrument at hand to carry out His purpose. It is the weak things of the world God has chosen “to confound the things that are mighty”

(1 Cor. i. 27). In this case, it is a *servant* ; and one, too, who had been observant, as we may gather from what he says. Now we have what is most important, falling from the lips of the prophet (verses 16 and 17), “ *Thus saith the Lord, make this valley full of ditches ; for, thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain ; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts.* ”

The blessing came in the morning at the time of the meat offering, by the way of Edom, the way they had gone up. It is indeed beautiful to see the prophet walking at the height of God’s thoughts, doing nothing but proclaiming the mind of the Lord. “ *Thus saith the Lord* ”—nothing more and nothing less.

Surely we may look upon the foregoing narrative as a figure of the state of Christendom in this day ; a day of dearth and a famine of the Word of God. The neglect of the study and meditation on the word results in a stunted growth of the soul and leaves the door open for all kinds of evil. “ *Keep the munition* ” is a suited word for us all in these perilous times, when even men from among ourselves arise speaking perverse things, and this with a view to drawing away disciples after them (see Acts xx. 30).

And, in conclusion, let us have our ears open to the sound of the minstrel—a figure, as we may take it, of the Spirit of God ; whose presence in us is so pure that there is no evil He does not resent and grieve over, and yet is so tender and sympathizing that there is no godly sorrow He does not feel. We have to own how little we live in the sunshine of His grace and power. May the music of this minstrel attune our hearts to sing the praises of the One who died for us and is coming again to take us to be with Himself for all eternity !

J. P. (*Montreal*).

## The Deity of Christ—4.

**WE** have in Romans ix. 5 a very clear statement on the above subject. When speaking of the passage in 1 Tim. iii. 16 last month, we referred to the difference in the reading of some of the MSS. ; but here in Romans all the MSS. are, happily, agreed. It reads, "Of whom (Israel) as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." One could hardly conceive a more explicit declaration of Christ's glory as God over all, asserted as it is without any shade of doubt or uncertainty ; to whom the apostle ascribes this suited doxology.

Turning now to Philippians ii. 5 we read, Christ "who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." The very next verse says that He "emptied Himself" and took upon Him the form of a bondservant. But the grace which led Him to thus humble Himself—a voluntary act on His part—shines all the more brilliantly when we contemplate the great truth of His eternal pre-existence in the "form of God," on an equality with God.

And when Christ thus "emptied Himself," it was not, we need hardly say, emptying Himself of His Godhead, which of course could not be ; but He laid aside the glory proper to Godhead in becoming a man. When here, He was as truly God as before He came, and He will be so for ever. Someone has said Christ came down in grace, He has gone up in righteousness, taking a place far above all heavens that He might fill all things.

We shall now close our quotations with a brief reference to the book of Revelation. That book commences with the words, "The Revelation of Jesus

Christ, *which God gave unto Him.*” Though here seen in the glory of God, He is still truly man as well as God. Indeed, it is most remarkable in John’s writings, specially his Gospel, where the Lord’s glory as the Eternal Son, the Word, God and with God, is so fully maintained, to find that He always loyally takes and never leaves the place of perfect and humble submission to the Father’s will. He is there viewed as the Sent One of the Father, dependent, obedient, doing only and always the works that the Father gave Him to do, and speaking the words that the Father gave Him to speak.

And John was the one chosen of God and suited to write the book of Revelation, in which the praises of the slain Lamb are celebrated, all things being put under His feet. We shall just draw the reader’s attention to the title Alpha and Omega, which is found three times in that book.

In chapter i. 8, it refers to God as such, the Jehovah of the Old Testament (see Exod. iii. 14; Isa. xli. 4; xliv. 6; xlviii. 12), yet not, we believe, to the exclusion of Christ. As already remarked, John in his writings so identifies God and Christ in his thoughts, that he passes rapidly from one to the other, sometimes in the same sentence.

Then in chapter xxi. 6, speaking of the eternal state of the new heavens and new earth, when the *time* state is over, we have this title of God, Alpha and Omega, again. And lastly, in chapter xxii. 13, we read, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” Here the title is definitely applied to Christ, who is coming to reward every one according as his work shall be. He is indeed Jehovah, who could verify, establish, and make good every word the book

contained; He is man withal, the coming One, ready to reward His servants according to their service here.

As all these blessed and wonderful truths, connected with the Person of our Lord, pass before us—on the one hand His absolute Deity and equality with the Father, and on the other His pure and spotless humanity—how can we but worship and praise? And the union of the divine and human natures in Him, inscrutable as it is, and known only to the Father (Matt. xi. 27), safeguards His glory, in His humiliation, against all prying of men, who, like those of old, might try either to steady the ark or to scrutinize its contents.

Let us never forget that it is the *same* Jesus who now sits on the Father's throne, waiting till the time when it is the Father's will that He should come. The same too, who had compassion on the widow of Nain and gave her back her son, the same who groaned and wept at the grave of Lazarus, who walked on the tempest-tost lake of Galilee and calmed the storm by His word—*this* is the One who is our guide, our friend, our eternal lover, as well as our divine and almighty protector. Shall we not lean hard upon Him, keep close to Him, drink in of those streams of grace which flow from Him, until we see Him face to face above? F. G. B.

### “ Be Sober.”

(2nd Timothy iv.)

**T**HE Apostle Paul, at the close of his life, and when many were turning away their ears from the truth and being turned to fables, gives this important word to Timothy, “But thou, be sober in all things” (2 Tim. iv. 5, New Trans.). What a contrast the life and testimony of a faithful servant forms, to all that surrounds us in this day of ruin! He ought to be

“sober in all things,” to hold the old man for dead, walking in constant self-judgment before God, and watching against everything that could open the door to the enemy.

Sobriety applies to every Christian activity here below: our words, eating, drinking, work, etc. In order to do “the work of an evangelist” one must first of all realize this holy self-judgment, without which the power of the Spirit is paralyzed in our souls. God is always active in love in this world and the servant must not allow himself to be hindered by the difficulties of the way, but rather “endure hardships.”

Timothy was to fill up the measure of his ministry. He had, in Paul, an example to follow, for Paul never stopped half way; he never allowed himself to be discouraged by the difficulties which abounded on the way. He had now reached the end of the course and he declares it with joy. Like a traveller who had reached the top of a mountain after a difficult ascent and who looks back over the road which he has travelled, the apostle could now look back over all the path his feet had trodden, in order to retrace with joy all the testimonies he had received of the Lord's love and faithfulness which had kept, sustained, and led him right through to the end of the journey; he says “I am already being poured out [as a libation].”

A martyr's death was before him; it was like the libation of wine which crowned the Levitical sacrifice and which expressed the joy which God found in the perfect burnt-offering. Paul's service was a sacrifice of a sweet odour offered to God, and his death as a martyr was as the libation consumed upon it. In Philippians the apostle identified himself so with the believers that he looked at their service and his own as forming one

whole before God. He rejoiced in the thought that his death for the Lord would be as the libation "poured out" which would crown the common sacrifice (Phil. ii. 17).

The apostle glanced both backward and forward. He saw first of all the entire path he had traversed, the sufferings completed, the good fight ended, the faith kept (verse 7). "The faith" embraces, here, the whole body of truth entrusted to faith (Jude 20). One may reach the end of a long Christian life without having finished one's course. If we do not respond to the Lord's thought, which has set us apart in order that we might follow Him faithfully, we shall not reach the end as He did. Paul could say by the Spirit that he had fully answered to the thought and to the will of the Lord who had put Him into His service. He had followed "righteousness, faith, love, peace" (chap. ii. 22).

Such a course would have for its reward "a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give His servant in that day." There opened up before him a future lit up by glory, in which all will be peace, happiness and eternal joy. The reward for our walk and our service will be given to those that are faithful, before the judgment seat of Christ, and will be manifested at the great day of glory. The latter was so much before the thoughts of the apostle that he confines himself to describing it by the words "that day" (2 Tim. i. 12; iv. 8).

And it is not to him only that this reward will be given, but to all those who "love His appearing." This does not signify merely to rejoice in the hope of the Lord's coming, but to walk in that practical righteousness which will be rewarded in the day of the Lord. If we manifest henceforth the characteristics

of the kingdom—"righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xiv. 17)—we show thereby that we recognize the Lord's rights and that we love His appearing.

J. B.

### Democracy.

THE growth of democratic power is one of the most evident and remarkable features of recent times, especially since the Great War. So far as it refers to the government of the various states, it is popularly called "self-determination." And what is also a noticeable fact is, that it is not confined to one country or nation; it is universal—worldwide. The principle of an independent will comes in collision with, and renders difficult, if not impossible, all proper governmental authority, not in one sphere only, but in the various spheres of life—in the political, the social and the industrial.

Now the Word of God fully prepares us for this lawless state of things, resulting from the uncontrolled will of man. If we look at the course of empire, as foretold in Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan. ii.), we find that it is marked by deterioration from the original source of power, namely, the grant then given of God to the Gentiles. Beginning with the image's head of gold, we come down to the feet and toes, which were part of iron and part of clay, therefore partly strong and partly fragile.

The clay was something that did not belong properly to the image, it was not a metal, but figurative of instability. It doubtless refers to those elements which came into the Roman Empire from outside, when the barbarians broke it up; these being accustomed to the freedom of their German forests, would not permit

one dominant power to sway Europe, hence the divided state in which it has been ever since. And God has not allowed anyone to reunite these various kingdoms, though some great and powerful men have used every effort to do so.

Now the increase of democratic power, within the last few years, is a remarkable sign of the times. We know from Scripture that it only needs the rapture of the church of God at the coming of the Lord (1 Thess. iv. 15-18) to give the signal for the first event of that great drama unfolded to us in Revelation iv.-xxii. and elsewhere. We can easily understand, too, how, when the restraining power spoken of in 2 Thess. ii. 6 and 7, is removed, there will be the rapid development of the state of lawlessness and anarchy depicted in the figurative language of Rev. xiii. 1 as "the sea." Out of this state the head of the revived Roman Empire, who will bring the ten kingdoms of Western Europe under his sway, will arise.

In such a lawless condition of things, some commanding genius will be required who will be able to control the masses, put down anarchy, and bring the revolutionary elements into some sort of order and subjection. But behind all, Satan has his purposes, namely, to prevent, if possible, the object God has in view in the establishment of what Scripture calls "The kingdom of the world of our Lord and His Christ" (Rev. xi. 15), or "The kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ" (Rev. xii. 10), or, as Peter says, "The everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The beast and the false prophet of Rev. xiii. are some of Satan's chief instruments to accomplish this design.

Democratic rule, however, fails to bring about the

peace and harmony which is the fond dream of its advocates. The roots of selfishness are too deep in the heart of fallen man to be met by any panacea such as that. Besides this, socialism, in whatever form we take it, is always infidel in its tendency, and therefore restless and unstable. It chafes under the restraint of God's authority, and consequently it says, *in its heart*, "There is no God."

But no true and lasting peace will come till He takes the reins of government whose right it is (Ezek. xxi. 27). Christ's reign will be both universal and just. Unlike all other kingdoms, which were taken from those who held them, His "shall not be left to other people" (Dan. ii. 44); and at the end He will voluntarily "give up" the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) may be all in all. Before this, however, He will have annulled—not merely the democratic idealism in which men boast to-day, but (and mark the three words used!) "*all* rule and *all* authority and power" (1 Cor. xv. 25).

And so completely will He put *all* enemies under His feet, and so exclusive is the statement, that it is necessary to explain that He is excepted which did put all enemies under Him. The last enemy to be destroyed is death, and we know that this will not be till after heaven and earth have passed away and the wicked cast into the lake of fire (Rev. xx. 14, 15).

But the progress of democratic power and socialistic doctrines to-day is an evidence to the thoughtful Christian mind, amongst many others, that the present dispensation is now rapidly drawing to a close.

## Revivals—and Afterwards.

THE book of Judges gives us the experiences of the people of God of old after they had been settled in the promised land and had been the recipients of God's blessings and mercies. What marked them was, alas, what marks every movement of the Spirit of God in blessing or revival, namely *failure*.

Time after time God, in His superabounding grace, gave them deliverance from their enemies, yet they sank lower and lower, until, as we read in chapter x, "Israel was *sore distressed*." In their trouble they cry to God, saying, twice over, "We have sinned."

The Lord reminds them of the former deliverances—which they had so easily forgotten—and adds, "I will deliver you no more. Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation." A scathing rebuke indeed!

Is not this the history of the Church of God also? Lack of separation from the world, lack of energy and of devotedness to Christ, and general decline in spiritual power and freshness, have followed every recovery of truth, after a sufficient time has elapsed to test the depth and solidity of the work. And yet we read, "His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel," and in grace He raised up a deliverer.

Were it not for God's grace, and for the fact that He is always ready to meet the individual soul who desires to be true to Him, where should we be?

It ought to humble us, break us down, and draw our hearts closer to Himself, to reflect on the fact that He is a God of grace. And yet we do well to remember also that He is a God of holiness and truth; as the epistle

to the Hebrews says, "Our God is a consuming fire" ready to burn up everything in us which is contrary to Him.

But, has not the world, in one form or another, sadly weakened the testimony of God's people to-day and deprived them of the strength needed to stand for Christ in this evil and deceptive world? It has been truly said, speaking of Nazariteship, "The assembly retains its strength, Christians retain their strength, so far only as they abide in this state of complete separation, which the world does not understand and in which it cannot participate. . . .The Nazarite represents the assembly, or an individual Christian, so far as the one and the other are separated from the world and devoted to God, and keep the secret of this separation.

"This is the assembly's position, the only one which God recognizes. The assembly, being united to Christ who is separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens, cannot be His in any other manner. It may be unfaithful to it, but this is the standing given it with Christ. It can be recognized in no other."

### Short Meditations—6.

#### The Patience of Christ.

"**I** WAITED patiently for the Lord." This is the language of Christ as given us in Psalm xl. 1. In fact, He waited upon Him up to the very ultimate limit of patience. When He was plunged in "an horrible pit and the miry clay" His patience still waited on the answer of God. And indeed His own resurrection and our eternal salvation have been the fruit and the consequences of it on God's part.

We may follow this marvellous patience step by step through all the events of the hours which precede the

cross. "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted . . . He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter . . . He openeth not His mouth." Again, "I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not My face from shame and spitting." Nothing could cause Him to deviate from the path of patience.

What was it, then, which sustained Him thus? It was *love*, that love which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, *endureth* all things" (1 Cor. xiii. 7)—marvellous description of the patience of Him who is perfect love! His patience has borne all in order to reach the end in view, namely, to obtain us, His people, for God and for Himself. In view of the joy set before Him, Christ *endured* the cross, despising the shame; and even now, seated at the right hand of God, He offers Himself to us as the model and pattern of patience. Only, let us observe, we do not find, in the case of a glorified Christ, patience in *suffering*, but patience in *desire*. He says to the church at Philadelphia (Rev. iii. 10), "Thou hast kept the word of My patience;" thus He encourages His beloved ones to the constant attitude of waiting and to desire His coming, as He also Himself waits and desires that the Father would give Him the signal to rise from the throne to take His bride to Himself.

If patience is, as we might say, one of the perfections inherent in the very nature of the perfect man, it is not so with us, Christians. Having the flesh in us, we must *learn* patience, contrary to all the aspirations of the old man. This is why it is said (what could not be said of Christ) that "tribulation *worketh* patience." This, in itself, leads to hope (Rom. v. 3) and makes us appreciate all the value of it (1 Thess. i. 3).

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And further, these blessed results of tribulation do not awaken in the new man any desire to escape it, although we may be moved or disturbed by it (1 Thess. iii. 3). But, in this latter case, our chastisement will return each morning until we have accepted the tribulation, to teach us to taste the blessed fruits of patience. The more we advance in the path of faith, the more our patience will become clothed with the traits of that of Christ. This was what the apostle desired for his dear Thessalonians; "May the Lord," he says to them, "direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the *patience of Christ!*"

How we should desire, in the measure in which we progress in the Christian career, to realize more and more this *patience of Christ, the fruit of love!* The epistle of Titus brings it before us as the ornament of aged men in the family of God (Titus ii. 2).

H. R. (Vevey).

## Atonement and Righteousness.

*Some thoughts on the Atonement of Christ and the Righteousness of God.*

**H**AVING such a subject before us, we need to approach it with worshipping hearts and in the earnest desire that God's thoughts may fill our souls and may not be distorted through the medium of our own minds.

"Thy righteousness is like the great mountains" (Psa. xxxvi. 6): surely this is a thought which commends itself to us as we gaze upon that which is so far above human attainment. For what the Scriptures present to us is nothing less than this glorious fact, that the Word, the Son of God, "became flesh" in order that,

as Man, He might glorify God in respect of sin, satisfy the requirements of His holiness and justice, and thus set Him, the holy God, free to bless those who have offended against His holiness, majesty, and truth; and that He might do so, too, without in any way setting aside this, God's blessed and holy character, but the rather to the glory of His great name.

This aspect of the work of Christ is not commonly dwelt upon—no doubt this is the case from various causes. Some seek to do away with it altogether, reducing the divine sacrifice of the Lord Jesus to what they are pleased to describe as an “at-one-ment,” which is but the *effect* (however produced) of the sacrifice upon the sinner's relation to a holy God. This view is evidently based on the English word “atonement” found in our Bibles, and deals with the effect rather than the cause.

Others, through a defective presentation of the gospel, think only of the sacrifice as it affects *them*, and of *their* safety under the shelter of the blood, thus losing much in their own souls, in not seeing how God's glory has been secured in the very same work which brings about their blessing.

We desire, therefore, to consider the subject as presented in Scripture, more especially from the point of view of what are the requirements of God's holiness in respect of sin. The scene presented in Noah's sacrifice first strikes us as presenting in its elements the principle of atonement. Sinful man had just been removed from God's earth by the waters of the Flood, and Noah steps out into a new earth. His first act is to build an altar and offer sacrifices to the Lord. On the ground of the sweet savour of these sacrifices the Lord said that He would no more curse the ground for

man's sake, although man's heart was not changed (v. 21).

Again, in the Passover night—although we naturally dwell upon the Passover as the beautiful and solemn illustration of the only shelter for a sinner from the judgment of God—it is the requirement of God's holiness which primarily necessitates the death of the lamb. If the Lord “put a difference” between the Egyptians and Israel (Exod. xi. 7), yet there was, actually, no difference, for *all* had sinned, and it was the blood of the slain lamb which, being under God's eye, enabled Him to pass over those who had obeyed His word.

But, for a full exposition of God's thoughts as to the atonement, we must turn to the directions given in Leviticus xvi. for the observances of the Day of Atonement, on which day alone the representative of the people might enter into the visible presence of God (verse 2). What was the position and the period in the history of God's earthly people Israel then? They had been redeemed by blood, delivered by power, and brought to God. The tabernacle had been set up according to the directions of Jehovah. The priests had been consecrated and, even then, rebellion had manifested itself even in the inner circle of the priestly family. So that it was only by the atonement made—although it was “a remembrance of sins every year” (Heb. x. 3)—that Jehovah could remain amongst them.

Aaron had to make an atonement for himself, for the people, and for the holy place. Now what does this signify? We are told that the word translated “atonement” means *a covering*. Again we say, “What does this mean”? Was it a covering for the priest, for the people, and for the holy place; or was it not rather satisfaction rendered to a holy God in respect of sin, so that His eye no longer rested upon it, and that He

could say, as He did once through Balaam (Num. xxiii. 21), "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel" ?

Looking at the broad outlines of what took place on the great Day of Atonement, we find clearly foreshadowed the New Testament doctrines of *propitiation* and *substitution*. The blood was carried in and sprinkled on the mercy seat where God dwelt, and His holy nature was thus vindicated. On the other hand, the iniquities and transgressions of the children of Israel were confessed over the live goat, which carried away their sins into the wilderness, so that God could say that He would remember these no more.

But this, in our short meditations, carries us directly to that wonderful moment when the Lord's forerunner, John the Baptist, could say, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29). Here, in His glorious and blessed person, we have the One in whom the shadows of the law found their fulfilment and substantiation, and all the promises of God their "Yea and amen." May we not consider the One spoken of in this statement by the Baptist as answering to the Lord's lot, set forth in Leviticus xvi. ? As the Lamb of God, He was the One upon whom Jehovah's lot fell ; and He is also the Azazel or Scape-goat.\*

We should note, however, that it is *sin* in itself that

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\* It is evident that, though the scape-goat was sent away alive, it was identified, as to the efficacy of the work, with the death of the other. The idea of the eternal sending away of sins out of remembrance is only added to the thought of death. The glory of God was established and His rights vindicated, on one side, in the putting of the blood on the mercy-seat ; and, on the other, there was the substitution of the scape-goat, of the Lord Jesus, in His precious grace, for the guilty persons whose cause He had undertaken ; and, the sins of these having been borne, their deliverance was full, entire, and final (*Coll. Writ.*, J. N. D., xix. 375).

is spoken of here in John i. 29, not the sins which constitute the guilt of individuals. He is the taker-away of the *sin* of the world. Christ is thus here characterized as the *One* who would do it, quite apart from any question of *when* or *how*. We know that it will not be *fully* accomplished till the new heavens and new earth, when every trace of sin will be removed from the whole universe in virtue of His complete and glorious sacrifice offered up once for all upon the cross. Moreover He is also, as on the Day of Atonement, the "propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (1 John ii. 2).

We may now turn to the second heading of this paper, viz., the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD; and, as will be seen, the one truth follows in divine harmony and suitability upon the other. Let us go to Heb. i. 3 for the connecting link. Here we read, "Who, when He had by Himself purged (made purification of) our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Thus, in wondrous language which calls forth the worship of our souls, we are told that what was spoken of in Lev. xvi. 15-19 was fulfilled once for all by the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ; and He who thus vindicated the claims of a holy God, sat down in His own right and title, on the right hand of the Majesty on high. How truly was this a divine transaction and one in which man had no part—save, indeed, his sins!

We are now prepared to enter upon the theme of Paul's letter to the Romans, which is "the gospel of God," wherein, as he tells us in chapter i. 17, the *righteousness of God* is revealed. Not the righteousness of *man*, be it observed, for he had none, but the triumph of God's grace, which now "reigns through righteous-

(Continued on page 105.)

ness.” We have all read in Luke xv. how God acts in the sovereignty of His *grace*, seeking the lost ones ; but the righteous basis of His action is not *there* declared. Nor was it declared when, on David’s sin being brought home to him, he made confession and was forgiven. But in his utterances given us in Psa. li. he expresses the desire (verse 4) that God might be justified. This is taken up by the apostle in Rom. iii. 4, and really goes to the root of the whole matter. For it is *God* whose holy character is in question, and *He* it is who is now righteous in justifying “ him which believeth in Jesus ” (verse 26). What a God, and what glorious news for guilty man ! For God has not simply condemned sin in the flesh in the Person of His own dear Son when He died as a sacrifice for sin, as we read in the eighth chapter of this same epistle, but He has Himself provided the Lamb for the burnt offering, and now sets Him forth as the meeting place (chapter iii. 25) between Himself and the sinner.

Thus, too, we get a fuller understanding of Romans viii. 31, 32, “ If God be for us,” etc. Truly we have learned that He is for us in everything, “ making all things to work together for good.” But the outstanding evidence of the truth of His being for us is in the following verse, “ He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all.” Here we get at the very heart of the gospel which the apostle speaks of in the 1st chapter as “ the power of God unto salvation ; ” and surely we are filled with wonder and worship as we contemplate the holy God delivering over His own dear Son, to be put to death at the hands of men, and to be a sacrifice for sin, so that the claims of His righteousness might be met and the believer justified.

May our souls be more firmly established in these

great truths, and thus may we be able to “ teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee ” (Psa. li. 13).

J. M. W.

## Woman's Place in the Church.

(A Letter.)

**M**Y dear Sister, I daresay you noticed my reluctance to express my convictions in connection with the subject of the place of woman in the Church. It is a *vital* question, to my mind, and one of *divine order*; but *we* may make it a matter of *expediency* to suit our own convenience, and to gratify the aspirations of those we love and have fellowship with in other things connected with our Christian career. The word of God is, *unquestionably*, plain, leaving no loophole for misunderstanding, *if we are subject* to it, which we often are *not* when we would like things to be *our way*; and so we displace the word to suit our own desires and to please others.

If you refer to 1 Cor. xi. you find that the apostle gives very plain directions for women. First, he points out the order of power in its *ascending* character (verse 3), the head of the woman being the man; that of the man, Christ; and that of Christ, God. In their *mutual* relationship, the apostle points out that the man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man; and as to relations with others, they were to be covered, *because of the angels* (verse 10), who are spectators, in this day of grace, and watch with untold interest the effect this grace produces in those who are its recipients. The man was not to be covered when praying, as he represents the image and the glory of God. The woman

was to be covered, for she is the glory of the man, and is to be covered in the divine presence.

Referring again to this order of an ascending character in creation, we should remember that the redeemed are a *spectacle to angels*; this is mentioned in chapter iv. 9 of this epistle. However, we find in our chapter (verse 16) that if this custom led to contention it was not to be pressed. Here it does not refer to *order in the church*, as to the woman's place, for which we get other scriptures.

I hope you will not entertain or accept those popular and sophistical pleas of woman's natural ability in rhetorical displays as a reason for giving her a place in public life. The world, in these days, has set the door wide open for women to enter the field of politics, and in giving them the suffrage is encouraging them to leave the sphere of home life for which nature has so eminently adapted them. She is thus, in a great measure, surrendering her inborn instincts of modesty and habits of retirement to the popular clamour for equality with man in public life.

Having dwelt somewhat on the creation order and the woman's place in it, we might very profitably look into the Word of God as to her place in ministry.

In the apostle Paul's first letter to his son Timothy, he gives directions for the internal order of the Church. The enemy sought to introduce things that were not for edification, and the apostle enjoins Timothy to warn some not to teach doctrines which were apt to turn minds to fables, which had their rise in the imagination of man; while some also were making an effort to introduce the law into Christianity. In the second chapter we find all distinction between Jew and Gentile set aside, "for there is one God, and one Mediator

between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." For this ministry he was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. The apostle then proceeds to desire that *men* pray everywhere, lifting up pure hands, apart from anger and reasonings of the mind. Women were to be modestly attired and to practise good works, also to *learn in silence*. The last four verses of this second chapter are very important, and should for ever silence the importunity of those who would encourage women to take a place which here bears so plainly the stamp of divine disapproval.

In the language of another, it should be noted that the reason given for the woman to abide in quietness and silence is remarkable, and shows, in our relations with God, everything depends on *the original starting-point*. In innocence, Adam had the first place; in sin, Eve. It was Eve who, being deceived, brought in the transgression. Adam was not deceived, guilty as he was of disobeying God. . . . Eve suffered on earth the penalty of her fault in a way which is a mark of the judgment of God; but, walking in modesty with faith and love and holiness, she shall be delivered in the hour of her trial.

The apostle Paul gives further instructions in the case of women and their place in the church in 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35, "Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is *not permitted unto them to speak*, but to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." It is clear from this passage that women are forbidden to direct others. Unmarried women who might have

difficulties could refer them to elders in the church. With all their gifts the Corinthians were not to think that the Word of God came out from them, nor that it had its application to them only. If they were led by the Spirit, as they boasted, let them be led by Him, and let them acknowledge that the things which the apostle wrote to them were *the commandments of the Lord* (verse 37).

From the Apostle's standpoint it is evident—and he writes by commandment—that any forwardness of women in public, in connection with divine things, was indecorous and lacking in propriety. The apostle Peter also gives us some striking injunctions referring to the duty and conduct of wives, “Likewise, ye wives, be in in subjection to your own husbands; that if any obey not the word, they may also without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting of the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, . . . a meek and quiet spirit, which is *in the sight of God of great price*” (1 Peter iii. 1-4; also 5, 6). Here it would appear that the subjection of the wives would take the place of scripture itself, if the husband would not heed it, thus making the word effectual by the fruits of this testimony.

While upon the question of women's place in the church and their conduct otherwise, it might not be out of place to refer to what the apostle states of the *older women* in Titus ii. 3, 4, 5. They were to be teachers of good things, they were to teach the younger women *to love their husbands and children*, and to be *discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own*

*husbands*, that *the word of God* be not blasphemed. The whole life of those referred to should be characterized by modesty and domesticity. How often, alas, in these days, we find the aged women authors of discord, and homes have been broken up through lack of following the instructions so clearly laid down in the word.

It will be asked, then, What place has woman in her service in the church? What is her sphere of ministry?

In Acts xxi. 8, we find the apostle Paul at Cæsarea, a guest in the home of Philip the Evangelist, who was one of the seven deacons (chapter vi. 5), and who had four daughters who prophesied. Some have used this fact as an excuse for the public preaching of women, but it has no application whatever. It may have been a partial fulfilment of Joel ii. 28, referred to by Peter in Acts ii. 17. No one would for a moment entertain the thought that the apostle Paul, *who was present*, would encourage these young women to act in violation of his most emphatic statements in the Scriptures we have had before us, and which we have carefully considered. There can be no doubt that the sphere in which they gave utterance prophetically, if it was continuous on their part (which is doubtful), would be among their own sex; and possibly this was customary with other women in the church also at this time. We are reminded of Phœbe (Rom. xvi. 2), who, it is stated by the apostle, was *a servant of the church* at Cenchrea, and who had been a succourer of many.

It is wonderful to think how many offices a sister in the Lord can undertake in His service, when her heart is right with Him. Paul refers to some of these offices in 1 Timothy v. 10, in connection with the reception of women in the number of those to be helped. She must be well reported of for good works, have brought up a

family, have lodged strangers, have washed the saints' feet, have relieved the afflicted, and so forth. We are cognizant of the fact that thousands of dear Christian women to-day are carrying out work for the Lord in a quiet, unostentatious manner, apart from any thought of publicity which the majority of them would dread.

It is of incalculable value to the work of the Lord to find women labouring with some prominent evangelist or preacher in the same way as women laboured with Paul in the gospel, inviting people to the meetings and visiting any who had been exercised by the preaching of the Word, etc. May the Lord lead you to act with, and for, Him, in spite of the plausible reasonings of opponents.

Yours sincerely in Him,

J. P. (*Montreal*).

### “It is I, be not afraid.”

**H**OW cheering the well-known voice of Jesus must have been to the affrighted disciples on the tempest-tost lake of Galilee, “It is I, be not afraid.” There arise, in the history of every Christian, moments of trial and difficulty, when they too are made to realize that “the wind is contrary,” and the waves of adverse circumstances arise. It may be that some reader is proving this even now.

But there is One who loves us dearly and truly, however great the trial may be—One who has *all* love and *all* power. Jesus can walk on the stormy waves as well as on the calm water; and He need not have allowed the storm to arise at all unless He saw fit. But had He prevented it, the disciples would never have learned the lesson they did. And it is our privilege, too, to realize,

especially at such times, His nearness to us, though we see Him not with the natural eye nor do we hear Him with the natural ear.

How well, too, the Lord knew the deep sorrow of Martha and Mary at the death of their brother Lazarus ; and it is recorded, " Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." Yet He did not go at the moment He received the call, but waited two days, allowing death to supervene, even in the case of the beloved man. He looked off, in fact, beyond second causes, to the great purpose He had ever in view, namely, *the glory of God*.

Truly He loved that family, but His was a path of perfect and entire obedience, and of complete dependence on the will of God, whatever the circumstances or the cost might be. And these dark shadows which fell across the path of Jesus, only formed the sombre background of the picture, against which the moral glory and perfection of the perfectly obedient and dependent One shone out all the more brilliantly.

Let us fix the eye of faith firmly upon Him, and strength and victory are ours in every hour of need.

Saviour, in Thyself confiding,  
 We would rest and comfort find ;  
 Safe beneath Thy wings abiding,  
 Ours an undistracted mind.

Soon upon the cloud we'll meet Thee,  
 See Thee in Thy glory shine,  
 There with all Thy ransomed greet Thee—  
 Triumph of Thy love divine.

## This Month's Message.

### A Word of Encouragement.

**T**HERE are times when the Christian especially needs fresh help, strength and encouragement in his everyday path through this world, in which he has to meet with the trials and difficulties of the way. But God, in His grace, has not only met the need of our souls in providing a Saviour, but all our daily needs and wants as well.

What we desire to say a few words upon now is, the blessed encouragement we have in the sympathy and intercession of our Lord Jesus as our great High Priest in heaven. He has, first of all, made propitiation for our sins by His death upon the cross, and having done this, He ever lives to intercede for us and sustain us in our path here.

How perfectly suited and qualified for that office and work is Jesus the Son of God! Being truly and really man as well as truly and really God, He can feel for His people with all the tenderness of a truly human heart. Once He, too, experienced the trials of the way, when, as the Man of Sorrows, He passed through this world. Did He not sit weary at the well of Samaria, weep and groan at the grave of Lazarus, and was He not afflicted in all the afflictions of His people? Of Him, indeed, it could be said, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matt. viii. 17).

Typically, the Lord's position as High Priest was beautifully represented by the High Priest of old—Aaron. The very garments which, in the divine ordering, he was to wear, were in themselves most significant. Taking only the "ephod," which was *the* priestly garment, this prefigured certain features of Christ's present

service in His ceaseless intercession for His people in the presence of God. To it were inseparably attached the shoulder pieces and the breastplate, with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, in their order, *engraved* upon them, so that when Aaron entered the sanctuary thus clothed, he was to bear them up unceasingly before God.

And how incomparably superior in every way, is our High Priest to Aaron, who was but a mortal and dying man! For Jesus carries the whole weight and burden of His people, and their varied wants and needs, on His shoulders, and on His heart according to all the worth and acceptability of His Person, before God continually. And because He "continueth ever," His priesthood is "unchangeable" and can never fail or cease.

But, in order that we may get the practical help and comfort which these blessed truths afford, we need to have them brought before us from the Word of God, to meditate upon them and to make them our own by faith. Thus, in daily life, during the spare moments of the day, perhaps when some difficulty or trouble arises, may we be enabled to make practical use of these soul-sustaining realities, and, remembering the ceaseless intercession and sympathy of our *living* High Priest, get fresh strength and courage for the way.

### Short Meditations.—7.

"Our Enemies."—Psalm cxxxix. 21-24.

**T**HIS psalm presents to us such a wealth of truth and instruction that it would be impossible, even in a simple enumeration of its contents, not to make a long treatise. Such, however, is not my intention in these short meditations, in which I desire rather to

dwell upon the truths which come home daily to my heart and conscience. These truths enable us to know ourselves better, to judge ourselves more; to better know also the heart of Christ and to love Him better.

Since we know God, such as He is revealed to us in Jesus, we are called to be well-pleasing to Him; to hate all that He hates, and to bring our heart into agreement with all that He loves, finding our delight in it. Now we are hindered by two enemies of God which are equally hateful; one is the world, the other, our own natural heart—the flesh.

The world, in rejecting the Saviour, has shown that it *hates* God and that it is ripe for judgment, yet this does not hinder the activity of the grace of God towards sinners, until there remains no longer any hope for them. And we, the children of God, are privileged to present that same grace to the world, “We *pray* in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” But we cannot act thus unless we ourselves are living in a holy separation from the world and from all that it holds out to tempt us. All mixture with it weakens us or paralyses us entirely, and renders nugatory the mission with which God has entrusted us.

I will now speak of the *second enemy* which is the subject of my meditation, that is to say, my natural heart, the flesh, which is still in me. The psalmist mentions it in the last place. How am I to fight against it and render it powerless? The flesh remains always absolutely the same, whether I am still alienated from God, as at the beginning of the Psalm, or whether I belong to Him in virtue of His free salvation. Is it not the flesh in me which draws me into the ways of the world?

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Lord, hast not Thou given me a new heart, a heart which loves what Thou lovest and hates what Thou hatest? But if my old heart and thoughts—if this flesh which I no longer possess alone by itself since I have Thy Spirit and Thy life, draw me on in a “grievous way,” how shall I resist it? I have none but Thee, O God, to enable me to resist.

It is not sufficient for me to hate the world with a perfect hatred, I must escape from its influence. But how shall I do this? My heart, my thoughts, I myself, must be in harmony with the heart and the thoughts of Christ Himself, which God would have me to know (verse 17, 18), and thus my conduct should be in complete opposition to that of the men of this world. Then I can say, “Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts.”

And I can add, Thou who hast searched me and known me of old, when there was nothing in my heart but sin, and when I thought only of fleeing from Thee, search me and know me now that there are two natures in me, so as to bring me into harmony with the new nature which I possess in Christ, and so that nothing should arise in my walk and my testimony to hinder it. I have nothing to hide from Thee, O my God, and I do not desire to hide anything; and besides this, have I not learnt long ago that Thou seest and knowest everything that is in me?

Then work within me, Thou who art light, so that my eyes may see all that is contrary to Thy glory, bring me completely into harmony with it! Thou knowest that I feel the need of Thy searching, because the new man within me desires to be well-pleasing to Thee, and to glorify Thy well-beloved Son.

Is not my communion with Thee sometimes hindered

without my being able to discern the cause?—then search me. Thou alone canst show it me, for, “Thou art greater than my heart and knowest all things.” Thou wilt teach me, for Thou teachest the soul who draws near to Thee without deception, and hiding nothing.

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But, besides this, it is necessary that after having shown me what would be a “grievous way,” He Himself should lead me in a path which would have His entire approval, a path in which there would be neither decline nor stumbling, a path in which Christ would be fully glorified, the same path in which He Himself fully glorified the Father.

What happiness when the soul reaches this state! But we must not suppose that it attains definitely and completely this goal here below. The words, “Search me and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts,” should be renewed upon my lips each morning, in order that *each day* I may be kept from the “grievous way” and led in the way of truth and uprightness.

H. R. (*Vevey*).

### “Things the Angels desire to look into.”

1 Peter i. 10-12.

**I**S there not something especially worthy of our consideration in the character and scope of the salvation which this Scripture declares was the subject of inquiry and diligent search by the prophets who foretold it, and into which angels desired to look?

It is declared to be by “the Spirit of Christ in them”

that the prophets of old were moved to make these communications, and that they were aware at the time of their writing that the grace and privileges they foretold, were to come to others and not to themselves. It is of the deepest importance to note, too, that we are still in the times when these special blessings of which they spoke are to be known and enjoyed, yet what appalling indifference marks the general state of Christians as to what these blessings are. This is a sad contrast to the diligent search and anxious inquiry on the part of the prophets, as to the character and import of the sufferings of Christ, and consequent glories, which they were given to foretell and which form the salvation that was of such deep interest to the angels.

The present is the day when the "Holy Spirit sent down," is the divine medium and power for making known to faith, wherever it is found, the greatness and glory of this salvation. And it is men, not angels, that He uses to spread this great evangel. Wonderful privilege surely!

If angels were to be our judges, how would they punish the indifference with which men treat this unfathomable grace. They could not refrain from celebrating the birth of the long-promised Saviour and Messiah in that beautiful theme which another has described as their "*unjealous song*," "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Ages had passed since they shouted for joy at the power and wisdom displayed in the beneficent works of the six days of creation, and they were familiar with the mercy and goodness toward man, of which they were the willing ministrants all down through centuries since. But another manifestation of a totally different character was to be "*seen of angels*" (1 Tim. iii. 16), namely the blessed

Son of God—"God manifest in flesh," in "the form of a servant, in fashion as a man," humble and dependent, in the world His hands had made. Yes! the One whose behests it had been their happy privilege to obey as given from His heavenly courts, was now on earth, "seen of angels" and ministered to, not only as a man here, but a man who obeyed unto death, even the death of the cross.

Is it any wonder that they desired to look into these things?—those incomparable sufferings and that inexplicable mystery of His death. And then again, that other mystery of the long-delayed Kingdom, that so tested the faith of John the Baptist; why were the "glories that should follow" so long postponed, and this present waiting session so much extended? We are told that the learned Rabbis, in their Jewish darkness, being unable to understand this mystery of suffering and glory, have invented a tradition of two Messiahs (one a sufferer and the other a ruler in glory), in a vain attempt to explain certain prophecies.

What a day will that be when the veil will be taken away from Israel, and "they shall look on Him whom they have pierced, and mourn." And when repentance shall be granted, so that they shall say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him" (Isaiah xxv. 9).

But although the everlasting doors will yet have to be opened to receive the King of glory in His promised manifestation, they have already opened to receive Him as the One whose title to it all has been established in His death; for He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself and to destroy the works of the devil. It is He whose everlasting throne is to be established in righteousness, when He shall come in the glory of His Father and of the holy angels.

One word more as to this delay, this interval before "the revelation of Jesus Christ," of which Peter here speaks. Surely one reason for it is to be found in "the long suffering of our Lord which is salvation." Such is the grace that lingers over poor rebellious man and a guilty world, that it postpones, as it were, "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men"; so reluctant is it that the sword should fall.

Well may the apostle add, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." It is a day, surely, when such an exhortation is much needed. There is a tendency to let our minds run away with us. A day when the mind of man is unrestrained, and hesitates not to touch even the holy mysteries of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ with a presumption that is a sure presage of the judgment of God. Consequently this exhortation comes home with its special appeal to His people, "Gird up the loins of your mind," beware of looseness and flabbiness on the one hand, and presumption of the imagination on the other. With what tender shepherd love does the aged apostle, so soon to finish his course, appeal again and again to the flock, in his second letter, in those touching words, "Ye therefore, beloved." How like the blessed Master, for whom he was ready so shortly to put off "this tabernacle," and to follow in death for righteousness sake. But while he lived he was ready and willing to suffer for the sake of the precious gospel which the angels desired to look into.

T. R.

## The Choice of Faith.

“There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture’s eye hath not seen.”—Job xxviii. 7.

“Thou hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name.”—Rev. iii. 8.

THE path spoken of by Job must be one morally far above the earth ; a path above our circumstances, and therefore one which faith alone can tread. Peter trod there when he walked on the water to go to Jesus, just so long as his eye kept looking off the water—his circumstances—to Him (Heb. xii. 2) ; but Peter was not on that path when he took the eye off Jesus and looked at the rough sea (Matt. xiv. 25–31).

The beautiful and far-reaching approval which the Lord Jesus gives to Philadelphia would seem to refer to “the word of His patience,” patiently waiting till the “other sheep” (John x. 16) have been brought, and have heard His voice, and when all are gathered in He will come again, and receive them to Himself. We have also here the thought of identifying oneself with Him in this the day of His rejection, as He says, “Thou hast not denied My name.” It is remarkable what hesitation there is with many people as to making mention of the Divine names. It is often said, “Providence” does so and so. Some will go further, and say, “The Almighty.” But if you bring in the Lord Jesus Christ, often the hearer has nothing to say. In Rev. xxii. it is said, “His name shall be in their foreheads,”—a striking contrast to what the beast does (chap. xiii. 16)—and which will show our identification with Him in the eternal state.

But it seems to the writer that Christ would have us to identify ourselves with Him *now*, and that such definite action is the choice of *faith*, walking far above

the circumstances of this life. Another has truly said : "In the ordinary matters of this life, as to our circumstances, etc., faith's path is *not* to choose, but to give oneself quietly over to God's ordering for us. Lot; in self-confidence, chose for himself, pitched towards Sodom, and then went into it. The first warning God gave him had no effect upon him ; he was delivered at that time by his uncle's intervention, but he had no mind to leave Sodom ; and when the wicked city was at length destroyed, he lost everything, and the beautiful plain he had coveted became a burning fiery furnace. . . . In *spiritual* things the contrary holds good. God *expects us to choose* what is most excellent in the path which He graciously opens up to us."

The truth that "We walk by faith, not by sight," should deeply exercise us as followers of Christ, if we desire to identify ourselves with Him. In the Word of God there are a number of beautiful examples of the choice of faith, one of which strongly appeals to us as illustrating the meaning of the words, "Thou hast not denied My name." I refer to Moses. Among the "cloud of witnesses" recorded in Heb. xi. it is written of him, "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season ; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt ; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." Now the word translated "denied" in Rev. iii. 8, is the very same word in Greek as that which (referring to Moses) in Heb. xi. 24, is translated "refused." The time came when that godly man could no longer endure the court of Pharaoh while his brethren, the people of God, were suffering affliction

in cruel bondage. So he made the choice of faith to identify himself with them at the brick-kilns. But this involved self-denial and the denial of all relationship with the princes of Egypt. He denied, or refused, to be called her son. Thus he was no longer identified with her, but chose rather to have fellowship with those who belonged to God. Doubtless Moses was reproached by the courtiers of Egypt for making such a choice, as Christ was reproached by His brethren for refusing to take a prominent place at the Jews' feast of tabernacles (John vii.).

But to faith, that reproach was then, as it is still, greater riches than all that the world could or can offer. Moses was, virtually, in the spirit of Phil. iii. 7, 8, in counting all things but loss, in view of faith's far better portion. And, as to us in New Testament times—who that has a heart for Christ could refuse to have fellowship with Him in the day of His rejection? But the proper place for the *full* enjoyment of such a privilege is, as Heb. xiii. 13 says, “outside the camp.” That involves self-denial, separation from the world as well as from a worldly religion that puts man still under probation. But the cross of Christ has ended all that line of things. *There* I am crucified to the world, and the world is crucified to me; and there also I am dead to the law in order to live the life of faith—“the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

Let us never forget how the Lord Jesus Christ, in superabounding grace, identified Himself with us on the cross, He who knew no sin being made sin for us. There our sin did indeed abound, but His grace and love superabounded. And let that be the motive power in our souls for identifying ourselves with Him now, in a

world which rejects Him. Not to deny His name, surely includes our not refusing to own our association with Him as well as our witnessing for Him here, as He witnessed for the Father and maintained what was due to His name. Let us then not be ashamed boldly to confess Him before men, owning the One who was called Jesus as the Christ the Son of God; confessing Him as Lord, yea as the One "Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." And may we and all His people take His word to heart, "Behold I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

J. R. (Canada).

## The Burnt Offering.

Leviticus i.

THE typical teaching of the commands which the Lord gave to Moses when He spoke to him "out of the tent of meeting" is so instructive that we do well to look into it, even though we must necessarily do so briefly.

The burnt offering comes first in the order of the offerings, as presenting to us that aspect of the work of the Lord Jesus which is, as we might say, Godward. Chapters i. to iii. go together; chapter iv. commences a fresh section with the words, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying." In this first section (i-iii.) we get what are specially the offerings of *sweet savour* to the Lord, and which are also voluntary offerings. In the second, we have the various sin and trespass offerings, which are not said to be for a sweet savour,\* and which are obligatory for sins committed.

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\*Chapter iv. 31, is an exception to this rule. Here the Israelite in humble circumstances, when he presented his offering of a kid, had the satisfaction of knowing that it was a sweet savour.

If the offering were an animal, it was to be a male without blemish, and the offerer was to bring it "of his own voluntary will," or "for his acceptance," and "it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him." Though it supposes the existence of sin, and hence there was the need for atonement, the great point in this offering was that it was a voluntary act on the part of the offerer.

How admirably this typified the Lord Jesus! He said, "Lo, I come . . . to do Thy will, O God" (Heb. x. 7), "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again" (John x. 17). He was both the offerer and the offering, for He voluntarily "*offered Himself*" without spot to God.

The offerer was to lay his hands on the head of the offering in token of identification. This act, in the case of the burnt offering, has a peculiarly beautiful signification, because, in as much as it was a voluntary offering for a sweet savour, all the acceptability of the offering was transferred to the offerer. In the sin offering, on the other hand, the sins of the offerer were transferred to the victim in the same act of identification. Thus the worshipper was identified with the acceptance of the victim in the burnt offering, just as the victim was identified with the guilt of the offerer in the sin offering.

The bullock was then to be killed before the Lord, and the priest presented the blood. This latter was always the priest's work. The victim was then cut into his pieces, the inwards and legs being washed with water, and laid on the wood on the altar. The act of washing rendered the sacrifice pure, and this Christ, the antitype, was absolutely and essentially in His own person. The *whole* was then burnt upon the altar for

a sweet savour unto the Lord. This is the more remarkable because in most of the other offerings, part was to be eaten by the offering priest or the priestly family.

Now when we consider this in its application to Christ, we have the blessed truth that He, the holy and spotless victim, offering Himself of His own voluntary will to God, when tested even to death itself as the true burnt offering, yielded nothing but a sweet savour to God. In this point of view, we are not looking at the work of the cross as that which meets the sinner's need, important as that is in its place, but as that in which God has been infinitely glorified, His will accomplished, His holy nature vindicated as regards the question of sin, and His glory secured in the very place where sin was.

It could not be otherwise. The whole truth of the person of Christ—His perfect obedience and devotedness to God's glory, His voluntary act in the offering up of Himself to God: indeed all that He was, combined to add infinite value, as well as to render perfectly acceptable the sacrifice offered at Calvary.

In closing let us say a few words upon the law of the burnt offering (Lev. vi. 8-13). Three times over in this portion it is laid down that the fire was to be always burning, it was never to be put out. And how blessedly this reminds us of the fact that the sweet savour of the sacrifice, offered up once for all upon the cross, never fails.

Day and night, year in and year out, the fire on that altar was kept burning. Not only during the day, but during the long night of Christ's absence, when He is rejected by the world as well as by Israel as a nation; the sweet savour of the precious offering of our Lord Jesus never ceases. We (believers) stand before God in all the acceptance and fragrance of that offering now.

Israel too, in a future day when they shall repent and turn to the Lord, will be accepted in virtue of it also.

Thus it is by getting into God's thoughts, and seeing things from *His* point of view, that the soul grows in a deeper knowledge of the truth and of Christ, through the blessed ministry of the Spirit and the Word of God. Thus, too, we are lifted out of the shallow and unbelieving atmosphere which beclouds and dims the spiritual vision of many of God's dear children in Christendom to-day.

F. G. B.

### My Object.

LORD JESUS, Thou wilt ever be  
 A "very present help" to me.  
 Inspire to confidence and trust,  
 My timid heart, though bowed in dust.  
 No works of mine could bring me nigh  
 The precious blood, Thy power on high,  
 Has cleansed and brought me unto God,  
 Tho' once the ways of death I trod.  
 But though above, Thou dost bestow  
 The needed grace, while here below.

Yes Thou dost care, for Thou hast said,  
 E'en sparrows from Thy hand are fed.  
 Lord, I will ever to Thee fly,  
 For none can fail who to Thee cry.  
 Aye, I will stay close to Thy side,  
 Whate'er of good or ill betide.  
 I'm saved by grace, but not to live  
 Unto myself: Lord, now I'll give  
 My heart, my life, my all, to Thee,  
 Henceforth Thy willing servant be.

\* \* \*

## Worship.

**W**ORSHIP to God, true worship, cannot separate itself from the whole body of true believers. I cannot really come with my sacrifice unto the tabernacle of God, without finding necessarily there the priests of the tabernacle. Without the one Priest all is vain; for what without Jesus? But I cannot find Him without His whole body of manifested people. The interest of His heart takes them all in. God withal has His priests, and I cannot approach Him but in the way which He has ordained, and in association with, and in recognition of, those whom He has placed around His house, the whole body of those that are sanctified in Christ.

J. N. D.

## Bible-Searching—"Able."

The reader is invited to find the places where the following occur, without a concordance, and to examine the context.

### QUESTIONS.

1. "Is God able to furnish a table in the wilderness?"
2. "Is thy God able to deliver?"

### ANSWERS.

- (1) "What God hath promised He is able to do."  
 (2) "God is able to make all grace abound." (3) "Our God is able to deliver." (4) "God is able to do exceeding abundantly." (5) Christ is "able to succour." (6) "Able to save." (7) "Able to keep" (twice). (8) "God is able to graft them in again." (9) "God is able to make him stand." (10) "God is able to raise." (11) "The Lord Jesus Christ . . . is able to subdue all things." (12) "God is able of these stones to raise up children."

## This Month's Message.

D'AUBIGNE, in his history of the Reformation, speaking of the Middle Ages, remarks as follows :—

“ Men forsook the precious perfume of faith, and bowed down before the empty vessel that had contained it. They sought other bonds of union, for faith in the heart no longer connected the members of the church ; and they were united by means of bishops, archbishops, popes, mitres, canons, and ceremonies. The living church, retiring gradually within the lonely sanctuary of a few solitary hearts, an external church was substituted in its place, and all its forms were declared to be of divine appointment.”

There is surely something for us to learn from these remarks. What was it that brought the church into the condition here described ? No doubt the beginning of the failure was just what the Lord refers to in His address to the church at Ephesus (Rev. ii.) when He says, “ I have against thee that thou hast left thy first love.”

It was that *inward* decline, when Christ ceased to be the object before the heart, which opened the door to other objects, and led to *outward* ruin and lifeless formality. Worldliness and many other evils soon followed, until at last the climax was reached in later times.

And how is it with ourselves to-day ? We may have much light and truth, as well as what we believe to be a right ecclesiastical position. These are things for which we should be thankful, but they carry a serious responsibility with them. Are we holding the truth in communion with the Lord ? Are we walking in separation from the world and in devotedness to Him who is

our Saviour, our life, our all? Are we really looking and watching for His coming again as those who can say without any reserve, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus"?

"Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. . . . Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon Thee: Thou saidst, Fear not" (Lam. iii. 40, 57).

### Short Meditations—8.

To see Him, To consider Him, To look off unto Him.

—*Hebrews ii. 9; iii. 1; xii. 2.*

THE name "Jesus," which comes before us in these three passages, is the Lord's humble name as man, that which He received on coming into this world (Luke i. 31), the name in which He was rejected and came down even to the death of the cross. But it is also at that name that every knee must bow, even amongst those who rejected Him. To us, this name of "Jesus" speaks of intimacy, though never of familiarity, even when "He is not ashamed to call us brethren."

In the first of the above passages (ii. 9) it is said, "We see Jesus." It is not said that we are invited to see Him, but it is stated as a fact that we see Him. No doubt we do not see Him with our natural eyes, but with our spiritual vision, nevertheless it is a *real* sight. We follow Him in spirit, whom we have "seen with our eyes" here below—He who has been made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death—we follow Him to the heavenly places where we see Him now crowned with glory and honour.

We shall see Him later on with our own eyes, when He shall have come to take us to Himself, and we shall be like Him; yet our sight of Him now is not in any

way less real, for faith is the conviction of things we do not see.

In the second passage (iii. 1) we are invited to "consider Him." To consider an object is to examine it carefully in its various aspects; and two of these aspects, peculiar to the epistle to the Hebrews, are brought before our notice, so that we may become thoroughly acquainted with the value of them.

The first shows us Jesus as the Apostle of our confession, of our heavenly calling; the second as our High Priest. The apostle of the earthly calling of Israel was Moses, its high priest was Aaron. These two characters are united in Jesus, in order that He may lead the people of God towards the heavenly Canaan, across the wilderness of this world.

As the *Apostle* of our confession, He has announced to us "the great salvation," the news of an accomplished redemption, which gives us the title to the inheritance of glory. It is to this inheritance He leads us. As *High Priest*, not only has He given us access to the throne of grace, within the sanctuary, but He occupies Himself about us, giving us succour and sympathizing with our infirmities; and He is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God by Him.

When we consider Him, what assurance it gives us! The salvation of which we have become heirs has been acquired for us, the help and succour whilst we wait for it cannot fail us, for our Melchisedec is a Priest whose priesthood is unchangeable.

In the third passage (xii. 2) it is said, "Looking off unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith." Are we not often wearied by the long continuance of the effort? As we go on, the extent of the way seems to stretch on till the end is almost lost to view. Could we not stop

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a moment in order to get over our fatigue, and then start on the journey again after we have been refreshed? Senseless people that we are! "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain" (1 Cor. ix. 24).

Let us remember, too, that many others are around us in the race, witnesses of the advantages of a life of faith—faith in promises not yet fulfilled and in an object not yet attained. But it is not to these witnesses—often faulty, always weak—that we are told to look. The writer of the epistle tells us to turn away our eyes from every other object in order to fix them upon *Jesus* alone. Did He ever fail in patience? Did He ever stop in the race? No, He ran the whole course to the end without one faltering step, and He reached the end. He is now "set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Nothing stopped Jesus in the race, neither the contradiction of sinners, nor the cross, nor the shame, but He reached the object set before Him—the joy of having glorified the Father, of having finished the work of salvation, of having gained for Himself His bride.

Let us, then, fix our eyes upon Jesus. He is the *author of faith*; He has led the way before us in order to reach the object that we reach as the consequence: He is the "finisher of faith," for up to this moment He alone has arrived at the full consummation.

Our strength and our blessing is to be found in fixing our eyes on Jesus. Happy are they whose strength is in Him, who go from strength to strength! And the end will soon be reached—Zion, the mount of royal grace, will soon be scaled and we can rest there, where He Himself rests whilst waiting for us!

H. R. (*Vevey*).

## Gospel Testimony.

**I**T is much to be regretted that current preaching in Christendom is far from giving satisfactory results, even where there have been revivals and increase of numbers. The explanation of some close observers is that only a minority stand well.

We would not ignore the movement that took place about a century ago in both hemispheres, when precious truth, hidden or forgotten amid the dust of theology, was recovered through the grace of God. The Spirit of God was then working in a remarkable manner in the souls of both men and women.

The gospel was then proclaimed in all its *fulness*, including those facts on which the Apostle Paul insists in such terms as the "gospel of God," or otherwise as "my gospel," "our gospel," and the "gospel of Christ."

It was, as he tells us in Galatians i. 12, received "by the *revelation* of Jesus Christ." It was not of man, neither was he taught it; but it pleased God, who called him by His grace, to "reveal His Son in him," that he might preach this gospel among the heathen (Gal. i. 15, 16).

It is important to bear this in mind; for although when he pursued his ministry in the heathen localities, there were Jews to be found who obeyed the gospel; yet Paul's ministry was especially directed towards the *heathen*: and in this respect, it differed in form from that preached by the blessed Lord and by Peter, who both proclaimed the "Gospel of the *kingdom*" which will finally be set up. The Lord Jesus and His apostle Peter preached to those of their own nation, and their ministry was one of affectionate appeal and entreaty. In the case of our blessed Lord, it continued so to be

until, after every effort to gain their hearts and reach their consciences, He had to pronounce the terrible woes that we read of in Matt. xxiii.

The Lord Jesus was "a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God" (Rom. xv. 8). Peter is stated to have been the apostle of the circumcision, for reaching the Jewish nation, but Paul emphasizes the fact that the gospel of the uncircumcision, suited to their condition as heathen, was committed to his special care (Gal. ii. 7-9).

If the reader will closely follow the ministry of the Apostle Paul in his epistles, he will conclude with the writer, that the gospel he set forth was not of an entreating or inviting nature, as a rule; but he took care to proclaim *three* great and important facts in connection with the Person of Christ: these were, His Cross, His resurrection, and His *coming again*. That gospel he called upon his hearers to *obey*.

If any of these great facts are omitted in our ministry, it is evident that Paul's gospel is not preached in its fulness.

At the time above referred to by the writer—nearly a century ago now—these three great facts were always presented, and some of us are old enough to be able to recall association with those who were preaching at that time, and whose experience was that the presentation of the coming of the Lord had such a remarkably convincing effect, that numbers were brought by the power of the Holy Ghost to accept the gospel in its fulness. Now, this, alas, is one of the facts almost universally omitted in current preaching at the present time.

It might be as well here to give, from the Scripture itself, instances to show how careful was the Apostle

Paul to include the great and crowning fact of the Lord's "coming" in his ministry of the gospel.

In his first epistle to the Corinthians (chap. xv. 1) he reminds them of the gospel he had declared previously when with them, wherein they stood, and by which they were saved. Notice how he speaks of these three fundamental facts; and firstly, of the *Cross*, "How that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." Secondly, we find mention of His *resurrection*, in that "He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures."

Then he follows with proofs by those who saw the Lord when risen, and the importance of insisting on the great fact of the resurrection generally; but he would by no means omit the third great fact of His *coming* again; for in verse 51 he was enabled to make known the secret that had been revealed to him, and which he calls a "mystery," namely, that "we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump"—it was of vital consequence to insist on the resurrection as well as the Lord's coming.

Then again, in the 1st epistle to the Thessalonians—a company of Christians who had only been recently converted when he wrote the letter—we find the three great facts just mentioned. The apostle reminds them also of the character of his ministry, under which they obeyed the gospel, in "turning to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come" (chap. i. 9, 10).

In every chapter in both of these epistles we find mention of the coming of the Lord *for* His saints, or

*with* them. We should ever remember that the coming of the Lord was a special revelation given to the Apostle Paul, as he himself insists upon it in 1 Thess. iv. 15: "For this we say unto you, *by the word of the Lord,*" etc.

We should also bear in mind that although, in a general way, the Lord spoke of His return, in order to have us with Himself, the *manner* of it was alone made known to the Apostle Paul, as he says. It is very important for believers, if we desire rightly to divide the "Word of truth," to keep distinctly in our minds the two lines of truth—one connected with the *heavenly* side of things, to be enjoyed at present by faith, and the other having an earthly character, in view of those who will be privileged to take part in it. The *kingdom* is *earthly* in its character, and the ministry of it points to the *appearing* of the coming King when Christians shall have been already with Him in the glory, and be found associated with Him when He comes to the earth for judgment. Hence it is written: "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world" (1 Cor. vi. 2).

But He will previously have come *for* us, when He descends from heaven with a shout and raises the saints who have already died, before He sets up His earthly kingdom (1 Thess. iv. 16). The coming of the Lord *for* the saints, the sleeping and the living ones, is *heavenly* in its character, and of this the presentation of Jesus as "the bright and morning star" is a beautiful figure. The "appearing," which is connected with the *kingdom*, is *earthly* and suited to the earth. Of this latter His appearing as the "Sun of Righteousness," to usher in the "day" of millennial blessing for this earth, is the apt and suited illustration.

J. P. (*Montreal*).

## Paul's Gospel.

**I**N reference to what we have said in the previous article, when we come to consider in detail the substance of the gospel, as we find it set forth in the first chapter of the epistle to the Romans especially, we cannot but be struck with the fact that it is addressed to those who are believers, that is "saints" by their calling, as we see in verse 7. For the apostle thanks God that their *faith* was spoken of "throughout the whole world" (chap. i. 8).

In our experience we find that while passages of Scripture of a doctrinal nature have been, and are, used of God to convict souls, yet if they do not get a full gospel ministered to them besides, they are left in an unhappy and often uncertain state. Practically they are very much in the condition of the one described in the seventh chapter of this epistle.

Everyone is called in the first instance to "obey the *gospel*" (Acts xxviii. 24; Rom. x. 16). When that is done sincerely, the next step is to have the ear open and the heart exercised for the teaching of doctrinal truth on which the Lord insists in John vii. 16, 17, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me; if any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." In the Gospels, we find that which is suitable for conduct and walk in connection with the *kingdom* of God, to have part in which, is the prospect of all believers who have obeyed the gospel, as preached, for instance, by the Apostle Paul.

We should indeed call to mind that GOD is the source of Paul's gospel, which is, as he says, "concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (chap. i. 3). It was, in the first instance, addressed to those who by nature

were hostile, and, in their minds, "enemies," alienated from God by their wicked works, which they were in no way inclined to give up (Col. i. 21).

Is it not a fact that, in current preaching, we hear but little of the CROSS, the first of the three great facts already referred to? The cross of Christ may well be termed the central fact of Christianity; and where it is proclaimed in the power of the Holy Ghost, it has the effect of arresting the listener's attention, drawing his mind away from his own thoughts, and centring them upon an object outside of himself—so wonderful and soul-inspiring, that he discovers that he is quite unfit for God's presence. But when, in soul-need, he bows to the truth about his moral condition, as well as to the holy requirements of God, he is led to realize the fact that there is One who has been "made sin," that is, a sin-offering, in order to become a ransom and a Redeemer—whose precious blood shed upon the cross, has opened up the way for him to step right into the presence of God, and to find his true joy *there*.

The gospel of God as proclaimed by Paul will be seen and felt to be *objective* in its character; that is, it occupies the hearer with the death and resurrection of the Saviour. A *subjective* gospel which characterizes the preaching to-day, with comparatively few exceptions, engages the hearers with themselves, and their state, so that they are thrown in upon their own thoughts, and are often pressed by preachers to make immediate decision, which they are little prepared for.

But the preacher, if going on with God, will not be occupied with results; for he is conscious that the Holy Spirit is exercising his hearers, and producing heart-searching work, which is of great value in bringing a listener to have to do with God. When the gospel is

thus presented, in its simplicity, it connects the hearers with God, like the Thessalonian converts, who “ turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven ” (chap. i. 9-10).

The pith of the gospel is not to show what man ought to be for God ; that is the law of Moses, given at Mount Sinai. But the gospel shows what God is for man, a sinner, in order to lead him to the Saviour ; and *that* surely is sovereign grace. As another has said : “ The Cross stands alone in the history of eternity ; there is nothing whatever like it, except the heart of Him who died upon it.”

Doctrines connected with the gospel, such as the fall and ruin of man, and the righteousness of God, are, in Paul’s epistles, addressed to *believers*. These truths should be learned *after* the soul is brought to God.

In conclusion—for all who minister in the gospel—I would remind them of their responsibility to preach it as it is presented in Scripture. Failure in this would easily bring such under the charge of preaching “ another gospel ” (Gal. i. 6-12).

J. P. (*Montreal*).

## The Meat Offering.

Leviticus ii.

**T**HE meat offering (meal offering or oblation as the better translations read it) was not one in which animals or fowls were offered, as in the burnt offering. It was of fine flour, with oil and frankincense. The “ memorial ” of it, that is a handful taken by the priest, was burnt upon the altar for a sweet savour to the Lord. The remnant which remained was eaten by Aaron and his sons, and it was characterized as being “ most holy.”

This offering represented Christ, not in His death as made sin and offering Himself voluntarily to God, but in His life. It is what He was in Himself in His perfection as man here in every conceivable circumstance of His path. There are three ways in which it was to be treated—baken in the oven, baken on the pan, or prepared in a cauldron. There are also differences in the form of the offering itself—either unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled or mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil. In the latter case the wafers were to be cut into pieces and oil poured upon them.

Now all these things have a deep typical meaning and prefigured Christ in some aspect of His blessed person as seen here below. The fine flour typified His pure and spotless humanity, as we read in Luke i. 35, “That holy thing which shall be born . . . .” Truly man as He was, no taint of sin was in *His* nature, who was conceived of the Holy Ghost. It is written, “In Him is no sin” and “He did no sin.” How carefully the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures guards, in every little detail, even in types such as this, the perfection, the personal purity, and the intrinsic holiness of the Lord Jesus!

Let us notice the two ways in which the oil was applied to the cakes and wafers. The former were to be mingled or mixed with oil, and the latter anointed with oil. So the Lord Jesus was *conceived* of the Holy Ghost, as Matthew and Luke inform us so plainly. And besides this, as Peter says in Acts x. 38, He was “*anointed* with the Holy Ghost and with power” (see also Luke iv. 18). Not only was the Lord Jesus conceived by the action of the Holy Ghost, acting upon Mary, but all His life, every act and word (as symbolized by the several pieces into which the cakes

were parted with oil put upon each) was in the power and energy of the Spirit of God.

The various manners in which the offering was to be treated—whether baked in the oven, on the pan, or prepared in the cauldron—set forth symbolically the many ways in which the only perfect man, Jesus, was tried and tested as He passed through this world. But all these testings only proved His perfection and caused the fragrance of the frankincense to ascend to God as a sweet savour. The burning of the memorial signifies that, whilst the meal offering presents to us Christ in His life and path here, yet that testing went on even to His death; and thus tested in His whole path up to the very uttermost, all went up as a sweet savour to God.

Leaven and honey were rigidly excluded from the meal offering, also every offering was to be seasoned with salt. Leaven was typical of evil (Exod. xii. 8, 15; 1 Cor. v. 7, 8; Gal. v. 9); honey of the mere sweetness of nature, which, while good in its place, could not enter into the sacrifices; and salt of that preserving quality which showed entire separation to God.

In the law of this offering (Lev. vi. 14–18) we have the very instructive fact that the remainder of it, after the memorial had been burnt, was to be eaten by Aaron and his sons in a holy place, and it is said to be “most holy.”

Aaron and his sons represent the whole priestly family, the body of believers; man in nature, unregenerate, has no part in these things. It is, therefore, the blessed privilege of the believer, as a member of the priestly family, to feed upon the meal offering. It is ours to meditate upon the blessed path and life of the Lord Jesus as presented in the Gospels, etc.—all

that He was as the perfect man, obedient, dependent, ever doing the Father's will, actuated and governed only and alone by what was for the Father's glory. And thus, by feeding upon Him spiritually, to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

F. G. B.

## Stand! Stand! Stand! Stand!

THE purposes of the "good pleasure" of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ are remarkably unfolded in the *opening* of the epistle to the Ephesians, while at the *close* of it we have another remarkable feature, namely, a fourfold appeal to God's people to "stand."

Why has the apostle spoken thus?

The "great mystery" concerning Christ and the Church had hitherto been "hid in God" as that which "in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." In his epistles the Apostle Paul passes on this revelation, made known only to him, "whereby," he says, "when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ."

Reader, "when you read" this epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians, may I ask—Understandest thou Paul's knowledge in the mystery of Christ? Twice in this epistle Paul prays: "that ye may know" and "that ye may be able to comprehend." Through the riches of God's grace let us also "read" until we reap the harvest of blessing in these rich pastures of God's great love, "till," as he prays, "We all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son

of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

In the counsels of His love before the foundation of the world, God purposed in Himself, “that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ even in Him”; and “gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all . . . that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

Here then “the ages past” and “the ages to come” are linked together in time—this present period of time. This link is “the church of God” wherein God revealed His own heart’s eternal secret to him who was once chief of sinners but now by His grace His apostle. Of this church every believer on the Lord Jesus Christ everywhere is a member, even as all are members of Christ’s body. This is the only membership formed by the Holy Spirit and owned of God in His Word.

Reader, do you own, and are you satisfied with simply owning, the one only membership acknowledged and made known in the Scripture for to-day?

In Ephesians (chap. iv.) there are seven “ones”—a perfect number—all complete and connected in this unfolding of the secret of the mystery concerning Christ and the Church—“one body,” “one Spirit,” “one hope,” “one Lord,” “one faith,” “one baptism,” “one God and Father.”

The beseeching voice of Paul “the prisoner of the Lord,” in this fourth chapter, urges upon us the “endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Here surely is the true and scriptural “*Christian Endeavour*” for all Christians to-day.

When the Lord Jesus was on earth the devil sought to defeat Him in His pathway of love, but at the Cross the devil was defeated and his power annulled : for there Christ delivered His people and lead captivity captive. Moreover He has gone up far above all heavens, in consequence of which God the Holy Ghost has come down to form the church. He is still here, indwelling the believer, and abides both in and with the church of God.

At the present time the wiles of the devil are directed against the work of the Holy Ghost, to defeat Him in His purpose of glorifying Christ, and manifesting the oneness between Christ and the Church, as revealed in the Scripture.

The epistle to the Ephesians, given of God mainly to make known this great mystery, contains the special truth to which the devil is opposed. Hence at the close of it we have disclosed "the whole armour of God" provided by Him, the panoply, wherein the saints may be covered, and which is more than able to vanquish the enemy. In this victory, the word "stand," four times repeated in the last chapter, must have its proper place : "Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil," "withstand" in the evil day, and having done all to "stand," "stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth."

Considering our responsibility to *stand* for God against all the wiles of the devil, well may the apostle urge upon the saints the true attitude in which the Christian warrior should be found, namely, on his knees in prayer : "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." U. G.

## This Month's Message.

### Three Unities (John xvii.).

**I**N that wonderful outpouring of heart in prayer given us in John xvii., the Lord Jesus makes request to the Father for three distinct unities for "His own." Let us consider them briefly.

1. The unity of the disciples concerning whom He spoke (verse 11), "That they all may be one, as we are." Here it is important to note the last three words, "as we are." There was no divergence of aim, thought or purpose between the Father and the Son, but complete unity in everything. And the Lord prays that they (His disciples) should be so kept that the same unity would exist amongst them. Such is His request to the One whom He addresses as "Holy Father," and indeed He prays at the high level of His own thoughts and His heart's desires for them.

2. The unity of all believers (verse 21), "That they all may be one," etc. This applies to us to-day. It was to be a unity based on the fact that all His people receive the same divine life and nature and are all indwelt by the one Holy Spirit, thus producing common thoughts and purposes, and delivering from those prejudices and selfish motives which would naturally separate one from the other.

By this unity the world was to "believe" that the Father sent the Son; it was therefore to be a manifested unity before the world—something that could be seen. And no doubt it was seen, practically, at Pentecost, when all that believed were together, and when they had one heart and one soul.

This passage in John xvii. is often referred to by those who, at the present time, are striving for the reunion of the churches of Christendom. And indeed, when we consider the divided state of Christians, what can we say but bow our heads in confession before God, each owning his common share in the failure ?

But the testimony of Scripture is uniform that, once failure and declension have come in, there is no possibility of restoring the mass of those who profess. What we may expect, therefore, is the judgment, not the reunion, of Christendom. This is a solemn consideration but it is a *fact* (1 Peter iv. 17 ; Ezek. ix. 6). True unity can only be brought about by the Holy Spirit acting in the hearts of believers, enabling them to drop their prejudices and party predilections, and drawing them to one common centre, namely, to Christ Himself.

3. The future unity in glory (verse 23). The Lord prays, "That they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me."

This request will be answered in that coming day when the church will be displayed as the "holy city, Jerusalem" (Rev. xxi.), visible in the heavens above Jerusalem on earth. Then the inhabitants of the millennial world, seeing the saints perfected in one and manifested in the same glory with Christ, will "know" that the Father sent the Son, and that He loved these redeemed ones as He loved His own Son. In this unity there is, and can be, no failure, for all will be made good in the hands of the Lord Himself.

But, thank God, *we* (believers) do not wait till then to know the Father sent the Son and has loved us as He loved Him : *we* know it *now* by the Word and by the Holy Spirit, for our soul's joy and comfort !

## Short Meditations.—8.

### Occupation with Evil.

**E**VIL may be viewed in two ways: as evil in us or as evil in the world.

The book of Job presents to us the picture of a believer viewed in connection with the question of good and evil *in himself*. In answering his friends, who alleged that his trials were a judgment of God on account of his wrong-doings, Job defended himself, and concluded, according to Elihu, "I am clean without transgression, I am innocent; neither is there iniquity in me."

But the conclusion of this history shows us that we never judge of evil truly until we get into the presence of God, that is to say, of perfect good. *Then* we reach a result diametrically opposed to our first conclusions, and say, "Behold, I am vile . . . I will lay my hand upon my mouth"; "Now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The light of God's presence only causes us to view the evil in us with horror and leads us to true repentance.

If it is a question of the *evil outside of us*, of the evil in which the world is plunged, it is an entirely different case, and we learn by many examples in what way we should be occupied with it without losing communion with the Lord.

The first condition needed to consider evil according to the thoughts of God is, to be entirely separate from it ourselves; without this we cannot have even a moment's happiness. The case of Lot is a very striking example of this. Lot had a "righteous soul," but he was deprived of communion with God because he had chosen his part with the world and had gone to dwell there.

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In the midst of it he had the evil continually before his eyes and could not banish it from his thoughts.

The consequence of this was that he, "just Lot" was "vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds." He did not think of justifying the evil, quite the contrary; but he was without strength and without resource against it; he had not a moment's rest or contentment in his soul. His suffering from a state of evil which he saw to be incurable was unceasing, but he found it impossible to abstract himself from it in order to grow in what was good, for he was incapable of it, not having a good conscience before God.

Abraham was entirely different. Occupying himself only with what was good and enjoying the presence of the Lord, the evil only produced, in his case, intercession for the iniquities of the ungodly. Now the work of intercession is never accompanied by sorrow; on the contrary, we carry it on in the happy sense of the resources which are at God's disposal to remedy evil, but with the conviction also that a moment will come when, in order to secure the glory of God, judgment will be inevitable. The danger which Lot ran only served to call forth, in the case of Abraham, all the energy of faith, in order that he might fly to his assistance after the battle with the kings.

It may, however, happen that the believer, through want of vigilance, may become the prey of the wicked one. Should that happen—and David is an example of it—it will be necessary for him, in order to enjoy the light of God's countenance again, to retrace painfully and with tears of repentance, the road which he had passed over until he rejoins the true path of God at the

point where he had left it. Sometimes he will even be obliged for this purpose to go back even to the beginning of his career.

A soul who lives habitually in the presence of God and enjoys his heavenly position in Christ, will be always capable of discerning the good and the evil—the good, in order to do it; the evil, in order to be wholly separated from it. Of this our beloved Saviour has given us the perfect example. He walked in the midst of all the evil which characterizes a world which is hostile to God, without being tainted by it in any way, but rather indeed to suffer from it. He was so separated that He did not take into His lips the names of those who “hastened after another god” (Ps. xvi.).

He walked so entirely above the evil that His sorrowful life is presented to us as a path of delights. These “delights” He found in “the saints that are in the earth,” in the goodly heritage which fell to Him, in the countenance of His God, satisfying His soul and filling Him with joy, in the pleasures which He should have at God’s right hand for evermore. Even the sepulchre and death were, for Him, the path of life!

H. R. (*Vevey*).

## “Thy Kingdom Come.”

Matthew vi. 10; Luke xi. 2.

THE words quoted above are taken from the prayer which the Lord taught His disciples at their request, so that they might express themselves in prayer as John’s disciples did. It is frequently termed, both by Catholics and Protestants, “the Lord’s Prayer,” but might be better named “the disciples’ prayer, given them by the Lord.”

Let us briefly consider the matter as follows :—

(1) *What is really "the Lord's prayer" according to Scripture?*

If we turn to the Gospel of John, chapter xvii., we shall find that wonderful outpouring of the Lord's heart which might indeed be called "the Lord's Prayer." He speaks anticipatively as from the resurrection side of the cross and as having finished the work the Father gave Him to do. This the disciples neither did nor could understand until after the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost.

The Lord, lifting His eyes from earth to heaven, addresses the Father in these words, "I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." It is clear, therefore, that He views the cross and His earthly path as *behind Him*, so that He could righteously ask to be glorified along with the Father with the glory which He had along with Him before the world was. After this His thoughts are occupied with those who had accompanied Him in His path of rejection, naming them as those the Father had *given* to Him out of the world.

And it is to be noted here that the word used for "pray" in verses 9, 15 and 20 is a strong one and is translated by some "demand" or "request"—a word which could be used by the Lord, not only as the accomplisher of the Father's will, but also in virtue of His Deity and equality with the Father, to whom He speaks. In this, as in all else, it is blessed to note the perfect union of the divine and the human natures in the glorious Person of Christ.

(2) *The coming Kingdom of the Messiah.*

To have an intelligent understanding of the subject before us, it should be remembered that the Lord is

viewed here on earth, as the coming Messiah, taking His place with the disciples as looking for the *kingdom*. This is especially the case in the three synoptical Gospels; whilst John begins his Gospel with the fact of Christ's rejection, "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." When the Lord speaks of the coming of the Son of man, as He does several times, it refers to His *appearing* in *earthly* glory to set up His kingdom.

It is well to note also that, in His ministry, the Lord has in view chiefly, if not exclusively, His own people, the nation of Israel. Even when sending out His twelve disciples His words are, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. x. 5, 6).

So when the disciples ask for a form of prayer He gives them one which directs their minds to what is connected with the coming kingdom. "Thy kingdom come"\* is one of its requests; so when this kingdom is set up, as it will be, the answer to this and to the petition, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," will come to pass. This last request is only mentioned in Matthew's Gospel, and the one which follows, "For Thine is the kingdom," etc., is left out by some authorities.

### (3) *Difference between the Christian and Jewish position.*

Let us remark that the disciples had then the Lord Himself with them to teach them how and what to pray for. But *we* (Christians), since the death and resurrection of Christ, have the Holy Spirit to teach

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\* It is "*Thy* kingdom," that is, the Father's kingdom. This is what we might call the higher or heavenly side of the millennial kingdom.

and lead us in prayer. Thus the apostle says, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. viii. 26). Again, "Praying in the Holy Ghost" (Jude 10).

When the believer is walking in communion with God, with an ungrieved Spirit, the Spirit will lead and guide him in the expression of his needs. So too the apostle enjoins on the Ephesian believers, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit."

The reader will see from the foregoing that, if we are to correctly interpret the Scriptures, it is impossible to mingle the truth which belongs to the kingdom here on earth, with that which is connected with a *heavenly* Christ and a *heavenly* people—it would be to attempt to mingle Christianity and Judaism. What relates to the *old* creation cannot be merged into what belongs to the *new*, where "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. v. 17).

The disciples who had received the Lord, and who were quickened by Him—for "the Son quickeneth whom He will"—knew Christ "after the flesh" as their Messiah and coming King; but those who belong to *this* dispensation, that is *Christians*, do not know Him in *that* character but rather as Head of the body, the church, and on "new creation" ground. They are taught to look for Him to come for them, and that may take place at any moment. Their proper hope is—not the kingdom, but the Lord Himself, coming to take them clean out of this world altogether to meet Him in the air (1 Thess. iv. 17).

(4) *Importance of distinguishing truths that differ.*

It is of the greatest importance that we should distinguish between the old creation and the new, between

(Continued on page 153.)

Judaism and Christianity. It is a serious retrogression to mingle these subjects in our minds, for progress in the truth is hindered thereby. We are enjoined to rightly divide the word of truth (2 Tim. ii. 15). And is it not the case that the sweet intimacy into which the grace of God introduces us is not enjoyed by the majority of believers? As to their position before God, many only take the place the disciples were in before the Holy Ghost came, not realising that now, since the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, they are as near to the Father as the Son Himself.

In John's Gospel, which specially brings before us the truth of our place as children in the family of God, we do not get expressions such as "Father in heaven" or "heavenly Father," for these expressions imply distance, which existed between the disciples viewed as on earth, as in Matthew, and the Father in heaven. But there is *now* no distance between the believer and the Father above, for we are seen as already there as to our position, and we shall be there bodily when the Lord comes. Prayer to the "heavenly Father," though it may be quite sincerely and heartily uttered, does not go beyond the position of the disciples, nor does it rise to the height of the Christian's place and relationship as one beloved of the Father and having all the value of the Son's name to plead before the Father in prayer (see John xvi. 23-27).

J. P. (*Montreal*).

### A Letter.

**T**HE following letter from a beloved servant of God—  
C. H. Macintosh, now gone to his eternal rest, has been sent us for publication. It is both interesting and instructive. It is dated 16th April, 1887.

MY BELOVED FRIEND,—Your loving letter was most welcome, and I hasten to thank you for it and also to reply to your kind inquiry after our health. Since I last wrote I have had a time of much bodily suffering and illness—gout in both feet and heavy bronchitis. I have been a prisoner for over a month. We had purposed shutting up our wee villa on the 19th inst. and going to London for the meetings. We were also expected at a large meeting at Rotherham on the 8th inst. But the gracious Lord ordered otherwise and His way is perfect. We have to learn that God is as much glorified by a patient sufferer, as by an active servant. This is a most important lesson. It was said of one of the greatest servants—yea, *the* greatest of Christ's servants, "I will show him how great things he must *suffer*," not what he must *do*.

I have found this season to be very good spiritually, a time for proving the reality, power, and preciousness of what one has been speaking and writing about for the last forty-five years. We are not now called to prison, the block, or the stake; but we have to pass through tribulation, in one way or another, and we glory in this because of its precious results. "Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope."

In Romans v. 1, 2, we have *peace* to begin with, *grace* to go on with, and *glory* as our hope. Then comes tribulation, with all its precious results, and at verse 4 we come back to "hope" again; but we do so in a deeper condition of soul, more mellowed, matured, and subdued. We do not look so *large* or so *extensive*, and assuredly we are much smaller in our own eyes, and this is good.

It is interesting to note that the word "tribulation"

is from the Latin word "*tribulatio*," signifying "a thrashing machine." This is very suggestive. The grain looks smaller coming out of the machine, but it is genuine, the chaff is knocked off. Thus it is with us, there is a lot of chaff, and much of the unreal, which must be removed. This needed blessed work must be effected by "tribulation."

But I fear my beloved correspondent will say that I am always writing sermons, instead of letters, the very thing I do not like to be done to me. Well, I know you delight in the precious truth of God, and hence I shall not offer any apology.

Through mercy I am better, but weak, and unable to venture out in the cold wind. I am a prisoner of hope, looking forth from the stronghold of grace for the appearing of the glory. All praise to our God and Saviour!

My beloved E—— is wonderfully sustained and always bright. She has been the sunbeam of my path during the thirty-eight years of our blessed companionship. She joins me in warm love to you and dear Mrs. ——. Also much love to all our beloved Bournemouth friends. May the word of Christ dwell in them richly, and the peace of Christ rule in their hearts. Tell them that the exhaustless resources of God, the moral glories of Christ, and the living depths of holy Scripture are only unfolded by the Holy Ghost to *faith* and *need*. Not to the learned, the clever, the far-seeing or the deep thinking, but to the little child that wants and trusts.

Ever, my beloved friend, your deeply affectionate

(signed) C. H. M.

## The Peace Offering.

Leviticus iii.

THIS chapter is the last of the three chapters which give us the voluntary offerings for a sweet savour to the Lord. Chaps. iv. and v. relate to sin and trespass offerings, which are obligatory and needed for the sinner.

The peace offering combined, to a certain extent, the same features as the burnt offering (chap. i.) and the meal offering (chap. ii.); but, as we shall see in a moment, it was chiefly designed to set forth the truth of the communion of the people of God with God Himself, with Christ the offering priest, and with one another.

In this offering the victim might be either a male or a female. In the case of the burnt offering, a male *only* was to be offered, because that offering, as representing the sacrifice of Christ as wholly devoted to Jehovah, required the very highest form of victim. In this offering also, it must be "without blemish." The offerer's hands were laid on the victim in token of identification, and the priest presented the blood. The burning of the fat as a sweet savour formed also a characteristic and important part of this offering.

The law of the peace offering (chap. vii. 11-18) brings before us some touching and important details. The worshipper who presented it for a thanksgiving brought with it unleavened cakes mingled with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil, fine flour saturated with oil and unleavened bread. These had the character of a meal offering (chap. ii.), so that we have not only Christ in His *death* (the foundation of everything) but Christ in His *life*, which went up as a continual sweet savour to God, and in which we too can find our delight.

But besides this there was to be offered leavened bread. This is the more remarkable, because leaven

was rigidly excluded from the meal offering. The reason is, that in what represented Christ alone, there was no leaven; but when we (believers) come in, there is leaven, for man—be he ever so saintly or godly—has sin in his nature, even if it be not actively allowed.

A part of these things, as well as the right shoulder, were for a peace offering to Jehovah and were the portion of the offering priest who presented the blood. The wave breast was the portion of Aaron and his sons, that is, of the priestly family. The rest was for the one who presented the offering, and those invited by him.

How wonderfully God had in view, in all these types and in each detail, the One who was ever His delight, and whom He has now given to us to be our delight also! The heavens could open over Jesus and the Father's voice could own Him as "My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." But above all, the offering brings before us all that God found in His death, which went up as a sweet savour to Him. No wonder that the Apostle John, in the opening of the book of Revelation, the moment he mentions the name of Jesus Christ, breaks forth in a note of worship, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood . . . be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Or again, Paul, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maran-atha."

And Jesus Himself—He, too, finds His joy together with His redeemed—the children whom God has given Him—in filling their hearts with joy and leading their worship, as it is said, "In the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee."

The apostle alludes to this very subject of communion in 1 Cor. x. 18–21, showing that, in partaking of the altar, we have fellowship with what is there

represented, "They which eat of the sacrifices are partakers of the altar." And since we thus have communion with God, it is well that we should never forget what is suited and due to Him. For it is solemnly stated here that the soul that eats of this sacrifice with uncleanness upon him shall be cut off from his people. It does not say that he is not an Israelite, but, if he goes into God's presence with unjudged sin upon him, he will suffer under His discipline as did some at Corinth.

Neither fat nor blood were to be eaten: this was a most peremptory command. The fat denoted the inward energies devoted wholly to Jehovah, the blood was the life which belonged to God. Nevertheless, as we contemplate the Lord Jesus in the entire devotedness of His whole inward energies to God, as well as in the giving up of His life to meet the claims of God's glory, it is indeed ours, to have communion with God in the joy He finds in that offering which was truly a savour of rest to Him. And in this communion and worship we necessarily take in the *whole* priestly family, *all* saints.

The flesh of the offering was to be eaten the same day it was offered; in the case of a vow or voluntary offering, however, the remainder might be eaten the next day, but if eaten on the third day it would not be accepted but would be an abomination.

Let us remember that true worship can only be in the power and energy of the Spirit of God. We may begin in the Spirit and end in the flesh, for unless the heart is kept in living touch with Christ, and what He is to God, our worship degenerates into a mere religious service gone through without power or vitality. It may be pleasing to the flesh, especially if fine music or other attractions are added in order to make up for the loss of spiritual power, but it is displeasing to God.

Such are some of the lessons, solemn and searching as well as blessed, which we may learn from the peace offering.

F. G. B.

## Our Hope.

“Have your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are on the earth.”—Col. iii. 2.

“For our commonwealth has its existence in the heavens, from which also we await the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour.”—Phil. iii. 20, New Trans.

THE sons of men are seeking,  
 'Mid scenes that gave them birth,  
 To find their satisfaction  
 In things upon the earth ;  
 But though the quest pursuing,  
 The goal is never won,  
 Nor can heart-satisfaction  
 Be found beneath the sun.

But citizens of heaven,  
 Whose portion is above,  
 Possess a rest unfading,  
 Prepared by sovereign love ;  
 E'en now they can, though dimly,  
 Its coming glories see,  
 And where is found their treasure  
 Their heart will also be.

The Lord of Life and glory  
 Redeemed them by His blood,  
 Has cleansed their guilty conscience  
 And brought them to His God ;  
 With Him, through grace unmeasured,  
 They're called to have their part,  
 'Tis *He* commands the homage  
 Of each believing heart.

O let us, then, walk worthy  
 Of Him who loved us so,  
 Our deepest joy to please Him  
 While serving here below ;  
 May every light be burning,  
 Our souls from earth set free,  
 With girded loins and waiting  
 Our coming Lord to see.

M. E. B.

### “Jesus Wept.”

“JESUS said, Where have ye laid him ? They said unto Him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept” (John xi. 34, 35). It is remarkable that the Greek verb *dakruo*, to shed tears (from *dakru*, a tear) is only found in this passage. The tears of Mary and of the Jews (*klaio*) (verse 33) have not the same sense. This latter word signifies : “tears accompanied by regrets and external signs of grief, such as lamentations, etc.” We meet with it frequently, but it is only once applied to Jesus (Luke xix. 41), when He wept over Jerusalem.

Thus whilst those around wept and lamented over the death of Lazarus, Jesus alone shed tears, in the sense we have referred to above. It was the expression of a *perfect sympathy*, which felt profoundly and without the mixture of any other sentiment, the deep misery of poor creatures bowed under the unrelenting power of death. It was a sympathy at once both divine and human, coming down into the midst of this scene of suffering and grief—which Jesus alone was capable of understanding in its full extent—in order to bring into it a complete deliverance. Lamentations could not have any place here, He who wept had only to speak one word “and Lazarus came forth.”

*From the French.*

## This Month's Message.

“Rededication.”

**A** GOOD deal has been said and written lately about Christians “rededicating” themselves to the service of the Lord, and indeed earnest devotedness to the work of God is much needed just now. We must therefore be thankful for any stirring up of a desire and an effort in this direction amongst the people of God, for the needs everywhere are great.

But there are one or two remarks which it seems desirable to make in connection with the matter. In all true Christian service, the object in view must be Christ and His glory, not anything of ourselves. “Self” is so likely to slip in, even in the things of God, that we need to keep diligent watch on the motives and intents of the heart.

When the children of Israel crossed the Jordan and entered the promised land they had enemies to fight and difficulties to overcome, but this could not be done in their own strength. To attempt it, as they did at Ai, only proved an utter failure. Then, after each victory, they were to return to Gilgal, the place where the reproach of Egypt was rolled away and the place of circumcision, or death to the flesh and all that is of man.

So we also are dead and risen with Christ, who is our life. Our strength for conflict and service is—not human strength or what men regard as brilliant qualities—not, in fact, self in any degree, but Christ as the object and the Holy Ghost ungrieved as the power.

Will this consciousness of our own weakness lead to slackness in the work of the Lord? Far from it indeed. See the untiring energy of a Paul, who could say, “I

laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me"; and, as the Lord said to him, "My strength is made perfect in weakness"; the apostle himself adds, "When I am weak, then am I strong." The basis of true energy and the power in service is, conscious weakness and dependence, but unwavering confidence in God and His power. This gives a freshness and vitality to the work which will not be found where that which is of ourselves—of man—intrudes itself into the things of God.

How often have we found that mere enthusiasm, however sincere it may be, passes away in the long run. What is wanted for the carrying on of the work of God is, a devoted and undivided heart for Christ and His interests, and complete dependence on the power and energy of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord increase this with all His people—and *all* should be servants of God in some way.

## Humility.

"By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life" (Prov. xxii. 4).

"Before honour is humility" (Prov. xv. 33; xviii. 12).

"Be clothed with humility" (1 Peter v. 5).

**T**HERE are three things that lie at the foundation of godliness—humility, obedience, and discipleship. The first of these, and in one sense the most important, is humility, and as to this we desire to say a few words.

Scripture tells us that because the Lord Jesus humbled Himself He was exalted. He took the low place and put divine, eternal glory on it. Love, grace, truth,—every attribute of God's character was manifested in the path which began (in this world) with *life unto death*, and

ended in life unto resurrection, and glory on the throne of God. It is well to lay to heart what the Scripture has said about it in the first quotation at the head of this paper. It puts humility before the fear of the Lord, nor is there any mistake about this. There can be no fear of the Lord, nor any fruit of the Spirit, until man is thoroughly broken down and humbled before God.

In realizing that I am a sinner and *owning it* I take the only place where He can meet and save and bless me. "Acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee" (Job xxii. 21). Then grace can flow into my soul in a mighty stream, and the fear of God and obedience, and discipleship—a true testimony to His grace—will be the result of that humility which has been wrought in me. Alas! the absence of these things marks the character of the last days, the days of ruin in which we are living.

We may have to say, "We commenced well, we glorified God by taking the low place"; but have we continued in the path, so that we could respond to what He looks for—"clothed in humility"? Let our hearts and consciences answer *now*.

But we must not be discouraged. If He has exhorted us to be humble, in giving us the Holy Spirit He has furnished the power for it. He it is who causes our hearts to burn with the words of Scripture, and the sense of the Lord's unchanging love. "He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

How wonderful are all God's ways. He not only says, "Before honour is humility," but also, "Those that walk in pride He is able to abase" (Daniel iv. 37). So long as the wicked Ahab humbled himself God could spare him; ignoring his lesson, and pressing on in pride,

\*

he is destroyed (1 Kings xxi. 27 ; xxii. 34). Beloved David, too, the great King of Israel, should have kept in mind that it is not only righteousness, but true humility, *to act according to God's Word*. Amnon's, Joab's and Absalom's sins called for judgment, not forgiveness! Therefore he must say, "Now these be the last words of David. . . . He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God . . . but my house is not so with God" (2 Samuel xxiii. 1-5).

Beloved Christian reader, are we judging everything NOW in humility, or delaying until shame overwhelms us ?

H. B. W. (*New York*).

## The Throne of David.

THERE seems to be much confusion in the minds of many Christians as to the Lord's present position as seated on the Father's throne (Rev. iii. 21), and His future place as sitting upon His own throne. In the first He is alone ; in the second His people will be associated with Him during His millennial reign (Luke xxii. 30). The first is *heavenly* ; the second is connected with *this earth*. And so when the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary he said, concerning the child Jesus, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest ; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David" (Luke i. 32). So also at Pentecost, Peter declared by the Holy Ghost that the risen Christ should sit, according to the purposes of God, upon the throne of David.

How blessed, then, it is to know that David's Son, as was promised, shall yet sit as "The Prince of the kings of the earth" upon the throne of David ! But we must ever remember that *this* throne is connected with the

kingdom to be set up *on earth*, and will be occupied by the Lord Jesus as the coming King.

This is the kingdom which is referred to in Psalm ii. 6, in words which read more correctly in a new translation, "I have installed My King upon Zion, the hill of My holiness." But does He take this throne peaceably? Not so: Jehovah sets Him there in spite of the opposition of the apostate Jews and the nations who rise up against His authority.

What, it may be asked, will be the form of His government? It will be a theocracy; God Himself will rule over the earth in the person of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, Son of David.

An important question in connection with the place and calling of believers of this dispensation, who form the church of God, is this—What connection has the church with the throne of David? The answer is that restored Israel will then be the centre of the Lord's *earthly* kingdom and glory (Isa. xxxii. 1): the church will be associated with Him in His *heavenly* glory in connection with the government of this world (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3; Rev. xxi. 10–27).

It is impossible in a short paper like this to dwell on the very interesting details of events that will transpire previous to the Lord's taking His earthly throne as Son of David, but it may be stated that the church will have been first caught up to meet the Lord in the air, *before* the judgments begin to be poured out on the world. At the time appointed He will then come forth *with* His church to put down His enemies and assert His rights as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Prophecy gives us particulars of the events which precede and prepare the way for the establishment of the millennial kingdom, but we cannot be too clear about

the *heavenly* place and calling of the church, as contrasted with the blessing of the millennial saints on this earth.

We might also remark that it is during the period between the rapture of the saints at the Lord's coming, and His appearing in glory afterwards, that the events of which prophecy speaks, mainly take place. These events include the revival of the Roman Empire as "the beast that was, and is not, and shall be present" (Rev. xvii. 8), the appearing of the Antichrist at Jerusalem, the great tribulation, the return of the ten tribes of Israel (as well as the two), and many others too numerous to go over in detail.

The Jews, who would not have the true Christ, will receive another who shall come in His own name (the Antichrist); and Christendom, which would not receive the truth in the love of it, will fall under the "strong delusion" spoken of in 2 Thess. ii. and believe a lie instead of the truth. Thus many interesting and solemn events will transpire *before* the Lord's appearing in glory to put down His enemies, as well as *after* He appears.

The Lord Jesus Christ is now seated at the right hand of God, the place to which He has been exalted until His enemies be made His footstool. God tells us who this Person is according to *His* thoughts, and He has publicly recognized His rights; He says, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." The Messiah will have, in due time, His *earthly* kingdom, which will never be taken from Him, but which He will "deliver up" to God, even the Father, after the close of His reign and after He has put all enemies under His feet (1 Cor. xv. 24-27).

Let us remember, then, that Christ's millennial

throne—the throne of David—is not the Father's throne. God does not reveal Himself as Father to the millennial saints, but as Most High. The title of God as "Father" belongs essentially to the *Christian* dispensation, that is, to this present period of time.

Through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ the way is now opened to us through the rent veil right into the very presence of God; such is the efficiency of His precious blood. There we find a throne—but it is not a throne of judgment but of grace, where we can obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need.

The majority of Christians to-day, sad to say, neglect the study of and meditation upon the Scriptures, depending almost entirely on what they hear from the pulpits of Christendom, consequently they do not grasp the truth which would enable them to distinguish between that which is *heavenly* and that which is *earthly*. A vast number look forward to, and pray for, the kingdom to come, in those familiar words taught by the Lord to His disciples, "Thy kingdom come."

And it surely will come, as the writer has already pointed out in this magazine. But the words, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" refer to a prayer which can only be answered on earth, in millennial days, when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea and all nations shall acknowledge His sway.

What, then, is the attitude in which the children of God should be found in this present day? For one thing, it is their privilege to know and enjoy their relationship to God *as Father*. For another, it is well for us to remember the words of the epistle of Jude, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost," etc. This will

not be formal prayer, but it will necessarily be intelligent and effectual, because under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord, in grace, bore with a lack of intelligence in His disciples of old, and surely He does so with us also. But how different their position was then to what ours is now. We have the Holy Ghost dwelling within us and God's mind fully revealed in His Word: the disciples had not these blessings until after the death and resurrection of our blessed Lord. Let us, then, seek grace to rise to the blessings and privileges that are ours.

J. P. (*Montreal*).

## The Sin Offering.

Leviticus iv.

WITH chapter iv. we commence a new section which brings before us, not the sacrifices for a sweet savour and which were voluntary (as in chapters i.-iii.), but those which were obligatory. The sin offerings were for guilt, for actual sins committed. But these were sins committed unwittingly or through inadvertance: the law did not provide for presumptuous or wilful sins. How different the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus, whose blood cleanses from *all sin*.

There are four classes of sin offering in this chapter: let us look at them briefly.

(1) **THE SIN OF THE ANOINTED PRIEST.** If the anointed or high priest sinned "so as to bring guilt on the people" (R.V.), he was to bring a bullock without blemish for a sin offering. In passing we may here remark on the blessed fact that the great High Priest of *our* confession, Jesus, "did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth," so that a sin offering could not be

(Continued on page 169.)

needed by Him, though in grace He became the sin offering for others.

The bullock was to be presented "before the Lord," who took knowledge of the sin, even if the offerer had failed to do so until it was laid upon his conscience. He then laid his hands upon the head of the victim and killed it. As before remarked, the laying on of hands in the case of the sin offering, in token of identification, signified that the sins were looked on as being transferred to the victim and therefore removed entirely from before God.

The anointed priest then presented the blood, which he sprinkled seven times before the Lord, "before the vail," within the sanctuary. There was but the one day in the whole year on which the priest could enter within the vail, and that was the Day of Atonement; for the Holy Ghost signified that the way into the holiest had not yet been made manifest while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.

Truly "the law made nothing perfect": man could not approach within the vail, the work of atonement had not been done. How far more glorious and superior is the work of Christ, which gives to the believer a conscience purged or perfected "in perpetuity" and an entrance at all times into the very presence of God. There is, too, a permanence and stability in the efficacy of His sacrifice which nothing can change or alter.

The victim's blood was to be put on the horns of the altar of sweet incense, showing that the communion of the people with God was interrupted for the time being and needed to be restored. Then "all the blood" was poured out at the base of the altar of burnt offering which was at the door of the tabernacle, outside. The fat, etc., was burnt upon the altar of burnt offering; but

it does not say here "for a sweet savour," as in the case of the peace offering (chap. iii.). The whole bullock was then burnt "without the camp."

All this is most significant. Jesus, our precious Saviour, who was made sin for us, suffered for us "without the gate," in the place of ignominy and reproach. And in virtue of His shed blood, we (believers) have access "within the veil"—the one answers to the other. Our place above, with God, is the latter: our place below, in this world, is the former; as indeed the epistle to the Hebrews exhorts us to go forth unto Him "without the camp," bearing His reproach.

(2) THE SIN OF THE WHOLE CONGREGATION. Here the instructions are almost the same as in the case of the high priest. The whole assembly was responsible and was to feel and judge the sin before God, so that communion might be restored in virtue of the sacrifice offered.

(3) THE SIN OF A RULER. In the case of a ruler or chief man, the blood was not applied to the horns of the golden altar of incense, because it was not a question of restoration of the communion of the whole assembly being interrupted, as in the two former. Only we should remember that in the case of the Christian, as Hebrews shows us, there is no repetition, the work has been done *once for all*, and the believer is perfected in perpetuity, or without a break (Heb. x. 14).

(4) THE SIN OF ONE OF THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND. Though Jehovah would impress on the Israelite in humble circumstances, as on others, his sin and his need of restoration, yet He allowed a lesser offering, suited to what such an one could provide—a kid (female), or a lamb. Also, this is the only case out of all the sin offerings in which the burning of the fat is said to be

“for a sweet savour” (verse 31). How gracious and considerate of the Lord!

When we turn to the law of the sin offering (Levit. vi. 24-30) we are impressed with the fact, so often repeated, that “it is most holy.” Could anyone think that in Christ’s having to do with sin, any unholiness could thus be found in Him? If so, let such consider the way in which God has guarded against this very thought. It was the One *who knew no sin* that was “made sin” upon the cross, and He was indeed and in truth the holy One of God.

In ordinary cases, the priest who offered the sin offering was to eat it in a holy place. So, in grace, “Jesus is identified with the sin which hinders communion,” as another has said. So, too, every male among the priests was to eat of these offerings, teaching us that the believer, acting in grace also, is to identify himself with his brother’s sin, feeling it and confessing it as his own\* (see John xiii. 4, 15). But the sin offerings which were for atonement, the blood being sprinkled in the holy place, were not to be eaten but burnt without the camp.

F. G. B.

## Two Interesting Questions.

**D**URING a recent conversation I was asked two questions: (1) Did I ever have a doubt as to my soul’s salvation? and (2) Did I ever feel a disinclination

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\* “Only priests ate it in the holy place specially, the priest who offered it was to eat his portion: Jesus is this priest; *that* on which the sin was confessed the priest ate, and identified himself with the defilement. Only Jesus did this once for all; His sympathy operates in washing our feet with water” (see 1 John i., ii., and John xiii.). (*Coll. Writ. J. N. D.* xix. 350).

for prayer? These two questions often occupy the minds of people who are brought to face seriously that most vital of all subjects--the soul's eternal welfare.

Through the grace of God I was able to reply positively to the first question, and to say that I never had a doubt. The one who asked the question thought this remarkable, but did not, as so many do, put it down to spiritual presumption on my part. When I once told the person who took the place of chief spiritual adviser of our parish that I was saved, he scorned the idea, saying that "even the Apostle Paul did not know that." But that "prisoner of the Lord," Paul, could say he had a *desire* to depart and to be with Christ, which was very far better, which showed that he had no doubt as to it.

I was indeed happy to be able to tell the friend who asked the above questions *why* one never had a doubt as to the great eternal future. The reason was because the cross of Christ, His sacrifice and finished work done there, had settled all; and this necessarily became our theme.

Oh! how sweet it is to look away entirely from oneself and fix the eye on that spot where the Son of God, in such marvellous love, undertook to settle, once for all, the question of sin. The question of sin! did I say? Yes—for sin it is that gives occasion for such a question as, "Do you ever have a doubt?"

Men universally know that something must be done to set this matter right, and how strange are some of the attempts to settle it! Happy would it be if all really believed the words of the hymn, "Not the labour of my hands could fulfil the law's demands." When no one else could accomplish this work, the Lord Jesus under-

took it, and offered Himself—how wonderful!—as a sacrifice for sin, as we read, “ But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God ” (Heb. x. 12). As I copy these words of the blessed book of God, my soul rejoices to see Him where He is in glory, and says He is worthy to be there !

“ No victim of inferior worth  
 Could ward the stroke that justice aimed ;  
 For none but He, in heaven or earth,  
 Could offer that which justice claimed.”

The all-important inquiry now is, “ Was God satisfied with the offering, the sacrifice of Christ ? ”—for Scripture, both by type and direct teaching, asserts that it was needful that His holy claims should be met.

Yes, God *was* satisfied—fully satisfied. The spotless victim required was found in the Lord Jesus, who was, during His whole life, the One in whom God found His delight. The Father’s voice had twice declared Him to be His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased. That life was now laid down, and my soul looks back to that cross and says, “ He was there for me, He died for me, to put away my sins.”

But there is more, our verse in Hebrews x. says that He has for ever sat down at the right hand of God, having finished the work of atonement. Is not the fact of Christ’s exaltation a declaration on God’s part that the work, the sacrifice, was sufficient ? Truly it is.

After a few words to this effect, in which I sought to give all the credit and glory to Christ, my friend said, “ Ah, I see, it would be an insult to doubt, would it not ? ” It surely would ; and may each reader resolutely shun every other means of getting right with God. May we all simply and happily say in the words

of the hymn, "God is satisfied with Jesus, I am satisfied as well."

Now for a word as to the second question, "Do you ever feel a disinclination for prayer?"

Here we are on different ground, and one has had on occasions to say "Yes." The answer to the first question depends on Christ—what He is and what He has done, and all doubts vanish. The second is a challenge to the believer's fidelity and whether he is walking in communion with God, and it necessarily brings before us our failures and coldness of heart.

But the earnest desire of the Christian should be that Christ may become so real to him, and His interests so absorbing, that prayer may always be a positive delight. It is ever an absolute necessity, so long as Satan is against us, the flesh within us, and an alluring world around us. Soon we shall be rid of all three, and able to sing, "Unto Him that loveth us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Oh, how we shall emphasize that "Him"!

P. W.

### A Letter.

THE following characteristic letter by the late T. B. Baines, the beloved author of the valuable works on "*The Lord's Coming, Israel and the Church*" and "*The Revelation*," came recently into our hands. It was written soon after the departure of his beloved wife to be with the Lord, and is inserted here to show what power God's love has over a heart that is subject to Him, even in the hour of its deepest sorrow.

LEEDS, *March 27, 1877.*

“DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,—Your note of comfort in this time of deepest sorrow is, indeed, most welcome to my spirit. The Lord’s hand, which had given to me most richly, has stripped me in an hour of the sum of my happiness here below. Still it is His hand, and in this break up of my earthly delights, He has a purpose worthy of Himself and His own perfect love.

“Nothing that comes from Him can be beneath Himself, and it is often in the darkest hour that His love accomplishes its richest purposes of blessing. When I look at my own loss, at the withering up of all I loved, at the blighting of a happiness, seldom, I think, exceeded in this world, all seems sadness; but when I look to Him who gave and who has taken away—who has set her in His own presence free from all sorrow and pain, and a sharer of *His delights* in her—I know that His love now is just as fresh as ever, I can only bow my head and own that there is some deep hidden blessing meant for me too.

“Oh! for more faith to own His hand in all things—to see without being made to feel, that this world is not our rest; but that God will have our hearts set on things above, and occupied with the Object He has set before us.

“How the spirit, brought into His presence, must wonder at the depths of love there discovered, and wonder that with such an object it can ever have found anything to satisfy down here. But how blessed to be learning this lesson deeply and thoroughly even now. Give my Christian love to Mrs. ——. We often spoke of you and her and of our happy fellowship in the things of the Lord at Mürren.

“Yours affectionately in Christ,

“(Signed) T. B. BAINES.”

## Forgiven.

NOT far from New York, in a cemetery lone,  
Close guarding its grave, stands a simple headstone,  
And all the inscription is one word alone :--

Forgiven.

No sculptor's fine art has embellished its form,  
But constantly there through the cloud and the storm,  
It heralds a message that needs no reform :--

Forgiven.

It tells not the date of the silent one's birth,  
Records not his failures nor speaks of his worth,  
But sets forth the tale from this few feet of earth :--

Forgiven.

His death is unmentioned, his name is untold ;  
Beneath lies the body corrupted and cold,  
Above is his spirit, at home in the fold,

Forgiven.

And when from the heavens our Lord shall descend  
This stranger shall rise and to glory ascend,  
Well known and befriended, to sing without end,

Forgiven.

(The late CAPTAIN HATTON TURNOUR.)

FRAGMENT.—“ Shew me now *Thy* way ” (Exod. xxxiii. 13). How truly we can pray this prayer which Moses uttered at a moment of difficulty in his position as leader of the people of God. God replies that His presence would go with him, and Moses answers, “ If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.”

In times of difficulty or perplexity, may we be delivered from doing *our* will and having *our* way, so that God may be free to go with us. Truly we are *absolutely* dependent on Him for the strength and wisdom needed for every step of the way.

## This Month's Message.

“Forbearance.”

**W**HEN the Apostle Paul exhorted the Christians at Ephesus to “use diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,” he prefaced his exhortation with the words, “with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.” We may be well assured that the Holy Spirit, who indited the epistle, knew well the need of those qualities expressed in the words, “lowliness,” “meekness,” “longsuffering” and “forbearance.”

The believer has still the old nature, the flesh, which is ever disposed to act in a way contrary to God if it is not kept in the place where God has put it, that is, the place of death. Hence the need of these exhortations.

Have we not seen the need of mutual forbearance in the assemblies of God's people? The want of it has produced, perhaps, as much sorrow and alienation of heart as any other cause. It is not a question of palliating or excusing what is wrong, but of bearing with one another in those things which call for forbearance.

How often our blessed Lord Himself showed the true example of this in His ways with His erring disciples, actuated by selfish motives as they sometimes were! And He exhorted His people to walk in this very same spirit and practice in which He walked during His whole path through this world.

It has been said that there is no remedy for a want of grace but grace,—that very grace which God has manifested towards us. In the exhortation given to the Colossians we are told to “Put on . . . bowels of

mercies, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering ; forbearing one another . . . . if any man have a quarrel against any ; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." Do we forgive as He forgave and act in His spirit towards others ?

Again, "longsuffering" is given us as one of the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians. Do we cultivate this blessed fruit ? How much it would help our happy and Christian fellowship with one another if we did so more than we often do !

Let us, then, weigh these Scriptural exhortations, and take them to heart, for we all need them. We may have much knowledge and contend for Scriptural truths and principles (a most important thing in its place), but without "love"—that is the divine nature in its activity—our speech is but "as sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal."

## The Captain of our Salvation.

Hebrew ii. 10.

**I** NTERESTING it is to notice that this epistle opens differently from any of the others, inasmuch as it begins with *God Himself* speaking unto us in these last days by His Son. Whereupon some of the glories of His Son are set before us. He is appointed Heir of all things, being the One by whom God made the worlds. He is the brightness of God's glory, the express image of His person, etc. This is *who* He is. Then we hear of His *work*—the work of the cross. "When He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

First, we have the glorious Person of God's Son, secondly, His work—that He has made purification of

sins—and, thirdly, His present position as having set Himself down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. This is the divine order.

Let us now pass on to chapter ii., where we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour, that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. In verse 10 there are the striking words, “For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation *perfect* through sufferings.”

Let us note the words, “It became Him.” If God brings many sons to glory He must of necessity do so in a way in keeping with His own glory and character. Therefore He has “made perfect” the Captain of our salvation: for Jesus by His work upon the cross has done everything needed to meet the requirements of God’s holy nature. Hence we have a “perfect” Saviour, and One made such by God Himself.

Now do not these words, “It became Him,” attract and captivate these poor hearts of ours? For of this we may rest assured, that God is acting for His own glory in bringing to heaven the objects of His own sovereign grace and love.

And what does He say to us about the “many sons” themselves? “For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.” Just think of that! And in chapter x. we have, “For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” It is perfection in perpetuity or without a break. And it is these sanctified ones whom Christ is not ashamed to call His brethren. This may surely remind us of the message sent by the risen Lord through Mary Magdalene, declaring that new and blessed relationship into which

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His people are brought, "Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God."

So, then, we are His brethren, His Father is our Father, His God is our God. What boundless grace is this!

We may now briefly look at the way in which Christ entered heaven. "By His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption" (chap. ix. 12). Never again is that blood to be shed. Its *full* value God alone knows. My estimate of it is a very small one indeed, but it is a comfort to the heart that God knows and estimates all its intrinsic worth. And it is that precious blood that "cleanses from all sin."

Thus, according to these Scriptures, two great truths (and truths are facts) are brought before us. One is that God has made perfect the Captain of our salvation. The other is that those who are sanctified are perfected for ever, and as a proof of this the Lord could say to the believing malefactor at His side on the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." O the depth of the riches of His grace!

Ere closing, we do well to remind ourselves that "God is love" and that "God is light"—that His sovereign love, which has been manifested to us, is the source and spring of all our blessings. And as we pursue our pathway through this wilderness in these difficult days, we find how much there is in the word of God's grace to sustain our faith and brighten our hopes.

At the same time it is well for us to bear in mind, for our soul's peace and comfort, that there are no hostile powers existing, in the heavens or on earth,

present or to come, which "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

N. J. M. (*New Zealand*).

## The Choice of Faith—2.

"Put on the whole armour of God" (Eph. vi. 11).

"He exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord" (Acts xi. 23).

TWO examples of the choice of faith are before the mind in connection with these texts: Caleb the one, and Ruth the other. The former illustrates taking possession, the latter fellowship.

Caleb, walking by faith, in patience and in faithfulness to God, waited forty-five years ere taking possession of the land which had been promised him. But when God's time came, he appears at the front to claim the promise. But it was the choice of faith; for conflict with giants lay before him (*See Josh. xiv*). He is beautifully spoken of by another in the following words, "Caleb had been sent as one of the spies, had gone forth in obedience, traversed the land from south to north, right up to Lebanon and back again, and he clung to the promise: 'Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance.' He had then a right to pick and choose his inheritance in all the best of the land given to the fathers. And after forty-five years of patience he chose, with its suburbs, that city where the sons of Anak lived, and where the spies felt with terror their own insignificance. . . . During seven years' conflict, Joshua and all Israel had left those giants alone; yet Caleb ventures to say, 'If so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them

out, *as the Lord said.*' It was simple faith, persevering to the end in the humility, and withal the boldness, which faith gives—no pretension, no boasting, but the quiet confidence of one who walked with God. And 'the *fields* of the city and the villages thereof' were made his for ever (Josh. xxi. 12). The 'first lot,' given to the sons of Aaron, the priest, was the city Hebron itself. Such is the choice of faith, working by love; and love must have its object, known to the soul and enjoyed. Without such an object, holiness is not possible for us."

There was one thing which probably endeared above all others that spot to Caleb: we learn from Gen. xxiii. 17-20 that the sacred cave of Machpelah was there; so touchingly referred to by Jacob on his dying bed (Gen. xlix. 29-32). Abraham and Sarah were buried there. Isaac and Rebekah were laid to rest there. And Jacob and Leah were also placed there with them. No wonder, therefore, that this man of faith valued the spot that contained the precious dust of such saints of God. But the citadel of the giants was there; yet Caleb's faith rose above his circumstances, and enabled him to say with confidence that he would "drive them out, as the Lord said." But he would need the weapons of warfare to accomplish this. And so do we in the real conflict which always meets faith.

The book of Joshua and the epistle to the Ephesians should be read together. The former contains the record of an earthly people *taking possession* of the earthly inheritance promised them by God; the latter gives us the *position* of a heavenly people, according to the sovereign grace of God given to us in Christ in the counsels of eternity. But entering into the *enjoyment* of this position—first of sonship (Ephes. i. 5), then of

membership of His body (verses 22, 23, and chap. v. 30—while being the portion of every child of God) belongs to the choice of faith. But as Caleb's choice involved conflict, so does ours.

Moreover the land which he had chosen where the giants were, was "in the hill country of Judah" (Josh. xxi. 11). Now the choice of faith is to *enter into the enjoyment of* "all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ" (Ephes. i. 3); and part of the conflict which meets the man of faith there is to "wrestle . . . against spiritual wickedness" (or rather "wicked spirits") "in the heavenlies" (Ephes. vi. 12). The Greek word for "in the heavenlies" is the same in both texts. It is high ground like Caleb's choice. Let any child of God seek to enjoy and walk in the truth as presented in this grandest epistle (Ephesians), without doubt Satan will meet him there; and the struggle will be real. But faith can say, "If so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said." It came to pass for Caleb (Judges i. 20), and so will it be for us: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you"; "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God."

The other example of faith's choice is equally instructive for those who desire to follow Christ in this day of His rejection. But it involves "purpose of heart," as the words of Barnabas to the Christians at Antioch imply. The case of Ruth beautifully illustrates this. A parting kiss did not satisfy this godly woman. Her heart had been won by Naomi, and she "clave unto her" (Ruth i. 14). Her mind was made up to follow her mother-in-law. Henceforth it was, "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God,"

etc. This was real purpose of heart, and withal counting the cost; but the happy fellowship was worth it, and her ultimate reward was great; for she appears in the genealogy of Christ.

Those at Antioch whom that "good man," Barnabas, exhorted to "cleave to the Lord," had recently "believed, and turned unto the Lord." They now needed to count the cost, and to make up their minds as to following Him. The word "purpose" which the Holy Spirit gave Barnabas to use, is that which He also gave Paul in Ephes. iii. 11, regarding the origination of God's design, "which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord." It is also used in Heb. ix. 2 for the presentation of the twelve loaves in the tabernacle; and the meaning seems to be that something is presented to the mind, and a *definite conclusion* is arrived at, as in Ephes, i. 11; iii. 11; and elsewhere. Now this is exactly what we need in answer to Christ's words in Luke ix. 23. Let us, indeed, count the cost, but be determined, by the grace of God, to follow Him wherever He may lead. If the heart has been won by the sufferings of the cross, where He loved us, and gave up Himself for us, it will surely *cleave* to Him, and say (not, however, as three said to the Lord in Luke ix. 57-62, but) like Ruth, with real purpose of heart, "Where Thou goest, I will go." The blessed fellowship is worth it; for it will be such as we read of in Rev. iii. 20, and Phil. iii. 10. And after "fighting the good fight," etc., it will be the realization in glory of the reward—the crown referred to in 2 Tim. iv. 8, and elsewhere, "So shall we ever be with the Lord."

J. R. (Canada).

## “But the Priests were too Few.”

2 Chronicles xxix. 34.

IT has been said that in the case of Hezekiah king of Judah, he displayed great energy of faith; whilst in the case of Josiah we see profound reverence for the Scriptures—the book of the law. The government of God, in those days, always had reference to the conduct of the king, whose example largely influenced the people. Hezekiah had a wicked father, but grace awoke in his heart the fear of God and directed his steps aright.

He first cleansed the temple and brought in the priests and the Levites and gathered them together, enjoining them to sanctify themselves also the house of the Lord. The Levites having done their part, the priests went in to the inner part of the house and cleansed it. Then, when everything had been purified, Hezekiah gathered the rulers of the city and went up to the house of the Lord.

Let us observe that purification was necessary for any participation in the service of the Lord. The first offering mentioned is the *sin* offering, which was offered for the kingdom, the sanctuary, and Judah. The victims were killed and the priests presented the blood, “to make an atonement for ALL ISRAEL.” This was the king’s command, for his faith took in the whole twelve tribes, though most of them were probably not then in the land.

Then the Levites were set in the house of the Lord with cymbals, etc., “according to the commandment of David.” It will be remembered that David—type of Christ as the Messiah—changed the age at which the Levites began their service and appointed the

service of song and the use of the instruments of music which Solomon was to carry out—typical of that future day when all will be ordered by the Lord Himself.

In returning to the occasion of this wonderful revival in the days of Hezekiah, we find that when everything was put in order the king commanded to offer the *burnt* offering upon the altar. It must have been a soul-inspiring sight to witness these Levites, set in the house of the Lord with cymbals, psalteries and harps, as originated by the command of David the king. It is so also in our day, when all the activities of service and worship have their spring in the blessed Lord and His word. And then we read that when the *burnt* offering began, *the song of praise began*.

The sin-offering necessarily took the first place, for there could not be worship until the way had been prepared by the putting away of defilement. Then came the burnt offering, which typified Christ offering Himself to God, and which ascended as a “sweet savour” to Him. Afterwards the congregation worshipped, the singers sang, the trumpeters sounded and continued till the burnt offering was finished.

At the invitation of the king the congregation now brought sacrifices and offerings in such numbers that there were not priests enough—or as the word says—“the priests were too few” to flay all the burnt offerings. In consequence the Levites had to be requisitioned until more priests were sanctified, and, as we are told, the Levites were more upright to sanctify themselves than the priests.

In this narrative we have the worship of the priests, the Levites, and the congregation; and the offering of each differing in character and degree. So it is in our day; for, while the standing and acceptance in Christ

of every believer is the same, the quality and power of worship differs materially. Scripture recognizes *individual* worship as well as collective; this we find in the fourth chapter of John's Gospel—the Gospel which always refers to the individual. But when the heart goes up to God in worship, love to *all* His people must possess the soul. In worshipping *together* we have the Lord's promise to be with us, "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee."

Turning again to our chapter, we find that when the service of the house of the Lord was set in order, the king sent letters of invitation to all Israel and Judah as well as to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the Lord's house at Jerusalem to keep unitedly the passover unto the Lord God of Israel.

What a very striking and salutary lesson is to be learnt from this portion of Scripture! How sad to think that, though we have the Holy Ghost in and with us, to occupy us with the blessed Lord and to teach us from His Word, yet, so to speak, "the priests are too few"—so few believers are in a condition to realize their true priestly character, so as to render thanks and homage to the One who gave His life for them: who lives for them and is coming for them.

We find two characteristics of our priesthood mentioned in the epistle of Peter—a "holy priesthood" to *offer up* spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, and a "royal priesthood" to *show forth* the praises (or virtues) of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.

In neither of these characters of priesthood is it a question of our attainment, but it is what grace has made us and done for us through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. We, believers, exercise this

“holy priesthood” to offer up spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, as having been *brought to God*. The description here given is taken from Exodus xix., where we find that God had formed the people for Himself, “Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you upon eagles’ wings, and *brought you unto Myself*.”

The people were to show forth all His praises and virtues, as all believers are to do now, as royal priests. It occurs to the writer that the practical side of this truth comes before us in Hebrews xiii. 15, 16, where we are exhorted thus, “By Him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” Here, then, we get the fruit of our *lips* and of our *lives*, to the praise and glory of God. May God, in His grace, increase the number of His priests who offer sacrifices such as these.

J. P. (*Montreal*).

## The New Birth.

THE above was one of the subjects discussed at the Church Congress held at Sheffield early in October. It is a most vital and important subject, more so indeed than most Christians seem to realize, because it goes down to the very root of the whole question of man’s relationship with God.

Without going into details as to what was said about “conversion”—whether it is “gradual” or “sudden,” we would remark that it may be either;—the great point to lay hold of—and it is one which is almost universally ignored—is that at new birth an entirely

new life and nature is communicated to the one who believes the testimony of God's word.

Mr. Pike Pearce asked the question in the course of his remarks, "How many of us who are regular communicants in our church could kneel beside a penitent sinner and show him the way of salvation?" Yes, this is the question, "How many?" and the answer is, "Only those who know it themselves." A man must first be brought to know God as a Saviour God through Christ, he must be "converted," he must be "saved," before he can show others the way.

The Bishop of Chelmsford asked another question, viz., "How many people would they find in the church next Sunday who two years ago had led notorious lives?" And he proceeded to remark that, "Attendance at church, singing in the choir, or serving at the altar was not the work which Christ died for. He was the friend of sinners. Were the clergy known as eminent preachers, splendid organizers and raisers of money, or as friends of the riff-raff of the world?" When he sat down he covered his eyes with his hand, and his lips moved in prayer.

Unquestionably some of the speakers felt that all the machinery of Christendom—the rituals, ordinances, church services, the schemes for bettering the masses socially—had not produced any deep or permanent effect. The truth is, man's nature is irreparably bad; "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." It may be moral, amiable or religious flesh, or it may be gross, depraved and wicked flesh, but it is "flesh" all the same. What is wanted is, not improvement but new birth: not a mere change of the man as he stands, but something entirely new.

Reformation is well enough in its place, but to fit

a man for the presence of God there must be—not merely reformation but regeneration. Hence our Lord insists on this in His conversation with Nicodemus, saying, “Ye MUST be born again”; no one can see or enter the kingdom of God unless he is born again.

The Bishop evidently felt the need of the perishing masses around, the “riff-raff of the world” as he calls them. But how are these to be reached and changed? No *outward* moralizing, no religious varnish put on can do it. It must be the old gospel which Paul preached, namely, “repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.” Loving and earnest effort to bring *this* gospel before sinners is indeed as much needed now as ever.

But let us remember that new birth is as necessary for the polished, the refined, the outwardly religious man as it is for the “riff-raff.” It is no mending up of the old nature, no change of what Scripture calls “the flesh,” but the communication to the soul, by faith, of a new life and new nature. It is the being “born of water and of the Spirit”—born entirely anew. It is the sovereign action of the Holy Spirit, using the Word of God (of which water is the figure—see 1 Pet. i. 23; Eph. v. 26) to bring about that great moral change called new birth.

What, then, is the effect of being born again—how does it work out in practice? Let us remember that the believer is “made partaker of the divine nature,” that is, of a nature answering morally to God’s nature, which is holy. What a change it brings about! The man loves things he once disliked or even hated. For example, prayer is his delight instead of being an irksome duty; the reading of God’s Word is his joy—the very food on which he feeds, spiritually—instead

of a weary effort, if done at all. The service of God is an enjoyed privilege instead of a mechanical routine.

Such are some of the fruits of having divine life in the soul—the fruits of the Spirit, who works in and through this new nature.

On the other hand, the man now hates things he once enjoyed—the world, sin, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life. True it is that he still carries about with him the old nature, which, if allowed to act, will lead him away from communion with God, and even, it may be, into sin and folly. This it is that gave occasion for the remark made by Dean Inge (perhaps more witty than the occasion demanded), “A large number seem never to have made a decisive choice. Their characters are a working compromise. They may think that they are on the right road, but others can see that they have left an account open with the world, the flesh and the devil.”

Alas, that occasion should be given for such remarks! Nevertheless, the true Christian *is* dead and risen with Christ, and he is responsible to “*reckon* himself dead,” to keep the old nature in the place of death, and to walk in newness of life, Christ being his object, his life, and his all. This is the true spring and power for Christian life and conduct.

F. G. B.

## Tribulation.

(From *Tribulum*, a threshing instrument.)

**H**E will not lose one single grain of all the golden store,  
As patiently He sifts His wheat upon the threshing  
floor.

He winnows with the Spirit's fan  
And every grain His eye doth scan.

With tender care He separates the precious from the vile,  
 And purges all the dross away that would the grain defile ;  
     He sees within the husks of earth  
     A treasure hid of priceless worth.

The threshing sledge must do its work, and other hands  
 are used,  
 But though the outer shell be crushed, the corn must not  
 be bruised,  
     Through tribulation it must be  
     Preserved for Him eternally.

One grain there was that fell beneath Jehovah's flail and  
 rod,  
 'Twas crushed and bruised, that He might yield a harvest  
 rich to God ;  
     His smitten body low must lie,—  
     Yes, Christ the Son of God must die.

Low, low it lay in rocky cave, away from mortal eyes,  
 But life lay hid in folds of death, and then in fairer guise  
     It rose, and filled the earth with fruit  
     Upspringing from this hidden root.

And now, upon the world-wide floor He spreads His  
 precious grain,—  
 The travail of His suff'ring soul, the fruit of all His pain,  
     And winnows it till pure it lies,  
     For garn'ring home above the skies.

He will not aye be threshing it ; 'tis but " a little while,"  
 And then each shining grain of gold shall thrill beneath  
 His smile.  
     And bursting through the shrouds of gloom,  
     Shall rise to light and deathless bloom.

*(The late Captain Hatton Turnour).*