

# WORDS OF HELP

FROM THE  
SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH

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## “Not Forsaking.”

SOME twenty years ago I was in L— on business, and when about to enter R— Street, which led directly to my destination, I felt that I ought to turn aside and go through a parallel street. I had not proceeded more than fifty yards in this side-street, when I met a young brother from a distant part of the country, eating cherries out of a paper bag; this I found was part of his vegetarian diet cure.

“Hallo,” said I, “What are you doing here so far from home?” “I am here in a hydropathic and vegetarian establishment,” was his answer.

“Why, you look the picture of health, there cannot be much the matter with you. But tell me, where were you last evening, for I did not see you in the meeting?” He replied, “Is there a meeting here? I thought there was none nearer than D—, where I hope to go next week.”

“There has been a good-sized assembly here for years, and you could have easily ascertained this. How long have you been here?” His answer was, “Four weeks.”

“Well, that is really very sad,” I replied, “it is not good for young Christians to be in strange towns without seeking Christian fellowship. The young brothers have a meeting among themselves this evening and will be very glad to see you; I trust you will go and join them.”

I fear, from later enquiries, that he did not go to the young men’s meeting. He was a good bicyclist, and not very long after undertook to race the local train, which ran parallel with the road near his home. He beat the train, but just before reaching the station, the road he was on crossed the railway. He would have had time enough to pass before the train came up, but the rails caught his wheels and threw him on to the track. The train could not be stopped and his triumph ended in a sudden death.

When they took his body up they carried it into a house near by, which turned out to be the very house in which our meetings mentioned above were held, and which he had neglected to attend. This seemed to me a most solemn warning from the Lord. There is little doubt that he was saved, for the Lord would not chastise so severely an unconverted man for neglecting His gracious warnings. May we all be like those in Acts iv. 23, who "being let go, they went to their own company." A dear brother told me once that he had often come home tired and weary from business, and felt inclined to stay away from the meeting, till he remembered an old couple of eighty years of age, who, although living at some distance, were most regular in their attendance at both the week-night meetings in this same room.

In the coming year, then, "let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: *not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together*, as the manner of some is: but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching"—the day of declension, of general apostasy and of divine judgment long deferred.

T.W.B.

## Encouragement for Evil Days.

**T**HE Epistle of Jude is a very short one, but how much there is in it! What contrasts there are! Beginning with soothing tones of precious comfort, followed by alarming blasts of warnings of evils—evils that are now current—it finishes on a note of such height and sweetness as carries our hearts on to worship and praise.

Of the 25 verses in the Epistle, 15 are concerned with the gross evils of the last days, and such is the

serious nature of these evils, that burning words are poured forth as from a fiery furnace of divine indignation. Serious to the last degree is the vista opened out to us. Solemn, deeply solemn, are the characters of evil presented; in proof of which a cloud of witnesses is summoned—how different from that of Hebrews xi.!

But what was before me was the special provision of encouragement for evil days. The first verse opens with sustainment and comfort; full, rich, most blessed, making special and ample provision against the dangers and evils of which the later verses warn us. “Jude . . . to the called ones beloved in God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ” (New trans.). Oh, the comfort of being “called”! If God has called us He will take the responsibility, “Whom He called . . . them He also glorified”; “Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.”

In London at every dangerous corner stands a policeman. The surging traffic coming from far as the eye can reach makes a crossing seem impossible, but the policeman's vigilant eye is upon it. At the right moment he lifts up his hand and all that mighty stream of traffic behind him comes to a dead stop. When he calls you to come across, he takes the responsibility; he has watched for you, he has made a path for you and he will see you safely across. And this is as true for the little child or the feeble invalid as for anyone else. Is there a dear timid one amongst our readers? We would say to such an one what some in a crowd of long ago said to blind Bartimeus, “Be of good comfort, rise, He calleth thee.”

Does not the Apostle Peter, after reminding us that judgment must begin at the house of God, set our hearts at rest with the beautiful words, “Casting all your care upon Him for He careth for you”?

and again, by telling us He is "the God of *all* grace"? Let us drink in the lovely words and not allow familiarity to cheat us out of their fulness. If the God of *all* grace has called us to His eternal glory, He will see that we get there. He has sent His Son to prepare the way, and the blessed Son of God Himself has become the way, so that it cannot fail nor can aught in earth or hell prevail against it.

Then comes the lovely expression, "in God the Father," only used on one other occasion—when the Thessalonians were passing through fiery trial and needed special comfort and help. Before we get to the Father's house on high, we have this inestimable consolation. And as if to heap comfort upon comfort, the word is given us, "Beloved in God the Father"—infolded in the Father's love! Did ever so few words convey so much? Let them sink deep down into our hearts, there to be an ever-springing well of divine comfort that all the demands of these perilous times cannot exhaust.

Perhaps that word "preserved" may send your thoughts instinctively to Psalm cxxi., which is full of His watchful care and ends with, "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth and even for evermore." How beautiful!—but, if possible, there is something even sweeter than this. In Psalm xvi. is a prayer of our adorable Lord when a dependent Man down in this very scene in which we are. The opening words are, "Preserve Me, O God; for in Thee do I put My trust." In matchless grace He has trodden the path before us—"in all points tempted like as we are, sin apart"; again, "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and He knows just the love, the sympathy, the preserving care we need in passing through a hostile scene. What a strengthening consideration is this!

But there is further special comfort in the saluta-



tion; for "mercy" is added to the usual salutation. The knowledge that the last stage of the church's wilderness journey is rough and dark and difficult, makes us feel the need of mercy. And we are to have it in abundance. Mercy, as also peace and love, are to be multiplied to us. If you multiply you soon get a big result. It is God's way. Our blessed Lord Himself was putting it into practice every day. In Him, as Man down here, we see the perfection of the meat offering, the sweet savour of which ever ascended to heaven. Every thought, word and deed was pure and perfect, affording ineffable delight to the Father; every footfall in this desert scene emitting a fragrance the memory of which shall never die away.

But with all this encouragement we must never be inactive but give diligent heed to the exhortations of our Epistle. Never was there more need to contend earnestly for the faith and for the building up of ourselves on it, than there is to-day. Mark the word "yourselves"—it is not addressed to leaders, pastors or teachers. All must take part in the building up. Notice also that, before the call to conflict in verse 3 and the call to service in verse 20, the saints are addressed as "beloved." What a thrill an endearing word like this gives in the pressure of severe trial! What a stimulus to strenuous service!

Then we have, "Praying in the Holy Ghost"—not vain repetitions surely, not asking ignorantly for the removal of that which may be unpleasant to us, but led by the Spirit into the knowledge (which intimacy with the Lord gives) of what is suitable and well-pleasing to Him. "Keep yourselves in the love of God" i.e. in the abiding consciousness of His love. The more evil the day, the more should we retire into communion with the One who loves us, cherishing in our hearts the very words of our

beloved Lord, the Son who ever dwells in the Father's bosom, "The Father Himself loveth you," and, "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you, continue ye in My love."

"Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." We have "mercy" at the beginning of the Epistle and here again at the end, carried up to where it will be no more needed. Blessed hope! Crowning mercy! The Lord Himself coming for us and causing mortality to be swallowed up of life, death to be swallowed up of victory, and every trace of the enemy's power to be for ever gone so far as it can affect us. Then—wondrous thought!—we who caused His exceeding sorrow will be the occasion of His exceeding joy.

A.J.H.

## How the Lord Encourages Young Preachers.

**I**T is nearly fifty years since a brother, moving away, left me in charge at Willowbrook Room in the south of London, where a happy work in the Gospel and a large Sunday School had long been carried on. The gracious way the Lord encouraged us ought perhaps to be told to His praise, and to strengthen the confidence of young workers, who might think that their efforts are unimportant. One of such instances I will relate.

One Sunday evening we had read the first chapter of Revelation, intending to preach the Gospel from it, but to my own great surprise I was led to deliver a lecture on the difference between a sinner first coming to the Saviour, and a believer who had got astray returning to Him. In the former case one approaches as guilty, burdened with sins, and in danger of being lost for ever; but pleading the value of the blood shed for lost sinners, and coming through Him whom God has set forth as a Mercy-

seat for the forgiveness of sins. Such an one, through mercy, learns that the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth (Rom. i. 16). He hears in faith the gracious words: "Thy sins are forgiven" (Luke vii. 48).

When, however, a Christian has left the path of obedience and gone into the world, the self-judgment and the shame are, if possible, greater; for ingratitude has been added to the transgression: yet one does not return to the status of a poor lost sinner, to be cleansed again by the blood and justified before the throne of a judge, for this had already been done once for all; but confession and contrition are necessary, and the application of the washing of water by the word. In Numbers xix., where it is a question of purification for sin (verse 9) when one had touched a dead body, there was no fresh application of the blood, but the ashes of the red heifer brought to remembrance the sacrifice whose blood had been sprinkled seven times before the tabernacle of the congregation. The running or living water in Numbers xix. would refer to the power of the Holy Ghost applying the truth of Christ's death for us to the conscience and heart of him who had gone back to a world that had been crucified to us and we to it (Gal. vi. 14).

After the meeting I saw a gentleman with a tall hat and a big Bible under his arm standing by the door waiting to speak to us. He said: "I have preached the Gospel nearly all over England, but have for some time got away from the Lord; I was standing at the other end of this long street this evening and a voice seemed to say to me: 'Go to the Gospel Room at the end of the road.' I had before noticed the room in passing by. You can judge how suitable the subject was to my case this evening."

The Lord had spoken to him, we did not need to say much.

The room was now almost empty, but a young lady remained seated. She proved to be the daughter of a brother who had been occupied in the Sunday School, so she knew the room well, but we had not seen her for years. She said: "I was going up the steps of the church in Rye Lane (a mile away) when a voice seemed to say to me 'Go to Willowbrook,' so I descended the steps and came straight here, arriving somewhat late." She also had strayed from the Good Shepherd and could not leave the room without confessing it and seeking help.

What wonderful ways of grace in reaching the heart and conscience of sinners or erring ones will the judgment seat of Christ reveal!

T.W.B.

## Familiar Talks on Fundamental Truths—4. Sanctification.

**H**OLINESS of *walk*.—No consideration of the subject of sanctification (or holiness) would be adequate which did not include the practical ways, the growth in grace and conformity to Christ, which is enjoined upon us in such Scriptures as the following:—"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. xii. 14), "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification . . . for God hath not called us to uncleanness, but unto holiness (1 Thess. iv. 3-7).

Here it is plain that the Scripture is speaking of holiness in our everyday walk and of the practical effect on the believer of having the Holy Spirit in us. The second Epistle to the Thessalonians makes the difference between these two aspects very clear. So we read "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief

of the truth; whereunto He called you by our gospel.”

Sanctification of the Spirit, therefore, in the last-quoted passage, accompanies belief in the truth, and was a fact true from the very beginning, from their conversion. Growth in grace follows afterwards in due course, for the Apostle prays that the God of peace Himself may sanctify them wholly and that “their spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

It is important that we should remember that we must never use one part of the truth to weaken another; for it is clear that the New Testament speaks plainly and pointedly of the fact that from the very first actings of divine love in the soul, right through, a believing person is sanctified. At the same time the Word of God, prayer, self-judgment and walking in the Spirit, all conduce to the soul's practical growth in holiness.

Now let us turn to another portion, “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all . . . by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb. x. 10, 14). These Scriptures do not speak of persons taken to heaven for saintship but of those walking on the earth in the everyday circumstances of life: indeed, what they teach us is nothing less than this—that if a believer died the moment that he believed (as was the case with the penitent thief) he is sanctified and made fit for the paradise of God, “made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light” (see also Acts xxvi. 18 and Heb. ii. 11).

Death strips us of everything that is unfit for the presence of God; then having been born of God, having received divine life, we are sanctified by the blood of Christ and by the Holy Spirit. We only learn what holiness really is by the place that the blood of Christ has brought us into; that is, a place of nearness to God. No effort of ours, however deep

and real, can give us this place apart from faith in the perfect work of Christ; but nearness to God, really known and enjoyed, must have its due effect upon us. I can never lose my place in the holiest which the blood of Christ has obtained for me, though I may often lose the enjoyment of it.

Now it is just here that the present gracious ministry of the Lord Jesus, as set forth in the washing of the disciples' feet in John xiii., comes in—the great principle of practical sanctification by the removal of that defilement which is contracted with worldly things or the allowance of that which is contrary to God.

There are two ways by which sanctification is promoted and both are ministries of the Lord Himself in the exercise of His perfect love towards us. One is by the application of the Word to the heart and conscience, as we read in Ephesians v., "That He might sanctify and cleanse it (the church) with the washing of water by the Word"; and the other is by discipline "He (God) for our (i.e. Christians') profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness" (Heb. xii. 10). The aim of discipline is to free us from every thing that hinders Christ being formed in us practically; but there is also chastening which we bring upon ourselves through the allowance of the works of the flesh.

Perhaps one great reason why many Christians find a difficulty in understanding this subject, and of the readiness with which what is called "Pentecostal blessing" is sought after, arises from the erroneous teaching that prevails as to the way in which God has dealt with the flesh, or the evil nature in us. This is the subject of Romans vi. and vii., where God's way of deliverance from the bondage and power of sin is clearly taught. These Scriptures show us that we are "dead with Christ," and we are exhorted to "reckon ourselves dead indeed unto

sin and alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord"; again "our old man has been crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

Carefully note that it is not said that we have to *die* to sin, but that we *have died* with Christ, and what we have to do is to keep the old nature in the place of death—the place in which God has put it. How serious the struggle is to subdue and overcome "the motions of sins which did work in our members" is known more or less to all; and consequently the great importance of understanding these two chapters in the Epistle to the Romans. The truth is that when Christ died, I died with Him, and now I have to "reckon" myself dead.

A story told of the efforts of a monk to overcome the working of the flesh in himself will bear repeating:—One day when listening to a brother reading, the monk happened to lift his eyes and to gaze dreamily upon the trees and sky. When he awoke from his brief reverie, his ears had lost the thread of the book. Abashed at his worldliness, and to restrain himself from such wanderings in future, he had an iron collar made for his neck, and bending his head towards the earth, chained it to his foot never more to allow his eye to entice his soul to wander. This was legality, not holiness. Many tales might be told of similar struggles in penance and mortification of the body. But however genuine they may be in purpose, they end only in misery and failure.

How different the effect when the truth of God is known and learned in the death of Christ! We are set free from bondage to sin and brought into that liberty wherewith Christ sets His people free. In fact Christ is the one blessed solution of all our difficulties as well as the One in whom we have eternal salvation.

T.R.

## “The Heavens Declare the Glory of God.”

Psalm xix. 1-6.

SOME years ago Dr. J. S. Plaskett, the Director of the Dominion Astro-physical Observatory at Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, discovered twin suns by the aid of the 72-inch reflector telescope. One of these is 15,000 and the other 12,000 times as bright as our sun. They have been named Plaskett after their discoverer. Though a thing almost incredible, it is computed that these suns are fifty-two quadrillions of miles distance from the earth; that they burn at a temperature of thirty thousand degrees Fahrenheit as they whirl around one another. One—the more massive, is stated to be seventy-five times, and the other sixty-three times the bulk of our sun.

That we have no knowledge of the vast extent of the heavens, as is suggested by Job's question, is therefore perfectly clear. The Lord alone knows their number. “He telleth the number of the stars. He calleth them all by their names” (Psalm cxlvii. 4); “Praise ye Him, sun and moon: praise Him, all ye stars of light” (Psalm cxlviii. 3).

Our penetration into the great beyond is greatly circumscribed by the limitation of our puny faculties, though the day of glory is at hand—that blessed day when all that is created will come under our vision. And, more remarkable than even this, our eyes will behold Him who created them all by the Word of His power; the Lord Jesus Christ, who brought into existence these marvellous constellations which fill infinite space. “They shall see His face” (Rev. xxii. 4). But even at the present time wonderful things have been revealed to us: things which call for the subject mind, and an ungrieved Spirit to intelligently comprehend. “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that



love Him. But God *hath revealed them* unto us by His Spirit" (1 Cor. ii. 9-10). These things have their source and centre in Christ, dead, risen glorified and coming again.

To understand and enjoy all this that is now ours in Him is our God-given privilege, and should also be our earnest aim, so that God may be glorified and we filled with gladness while pressing on to see Him face to face. But this demands obedience to the Word, and that we should have the same spirit which filled the Psalmist in Psalm cxix. 98-104, "Thou through Thy commandments hast made me *wiser than mine enemies*: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than *all my teachers*: for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than *the ancients*, because I keep Thy precepts . . . through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way."

With what untiring patience did the blessed Lord minister to His disciples before He went to the Cross, and yet somehow they did not understand, nor indeed could they fully, until He had died, and as He had said, the Holy Ghost had come so that He might both open their understanding and dwell in them. Then they remembered and understood with joy the precious ministry of Christ while He was here, whom they gazed at as He ascended to heaven, and whom they, and we too, shall yet behold in a new form—"this same Jesus"—and be with and like Him for ever. It is good to gaze at His handiwork in the heavens above, but better still to be above and gaze upon Himself. By faith "we see Jesus" now, while soon "we *shall see Him as He is*" (Heb. ii. 9; 1 John iii. 2), and both sights—the present and the future—are infinitely more wonderful than any astronomer has ever disclosed in the vaults of heaven.

J.P. (Montreal.)

## “The Father of Lights.”

James i. 17.

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**G**OD is almighty, all-wise, all-good—and God is *for* us. “Father of lights” refers to the sun as the source of light and good. It is a figure expressing how all the blessings we have, come to us from the very heart of God, who is the source of them all. The sun it is that gives light, warmth and prosperity to the earth, so that there should be an answer in fruitfulness.

Verse 11 of our chapter points to the fact that the glory of this world passes away as a flower of the grass; but the word of the Lord, as Himself, endureth for ever. Jesus, the Christ, will displace everything of the old creation; not a vestige of which will enter that glorious universe of bliss to which He will give its character, as well as being its Head.

It is important to see that, in this verse (17), we have the sun in an abiding character; the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” God dispenses everything that is good for the prosperity of our souls, so that we may be made sensible of His blessings, “According to His own will begat He us by the word of truth, that we should be a certain first-fruits of His creatures” (verse 18; new trans.)

God’s grace it is that is the sole and divine source of any good that is in us, as born of Him and that through faith—since it is by the Word of truth. By that Word we are born again, and receive a new life, according to the will of God. We belong to the new creation—we are its first-fruits. How wondrous, blessed, and precious this is to the soul! As one looks into a mirror one sees one’s face in it; so also by beholding what I am “in Christ” I find that, through grace, I am “taken into favour in the Beloved.” And now it is my

blessed privilege to act as the man that I am; not as the man I once was.

The objective side is seen in Christ, as we read in 2 Corinthians iii. 18, "But we all, looking on the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, are transformed according to the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit" (new trans.). So also we look into the perfect law of liberty in Christ. We need the objective lest we should become occupied with the subjective in ourselves.

All was perfectly and divinely expressed in Christ as He went through His daily life in this sin-stricken world. The perfect law of liberty shone out in Him in its perfection. We come under the blessings of the new covenant now—all the love of God having been expressed in Christ. Having the objective, we look into the perfect law of liberty; the new nature in us finds its true satisfaction in expressing what is according to God, as seen in Christ. How sweet and precious the Gospels become as we turn to them to gaze on Him with our heart's adoring eyes! "Every good gift and every perfect gift"—nothing that is from Him is other than a good and perfect gift, if we only use it and value it as such.

God being the Father of lights—Himself light—the display of this light is seen in His ways with us. A wondrous spectrum indeed, in which the glory of the light is displayed in its many-coloured rays. And it is all of grace! We are familiar with these lights as seen in the jewels in the high priest's breastplate; the embodiment of the light was in those gems upon which the names of the tribes of Israel were engraven. We have them again in the jewels of the eternal city, the perfect display of God's attributes, upon which all is founded there, and which therefore form an eternal foundation—God displayed in His own nature.

Who could change this in any one detail? "With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." The main thought here is the unchangeableness of God as the blesser; so if there is no response from us it is our own fault. The sun is always shining; the conditions that make for growth, from God's side, are always present; and all are centred in and shining forth from the Lord Jesus Christ, in view of the growth in grace which He looks for on our side; for *He* cannot be anything else but what He is. He cannot deny Himself.

R.E.C.

## "The Father Sent The Son."

1 John iv. 14.

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Father divine! in grateful love  
 We bow before Thy face,  
 While for Thy gift unspeakable  
 Our souls o'erflow with praise.  
 Thine only Son, Thy heart's delight  
 Far back, ere time began,  
 Thou, in Thy boundless love didst give  
 To die for ruined man.

Thou gav'st Him, too, well knowing all  
 That lay before Him here—  
 The thorny crown, the purple robe,  
 The gall, the cruel spear;  
 And, in that hour of woe supreme,  
 When Jesus bore our sin—  
 Thy patient, holy, suffering Lamb—  
 Thou didst forsake Him then.

Father! this mystery of love  
 Must all our praise excel:  
 No human, no angelic, tongue  
 Its wondrous depths can tell;  
 For what were we, that Thou on us  
 Such love shouldst e'er outpour?  
 We bow, and, filled with joy and awe,  
 Father and Son adore.

C. H. v. P.

## “Christ Loved the Church.”

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**T**HE love of the Son of God for the Church, as it had been from everlasting, so must it be to everlasting; as it is here written, “Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.” Every age and scene must witness the same love in some of its services, and in its abiding fervour and truth. No change of time could affect it. The dreariness of this world and the glories of heaven found it in His heart the same. Neither sorrow nor joy, suffering nor glory, could touch it for a moment. His death here, and His life in heaven, alike declare it. Nay, much more, He had served her in this love before the world was, when He said, “Lo, I come!”—and in the kingdom after the world, He will serve her still in the same love, making His saints to sit down to meat, while He waits on their joy (Luke xii. 37).

Such was the Lord, such is the Lord, and such will be the Lord in His unceasing service of love towards His saints: and He tells them to be His imitators. “If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet.” He expects to see, among us on earth, the copy of that which He is doing for us in heaven. He is there daily washing our feet, bearing our need and meeting our defilements before the throne; and He would have us daily washing one another’s feet, bearing one another’s infirmities, and helping one another’s joy, here on the footstool.

“Love, that no suffering stayed,  
We’ll praise, true love divine;  
Love that for us atonement made,  
Love that has made us Thine.”

J.G.B.

## The Gospel.

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**T**HE last few paragraphs in the article entitled "It is a Light Thing," which appeared in November "Words of Help," struck a chord in my heart. What a cheering thought that every precious soul won for Christ will be to the gratification of His heart for all eternity! We know they will be there as the fruit of the travail of His soul, and yet we need to remember also that we have a responsibility to carry the message to everyone we can.

The great apostle to whom was committed the truth of the Church was foremost in proclaiming the gospel, and went forth with the belief that he had a debt which he must pay to all. "I am a debtor," said he, "both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise." Souls cannot be won without sacrifice and effort, and perhaps this has not been sufficiently felt. Paul suffered for the gospel (2 Tim. ii. 10, etc.), and exhorts Timothy to be not ashamed of "the testimony of the Lord," but to be "a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel." "The testimony" here, no doubt, embraces the truth of "the mystery" and all that is connected with a *glorified* Christ. It is the whole revealed truth for the present time, no part of which should be omitted in its season.

But we fear the importance of the gospel has not been laid to heart as it should. And when we consider what it is in its fulness—the gospel of the grace of God, and the gospel of the glory of Christ, as so plainly set forth in the Epistle to the Romans too as being distinctly "the gospel of God," how could there be anything more to the glory of God, and more wondrously grand, than the gospel? But, sad to say, we have heard disparaging remarks made of the gospel and of those who preached it. Yet what a sower of the Word and preacher of the glad tidings

was the Son of Man Himself! Oh, that we had more of the heart of Christ!

“Could Christ for sinners weep,  
And shall our tears be dry?”

It is not only that the full truth should be known, but also there should be *compassion for souls*. Some have this latter more than others; and it will certainly not be lacking in the true evangelist. But surely if the saints had more of the mind of Christ, they would have this earnestness and compassion also.

God is still working; the Father and the Son are working in grace (John v. 17), and God graciously uses His servants that souls may be saved. To what extent have we considered this? We are apt to be turned aside and to miss the mind of the Lord, to see only one thing, and lay all the emphasis on it, to the neglect of that which is dear to the heart of Christ.

It should encourage us to know that “the long-suffering of God is salvation, not willing that any should perish,” and though the many are refusing to have to do with God to-day, yet, as long as the Lord tarries, we are to know that some are to be gathered in. And it is surely a part of “Holding fast His word and not denying His name” to proclaim the gospel far and wide. His presence in that can always be counted on just as truly as in the gathering to His name. God’s love to the world was expressed in the gift of His Son, and His object in sending out the gospel is that souls may be saved and Jesus may be glorified. Has He not, in His grace, saved us, and should we not then have confidence that He will save many others also?

There is no more wonderful message to declare than “the gospel of the blessed God,” which is “concerning His Son Jesus Christ.” “How beautiful

are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Let us, then, have grace and real heartfelt desire to serve in the gospel of His Son. How touchingly does the apostle give the saints at Philippi credit for their joyful interest in His service (Phil. ii. 17). Again in Phil. i. 7, we read, "Ye have me in your heart (margin) inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace." "The regions beyond" should ever be the motto of the evangelist, and, much as the assembly should appreciate the ministry of the Lord's servants, there should surely be the fullest sympathy with their efforts to go forth to the world.

F.E.H.

### "For Me and Thee."

Matt. xvii. 22-27.

**T**HE more we contemplate the ways of our beloved Lord in His gracious pathway through this scene, the greater must be our apprehension of their exquisite perfection. The record in this gospel of their development furnishes us with the most blessed instruction in them.

He came to His earthly people in the very way (ch. i.) and at the very place (ch. ii.) foretold in glowing words by their great prophets Isaiah and Micah. His public ministry was heralded just as predicted by the same great prophets (ch. iii.). He presented Himself as their Messiah (ch. iv. etc.), teaching with authority (chs. v., vi., vii.), displaying divine power in grace, e.g., healing the leper—for which it was acknowledged divine power was needed—(chs. viii.-ix.), and sending out His disciples to announce the Kingdom at hand (ch. x.). Yet in ch. xi. we find how fully He was rejected, and in ch. xii. they seek to destroy Him.

Will He not put forth His great power and consume them with the breath of His mouth? No: He



had come to save, not to destroy. But He no longer seeks fruit from His vineyard (ch. xiii.) ; He becomes the Sower and sets forth, in parables, the kingdom in mystery with the King absent. In ch. xvi. He reveals the church which He would Himself build, and in ch. xvii. the heavenly glory of the kingdom to three chosen ones. So that the kingdom in mystery, the church, and heavenly glory, take the place of Messiah on earth. Redemption must be accomplished. In ch. xvi. the Lord had forbidden His disciples any more to announce Him as Messiah, and in verses 22, 23 of ch. xvii. He tells them plainly He is about to be betrayed and put to death. Then, in this touching way, He shows them the new association with Himself *beyond death*.

When the collectors of the temple tribute came to Peter with the question, "Doth not your Master pay tribute?" he, forgetful of the glory of the Lord, answered "Yes," putting the Lord on a level with every Jew. Only three or four months previously Peter had made so full and beautiful a confession of who He was that Jesus had pronounced him "blessed" as a recipient of a direct revelation from His Father. And in the interval he had been one of the chosen ones to be with Him on the holy mount, privileged to witness the transfiguration and to hear the testimony from the excellent glory, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased ; hear ye Him." Jesus had thus been revealed and manifested as Son of God to Peter. He was, moreover, Lord of the temple as we see in Psalm xi., Malachi iii., etc., how then could He be asked to pay the tribute?

But the Lord, though not present, knew all that had happened and takes Peter up about it. And when Peter had admitted that earthly kings take tribute from strangers, not from their own children (or sons), Jesus said, "Then are the sons free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou

to the sea and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money; that take, and give unto them for Me and thee."

What blessed grace! The Lord associates dishonouring Peter with Himself. He said, not the Son, but "the sons are free"; not lest *I*, but "lest *we* should offend them"; the money to be miraculously provided is "for Me and *thee*." And to intensify the identification, the money needed for both is in one coin. For Me and thee—how individual and what intimacy! Each believer stands in this personal and intimate relation with the Lord. If in joyful wonder we ask, "Lord Jesus, are we one with Thee? O height! O depth of love!"; Hebrews ii. 11, gives the glorious confirmation, "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one."

We must linger a moment over His glory which so shines out in this incident. We recall the word, "The world is Mine and the fulness thereof." Having taken, in grace, a place with the poor and despised of His people, He had not here the money to pay the tribute. And yet He was the Creator and Sustainer of all things. Had He not a short time before spoken to that sea when its waves were raging under a storm of wind, "Peace, be still," and there was a great calm? So now, knowing exactly where, in those miles of sea, that coin lay, He directs a fish in its deeps to take it up and bring it to Peter's hook. Omniscience and omnipotence are found in Him who, in surpassing grace, was the lowliest of men.

All the need was supplied by the Lord. God supplies all our need according to His riches in glory by *Christ Jesus*.

The provision is made through death, for out of the waters the fish is taken. With adoring hearts we sing

“Baptised in death’s dark waters,  
 For us Thy blood was shed;  
 For us Thou, Lord of glory,  
 Wast numbered with the dead.

With Thee, our Life, we’re risen,  
 And shall be glorified.”

The precious corn of wheat would not abide alone but has died in order to bear the much fruit, in which—eternal thanks to Him!—we have our part.

“One spirit with the Lord,” oh, blessed truth! what is our answer to it? Alas! what failure has come in here. May we not learn a lesson from our well-beloved Lord in this lovely incident? In it He teaches us to walk in humility, ready to surrender our personal rights in order not to offend—especially those who may be carrying on the service of God.

A.J.H.

### “These Things.”

Matt. xi. 25-30.

**T**HE above words have a special significance as they were spoken at a time when our blessed Lord was sensible of His utter rejection by His own nation. The gospel by John differs from that of Matthew in that it *begins* with the Lord’s rejection: while the scripture before us indicates a *gradual* course of rejection terminating in the Lord’s denunciation of cities in which He had ministered and which had refused His ministry.

What was on the Lord’s mind when He turned from all those earthly hopes that would have united Him with the nation He loved, and that had so treated Him? Was it not that He might introduce Himself in a new character, namely as the revealer of God as Father, to the feeble and distressed remnant who were weary and heavy laden, borne down with sorrow and cast out from all the then

privileges of Judaism? In His character as *Son of the Father* He was leading them into that new relationship, which carried with it the knowledge of *the Father* far beyond the prevailing system of Judaism. "These things"—things which are based upon the work of the Cross—could not be grasped by human intelligence. The adult should not aspire to greatness but rather, as another has said, backslide into childhood and become a "babe" in spirit. It is to this spirit of the babe that "these things" are revealed. It is beautiful to see the perfect accord and unity of purpose which existed between the Father and the Son. Human wisdom and intelligence remain in darkness as to these blessings. The revelation of this new relationship of God as Father could be known only to those who were babes in spirit. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

To this weary and worn-out remnant, who had already owned Him as Messiah, and the One promised to restore all things to Israel, He turns with all the affection of His loving heart to lead them off the ground of Judaism, from under law, and from looking for the kingdom into an entirely new and different relationship, "Come unto *Me* and I will give you rest." We must look at this pronoun *Me* very carefully for it has a very different signification in its connection here, from its ordinary use. The spiritual mind will at once detect that the Lord here refers to Himself in that *new character*, already mentioned, as *Son of the Father*, which was unknown to Judaism.

The rest *given*, as another has said, is the new relationship with the knowledge of the Father far beyond Judaism!

"Take *My* yoke upon you, and learn of *Me*; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall *find* rest unto your souls. For *My* yoke is easy, and *My* burden is light." By bearing in mind the character

which these pronouns give to our Lord as *Son of the Father* it will be easier to grasp the fact that He refers to His filial subjection! The yoke being indicative of His implicit obedience to the Father's will, which He enjoins us to take, and thus learn from Him all that is due to the Father thus revealed by the Son.

The rest *found* is in the practical enjoyment of the rest *given* in *grace*. The Son, as the obedient One, was able to find and to speak of the easiness of the yoke and the lightness of the burden because He had Himself walked in that path.

J.P. (*Montreal.*)

### Three Beginnings.

“**I**N the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. i. 1). When we open the Book of God how different it is to any human book! There is no effort to display superior knowledge, no involved attempt to explain the *how* or *why* or *when* of creation; in fact, nothing can surpass the sublime simplicity of the first chapter of Genesis.

Here all is referred to God and this is enough for faith. “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God” (Heb. xi. 3). The believer has not to search for a “First cause”; for him theories of Development, Evolution, and all such speculations of man's mind are out of court. It has been often remarked that there is ample room for the geological periods, however long, between verses 1 and 2. That the earth *became* without form and void (or, as the Revised Version reads it “waste and void”) we know from verse 2, but as Isaiah tells us, it was not so created: “Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; He is God; that formed it; He established it, He created it not a waste, He formed it to be inhabited” (Isa. xlv. 18). How or when it became waste and empty we know not; but the remaining part of ch. I gives us the ordering and

furnishing of the earth as an abode for man. Such was "the beginning" as far as creation is concerned.

*"In the beginning was the Word"* (John i. 1). Here we are carried back long before creation or anything that had a beginning. Is there any point in a past eternity on which we can fix our mind?—*then* the One designated as the Word *was*. He, the Uncreated, had no beginning, He was eternal in His being.

"All things received being through Him"; and so absolute is the statement that it is added, "without Him not one thing received being which has received being" (New trans.). What a wonderful unfolding of the personal glory of the One who was "with God" and "was God"!

Let us meditate on these truths, let us hold them tenaciously in this unbelieving age in which we live. Everything hangs upon the truth of the Person of Christ, His eternal pre-existence in the form of God, His equality with God, His absolute Deity, as well as His pure and spotless humanity. As our chapter states it, "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us."

*"That which was from the beginning"* (1 John i. 1). The distinct purpose in view in the Epistle of John is to present Christ as the Life, the eternal Life which was with the Father, in all the blessedness of that relationship. It is not the same beginning as in the Gospel, though it is the same Person in both. It is not "In the beginning," but "From the beginning," that is, from the moment of His manifestation here in this world. He was a real living Man who could be heard, seen, contemplated, handled. What a wonderful truth that the Life has been manifested; and it is no other than the very eternal life which was with the Father in eternity.

Every title in Scripture has its own proper place and significance. Here it is not the "Word," "with

God," as in John i, but the "eternal life" with the "Father." God has been revealed by the only One who was competent to reveal Him—the only-begotten Son, who dwelt ever in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

And why are all these blessed truths brought out here? It is in order to show to the children of God what the true character of the divine life is in all its perfection and reality as known by the Son in the intimacy of the relationship in which He ever was with the Father. Such was the life as manifested in Christ here.

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you," says the Apostle; he did so in order that we too might enjoy fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. Could anything be higher or more blessed? Being made partakers of the divine nature, we can have fellowship with the Father about the Son, and with the Son about the Father, in order that our joy may be full.

This never was known in Old Testament times, however honoured many of the saints of those days may have been. No, it was reserved for the moment when the Son, who dwelt ever in the bosom of the Father, came forth in love and grace to make Him known for our blessing and enjoyment. And if we enter into these privileges will it not deepen our reverence, increase our sense of gratitude for such grace, and bring us in spirit, even now, into that heavenly sphere which shall be ours in actuality when we are with Him in glory? F.G.B.

## "Grace and Truth."

As seen in Jesus in John iv.

**I**N the gospel of John we find the Lord Jesus as Son of God, come from the bosom of the Father, and as being the only One who could reveal Him in a perfect way. God had spoken to the fathers by

the prophets, but only One could reveal what was in His heart, it was Jesus, His beloved Son. God is both love and light, so says John, and the Lord has given us to know Him in these two characters.

Jesus was the light shining in the midst of darkness and He has shed the light upon every man. But this light makes sin manifest, and the wickedness of man's heart, which could not bear the light, and never has had rest since he crucified the Lord of glory. But in thus laying bare the heart of man the Lord Jesus shows also the heart of God. At the cross was demonstrated the fact that God could not possibly tolerate sin; and Christ at the same time revealed the fact that God is love.

We often see the goodness and compassion of God in the Old Testament, but divine love could not be manifested in its fulness except in Jesus. We see in this chapter a poor sinful woman who was so miserable that she did not dare to go out in company with other people on account of the shameful life she had lived. She is surprised that a Jew should speak to a Samaritan woman and that He should be willing to give her water without having anything to draw with. She raises objections in order to escape from that which reached her conscience in the words spoken by the Lord.

Man born of Adam is always the same; he desires to escape from the presence of God. When divine light shines upon him and penetrates into the hidden recesses of his heart, Adam seeks to hide himself behind the trees of the garden. It is the same to-day; man fears to find himself in the presence of God, from which he would like to escape by becoming engrossed in the pleasures, or distracted by the affairs, of this world.

The woman of Samaria tried to turn aside the edge of the Lord's word by discussing religious questions with Him, but the grace of God in Jesus was occupied



with her in causing the truth to sink into her soul. This was not to cause her needless trouble but to do her good; His grace is always the same; if you are still far from Him He would draw you in order that you may be His.

What pains the Lord takes with her soul! He desires to lead us to hide nothing from Him and then He produces love in our hearts for His blessed Person. We must be alone with Him in order that He may discover to us what we are so as to do us good. There are needs in this woman's soul: what would she not have given that her wrongdoing might be forgiven? We find that all men desire to be happy; they have an insatiable thirst for happiness. So it was with this woman, and God knew it. He knows our wretched state and reveals to us what awaits us if we do not come to Him. He is moved with compassion towards her.

Jesus awakens the attention of the Samaritan woman (v. 7). He who created all things was there sitting on the well side; dependent on a sinful woman for a little water: He wanted to reveal to her what could make her happy. He presents Himself to her as being the gift of God; and it is this gift which God still presents. He leads her soul to Himself in order to remove from her everything she thought she had, and when she felt herself to be miserable and unworthy He makes known to her all His love.

Jesus gave Himself for us and communicates to us a life which makes us capable of understanding the love of God. Christ reveals the Father to us: it is a spring which satisfies the soul's thirst and springs up to eternal life; He gives freely in order to refresh the thirsty soul. No man has ever been able to make God known, but the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. Do we now seek to hide ourselves after having understood what the Saviour is? When we possess

Him we have everything in Him and we have need of no other.

What are God's thoughts towards men? Not only has He desired to make them happy, but He seeks worshippers. He desires to have children—a beloved family. In the tabernacle of old God remained hidden behind the veil, but now He is completely revealed. He is our Father, as He is the Father of our Lord Jesus. He has brought us near to Himself and has given us the title to become His children in perfect intimacy with Himself. It is Him we worship, and we may well say, "To Him who loves us and has washed us from our sins in His own blood," etc.

Only the blood of the Lamb can cleanse us and make us fit to be in the presence of God. By faith we know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. viii. 9). The Samaritan woman to whom He revealed Himself recognised that it was He who was to come and make known all things (John iv. 25).

Do you know Him and has He taught you the way of drawing near to God? And we who have received this grace, and who possess this well within us, springing up to everlasting life; does it suffice us that we have been brought to know the Son of God? Have we one desire only—to walk with Him alone and leave aside both the pleasures and distractions of this world?

The Lord is coming soon—blessed prospect for those who wait for Him; solemn fact for those who know Him not and who will have nothing but judgment as their portion. May each of us taste for himself the gift of God and possess Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

A.L.

## Scripture Notes and Gleanings.

“**G**OD’S fellow-workmen” (1 Cor. iii. 9). Whoever the servants may be, they are God’s, in direct responsibility; not in this sense the church’s, still less servants of a party. Not that, for this reason, they do not serve the saints; for the more they preach not themselves but Jesus Christ, the more are they bondmen of the saints for His sake. But they are *God’s* fellow-labourers, given of Him, doing His work, responsible in everything to Him, and finally to give Him an account. The phrase in no way means “workers together with God.” This is not the gist of the argument in the context; it is a thought and language foreign to Scripture; and also, in my judgment, unbecoming and presumptuous. The emphasis rests on “God’s.” They were “*God’s* fellow-workmen, workers together,” not rivals . . . but companions in work under God who employed them as such.

W.K.

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The whole of the Epistle to the Philippians sets forth what Christ is for the Christian. Its central theme may be summed up thus:—Christ, the Life, “For to me to live is Christ” (i. 21); Christ, the Pattern, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (ii. 5); Christ, the Prize, “I press toward the mark for the prize” (iii. 14); Christ, the Power, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” (iv. 13).

U.G.

. . . . .

The cross is the centre of the universe, according to God, the basis of our salvation and our glory, and the brightest manifestation of God’s own glory, the centre of the history of eternity.

J.N.D.

## The Christ of God.

“ Who do the crowds say that I am ? ”

“ But ye, who do ye say that I am ? ”

Luke ix. 18-20 (New Trans.).

**T**HE earthly path we wondering trace  
Of Him who, full of truth and grace,  
From heaven came down.  
His glory veiled, Himself unknown,  
Love, boundless love, in Him was shown,  
But to the eye of *faith* alone,  
Of faith in God.

Faith sees Him now exalted high—  
The One who came in grace to die—  
With glory crowned.  
To Him who loves us thus we raise  
Our joyful songs of thanks and praise—  
Theme of our everlasting days—  
Saviour divine!

Soon we shall meet Him in the air,  
The joy of His own heart to share  
In glory bright.  
Then when we see Him face to face  
And view the glories of His grace,  
The wonders of His love we'll trace,  
In God's own light.

Lord, deepen in our heart and soul  
Our love to Thee: do Thou control  
The heart Thou'st won.  
Let nothing here our souls beguile,  
And may we thus this little while,  
So live that we may win Thy smile  
And Thy “Well done.”

M.E.B.

## A Word for To-Day.

**I**F we look back upon the position and circumstances of the remnant of Israel in the days from Ezra to Malachi, we may find many truths which are helpful to ourselves to-day. They had to contemplate the same outward weakness in the testimony of God on the earth, and the fact that, through the sin of the nation, they were deprived of those marks of God's presence which once distinguished them. They had no Shechinah of glory, no priest with Urim and Thummim, no fire descending from heaven on the altar as in the days of Solomon. But they had *God*; and so long as they were humble and faithful to Him, this was everything.

Two things especially marked such a time as that was, and they should mark us to-day. Having forfeited everything on the ground of the special privileges that belonged to Israel as a nation through their sins and idolatry, they found their resource in the unfailing grace of God. Though God did not show Himself in displays of power as in former times, He was none the less the all-sufficient resource for all those who were humble and who trembled at His word.

Another thing which distinguished this remnant—found also 400 years after Malachi, at the time of the Lord's birth—was the constant expectation, on the part of earnest and godly souls, of the coming of the Messiah. This was the heartfelt desire and hope of the remnant: and they were not disappointed.

Surely this is the right attitude for all those who have intelligence in the mind of the Lord now. We cannot look for outward displays of power: we *can* count on the faithfulness of God. And we *can* and should have before us the blessed and cheering hope of the coming of the Lord, which is drawing nearer every day. And when He comes, the whole Church

will be caught up together to meet Him in the clouds. This delivers us from that narrowness of spirit which thinks only of ourselves, and fixes the heart on an object well calculated to cheer and sustain the soul amidst the prevailing weakness and the failure of human resources and plans.

## Propitiation and Substitution.

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**I**T is very helpful to us to distinguish clearly between Christ as the *propitiation* for the whole world, and as the *substitute* for His people. The two goats in Leviticus xvi., typify Him in these two aspects of His work. The Lord's lot fell upon one. This was Christ the propitiation. The people's lot fell upon the other. This was Christ the substitute. John i. 29, refers to the former, "The Lamb of God that taketh away the *sin* of the world" (see also Hebrews ix. 26). Christ did a work on the cross in virtue of which every trace of sin shall yet be obliterated from the whole creation. The full result of this work will not be seen until the new heavens and the new earth shall shine forth as the eternal abode of righteousness. It is in virtue of Christ's propitiatory work that God has been dealing in mercy and goodness with the world and with man, from the fall down to the present moment. He has sent His sunshine and His rain upon the earth, He has filled men's hearts with food and gladness. He has been dealing in patience and long-suffering with the human family.

And, further, it is in virtue of the same propitiatory sacrifice that the evangelist goes forth with a world-wide gospel, to proclaim it in the ears of every creature under heaven. He cannot go and tell every creature that Christ died as his substitute, but he can tell him that He died as a propitiation; and when,

through grace, the soul believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, he can learn the further tranquillizing truth that He died as a substitute, and bore all *his sins* in His own body on the tree (Heb. ix. 28), "So Christ was once offered to bear the *sins* of many"—all His people. In verse 26 we read, "He hath appeared to put away *sin* by the sacrifice of Himself." Christ is never said to have borne the *sins* of the world. It is utterly false doctrine—it is universalism. He bore the sins of His people, and He has done a work in virtue of which every trace of sin shall yet be abolished throughout the wide universe of God. These distinctions are of the utmost importance. Scripture maintains them. Theology confounds them, and confounds souls in consequence.

C.H.M.

## The Lord's Coming in 1 Thessalonians.

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**D**O we not lose much by overlooking the different ways in which the Lord's coming is presented in the several chapters of this epistle? Having drawn attention to them lately, an aged and gifted brother told us he had never heard, read or noticed how the blessings and privileges connected with the Lord's coming were, here in Thessalonians, so clearly expounded to young christians but recently converted.

Many say, "If I see the Lord Himself I shall be satisfied, and shall desire no more." But such thoughts are sometimes used to hide our slothfulness in the Lord's service. It is not well to pretend to more spirituality than Scripture enjoins. If one loves the Lord sincerely, one will long to have a crown to cast at His feet. When a boy comes home from a distant school at the end of the term, his first desire should be to see and be with his parents; but

he has to remember that his parents have desires for him, and are most anxious that he should come home with good testimonials as to behaviour and diligence. In like manner the Lord wants us to be among those to whom it can be said, "Well done, . . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. xxv. 21).

In ch. i. 10, the great, the all-important hope connected with the coming of the Lord is held out to our hearts, viz., Himself: "To wait for His Son from heaven." This eclipses all other hopes for true, christian affections. And we shall then know what joy the Lord has in seeing His loved ones with Him there, when, "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied."

But in ch. ii. 19, we read of another joy that the Lord is preparing for His faithful ones, "our joy." "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy." This is a joy in the presence of our Lord Jesus, thus a sanctified and holy joy, that He will behold with complacency. He who could say for Himself, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me" (Heb. ii. 13) will have His own pure delight in seeing that we also find in His presence some to whom we have been privileged to carry the word of salvation. "Ah," says one, "we cannot save sinners." Certainly not, nor can we quicken a corn of wheat in the soil, but we can sow it, and serve the Lord thus in our small measure, even as Paul who planted and Apollos who watered. If we bear this in mind we shall not lose an opportunity of helping along the road the young christians around us, or inviting sinners to come and hear the word of salvation. Would we so easily be deterred from going to the prayer-meeting or the gospel-meeting by a slight indisposition, or by the inclem-



ency of the weather, if we remembered the Lord's joy in being able to commend us on that blessed day, "in His presence"? He wants us when before Him, to have those with us who are "our glory and joy."

In ch. iii. 12, we read, "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love toward one another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you." This is with an end in view, but let us look at the way first that leads to the end. This glorious prayer was answered, for we read in 2 Thess. i. 3, that "The love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." What a solemn question for our hearts: Could the Apostle say that of me? Can my brethren with whom I meet, or with whom I come in contact, recognise in me, in increasing measure, that love which suffereth long and is kind, which envieth not, and which seeketh not her own? Oh, how much envy and self-seeking often lurk in our poor hearts, unobserved by ourselves! May the Lord in these last and difficult days make us to increase and abound in love one toward another, and then we shall discover fresh christian virtues in our brethren, and probably more faults in ourselves than hitherto.

"To the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."

We now have, in addition to the other joys and privileges, the glorious fact and wondrous blessing of being before, or in the presence of, our God and Father on that day. Surely a good earthly father takes a fatherly interest in his children and is pleased at their successes; and what good child is there who does not seek to be unblameable before his father? O my soul! hast thou thought that thy heavenly Father desires that thou shouldst be unblameable in holiness before Him on that day, and that one way that leads to this is love in activity towards the

brethren and all men? Surely it will not be necessary to remind dear readers that we are not speaking of the justification of a sinner, but of the well-pleasing walk of one already justified by faith? The holiness of the flesh says, "Stand by thyself, and come not near me, for I am holier than thou" (Is. lxv. 5). Divine holiness manifests itself in being near to God and like Him, in loving Him that begat and him also that is begotten of Him (1 John v. 1). Knowledge of the truth and purity of doctrine are surely most conducive to holiness, but let us not rest satisfied with these alone, but remember that if I have all knowledge and have not love "I am nothing" (1 Cor. xiii. 2).

"At the coming of the Lord with all His saints." The view is enlarged, a great cloud of witnesses arises before our astonished gaze. Does God want me to think of all these? Who are all His saints? Are they only those of the New Testament or may I think of what Enoch prophesied, "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints"? Our God and Father wished the newly converted young Christians in Thessalonica to be unblameable in holiness at that august moment when our exalted and ever-blessed Saviour will appear accompanied by all His ransomed ones from Old and New Testament times. We shall have a nearer place than God's honoured saints of the Old Testament, "God having provided some better thing for us" (Heb. xi. 40); but they too will be present when the Lord is manifested.

How puny and narrow our thoughts are of that stupendous time when grace shall end in glory, and when those who have suffered with Him shall also reign with Him (2 Tim. ii. 12). May the thought of those awe-inspiring and momentous times that God was pleased to depict for the saints in Thessa-

lonica brace us up to forsake all that is unworthy of our high calling and enable us to cast off the fear of men, to testify to the truth, and to walk circumspectly, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

T.W.B.

## The Philistine is in the Land.

**A**FTER the death of Abraham his son Isaac dug again the wells of water which the Philistines had stopped up (Genesis xxvi). These wells speak eloquently of spiritual things. The Philistines represent the enemies of God's people in all ages. The Philistine of our day is leading many to turn away from the Scriptures as the sole authority for faith and life. It has been said with truth that modern theology is, in reality, but modern infidelity, denying the revelation of God, the Deity and virgin birth of our blessed Lord, and His physical resurrection. The refreshing wells of inspired truth have been stopped up by these modern Philistines. These foes of the truth have stated that other books are inspired, and in the same degree that the Scriptures are inspired, viz.: Shakespeare, Milton, Byron, etc. They forget that inspiration has different sources. False prophets, we read, were inspired to speak lies in the Name of the Lord.

To fight this hydra-headed monster is impossible. The only way is to act according to the principle given us in Numbers xvi. 26, in the words of Moses, "Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men." The writer would counsel any who are under the ministry of these modernists to break away and associate themselves only with those who are orthodox. Those believers who are sound in the faith for which they earnestly contend, not only claim that the Scriptures are inspired, but that they are inspired by God the Holy Ghost. And who is

it that is behind these poor dupes, who prate from the realms of so-called science against the truth of God? The answer is not far to find. It is none other than he who was "a murderer from the beginning"—the "father of lies" (John viii. 44). He is the originator of all that is false, who has led men on to close up the wells of eternal truth and introduce new cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

The writer recently crossed the Atlantic in company with the editor of an English religious magazine. The object of this publication is, "To uphold the inspiration and integrity of the Bible as the Word of God." A recent editorial in it, commenting upon the ravages wrought by "higher criticism," refers to what archæology has done in its corroboration of the records of the Old Testament. This has come to us, for the most part, through the cuneiform records of Babylon and Assyria. The testimony of the hieroglyphics of Egypt, although less direct, has also been invaluable in showing the reality of the world in which the human authors of Holy Scripture lived and wrote. They have shown the high state of civilisation to which men had risen at a period when a mistaken scholarship imagined all were still back in the supposed barbarism of the race.

This mistaken scholarship, which, coalescing with more avowed unbelief, has blossomed out into the "higher criticism" of the present day, has, with an amazing and almost incredible wilfulness, closed its eyes to the mass of contrary evidence which has come to light since its theories were propounded. It was also shown, in combination with other causes, that this "higher criticism" has been largely responsible for producing that "falling away" from the faith (1 Thess. ii. 3)—i.e., the body of christian doctrine—which is so ominous a characteristic of the professed Christianity of the present day.

To prove the truth of our remarks we need go no further than the presidential address before one of

the largest denominations in the old country, when the following words were used recently by one who is also the president of a theological college for the training of young men for the Christian ministry:—

“We no longer stake our Christian faith on the historicity of the early chapters of Genesis, though as Denney says, he who does not hear God speaking there, will hear Him nowhere. God is not confined to history as His only means of teaching us. We do not stake our Lord’s divinity on the issues of controversies which must be settled on scientific and literary grounds. We have been compelled by the sheer weight of evidence to reject, or at least to modify, traditional views as to the authorship, date and unity of many books of Scripture, to readjust our conceptions of the course of Israel’s history, and to find where once we thought we had a single document of one age, various strata, the work of several hands, the result of slow growth and of final revision.”

Such words can only come from a modern Philistine. It may seem plausible to say, “We do not stake our Lord’s divinity on the issues of controversies,” but such phraseology is enough to make every Christian shudder, for, if the issues of controversies were true, and contradict our Lord’s truthfulness or knowledge, then His divinity must go. The Lord Himself threw down the gauntlet to such critics when He said to Nicodemus, “If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?” If He did not know who gave the Law and wrote the Pentateuch how could He tell us anything about the character of God or the future life?

J.P. (*Montreal*).

## The Presence of the Holy Ghost.

**I**T is very striking in Scripture, the way in which the Spirit of God meets things which are wrong amongst Christians, not by lowering the standard of truth, but by maintaining it at its high level. We

find an illustration of this in what the Apostle says to the Corinthians, most of whom had just come out of heathen darkness. Some of them were living in a way that called for strong rebuke and even discipline; but the truth of the believer's standing in Christ is never called in question for a moment.

No: the Apostle did not water down or accommodate the truth on account of their bad ways; on the contrary he says in ch. vi., "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? . . . Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?" Remark here how he holds up the standard of truth, for what could be a greater incentive to holiness of life than the fact that this body is the temple, the dwellingplace, of the Holy Ghost? Do we remember this and has it the place it should have in our daily life?

Again, let us take another exhortation connected with the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, "Grieve not the Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." This is a most important word for every believer. We "grieve" the Spirit when we act in the flesh or according to the desires of the flesh. It is true we do not grieve Him *away*, as some think, but we hinder His work; for if we allow that which is wrong in our practical life, the Spirit of God becomes within us a reprover and has to lead us to judge ourselves. Until we do this He is not free to carry on His more blessed work of teaching us more of Christ and of the blessings that are ours in Him. Let us see to it, then, that we grieve not this holy guest who dwells within us, and by whom we are sealed to the day of redemption.

At the close of that beautiful Epistle written to the young converts at Thessalonica, we find another important exhortation, "Quench not the Spirit." Here the context shows that it is a question of hindering the action of the Holy Spirit in the

assembly of God's people. It was God's desire and purpose that the youngest and simplest among them should be free to minister in the assembly, to lead in prayer or in worship, as the Spirit of God might direct.

We know only too well that there may be a restless activity of the flesh in our assemblies; some may speak or pray or give out hymns without the guidance of the Spirit at all; but the way to correct this is, not by making a rule which restricts liberty, but by patient waiting upon God, bringing the matter before Him in prayer, and, if necessary, by speaking to those who cause the trouble in a wise and gracious manner.

The whole question of the presence and power of the Spirit of God is a very important and practical one and very much overlooked in the present day. Every revival amongst believers, as well as all real blessing in the preaching of the gospel to the unconverted, from Pentecost onward, has been the work of the Holy Ghost; always doubtless, accompanied by prayer. In prayer we express our complete need of dependence on God for strength and blessing. We know that it is not human strength or effort which can accomplish the work, it must be by the power of the Spirit of God.

At the same time we must be in *earnest*. It will never do to simply fold our arms and say we are waiting for the work of the Spirit. How earnest men are about the things of this world—their business, their pleasure, their political schemes, etc. Is the Christian to be less earnest in the work of God? It is to be feared we are sometimes very apathetic and unpractical in the Lord's interests.

We have only to look at the example of the early disciples in the work of the gospel as recorded for us in the Acts of the Apostles—which, indeed, someone has suggested might be called the Acts of the Holy

Ghost. There was the ministry of the Word of God, watered by prayer, and energised by the Holy Ghost, and God gave a rich harvest of blessing. We who live at the end of the dispensation may not see the same outward manifestations of power, but the principle is the same now as then.

Yet even this remarkable work of God's Spirit did not free the labourers from hardship, toil and persecution. On the contrary, theirs was a life of constant danger, of trials which most of us know little about; but in spite of all we read of them that, "they were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost." Let us remember that God is the same to-day, His power and His grace is available where there is faith and earnestness, and the Holy Ghost is here and will remain as long as the Church of God is still on earth.

F.G.B.

## The "Healers" and "Pentecostal" People.

**T**HOSE who are at all familiar with the doctrines of the present-day "Healers" and "Pentecostal" people, so called, must be aware that the 2nd chapter of the prophet Joel is a portion of Scripture to which they repeatedly turn, believing that the prophecy given therein is now being fulfilled. The Scriptures which we quote below, they apply to themselves and to their doings, which they assume to be of God:—

"Rejoice in the Lord your God, for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain."

"And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm." . . . "And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth," etc.



Now, what we want to know is this, Do these prophecies refer to the present time? If they do, then we may look for these manifestations; but if not, we must turn away from all such pretensions.

A little careful reading of the chapter will be sufficient to show to any spiritual mind the time and place to which these prophecies belong. For the help of some to whom this may not be quite clear, we will quote again from the chapter certain portions omitted in our previous quotation:—

“Blow ye the trumpet in Zion.” . . . “Fear not, O land.” . . . “Be glad then, ye children of Zion.” . . . “And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel.” . . . “In mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance.”

It can be seen at a glance that the prophet is here foretelling events which will take place in connection with the Jewish people and their land. They do not belong to the “Church” dispensation or age in which we live, but to a subsequent period of time. It is not the Lord Jesus in the midst of the assembly as we find in Matthew xviii. 20: it is not the “building” spoken of at the close of Ephesians ii. (which is an “habitation of God through the Spirit”), but it is Jehovah in the midst of *Israel*.

To make out that the 2nd of Joel refers to the present time is a perversion of Scripture. The truth is, it has no connection with the “Church” as seen in the New Testament. And thus, the foundation of the doctrines put forward by these teachers being wrong, the structure erected upon it cannot stand. We are responsible to test all things by the Word of God; that is one purpose for which it was given, as well as to guide our feet through the labyrinth of confusing ideas which surrounds us. “By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer” (Ps. xvii. 4).

It makes no difference how loudly people may profess, and what lofty claims they may make, our

only place of safety is in adhering closely to what is written. If Satan quotes Scripture—and he does—the dependent believer should say, as Christ did, “It is written again.”

We all know that on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was poured out, and that on that occasion Peter, in addressing the people, quotes from the 2nd of Joel. But it was then only a partial fulfilment of that prophecy and not its direct and complete fulfilment. Instead of Israel being delivered, Pentecost was the commencement of an entirely new work of God—it was what we might call the birthday of the Church—a body formed from both Jew and Gentile, baptized into one body by the Spirit.

The early chapters of Acts show us that Christ was then afresh offered to Israel, and it seemed as if the kingdom which God had promised them was about to be set up. But the nation as such definitely rejected Him, and in the stoning of Stephen they resisted the testimony of the Holy Ghost. Consequently instead of coming into the blessings promised them, God raised up the Apostle Paul as a chosen vessel to carry the gospel to the Gentiles. It was then that the formation of the “Church,” as a distinct body, began. The present period of time is the “Church” period, which is in no way the subject of Old Testament prophecy. It is repeatedly spoken of as the “mystery” which was “hid in God” (Eph. iii.); or as the “one body,” which is now being formed of both Jew and Gentile. Of this we do not find a hint in the Bible until we come to Paul’s Epistles.

But has God cast away His people Israel? By no means. There will yet be a fresh outpouring of the Spirit upon them, and upon all flesh (see Rom. xi.). That, however, will be after the “Church” period

is over. Christ will have come for His Church before that time arrives.

We must not confound the "last days" of 2nd Timothy iii. with the "last days" of 2nd Joel and other Scriptures, such as Isa. ii. 2-4; Micah iv. 1; Hosea iii. 4, 5, etc. The first describes the last days of Christendom; the latter, the last days just before the Lord's appearing in glory to put down His enemies and begin His millennial reign.

We should learn to value and appreciate *all* Scripture; but it is most important that we should "rightly divide the word of truth"; for Scripture misplaced and misapplied is a constant source of error. What false system is there to-day that does not come to us quoting Scripture? But shall we accept them because of this? Far from it. We need to watch for counterfeits, especially on the part of those who adopt feigned words and fair speeches. Let us have only the truth and avoid all else. The truth is a sure preservative to those who have it and walk in it.

The practices of present day "Healers" and miracle workers are shameful, indecent, and unbecoming sound doctrine and christian conduct. The wreckage they leave behind them of disappointed and damaged souls is a sad sight indeed. Such acting only encourages infidelity in the men of the world. Could we imagine the early Apostles or servants of Christ departing from a city with some 20,000 dollars, or with a satchel so full of money that police officers were told off to guard them on the way to the train? Yet these things are facts recorded to-day of these professedly "Pentecostal" preachers and teachers. May God's people be preserved from such snares of the enemy!

**F.E.H.**

## Boundless Love.

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O BOUNDLESS love of Jesus!  
Its taste to me while here,  
So fills my heart with gladness  
I long to see Him there.

O boundless love of Jesus!  
My fear is now all gone,  
I'm resting on the atonement  
Of God's beloved Son.

O boundless love of Jesus!  
I sing aloud His praise;  
For I, a poor vile sinner,  
Such heavenly songs can raise.

O boundless love of Jesus!  
He gave Himself for me;  
That I might share His glory,  
And with Him ever be.

O boundless love of Jesus!  
I cannot sound its depth;  
But soon I'll know its fulness  
Beyond the power of death.

O boundless love of Jesus!  
Blest theme of glory bright.  
For as He is, I'll see Him,  
And walk with Him in white.

T.M. (*New Zealand*), aged 86.

## Victory and Defeat.

**I**T was not long after Adam was set up in the Garden of Eden until he failed; it may have been the very same day. Since then, in every great crisis and in every time of testing, the fallen race, of which he was the head, has suffered defeat also. No matter what form of responsibility he was placed under—whether it was without law, with law, under kings, prophets, or priests, etc., right on till Christ Himself was cast out of the vineyard and crucified—the history was always the same.

And every effort to find a remedy for the state of things in the world, or something to satisfy the cravings of man's heart, has been a failure. To-day, Socialists and Communists dream of an Utopia, where wrongs will be done away and everyone will be happy; but we have only to look at the result of this idealism as seen in Russia to see what a delusion it is. Turning away from Christianity, the atheistical rulers of that country have been more oppressive and cruel than the monarchy that they displaced, bad as that government was in many ways.

Do we not see, as the close of the present dispensation approaches, the dark shadows of the coming apostacy already falling upon Christendom? In that day, God will send judicial blindness, a "strong delusion," on those who have no love for the truth, so that they will believe a lie instead of the truth (2 Thess. ii). He tells us these things in His Word so that we may be forewarned.

Now contrast this utter failure of the first man with what has been accomplished, and will yet be brought in, by the Second. Christ stood faithful and true to God in every trial where Adam failed, and incomparably more. He met and overcame Satan at the temptation in the wilderness at the beginning of His ministry. And even when the great issue of good and evil was fought out at the

cross; when He was crucified through weakness, when apparent defeat was His portion: *then* it was that the greatest victory of all was won—a victory which settled the whole question of sin, to God's eternal glory, for all eternity. Through that work, too, deliverance is brought to poor captive slaves of sin and Satan.

Thank God we, Christians, belong to a victorious Christ. We triumph in His triumphs, and we wait for the day when all things, both in heaven and on earth, shall be headed up in Him. Thus the Christian's place is one of assured victory; there is no doubt about this, whatever his conflicts or difficulties may be here.

And so, while passing through this fleeting and unsatisfying world, it is our privilege to account that we are not of it, that ours is a better portion, that we belong to a better country, that is, an heavenly. We have to do our work and business *in* the world, but this does not mean that we are to defile our garments with its pollutions or to be caught by its seductions.

We wait for the day when the victorious Saviour, Son of man, will claim His rights and be exalted over all the works of God's hands. Until then, God will overturn, overturn, overturn all the things that man's vain hopes are built upon—his pursuit of "liberty, fraternity, equality," etc.—all these will come to nothing; unless, indeed, it be open rebellion against God.

### Sharing Christ's Thoughts.

**A**N esteemed contributor writes us appreciatingly of "Words of Help," and the following extract from his letter is worth reproducing:—

"I most sincerely and prayerfully trust the Lord will guide and use the ministry of His precious word in 'Words of Help' to the awakening and

building up of His saints, so that they may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. My heart's desire is, that you and all of us may be kept in close fellowship with Christ, so that the spontaneous fruit therefrom may be love to all saints. To the same extent that Christ is valued will the saints be valued. In proportion as Christ's thoughts about His saints are known to me will all saints be in my thoughts. May the grace of God so subdue us that we may take stock of each other more in the abstract. Balaam's view-point should be ours (Num. xxiii. 20, 21; xxiv. 5).

"The year 1923 is rolling away: It will be good exercise for our hearts to recall how faithful the Lord has been in His constant care and service toward us. How we need to realise what we owe to His gracious activities as Shepherd, Advocate, High Priest, and Head.

"In addition to all this, we await Him from heaven as Saviour, to change our body of humiliation and fashion it like His body of glory. I am sure this thought must appeal to you more than to many. The end the Lord has in view in all His activities is the presentation of the assembly to Himself; a glorious assembly, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and blameless. As He contemplates it He will discern every feature of it to have been derived from Himself, and at the same time, will accept it for eternity as given to Him by God the Father to be His bride. No thought of God is ever allowed to lapse; and this one—though belied by the first woman—is to be fully realised in the assembly as being united to Christ (Genesis ii. 18)."

NOTE.—We desire to take this opportunity of sincerely thanking those who have contributed articles to our magazine, but we would like to say a few words on the subject of such. A writer, as well as a speaker, needs to be much in prayer that God would give him just what He would have communicated for the

good of His people. Articles should not be long; not more than about 1,000 to 1,200 words. We have to consider what we might call the ordinary Christian, rather than those who are deeply taught in the Word of God. It is therefore important that papers should be brief and pointed, expressed in words easy to be understood and which convey the meaning clearly. Then also we have to seek wisdom from God as to what is specially needed for the times we live in, as well as meat in due season for any and every child of God.—[Ed.]

## The Coming of the Lord Draweth Nigh.

**O**F this glorious event, we can scarcely be reminded too often. In the parable of the ten virgins we see illustrated how the early church fell asleep; but we cannot believe that the hope of Christ's coming will ever be entirely lost by the church again, rather will the hearts of "His own" rejoice more and more in that "blessed hope." As Christendom becomes increasingly corrupt, as we are foretold in the Scriptures, so we are to "look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

It is happy to think of the joy it will be to Christ to come for the church as His purchased bride. "The Lord Himself shall descend," He will not send another, but He will come Himself. Think of His grace, dear believer: He will come for you, and He will come for me!

How cheering is the hope of His coming as "the bright and morning star"! It is night now. He will come for us "just before the break of day." It will be "morning" when Jesus comes. Before the fulfilment of God's promises to Israel and before He comes in judgment, the Lord Jesus will descend from heaven and take His saints to meet Him in the air (1 Thess. iv. 15-18).

We know, also, that Christ will appear to the world, and "all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him," but we are looking for the meet-



ing in the air before His appearing thus to the world. And yet we may ask ourselves, Are we really looking? All Christians are supposed to be looking for the rising of the morning star. Never before were we so near His coming as we are now. He might come to-day! Do we believe it? Does it move our hearts? It must, if we are His.

The bride hears a voice; it is the voice of her beloved. And what does He say? "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." He has not said it yet, but He will say it ere long, and knowing this, our hearts are now set upon Him where He is, and where we shall be. Shall our object be to make the best of this world? Rather, let our hearts be separated from it, for the Lord Jesus is coming to take us to be with Himself where He is.

The hope of His coming should comfort us in trial; Do we forget that? How it brightens things! it will more than make up for all that we have to suffer here. We shall see His face! Oh, that our hearts were set upon Him now, that we might think and speak of Christ and His coming as we should, and that we might act for Christ, too; being placed here as we are, to witness and suffer for Him during His absence.

He is coming! There were those who waited for Him before, and He came. He came in lowly grace for the suffering of death. But He promised to come again, and He will come the next time to take those to be with Himself whose sins He put away at His first coming. He has redeemed and fitted them for the glory above by the shedding of His precious blood, so that the question is once and for ever settled for all who believe. With our consciences at rest, we long to see Him and to be like Him. There cannot be any dread about that, for it shall be the most blessed realisation of all our hopes. The perfect love of God casts out all fear.

Those out of Christ—the unsaved—might well fear; and if they do not fear now, they will rightly fear when He appears in glory. And the mere religious professor might well fear, for the door will be shut against him when Christ comes for His own. Those also who are depending upon their works should fear, for our works cannot make us ready to meet Him. But for the true believer—the saved one—it will be the most glorious of events. Praise His name for His grace that has fitted us for that sharing in that moment of His extreme joy and blessedness, and ours also.

Are we not told to look for signs? No, we are to look for Himself!—"Looking for that blessed hope." "Unto them that LOOK FOR HIM shall He appear", "The Lord HIMSELF shall descend." Could anything be richer or more blessed than that? Do you know of anything, fellow-believer?—it will be His best—it is HIMSELF who will come for us!

Oh, to enter into it more! Here, we are in this scene where our Lord was rejected. In His love and mercy He has picked us out of the world's filth and sin. We deserved nothing but condemnation, but Christ gave His life for us, and we have been made to live in Him and He in us. Here also we suffer and groan. We see the failure of the church as a witness for Christ, and irreparable ruin, to which nothing can bring relief but Christ's coming. Then He will receive the church into glory and present it to Himself without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Is there not something worth thinking about in that? We do not see the church in that condition yet, far from it; but when the Lord Jesus comes how different it will be!

You are a Christian. You are saved and the Holy Spirit of God dwells within you; the love of God is shed abroad in your heart by that Spirit of promise.

You "joy in God." But for all that you are in the wilderness. You are not yet in the Father's house where the Lord Jesus is; though you can and do "rejoice," you also "mourn." But you shall be "satisfied." Surely your cry is, "Come, Lord Jesus." And why? It is the Spirit-taught longing of the bride to possess the Bridegroom, and then there will be "fulness of joy."

Have you realised that nothing can ever satisfy your heart but Christ, and are you watching for His coming again?

F.E.H.

### Christianity.

**T**HE metropolis of true Christianity is not St. Peter's at Rome, or St. Paul's Cathedral in London, or even Jerusalem in the Holy Land. It is true that the latter is to be the future metropolis of the coming earthly Kingdom of the Son of man, Jesus Christ our Lord. But the metropolis of Christianity is in heaven, where the risen Christ is. He is now "set down at God's right hand in the heavenlies, above every principality, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that to come" (Eph. i. 20, 21, new trans.).

Christianity is divine in its origin and heavenly in its character. From heaven God carries on the administration of "the mystery hidden through the ages in God, who has created all things in order that now to the principalities and authorities in the heavenlies might be made known through the assembly the all-various wisdom of God" (Eph. iii. 9-11, new trans.).

The Crusaders girded their swords upon their thighs to make way for, and to advance, the kingdom of Christ on earth, and many an earnest Protestant is ready to do the same to-day, forgetful of the Lord's

own words, "My kingdom is not of this world; if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews, but now is My kingdom not from hence (John xviii. 36).

Soon, very soon, it will be otherwise. The word will then go forth, "Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O most mighty, with Thy glory and Thy majesty, and in Thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and Thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible things" (Ps. xlv. 3, 4). Then, too, will His saints know the right time for wielding weapons of war, for, "The *armies* that were in heaven followed Him (who in righteousness doth judge and make war) upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean" (Rev. xix. 11-14).

But how different what is written of the disciples of Christ when He was here on earth, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. v. 10; see also verses 11, 12).

It makes a complete difference in our conception of what Christianity is when we have a due understanding of the times and see the calling out from this world of a *heavenly* people to follow a heavenly Christ whom the world has rejected and to walk in faith, realising that we belong to Him where He now is. Such a path entails present suffering and conflict, and we learn something of the nature of this conflict in His word, for we "wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. vi. 12). Of what avail is a sword or a stave in this war? None whatever. A complete armour is needed and is provided; and this we are exhorted to "take up" so that we may be able to stand in the

evil day; for the object of the enemy is to keep us out of the enjoyment and realisation of the heavenly portion which is ours in Christ even now (see Eph. vi. 13-19).

T.R.

## Intelligence in the Things of God.

**A**MONGST the various precious truths characteristic of the Gospel of John and interwoven with the whole structure of that Gospel, none is more evident than the fact that the very words spoken and the works done by our Lord Jesus were those which the Father had given Him to speak and to do. What a weighty responsibility this entailed on those who heard and saw!

“My doctrine is not Mine but His that sent Me,” He says. How then am I to understand His teaching—teaching set forth in the most simple words, but with what a profound depth and meaning? The answer is, “If anyone desire to practise His (God’s) will, he shall know concerning the doctrine,” etc. (chap. vii. 17, new trans.). It all turns on the state of the soul: the question is, Is my eye single? Is the true, honest, unreserved desire of my soul to do God’s will, not my own? If so, this is the key to the understanding of God’s Word.

Truly we are most thankful for godly and gifted men who have helped us much; but is Christ really the object before the heart? That is the point we must keep in view if we are to profit by His Word.

Let us take the Lord’s answer to the question asked by the Pharisees, “Who art Thou?” He says, “Altogether that which I also say to you” (chap. viii. 25, new trans.). None could say this but Jesus—it really means, “I am what I speak.” His words represented exactly what *He was*; and He was the living expression of all that He said.

May we not well judge ourselves in the light of the perfect One as we ponder His path here? How often *our* words run far beyond what we are! How often we show ourselves before others, in our actions, to be different to what we teach or say!

Take, again, His question to the Jews, "Why do ye not understand My speech? even because ye cannot hear My word" (chap. viii. 43). They did not understand, and they did not hear except with the outward ear. But what does the Lord mean? A most important thing truly.

In human things, in the affairs of this life, words are used to convey to the hearer a certain meaning. If I say, "This table is well made," I use the words to convey to the hearer a certain fact about the table. But this is not so in divine things. In the things of God, I must first know the *thing*, in order to be able to understand the bearing of the *words*.

Take, for example, the question of "new birth." To an unconverted man the words convey no intelligible meaning; he cannot understand what is meant, any more than one who cannot read cannot understand a printed book. But to the Christian, who is himself born again, and who has the Holy Spirit as his guide and teacher, the words are quite intelligible and convey to the soul a most blessed truth. When we have heard with the heart and conscience and believed God's testimony about Christ, the Bible becomes a new book. And when thus read, it conveys, more and more, to the soul the impress of its divine origin.

Why do Higher Critics (so called) and sceptics so often stumble over what seems simple to a christian Sunday-school child. Because, not having the new life and nature, they have not the capacity to understand the things of God; of which we are distinctly told that they are "spiritually discerned."

It is as the whole heart expands to that sunlight which comes from above, revealing God's love in

Christ—it is as He Himself, the lowly One, fills every crevice of our renewed being—it is as God's will and Christ's glory are our sole object and motive—it is only thus that we will have true spiritual intelligence in the things of God.

F.G.B.

## God Speaking.

**I**F we read Psalm xix. and the quotation from it given in Romans x. 18, we shall find that God is speaking by the firmament, and the words are *heard* to the ends of the earth. Of the created heavens it is said, “Their *sound* went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.” The divine communications, whether in revelation or in creation, are as broadcast as earth's limits, and are addressed to “every creature.” There is no bound to His message to man. And yet God has condensed all that He has deemed it advisable for us to know into one book—the Bible—which can be purchased for a few pence and carried in the pocket.

As one passes through the busy streets of our large cities just now, a new thing meets the eye, namely, the wonderful development of what is known as “listening in.” May we not say that this remarkable adaption of electricity has a counterpart in the realm of spiritual things? People who are in earnest about spiritual realities are sometimes considered by the men of the world to be missing some enjoyment, to be behind the times, and living at a disadvantage. Really this is not so, for the believer has a far deeper source of joy, inasmuch as what the world is now so much taken up with, has been known, in a spiritual sense, for ages.

I trust it will not be taken as irreverence if, in this paper, common words and objects seen every day are taken to illustrate what is meant. If we only knew it, the ether around us is full of electric waves,

which, when detected by a suitable instrument, convey real, distinguishable sounds to the listener.

Now the man of faith, who listens to God's voice speaking in His word, as expressed in words given by the Holy Spirit, has the wonderful privilege of hearing what He has to say to him. It seems to us marvellous that we should be able to listen to a person speaking from the other side of the Atlantic; but the man whose ears have been unstopped by the ministry of Christ, may, like the one who was healed of the deaf and dumb spirit of old, hear a voice from heaven conveying spiritual music to his ears.

There is nothing sweeter than this in a spiritual way. While youthful Samuel heard for himself the word of the Lord, Mary of Bethany sat at His feet and heard His word, the two disciples on the way to Emmaus found their hearts burn within them as He talked with them by the way. We also to-day are not less privileged than they, possessing, as we do, the spiritual capacity for receiving heavenly communications because of the new nature, and the Holy Spirit dwelling in us individually, and in the church collectively.

Charles Wesley must have felt something of this when he wrote:—

“When quiet in my house I sit,  
Thy book be my companion still;  
My joy Thy sayings to repeat,  
Talk o'er the records of Thy will;  
And search the oracles Divine,  
Till every heart-felt word be mine.”

Let us also seek to have our heavenly and earthly connections so in order that we shall hear these wonderful things.

Sometimes, when passing the centres already mentioned, one can hear a demonstration on a loud “speaker,” of what is broadcasted, given in order to induce people to purchase the instrument so as to



entertain the family or even a large circle of hearers. Does not this remind us also of what we often hear in the streets of our cities, namely, the broadcast announcement of the glad tidings of the glorious Gospel of God, made by men who have already "listened" to it and received it themselves, and have now, in their turn, become "broadcasters"? The evangelist is authorised, yea urged, to carry his message far and wide and to "lift up his voice like a trumpet," and this "whether men will hear or whether they will forbear."

But whether God speaks loudly, as at Pentecost and the subsequent revivals, or softly, to individuals, the means of communication is the same,—the living Word of God. And surely we all ought to be broadcasters in our measure! David prays at the close of Psalm xix. "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."

The Word is the source of every right thought and the power of every right utterance. Well might David again declare that it was more to be desired than gold, and sweeter than honey. May we, believers, whose lot is cast at the end of the church's history, in the period figured by Laodicea, hear the voice of the Lord Himself and know the blessedness of being called to sup with Him, as He indeed will, in grace, with us.

P.W.

## Christ and the Glory of the Father.

John xvi. 7-15; Eph. iii. 14-21.

**T**HE blessed Lord was about to go back to the Father who sent Him—to the greatest possible place. The Lord Himself had said, "My Father is greater than I": He had come forth from the Father and was now going back to the Father. He had done the Father's will and accomplished everything

needed to fulfil the counsels of God. Had He not said, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to finish His work?"—and now He was about to return to the Father.

It is brought out prominently in the Gospel of John that "All things that the Father hath are Mine"; both in His own testimony and the witness of the Holy Ghost. Jesus said, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand." Oh, how precious it is to see that everything is centred in the Son; so the Lord says of the Holy Spirit, "He shall glorify Me, for He shall take of Mine, and shall shew it unto you"; for He was sent into this world to testify to what was Christ's. The Spirit bears witness, because the Spirit is the truth: Christ is the truth in the sense that in Him everything is revealed objectively, but the Spirit is the truth of all subjectively in the believer.

Verses 8 to 11 are, in a sense, parenthetical; the direct line of the Lord's communications goes on from verse 7 to 12. The Spirit, when He came, would convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment: that is to say, His presence here would be the demonstration of those three things. In view of the rejection of Christ everything was brought to an issue—sin, in that they believed not on Him; righteousness, because He went to the Father; judgment, because Satan the prince of this world was judged. The whole world-system is judged, as is demonstrated by the presence of the Holy Spirit here. It is not a question of judging persons, but the system is laid bare and judged.

The grand point was that the Holy Ghost, when He came, would bring into view another system, a system of things that lay in the Father's counsels—a glory-system, entirely different from what had been heretofore. It is most important for us to apprehend that God is sovereign in what He creates; it was so

in regard to the first creation. If He sees fit to create millions of suns, He does so according to His own sovereign will. If He sees fit also to display His love, He is sovereign in displaying it. He has His own plans and purposes, but the object in all—the One who was to be displayed in them—was the Son.

And so we read those wonderful words, “All things that the Father hath are Mine”—all that system of things that lies in the Father’s counsels is created in, and for, the glory and honour of the Son. Having become Man in order to give effect to those counsels, He becomes the Head and centre of all things. He has power to give “eternal life to as many” as the Father has given to Him; thus the Father’s counsels all have the Son for their object and centre.

In Ephesians iii. the Apostle prays to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, “of whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.” His heart intuitively turns to the Father’s bosom—which is the source of all our blessedness—as David says, “according to Thine own heart, hast Thou done all this greatness.” As we apprehend the greatness of the Father’s purposes, we get enlargement of heart, and one cannot know anything of the testimony of the Holy Ghost without getting enlargement of heart.

To know God’s will there must be separation from the world, but the world looks on this as an insult and will not be insulted without taking revenge. So Paul experienced, for He unfolded the truth of “the mystery” from a gloomy dungeon at Rome. What a contrast to the world! What a vista of heavenly glory is opened to the eye of faith! What an incentive we have, beloved brethren, to make the touchstone of the Apostle Paul, our own! He says, “For to me to live is Christ” (Phil. i. 2; iv. 9).

Now the effect of the testimony of the Holy Ghost was to lead the disciples’ hearts to the place where Christ had gone; it could not be otherwise. The

Holy Ghost did not come to occupy God's people with things here—and a man lives where his thoughts are—but to conduct souls to Christ where He is. Like Abraham's servant who was to conduct Rebecca to Isaac; so the Holy Ghost conducts us to Christ where He is.

What led the Lord to send this testimony was affection for His disciples. It is perhaps a difficult thing to take in fully the thought that the Lord loves us. We may challenge ourselves as to how far we love Christ; but our love to Him won't be greater than our appreciation of His love to us; "We love Him because He first loved us." Now if Christ loves the Church He finds pleasure in the company of the Church, and this must be so because company is what we might call the exigency of love. Love will have company, so Christ will "present the Church to Himself, glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen us with power by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith. The love of Christ is also the love of God expressed in Him. All that is divine is set forth in Christ, the display is all in Him. Who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? Stephen saw the failure and collapse of all down here, and he could look up and see the whole range of divine glory come out in Christ. May God give us to know these two great principles—the love of God and the glory of Christ, that which is the fruit and expression of the Father's counsels.

R.E.C.

## Am I My Brother's Keeper?

“**A**M I my brother's keeper.” Yes, certainly; for this commandment have we from Him, “That he that loveth God love his brother also.” And who is my brother? The answer is simple, “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God” (1 John v. 1), this is my brother. Wherever the new life and nature is found, there God Himself has formed the relationship; such an one is my brother.

In times of persecution and trial in the Church these truths were realized in a very special way; it was said of the early Christians, “See how these Christians love one another.” Their love was manifest to the world around. It was the Lord's own command, “That ye love one another as I have loved you,” and this is repeated twice as though to emphasise it in a special way (John xii. 34; xv. 12). It was a love which rose above all prejudices and peculiarities, and which sprang from the love of God in the heart and the divine nature in the believer.

When the Church was bright and fresh, that love was seen in its blessed activity. So it was said to the young believers at Thessalonica, “But as touching brotherly love . . . ye yourselves are *taught of God* to love one another.”

Alas! the devil has brought in many things amongst believers to hinder the expression of that love and cause alienation of heart one from another; but let us get into the light of God's word and judge ourselves in this respect. *We are* our brother's keeper; we *have* a responsibility towards him which we never can rightly ignore or neglect. Not that we have authority to rule over his faith or try to compel him to do what *we* think right; “Not for

that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy."

Nor is it that love can be indifferent to what may be wrong in another; it may even have to rebuke at times. The Lord says to the Church at Laodicea, "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten"—His rebukes are in love and for our good. Yes, I am my brother's keeper; not in the spirit of meddling or interfering or domineering over him, but in a spirit of grace and lowly service for his good. Let us remember this.

## The Refiner of Silver.

Malachi iii. 3, 4.

**A**BOUT 1830 A.D., a few ladies met together in the city of Dublin to meditate upon and study the Scriptures. One of them remarked that the expression in verse 3 above was very striking, "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver." They wondered if such a process was carried out in their day, so one of them promised to call on a silversmith and ascertain. She accordingly went and, without telling him the object of her visit, asked him as to the process of refining silver. This he described to her very fully.

"But, sir," said she, "Do you sit while the work of purifying goes on?" "Oh yes, madam," replied the silversmith, "I must sit with my eye steadily fixed upon the furnace, for if the time necessary for refining be exceeded in the slightest degree, the silver is sure to be injured."

How beautiful this is as a figure of the Father's dealings with His children when He sees it needful to put them through furnaces of trial and affliction. So to speak, the blessed Lord sits by. His wisdom and love are engaged for His own as they pass through every tribulation,

As the lady was leaving, the silversmith called her back and said he had still further to mention that he only knew when the process of purifying was complete when he saw his face reflected in the silver.

This also is a striking figure. The lesson it points is that when the Father sees Christ's image reflected in His children the object of the trial is accomplished. How often, when put through the furnace of affliction, we are impatient in spirit and disposed to fret instead of lying passive in the hands of the One who in perfect wisdom is dealing with us for our blessing. The language of our hearts should be, while going through the refining process, "though He slay me yet will I trust in Him" (Job xiii. 15). Instead of which we often cry to God to remove the discipline. If it is not removed, the Refiner knows the process is not complete, but He gives grace that we may submit. Three times the Apostle Paul knocked at the gate of heaven to have the thorn in the flesh removed but received no answer, when he remembered what the Lord *had* said unto him, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. xii. 9).

It is hard to conceive it possible, that any one, except the blessed Lord Himself, could with truth declare what this beloved Apostle did, "most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities than the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I *take pleasure* in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (verses 9 and 10).

The Lord was showing him the great things he had to "suffer" for His name's sake. He was a chosen vessel unto the Lord and was commissioned to bear the Lord's name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel (Acts ix. 15). Let us observe, by the way, that the Gentiles are here

mentioned first, for it was to them particularly that his ministry was directed. In Romans, chapter xi, 13, he writes, "For I speak to you Gentiles as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office."

Referring again to the magnitude of the sufferings of this man passing through the furnace, during the whole course of his ministry, what an example is presented to us. And let us remember his own words as he gives a category of his sufferings, "Of the Jews five time received I forty stripes, save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides these things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities" (2 Cor. xi. 24-30).

This wonderful servant of God went through the refining process for Christ's sake, and there was not one pang suffered in body or mind that was not felt by the One who was sitting by the furnace, and watching that He might see the reflection of His own blessed image in the course and career of His devoted servant.

And what a recompense there was for Paul, terrible as were his sufferings! The power of Christ resting upon him made him take pleasure in all the things that he suffered. May the writer and readers of this paper profit by the example set before us so that in any trial we may be in, we may



see the hand of Him who lets us pass through it. For we may rest divinely assured that it is for our benefit and His own eternal glory.

J.P. (*Montreal*).

## A Word on Galatians Illustrated by the Orders given to the Kohathites.

Num. iv. 1-20; vii. 1-9; Gal. v. 1-10; vi. 12-14.

**I**T is impossible to read the epistles carefully, beloved brethren, without seeing that the grace of God, as manifested in the cross of Christ, is presented in them in two very distinct ways. First, we find salvation through the redemption that was there wrought once for all. Secondly, we learn that this same grace characterises the path of the Christian through this world. The apostle says: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ [not, 'By which I have been saved or been brought to God,' but] by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." That is, not merely does his soul rest in the deliverance wrought for him from Satan's power, from sin, from death and judgment, but he finds a separation effected between Him and the world, and so completely, that there is no desire on either side to come together again. And that which has made the separation is the cross of Christ. So that we may look at the cross of Christ and say: Well, if I am to go into the world, I must give up what God has vouchsafed to me in that cross; I must outrage Him who was nailed there for me, who shewed the depth of His love to me in giving Himself, and in such circumstances of unutterable suffering for the manifestation of divine righteousness in itself and in its effects.

Now there are two sides to this proposition. You might withdraw from the world and say, I stand

apart from it; and in so doing might have your heart lifted up with thoughts of your superiority to it in thus standing aside. But the other side of the question presents itself, Would you have the world draw aside from you? Are you *crucified* to it? Paul had learnt the value of the *cross*, and accepts the double position.

With the Galatians it was far otherwise. There was on their part an attempt to make a path down here, such as the natural man might walk in; but Paul says, I will not have it nor seek it.

It had not been always so with these saints. They had at first received the truth honestly, and their hearts had burned with affection to Christ and His people. He bears them witness that their love to him, as the minister of it to them, was such that they would have plucked out their own eyes and given them to him. There was every sign of the work being a true one in their souls; at the beginning he had nothing to say against their course at all. But when he looks at them after some years (there is no actual date given, but evidently some years had gone by), such a change had taken place in them, that, in considering their ways, he stands in doubt of them as to whether there was a real work of God in their souls. He says: I have confidence in the *Lord* about you, but when I look at you, I can scarcely recognise you as my children.

Now what made this difference? You do not find in the epistle that there was any moral evil among them. But the fact was, they had given place to an evil principle which was undermining and ruining everything. They wanted to arrange spiritual things so as to suit human nature and thus walk by sight, not by faith. They were seeking to get up a system of their own in which everything would go on wheels, as people say; like a machine in working order, you have only to turn the steam on and all is

set going at once. That suits the natural man. The Galatians had not got in their souls the sense of the Holy Spirit as a present living power in their hearts, and so they turned to an external machinery based, no doubt, on what in its origin was divine, but, when misapplied, became the means of resisting God's present purpose in grace; and by it they brought themselves into bondage to their own ordinances.

The apostle goes at once to the root of the matter and shews them that, in so doing, they had really given up the truth that God had sent down the Holy Ghost to dwell in the hearts of those that believe, to guide them into all truth, and to take of the things of Christ and shew them unto them, and to be in them a present living power for walking worthy of Him who had called them to His own kingdom and glory, besides giving them the power to cry Abba, Father, and to know what it is to be "an heir of God through Christ."

I may be forgiven a short digression here for the purpose of making this clearer; for it is of great importance. The admittance that deliverance *has been wrought*, is quite a different thing from the knowledge that *oneself* is individually free. Now in the first seven verses of chapter iv. there are two distinct statements as to the work of the Son and the Spirit. There is, first, the mission of God's Son to redeem those that were under the law. That was Christ's own work quite apart from us. Then we read: "Because ye *are* sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." This is quite another thing; it is the mission of the Holy Ghost, and is accomplished *in* us. The cry "Abba, Father," is much more than the statement that God is Father. It means that the believer has the sense in his soul of the relationship the words imply, and that he rejoices in it.

When I state that such a person is my father, there is nothing in the mere statement which implies my attachment to him, or gives a guarantee that I shall not break away from him and never speak to him again. But when a child addresses his father as such, calling him affectionately "my Father," the relationship between the two is evidently being kept up. Now God sends His Spirit into our hearts for this very purpose. Surely it needed a divine Person in us to make such a relationship known so as to be enjoyed.

It is based upon redemption: there we find the door of access into it; but we have to learn in our souls individually what it means for a slave to become a son. Let us take the figure of a negro in slavery. Suppose you wanted to deliver such an one and set him free, how would you go about it? The first step would be, of course, to go to the master and settle with him as to what price he would take. It would be of no use to ask the slave what he considered his price to be; *he* could not settle it. It is evident that the act of purchase is entirely apart from the slave. But now, having paid the price, you have to do with the poor man himself, and then the question is how to make him understand that you intend him to be free.

A first impulse might induce you to let him go. But if so, how is he to live? He has no means of providing for himself. He is without friends, without a position, without means in the wide world. You would surely furnish him with means, but what is he to do when the money is spent? The same difficulty recurs. You take him into your house, and let him work for you, and pay him as a hireling for his labour. After a while, let us go and ask him how he likes his new life. We remark to him: You are free now! Free? he answers; what does that mean? I have changed *masters*, it is true: my

present master is very kind to me, so that my life is no longer burdensome to me as it was; but still he is my master, and I am his servant: what do you mean by being *free*? As long as the relative position remains the same, one born and bred in slavery cannot possibly understand what freedom is. But bring him into the family, make him as one of the children; will he not then learn, through newly awakened affections, what it is to be in another relationship altogether? "They have set me at their own table," he says; "they treat me as one of themselves; they talk to me as one interested in the family matters; this is different indeed! I feel I am a slave no longer; he who was my master is now my father; now I know that I am free!"

And then, what place is ours at the table? Ask the negro slave again; what place would his slave's heart dare to crave for? Would he not shrink from being at the same table as the other members of the family? Would he not look on himself and say, I am black, they are white; I cannot sit with them; let them give me a little table by myself, or one in another room? Ah, it is not thus God deals with us. But we must change the simile. The slaves are many, but there is one Son, and He sets us in the place of His own firstborn.

It is "the Spirit of his Son" that He has sent into our hearts. He would turn our eyes and thoughts away from our miserable selves, that our gaze may be fixed on the SON and our hearts ravished with His glory; and He sends down the Holy Ghost to say to us in living power, "If a son, then an heir, an heir of God, joint heir with Christ." Everything that belongs to the relationship is ours; for sonship and heirship go together; but the Lord's heart finds contentment in making known the Father (John xvii. 26).

W.J.L.

*(To be continued).*

## The Kindness of God.

2 Samuel ix.

**"THE Kindness of God!"** To human ears, in a world that (however it may vaunt itself) "lieth in the wicked one," what a marvellous expression! The Great War has familiarised us with destruction, cruelty and deceit on an unprecedented scale; and has left this poor world weltering in a wreckage moral as well as material. Such hope-inspiring words, therefore, have an especial charm as of a ray of light that pierces "th' encircling gloom."

Our great poet has given us the phrase, "the milk of human kindness." And, truly, in this selfish, sin-stricken scene, a little human kindness comes as a rare and refreshing draught to be eagerly welcomed even as milk is the one desire of the babe.

Infinitely superior must be the kindness of God both in measure and preciousness; for "as the heavens are higher than the earth" so are God's ways and thoughts higher than ours.

It will be asked, "How then can such an expression be associated with an act of David, an earthly king?" The Holy Spirit inspired the use and record of it (see 2 Saml. xxiii. 2; Mark xii. 36; Acts ii. 30), because David's exceptional kindness to Mephibosheth took its character from God and was designed to foreshadow His kindness to sinners that would be fully revealed in its due time.

Incidentally, it is an evidence of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures as showing their unity and the one object of the Spirit of God through each writer to be, the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. In this connection, it is most interesting to notice that in Psalm xvi. 10, David is led by the Holy Spirit to use the same word in a personal form, as is the writer of Psalm lxxxix. in ver. 19. Thus the

word in these two Psalms translated "Holy One" really conveys the blessed thought that Christ Himself is the embodiment of God's kindness, or lovingkindness as the word is so often translated. Does not such a thought make our grateful hearts bubble over with thanks to God for "His unspeakable gift"?

It was fitting that the blessed Lord should begin the unfolding of this lovingkindness in the beautiful words of Luke vi. 35, "The Highest is kind to the unthankful and the evil"; Titus iii. showing us its operations, and Ephes. ii. carrying us on to its wondrous consummation in the ages to come.

In tracing David's kindness to Mephibosheth we may apprehend how far it is transcended by the kindness of God in every feature and at every step.

David's kindness contemplated someone of the house of Saul who had been his chief enemy. That one was found to be a lame dependent outcast in distant Lo-de-bar, a place of "no pasture," while the river Jordan (figure of death) rolled between. David seeks him out, lets no obstacle divert him from his purpose, fetches him away from that pastureless place over Jordan, right into his very presence. And when Mephibosheth fell on his face and did reverence, David called him by name, removed his fear, declared his purpose of grace, gave him an inheritance, conferred on him the privilege of eating at his table, made him as one of the king's sons. And this extraordinary kindness was continuous and permanent. It secured him from judgment (ch. xxi. 7).

All this is exceedingly beautiful. It compels us to raise our eyes to behold a moral loveliness far beyond aught in the ordinary benefactions of kings. And it lets us a little into the secret of the unique testimony to him—"a man after God's own heart." Yet is it but a shadow of better things to come, in

the counsels of One who had those better things under His eye from the beginning. "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world."

Does not Lo-de-bar, the stigma of Saul's heredity and the impotence of lameness on both feet, but poorly picture the distance, enmity, wretchedness and strengthlessness of sinners of Adam's race? Even more feebly does the sending of a servant by David to fetch Mephibosheth to his palace set forth the grace of the blessed God, supreme over all, in sending His own Son into the world to seek and save them; or the willingness of the Son to fulfil the mission of mercy that involved propitiation and suretyship for those who accepted Him. Happily, our gracious Saviour has Himself set it out for us in the inimitable words of John iii. 11-18, and in many another touching word and lovely parable such as the Good Samaritan, the Good Shepherd, the forgiving creditor, the One who gave His life a ransom, etc.

As the Good Shepherd, having given His life for the sheep, He "calletH His own sheep by name." With what intimate tenderness does He, after His resurrection, call "Mary," "Simon, son of Jonas," "Ananias," "Paul"! He, too, says, "Fear not" and God's "perfect love casteth out fear." God confides to us His choice of us "in Christ to be holy and without blame before Him in love," the display of the exceeding riches of His grace in the ages to come. He has made us joint-heirs with Christ even now. He has spread a table for us in the presence of our enemies and we await the marvellous provision of Luke xii. 37; xv. 22-25. He is "bringing many sons to glory." "He sent forth His Son . . . that we might receive sonship." We "shall not come into judgment," "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." And it is



an *eternal* salvation that the Son, sent by the Father, has obtained for us.

David's kindness to Mephibosheth won his heart! In Absalom's rebellion, he was so occupied with the king's interests, so mourned his absence from Jerusalem, that he neglected the ordinary attentions to his own person. He so rejoiced at David's return in peace that he esteemed his inheritance of no value compared with it.

May we, as recipients of the transcending kindness of God, surpass Mephibosheth in loyalty and in eager looking for our returning Lord.

A.J.H.

## Familiar Talks on Fundamental Truths.

### The Two Natures in a Believer.

**T**HERE is a desire in every Christian for holiness of life. This is the natural result of his possessing a new nature, and the Holy Spirit who dwells in him. Originally we had but one nature, we were, as Scripture terms it, "in the flesh." As born again we have two natures: the one we derive from Adam, the other from Christ in glory. We are no longer looked at by God as having our standing "in the flesh," although the flesh is still in us. It is scarcely necessary to add that we must not confuse "the flesh" with the material body. Neither should our minds be confused regarding the difference between our personality (which even after our conversion remains unchanged), and our responsibility: in other words between the *sin* that dwells in us as a root, and the *sins* which we commit as responsible beings. *Sin* became attached to man at the Fall, as a distinctly new element or an evil principle; and *sins* are the fruits of that fall. Since coming under the power of sin, "the flesh," which

is sinful, has dominated man's acts and thoughts; while Godward man became dead in trespasses and sins.

That strong statement as to this in Romans vii., "In me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing," once prompted a young believer to remark:—"But surely we do grow better as we go on in our christian life, do we not?" His remark proves that he confused two totally different things. We verily *are* exhorted to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. If we do not, there is something wrong. We ought not to remain babes (as in Heb. v. 12, and 1 Cor. iii. 1-3) but to go on to full growth, to spiritual maturity. But the flesh, or the old nature, which remains in us does not grow better but is a hindrance—and nothing but a hindrance to this very desirable growth in grace. In its very nature the flesh is always spoken of in Scripture as irreparably bad and worthless, and no hint is given as to its ever improving, rather the contrary.

The sixth chapter of Romans shows us very plainly the way of deliverance from its bondage and its power. This way is through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him (Christ) that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin . . . Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord." The figure used in this chapter is clearly that of a master and his slave. We, like the slave, were under the dominion of sin, and the commandments of the law only tend to give the knowledge of sin and so strengthen its power. No amount of penance or mortification can procure deliverance from its grip. Death is the only way of freedom. Long years of effort (alternating between experiences of relief at one time, and

pressure at another), can make no difference in the bondage under which the slave groans, according to Romans vii., "O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from this body of death?" In Job iii. 17, we read of natural death, "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest"; but in ver. 19, which is not so often quoted, we find what suits our argument as to the flesh in us, "And the servant is free from his master." Death—the death of Christ—has snapped the tie that bound me to the tyrant. "He that is dead is freed (justified) from sin" (Romans vi. 7); "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Romans vi. 18).

Now what do these passages mean? That the flesh is no longer in us? That the old nature is actually dead? No, but rather that in the death of Christ it has been judged and crucified (Gal. ii. 20). Thus we, by faith, are delivered from its dominion. We are exhorted now to *reckon* ourselves, "to have died indeed unto sin, and to be alive unto God in Jesus Christ." Hence the clarion note with which the eighth chapter of Romans opens, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are *in* Christ Jesus." Here a new place is ours, a new standing, "We are in Christ Jesus," in a risen Christ, where there could be no question of sin, wrath, or imputation. There is also a new power, a new rule of life introduced to govern us, "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." We are no longer expected to strive to improve the old nature, but rather to accept God's sentence of death upon it expressed in the death of the Lord Jesus. We, by faith, now have to reckon it dead, and to thank God for the deliverance through Jesus Christ our Lord. The Holy Spirit in us is the divine power to do this.

T.R.

## A Song from a Cripple's Chair.

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[The following poem, the original of which was by Madame Guyon, written from her prison in the Convent of St. Marie, January, 1688, has been adapted by the late Mr. Eversfield, of Horsham, to give expression to his own experiences. He was converted to God after a stroke of paralysis which maimed him for life. The account of his conversion is given in this and last month's number.]

**A** SHATTERED wreck am I,  
 Enjoying now a chair;  
 And full of life I sit and sing  
 To Him who placed me there.  
 Content a shattered wreck to be  
 Because, my God, it pleaseth Thee.

Naught have I else to do,  
 But sing the whole day long;  
 And He whom most I love to please  
 Doth listen to my song.  
 He caught and clipped my once strong wings,  
 And now He stoops to hear me sing.

And it is good to soar  
 The palsied limbs above,  
 To Him whose purpose I adore,  
 Whose every act is love.  
 And in His mighty will to find,  
 Such sweet repose for heart and mind.

\*   \*   \*   \*

How sweet to trace the path He trod,  
 Learning of Him to walk with God.  
 His cross behind, His house before,  
 Himself to-day and evermore.

## “I Know Whom I Have Believed.”

2 Timothy i. 12.

**T**HE Apostle Paul, to whom was specially committed the blessed truth of the Church of God, its calling and its privileges, lived almost within sight of its ruin as an united testimony for God on the earth. This decline, which was even then coming in, was the burden which pressed on his heart, when he poured out his feelings and sorrows to his beloved son in the faith, Timothy, in his second epistle, written not long before his martyrdom.

But amidst all the discouraging circumstances of the moment, Paul could say that he was not ashamed or confounded, for, as he adds, “I know *whom* I have believed.” What sustained his faith was, not merely doctrines or truths, however good, but a *Person*—the One to whom he himself had entrusted all that he was and had, both as a Christian and a minister of the gospel.

We who live at the close of the Church’s history, witness to-day a state of ruin and confusion in the Church of God far greater than that which existed in the Apostle’s day. Yet, in spite of all this, we can say, “Nevertheless I am not ashamed.” And why? Is it because we have much truth and knowledge? This would be a poor foundation to rest our faith upon. Is it because we have the ministry of gifted men? We can be truly thankful for all such, but to lean upon them would be no better than to lean upon a broken reed which can only pierce the hand. Is it because we can find our resource in “the Church”? This, again, would be as disappointing as a broken cistern which can hold no water would be to a thirsty man. What then?

Ah! our resource is in One who can never fail—the One “Whom we have believed.” It is “Jesus Christ of the seed of David, raised from the dead according to my gospel,” This is the One who is both the object

and the fulfilment of all the promises of God connected with Israel, and the One whom God raised from the dead; yea who rose in the power of a victorious life, over which death could have no hold. Christ is our life and He is the Head of the new creation, the Head of His body the Church, which is the fulness of Him who fills all in all.

Do we rest in implicit confidence in Him who never changes? Amidst the shaking and passing of everything here, do we prove practically what it is to have such a Person as the One "Whom we have believed" the unfailing stay and strength of the soul no matter how difficult the day may be? God grant that it may be so.

## "Who Touched My Clothes?"

Mark v. 25-34.

**I**T is remarkable that in Mark's gospel the incident narrated in these verses is followed more rapidly by events coming one after another than in any of the other gospels. This fact is evidenced by the frequent use of the words, "forthwith," "straightway," "immediately." It has been stated that, in this gospel, we get the servant character of our blessed Lord, and this is the reason for the rapid transition, because in a faithful servant, no time is lost in the service before Him.

It seems to have been universally known that those who were afflicted would receive what they sought for by touching the Lord's garment. In Matt. xiv. 36, and Luke vi. 19, numbers of afflicted ones were healed by the touch, but it is not stated that He took any special notice of such cases.

In the case of the woman referred to in Mark v. which is of special interest—there was the answer to the touch of faith which called forth the power which the Lord said He felt had gone from Him, But He

had something more in store for this poor woman than the cure of her bodily affliction. She was to hear His word imparting also a spiritual blessing, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole: go in peace . . . ." (verse 34). Besides, apart from this, she was to be a testimony to His glory and divine power by making an open confession, " . . . she told Him all the truth." Faith has always to be tested, as we find in many cases in Scripture.

We have an illustration of this in the case of Mephibosheth (2 Samuel xix. 29, 30) when King David said to him "Thou and Ziba divide the land." Some have supposed that David was ignorant of the character of Ziba, but it evidently was not so; David wanted to test the reality of Mephibosheth's expressed fidelity to him. It is beautiful to note the answer of absolute devotedness and acknowledged gratitude by one who had been befriended by the king of Israel, "And Mephibosheth said unto the king, Yea let him take all forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house" (verse 30).

How sad it is to see so many believers in this day who are hiding their light and ungratefully going on hand in hand with a world whose hands are imbrued with the blood of a murdered Christ. It was the Lord who told the disciples that they were the light of the world (Matt. v. 14). How often believers who are enjoying all the privileges of Christianity let opportunities for service slip from them. We would do well to give all heed to the injunction by Paul to the Corinthians, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. xv. 58).

Referring again to blessing received by many in the Lord's day by touching His garments, it should be noted, as another has said, that whatever He attracts by, He gathers round Himself to worship (Luke vi. 17,

18, 19), surrounds Himself with them, and then comes down and stands in the plain. Great multitudes are attracted by His miracles and by their want, coming to hear and be healed. The company of the disciples were an inner circle. "The whole multitude sought to touch Him." It is not said they were converted, which is another thing; but living power went out of Him, healing their bodily misery and delivering from the power of Satan.

In keeping with what already has been stated as to the rapidity with which events follow one another in this gospel, it may be noted in connection with the Lord's temptation by the devil in the wilderness, that it reads in Mark i. 12, 13 (new trans.), "And immediately the Spirit *drives* Him out into the wilderness . . . , " whereas in Matthew it reads "Then Jesus was *carried up* by the Spirit into the wilderness," and in Luke iv. 1, "But Jesus . . . . *was led* by the Spirit in the wilderness." In the words of another, it may be stated that that which distinguishes Mark's gospel is the servant and the character of service that is attached to the life of Jesus—the work that he came to accomplish personally as living on the earth. On this account the history of His birth is not found in Mark.

In conclusion, the writer would affectionately appeal to his readers as to the necessity of being found in the path of service in communion with the One who was the only true and perfect Servant. In that path He presented perfect God to man, and perfect man to God.

J.P. (*Montreal*).

## Landmarks of Inspiration.

### The Feasts of the Lord (Leviticus xxiii.)

**T**HIS chapter, which describes the feasts of the Lord, is one of the most remarkable chapters in the Bible. It begins with the Sabbath, the rest of God (Gen. ii. 2, 3); and it carries us on to the feast of



tabernacles, which will be celebrated when Israel are once more gathered back to their land in the millennial day.

To the reader who looks at things from the Higher Critical point of view, Leviticus xxiii. could have no particular interest, but would be regarded as certain laws concerning Jewish rituals. But to the Christian who reads it under the guidance and teaching of the Holy Spirit, the chapter is, as indeed are many others also, full of the most instructive typical teaching, well calculated to produce in his soul a spirit of worship and adoration as he contemplates the prophetic bearing of the commands given of the Lord through Moses. Let us briefly consider these feasts.

In one view of them—and this is the one we touch upon now—they begin with the Sabbath. The very beginning of the Bible tells us that, when God had finished the work of creation, He rested on the seventh day. He therefore blessed that day and hallowed it.

Next we have what formed the foundation of everything with God, the Passover, typical of the death of Christ. As Israel's history as a nation began there, so also the history of every saved soul begins with the cross of Christ, with redemption. With this is connected the feast of unleavened bread lasting seven days—the whole complete period of man's history, in type.

Leaven, we know, represented what was evil, and this was to be rigidly excluded from this feast. So we (Christians) are to keep the feast suitably to the character of the holy One who died for us, with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Next in order was the feast of first fruits, when the wave sheaf, the first fruits of the harvest, was presented before Jehovah. This beautifully typified Christ presented before God in resurrection. "Christ the first fruits" of the great harvest of resurrection, proof that the rest of the harvest will follow also. There is no mention of leaven connected with this, there could not

be, for Christ, the holy and spotless One, was without sin; He did no sin neither was guile found in His mouth.

After this there were to be seven Sabbaths complete, and this brings us to Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost came down. Here we find the two loaves, made of fine flour baked with leaven. This was an exception to what was laid down in Leviticus vi. 17, namely, God's command expressly excluding all leaven. Why this remarkable difference? It is because these two loaves represented those who compose the church, and, where man is found, there is always leaven; there is evil in his nature even if not actively allowed in practice.

Following upon Pentecost there was a long lapse of time before the next feast, but before touching upon that, let us observe that in verse 22 they were commanded not to make clean riddance of the corners of their fields at harvest time, but to leave some grain for the poor, the fatherless and the widow. Here, in a way which is purposely vague, we have a reference to that work of gathering in the grain, after we (Christians of this dispensation) have been taken to be with the Lord at His coming—a gathering which will include saved Gentiles.

Upon this follows the feast of the seventh month, leading on to the great millennial gathering of Israel in a future day. It began with the blowing of trumpets, the call for the gathering of Israel who will be once more assembled in their land (see Joel ii. 1, 15; Ps. lxxxi. 3).

On the tenth day of this month was the day of atonement, a very solemn day indeed, when Israel will "afflict their souls" and go through deep exercise for having crucified their own Messiah (see Zech. xii. 10-14). Then follows the feast of tabernacles for seven days—a complete period—which takes place *after* the harvest and the vintage; both of which are figurative of the judgment which will fall upon apostate Christendom as well as upon the apostate part of the nation of Israel.

This leads us to the millennial period, when the long expected kingdom will be established in righteousness and peace in the hands of the Lord Himself. May He hasten that day!

Referring again to what was said at the beginning of this article; let us suppose, as the Higher Critics allege, that these Scriptures are merely a collection of records of Hebrew rites and customs (compiled by . . . no one knows who!) how then could such a complete, though brief, sketch of the history of God's dealings with Israel, from the beginning to the end, be given in such a form? No spiritual mind can doubt the remarkable typical bearing of the feasts, embracing as they do the whole period from Genesis to Revelation: and the question at once arises, How could any mere man, if left to himself, forecast the progress of events from the days of Moses, right on to the future kingdom of the Son of man? Truly the difficulties of doubters of the Bible are greater by far than the difficulties of believers.

F. G. B.

### Three Appearances.

Hebrews ix. 23—x. 24.

**I**T may be predicated of those who are Christ's, to whom He has given eternal life, that there is that which "is true in Christ and in us." And it may be profitable to pursue this thought in the precious portion of God's word before us.

There are three blessed declarations as to Christ at the close of chap. ix. dealing with the past, present and future.

1. That He now appears in the presence of God for us having entered into heaven itself, v. 24.
2. That He appeared once in the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, v. 26.
3. That He will appear the second time apart from sin and salvation, v. 28.

They are glorious antitheses to sin, death and judgment, which sum up the moral history of the first man—sin put away, life in honour beyond death, “glorified together.”

1. *That He now appears in the presence of God for us.*

The great fact for each one to embrace and rejoice in is, that Christ is gone into heaven itself there to appear in the presence of God for us. God has been pleased to make known to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsels; and how much that is unfolded in this epistle is in regard to them! Since we are not yet in heaven, Christ has gone there to appear in the presence of God *for us*. He is there representatively; but if so, we have a place there too. The Lord spoke of going to His Father's house to prepare a place for His disciples. It is true that this is rather a different thought but, in either case, He has gone into heaven itself and is there representatively on our behalf.

Once that precious holy Saviour entered into the place which was properly ours. He was made sin for us vicariously (not representatively). He was made a curse for those who were under it. The cross was our place and due and Christ was there for us, that we might not come into judgment. When He, in matchless grace, entered that place it became a question, not of His own perfection which remained as absolute there as ever it was, but of what was due to those whose place He had taken. Christ became vicariously the subject of righteous judgment on the Cross, but there alone. Therefore we can never come into judgment.

Now the place where Christ has entered for us, in the presence of God, is a contrast to that. It cannot be vicarious (*i.e.*, in the place of another) for it never belonged to us at all. We are waiting for the Lord to come and take us into it. But in the meantime, His being there is the intimation to us of what our appointed place is. We are not of the world but belong to the

new creation where all things are of God (2 Cor. v. 17; Eph. ii. 10). And the heavenly colour and character should mark us in our pilgrimage down here (Phil. ii, 12-16). So that heaven is not only our *home*, where our Father delights to welcome us, but our *place* to which we belong in virtue of Christ's meritorious work. But—and how tranquillising the thought—we are going to be in heaven for the satisfaction of the love of God, and God will show forth in the church the surpassing wealth of His grace (Eph. ii. 7).

2. *Christ's appearing to put away sin.*

In the epistle to the Romans sin is set forth as a tyrant reigning unto death, exercising dominion (ch. v. 21—vi. 23). The testing of man in various ways by God only manifested how completely he was under the dominion of sin. Then, as one has remarked, "God by His own power and grace, in the Person of Christ on the cross, put away sin—abolished it from before His face, and set the believer absolutely free from it as regards judgment." But, until the mystery of God's forbearance with the world is finished (Rev. x. 7; xi. 15), sin is all around us and dominant; while we have to walk in the midst of it with that evil nature still in us which answers to it. The one way out of this difficulty God has marked out for us in Rom. vi. 10-11, "Christ died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." We go back to the mind of God for us as set forth in baptism—our identification with the death of Christ. We are baptized unto Christ's *death* and are thus freed from the whole course of things in this world. Christ having been manifested to set aside sin, the world necessarily has but a limited lease.

3. *Christ's appearance the second time apart from sin unto salvation.* When Christ appears again—and this must be a great comfort to us all—we shall have no thought of sin. He will be seen by those who are

looking for Him, apart from sin altogether, unto complete salvation. This is our glorious anticipation in connection with the coming of the Lord. He will have nothing to say to us *in reference to sin*. Hallelujah, what a Saviour! "To them that look for Him" assumes that all "His own that are in this world" are eagerly watching for His second advent. May none disappoint Him! May the light of this "blessed hope" burn in our hearts with ever-increasing effulgence, and may our faith be in exercise to apprehend what a death-blow has been dealt to the dominion of sin, and what a victory has been won over it!

R. E. C.

## A Word on Galatians Illustrated by the Orders given to the Kohathites—2.

Num. iv. 1-20; vii. 1-9; Ga<sup>1</sup>. v. 1-10; vi. 12-14.

**N**OW, while upon this subject, just let me ask you one thing. Which part of the blessing has the greatest attraction for your soul? Is it the inheritance and its glory, or is it the relationship with the Father? Surely not one of us will hesitate to say that the relationship is by far the more precious of the two. But that, dear friends we have *now*. We are waiting for the inheritance: we have the *hope* of that; it is the "hope" attached to the revelation of God's righteousness, as expressed in this epistle, and inseparable from the relationship into which we are brought. But the relationship, the more blessed of the two, is ours to enjoy *now*. The doctrine exposed in the Galatians is the fundamental principle of Christianity: God has sent down His Spirit into our hearts here, and that because we have been made sons through redemption. He sends the Spirit into our hearts, that we may enjoy it. In Ephesians we see the blessed fruits of its exercise and what flows from it, as well as the activities of these divine affections in the power of

the Spirit. In Galatians we find the introduction to it, and the power for its exercise, the Holy Spirit.

Now the Galatians had practically given this truth up; the apostle has therefore to lay the foundation of first principles, insisting upon the relationship into which they had been already brought, and shewing that as to the inheritance which attaches to it, the Holy Spirit is the present earnest. So when speaking of how we are to live down here until we get to the inheritance, he says, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." The Holy Spirit occupies us with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ as we go on our way, forming us morally in His image (2 Cor. iii.).

There is a remarkable point too, if we pay attention to it, in chapter v., which shews the character of this power that works in us. We have in verses 19, 22, the contrast marked between "*the works of the flesh*" and "*the fruit of the Spirit.*" Why are the words different? "Works" suppose effort; the natural man understands this; it expresses his life in the world; but there is no effort connected with the thought of "fruit." No amount of trying would ever get fruit from a tree. If it is in a suitable climate and in a good state and watered, it must bring forth fruit.

Consider too "the fruit" mentioned in verse 22. Would you confide your heart to a person who says, I am trying to love you as much as I can? Would you not feel instinctively there was something wrong? Real love is so engrossed with its object, that it is only tried with the feeling of its own insufficiency: there is no effort, no difficulty about it; it is the natural outflow of what exists within, and only seeks a vent in order to shew itself, though never for its own sake. In the same way is it not clear that one who says, I am trying to get joy, or I am trying to get peace, is only painfully manifesting that he has not got it? All these fruits, different and varied as they may be, and admitting of growth and culture, are produced without effort the

moment a soul is really subject to the Spirit of God, led of the Spirit and indwelt by Him. But, as with the healthy tree, there must be, for the development and abundance of fruit, the suited climate and nourishment. The vital power is the Holy Ghost; the meat and drink is Christ (John vi.) ; the climate is the grace of God (Rom. vi. 14) ; the ground we are rooted in, His love (Eph. iii. 17 ; John xv.). We are first "*born of the Spirit*," as the Lord says to Nicodemus, that is, made children through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ ; then we are called to "*walk in the Spirit*."

I now desire to look at the practical hindrances which came in to turn the Galatians aside from the path of faith in the power of the Spirit. Paul says to them : "*Ye did run well ; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth ?*" This is why I read those passages in Numbers, because we find in them several points which bear upon the subject before us. It is a serious thing to find these young saints who had received the word in its fulness from an apostle, turned away in so short a time from the truth they had been taught. Is not this a solemn warning for us all ?

In the book of Numbers which contains the Levitical ordinances, we find God's thoughts as to what He considers His service\* in this world. The Levites were first, as an entire tribe, separated to God, and then their three families made three principal classes (or four, if the priesthood be included), each having a different service to perform. Those who, after the priests, were brought into the nearest place were the Kohathites.

\* The word rendered "*host*" in Numbers iv. 3 has various meanings. In verse 23 and elsewhere, it is translated "*service*" in the text, and in the margin "*warfare*." It is a word which is constantly translated "*war*," "*battle*," "*army*," "*host*." It means labour or hard duty of warlike character, implying personal suffering. Evidently the better rendering here would have been warfare or service. See Philippians i. 29, 30.



Now, without entering much into the details that are given to us, we may notice that the special service of the Kohathites was in connection with the vessels of the tabernacle, with the dwelling-place of God in the midst of His people—those vessels which set forth individually different phases of Christ's glory. When the camp removed (and the journeying was characteristic of the wilderness), their duty was to bear the holy vessels. They could not choose their burden; they were not even allowed to touch the holy vessels; but after the priests had covered them up in the ordered way and put them upon bars or staves, then the Kohathites came forward to receive each one his appointed service and learn what his duty was. They were not to look at the holy things uncovered, on pain of death. This was a particular ordinance as to their special service (chap. iv. 17-20). It was the priests, who went habitually into the tabernacle, whose duty it was to cover the vessels and prepare them for removal.

None of these vessels might, on any account, be put into waggons, as was all else that pertained to the tabernacle; they were to be carried alone on the shoulders of the Levites. Waggons were offered at the time of the dedication of the altar by the twelve princes of the tribes for the service of Jehovah, and God told Moses to give them to the Gershonites and the Merarites, as useful in transporting the curtains, boards, bars, sockets, and other different parts that fell to their share in the transport; but to the Kohathites He gave none, "because the service of the sanctuary belonging to them was that they should bear upon their shoulders."

As we have seen, all these vessels thus carried were covered up. There was nothing to be seen, nothing to attract attention except the ark with its covering of blue; all else was under the badgers' skins. Upon the ark was first put the veil of the tabernacle; then the badgers' skins, and over that they were to "spread a

cloth wholly of blue." This gave to the ark a very marked place. When the Israelites were moving from place to place, the ark in its blue covering was always to be distinguished, standing out in contrast with the white robes of the priests and Levites. But this exception only brought more fully into view the fact, that all the other vessels of the sanctuary were concealed under the badgers'-skin coverings. No one could tell from the outward appearance what these vessels were, though each Kohathite might know what his appointed charge was. But there was nothing in the service itself, or what was visible of it, to bring glory to those occupied in it. An external looker-on could only have the impression that the Kohathites were set apart for the hardest labour. On no account were they to be allowed the relief of a waggon for bearing their charge. They were always to carry on their shoulders. Is not this attitude full of meaning for us? The Kohathites were subject to what they carried, and their hearts were exercised as to the value of what they bore; each one must keep in his proper place, and bear his appointed, outwardly unattractive burden. But if any asked them what they did, their answer would be, that they carried the vessels of the sanctuary. And, better than all, they could have the sense in their souls that the eye of Israel's God was upon them; they were set apart for the service of His house.

Now have we anything in our hearts of the spirit of the Kohathites? God has called us near to Himself, that we may bear His truth in testimony to Him through this world. Are we bearing it as the Kohathites were called to do? It was no question of choice with them: their service was one of simple obedience, yet very near to God, and, if their heart was in it, one of singular delight. And observe too, *they must needs walk together*. No vessel of the sanctuary could be carried without a bar, which supposes at the very least two bearers. Every personal consideration must with them

be set aside. One might be stronger than another, or able to walk faster; but neither the strong nor weak could decide the pace or the time; that depended alone on the cloud which directed every movement of the camp. And none were in more direct dependence on it than the Kohathites. But so walking in their divine order, might they not count on help from Him who manifested His glory on the ark they bore? So it was, on a most memorable day of joy in Israel, which we will speak of presently. Their service obliged them to look up to God, both for guidance and help: it was characterised in every detail by obedience and dependence upon Him.

W.J.L.

## The Saviour is Coming.

**T**HE Saviour is coming—O hearken the word!  
A people are waiting, prepared for the Lord,  
*Whose loins are well girded, whose lamps brightly burn*  
While waiting, expectant, their Lord's blest return.

If aught has beclouded Himself from your sight,  
If "first love" has waned through this world's dark blight,  
Away with all idols!—All self-seeking spurn,  
For worthy is He who so soon will return.

This world is not for you—ye saints of the One  
Whose love it rejected—God's well-belov'd Son;  
O Bride of the Lamb once rejected and slain,  
Be ready, unspotted, He's coming again!

'Tis Jesus the Saviour, our Lord and our Friend  
Whose footsteps on earth the Evangelists penn'd—  
'Tis Jesus, THE SAME, now ascended on high,  
Who loves with a love which never can die.

The One who has led us along by the way—  
Our Shepherd, our Helper, our Strength and our Stay—  
The One ever living His saints to sustain,—  
Is waiting to bless at His coming again.

Ye servants of God, ye blest heralds of His,  
 Who long have foretold of this morning of bliss,  
 Still tell of His coming and spread it abroad—  
 "Make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

O speak ye of Christ, how *He* waiteth above—  
 Awaiteth with rapture the Bride of His love—  
*His* love has not waned, but e'er remains true,  
 And shall it not kindle His saints' love anew?

Ye preachers on earth of the Gospel of God,  
 Whose feet e'er with peace and glad tidings are shod,  
 Again tell the lost of the Lamb that was slain.  
 And gather them in ere *He* cometh again.

O God!—by Thy Spirit, our hearts now prepare  
 To meet Thine own Son when *He* comes in the air;  
 For only Thy Spirit the grace can afford  
 For waiting and watching to welcome our Lord.

O God!—afresh show us His glory and grace,  
 Yea all that *Thou* art as revealed in His face;  
 Thy Spirit, who for Him, our hearts at first won,  
 Make ready a people to welcome Thy Son!

—The late Miss A. E. PRICE.

## Scripture Notes and Gleanings.

The divine mind is always at work according to the measure of divine love. Directly you get the clue to the divine mind, you get beauty and order.

\* \* \*

Faith does not reason, it acts from its own point of view and leaves the result with God.

\* \* \*

I may study the Word again and again, but unless I get into communion with God by it, it will profit me nothing—at least not at the time.

\* \* \*

God's nature morally is light, but the energy of it is love that goes out in goodness to others.

## The Watchmen on the Walls.

“I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give Him no rest, till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.”—Isaiah lxii. 6,7.

**J**ERUSALEM was the city upon which Jehovah had set His name, the city which belonged to Him above all others, and which was precious to every pious soul in Israel and everyone who loved Him. “If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,” says the psalmist, “let my right hand forget her cunning.” All Israel’s blessings were found there; all their religious services and their heart’s affections went out towards Zion, the beauty of holiness.

But, alas! the fine gold had become dim, the seeds of sin and apostasy from Jehovah had sprung up, and everything was in confusion. The weeping prophet has to lament, “The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem.” The watchmen had not been vigilant, they had slept; yea, even *they* had admitted the enemy.

And *we*, who form part of the people—of those who belong to the heavenly Jerusalem—should not *we* hear and understand? Were these things written for God’s earthly people only and have they not a voice for us to-day? Has not the enemy, through our unfaithfulness, found an entrance among the people of God?

God’s chastening hand had been heavy upon them, and, far from their own land, in Babylon, the dwellers in that city taunted them with the word, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion.” But how could they sing the Lord’s song on a foreign soil? Would not this be to forget that they were captives in the enemy’s land? Thank God we (Christians) who possess a heavenly portion in Christ, good to faith even now, can sing the

song of heaven, while still in the enemy's country.

But the watchmen on the walls were to give Jehovah no rest; day and night their cry went up to Him. And if we are at all conscious of the needs of this closing hour of the Church's history, surely our prayers will go up unceasingly on behalf of the people of God. But oh! let us be in earnest, let us not fall into listless formality. The watchmen were to make their voice distinctly heard; to cry in earnest, vigilant accents. Never were they to cease until Jerusalem was made a praise in the earth.

We, who have a heavenly Christ as our portion, look for the establishment of the heavenly Zion. And we have a faithful Lord and Master and a faithful God. Never will Christ's love to His Church cease or decline; yet He would have us to be in prayer—unceasing and persevering—until that moment when He shall see of the fruit of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. Then, not only shall there be praise on earth, but all heaven shall celebrate the worthiness of the slain Lamb, and every tongue shall own Him as the only worthy One.

### A Word on Galatians Illustrated by the Orders given to the Kohathites—3.

Num. iv. 1-20; vii. 1-9; Gal. v. 1-10; vi. 12-14.

**D**OES not all this transport us at once into the epistle to the Philippians, where we find the aged apostle suffering, with joy, in prison, despised and forgotten in the world, cheering and exhorting the saints to stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, to be heavenly minded, "walking by the same rule," forgetting what was behind and reaching forth to what was before? Could he not present himself to them as an example, having laboured in the gospel in the very spirit of the

Kohathites? "Necessity is laid upon me," he says; so he would have his service without charge; its reward was in itself, in its being for Christ's sake. So we can understand how deeply he felt the conduct of the Galatians.

Alas, God's order is easily forgotten by us. As it was with the Galatian saints, so had it been before in Israel: human nature is the same. God has written His judgment of it for our learning and instruction. Let us go over briefly the facts of the history in 2 Samuel vi. It was a wonderful moment for the king after God's own heart, when he thought of bringing the ark to Zion. Up to that time there had been a moral blot on God's chosen people: a fortress in the land from which no power of Israel could dislodge the enemy. Joshua, the Judges, and even king Saul, who in his zeal for Israel sought to destroy the Gibeonites, had left it untouched. There the enemy was insolent, more so than anywhere else. The place was impregnable in their eyes: "the blind and the lame" could keep out the hosts of Jehovah. It was a standing reproach on them, and consequently on Jehovah's name. But as soon as David receives the crown of the kingdom over Israel, and the whole land is at his feet, he feels his responsibility is now to put all at God's feet; so the first thing he does is to go to the fortress of Zion and wrest it out of the hands of the Jebusites. God owned this act of faith, and chose the place from that time "to place his name there." That which had been the stronghold of the enemy is to be henceforth the brightest spot of all. But the glory of the victory is not complete until Psalm cxxxii. can be sung there, and David can say in the words of Moses: "Arise, O Lord, into thy resting place, thou and the ark of thy strength." This leads to fresh exercises of heart, and to fresh lessons of human weakness. Yet David is a Kohathite in heart, and shews, as is clear from the

end of chapter v., that dependence on God was his habit; and he finds in practice that God is for him.

But now comes a very different scene. David had been faithful in fighting the enemy: he has to be tested as to faithfulness in God's house. Then is manifested how a real danger to the soul is the moment after a victory has been gained. The ark has to be carried up to Mount Zion; but David does not think of the Kohathites. His mind is full of the victories God has given him, and he gathers together 30,000 chosen men of Israel, and consults with every leader about bringing up the ark (1 Chron. xiv.) He only finds the world's wisdom with them, but does not detect it: and they imitate the Philistines with their cart and oxen. But the oxen stumble, Uzzah puts forth his hand to steady the ark and is smitten, and David, displeased, carries it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.

Why was it that God allowed the oxen to stumble? How is it that David has to give up his enterprise with shame, whereas when the Philistines did the very same thing all went right, and God was glorified? It was, as David himself owned soon after, because "we sought him not *after the due order.*"

The Kohathites were not in their right place. God allowed this to be worked out to its full result, in order that David's heart might be fully tested and brought into the light of His presence. David's thought of bringing up the ark was very beautiful, but he forgot "the due order." Like the Galatians in an after day, he replaced the service of the sanctuary by the Philistine cart and oxen, and did not do it even so well as they: and so it generally happens when God's saints imitate the world. It seemed so simple and natural; but because it was so, it was manifestly of the world. It was not God's way.

David however learned the lesson; and when afterwards he set the Kohathites in the proper place, God



“helped them” as they bore the ark of the covenant, and the joy in Israel was legitimate and blessed. At every stage of the Levites’ onward progress, they offered a bullock and a ram.

W. J. L.

(To be concluded in our next.)

## “What Manner of Man is This?”

Mark iv. 41.

A GREAT impression was evidently made on the minds of those who were witnesses of the Divine power put forth on this occasion by Him who had created everything within the reach of their natural vision. But the impression was not lasting. Divine and spiritual impressions alone are lasting.

He *rebukes* the stormy wind on the lake of Galilee, raised by the one who is the “prince of the power of the air,” while He *speaks* to the sea. His word was enough. It was the same word that created it. He also, however, rebukes the lack of faith in His disciples.

We are living, dear reader, in a day when everything divine is questioned. The first question we find in Holy Scripture was put by Satan, “Yea, hath God said?” This is the first place in Scripture where the note of interrogation is used. In the present day, on both sides of the Atlantic and elsewhere, the aim of the enemy is to raise up instruments to deny the fundamentals of our most holy faith, and the main attack is upon the Person of Christ.

Speaking of the blessed Lord, a preacher recently made the awful statement that He was “only a Palestinian Jew who partook of the limitations of His day.” Another, teaching a young men’s Bible class, stated that Jesus was “only an ordinary man”; whereat one of the class, righteously indignant, spoke up saying, “How could an ordinary man raise the dead?” referring to Lazarus. The reply was that he had not

very carefully studied that subject! This product of one of our theological colleges is still ministering to a Protestant congregation in one of our largest Canadian cities.

Modernism, this hydra-headed monster, is spreading its fangs all over Christendom: men invariably go wrong in what they deny; their system is destructive. They give nothing in return for what they would take away. Their thoughts of God and divine things are entirely human. As Luther said to Erasmus, "Your thoughts of God are too human."

A believer in the Lord was once asked what he thought of the Lord Jesus. He replied, "I believe He is the eternal Son, I believe in His absolute eternity, in His essential Deity and His almighty power as Creator." This was a beautiful answer, in substance, to the question, "What manner of Man is this?" He might have gone a little further by referring to His perfect humanity—the Divine and human blended in One Person.

To-day the *Philistine* is in the land (*Gen. xxvi, 18*). To affirm that the wells of Christianity, as another has said, have been stopped up is to stress a well-known and pathetic fact, "An enemy hath done this" (*Matt. xiii. 28*). The great and gracious fact of a divine provision for sin needs to be dug up from the rubbish that a lying devil and a sceptical world have heaped upon it. The effort of the Philistine is to stop up the wells of divine truth. The rationalistic teachers of the present day, who deny the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, go further and eliminate the miraculous element in the Word of God. All these things indicate that we are in the last days of the history of the Church and on the eve of the coming of the Lord (*1 Thess. iv. 13-18*).

We only know in part all that is before us, but when He comes we shall know even as we are known. We

shall fully see "What manner of Man" the Lord is. When the late John Conder—once a leading Unitarian—was converted to God, he wrote that well-known beautiful hymn which begins as follows :

"Thou art the everlasting Word,  
The Father's only Son ;  
God manifest, God seen and heard,  
The Heaven's beloved One.

The higher mysteries of Thy fame  
The creature's grasp transcend :  
The Father only Thy blest name  
Of Son can comprehend."

This perfectly accords with what the Lord Jesus Himself stated in Matt xi. 27, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father," so it is useless to attempt to delve into the things that are not revealed to us, for only those things that are revealed belong to us. ". . . the secret things belong unto the Lord our God" (Deut. xxix. 29).

The writer, during a very long christian career, has met many men of the modern school, and without exceptions it was evident that the spirit of pride actuated them in their thoughts concerning divine truth. Pride of intellect has been the downfall of numbers who might otherwise have been useful in the Lord's work. Pride, as someone has said, is the subtlest serpent with the loftiest crest. It is not astonishing, therefore, that those who met the Lord when on earth, unless divinely taught, would be bewildered as to His origin. To those who had been drawn to receive Him, the power of His attraction was wonderful, but to others that power and quality in Him repelled and produced hatred of heart, especially at a time when the blessed Lord sought to speak to the Jews of the Father, which they did not understand (John viii. 27). He had previously stated, "If ye believe not that I am he ye shall die in your sins" (verse

24). "Then said they unto Him *Who art thou?*" "Jesus said unto them: perfectly that which I said unto you" (new trans.) or, in the words of another, to make His answer more clear, "In the principle and universality of what I am," i.e., His speech presented Himself, being the truth, or "I am that which I speak," i.e., "the truth."

In conclusion, the writer would emphasise the absolute importance of the daily study of the Scriptures in these dark and trying days. It is by these alone that we can be kept from falling into error, and from them we learn "What manner of man . . ." the blessed Lord is. We read in Luke xxiv. 27 that when the Lord joined the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, that "beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Again, referring to the importance of the Word, in Paul's farewell address we read in Acts xx. 32, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." May we not only value but have an appetite for God's precious word. Only thus can we know "What manner of man" the blessed Lord is, and what manner of men we ought to be.

J.P. (*Montreal*).

## The Work of the Lord

**A**S we read the account of the work of the Lord as given us in the Acts of the Apostles we find that it was specially marked by four things:—

1. The preaching of salvation and forgiveness of sins through faith in a once crucified but risen and glorified Christ.
2. The power of the Holy Ghost accompanying the word spoken and producing remarkable results.
3. Prayer.

4. Untiring and devoted service on the part of those whom God used to carry on the work.

Let us briefly look at these four things.

(1) *The subject.* The Lord had told His disciples ere He left this world that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. To this truth Peter bore the fullest testimony, declaring that there was none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, and that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.

Now nothing could be more plain and emphatic than this declaration of the value of the name of the risen Saviour. And Paul bore witness to the same truth, preaching forgiveness of sins and complete justification through faith in Christ. But besides these specially gifted men, a crowd of disciples—those that were scattered abroad through persecution; what we might call the rank and file—went everywhere preaching the Word.

Thank God we have the same theme as they had then, the same gospel, which is still the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. But let us keep to it and not allow ourselves to be diverted from it by the sophistry or the ideas of men. Oh, what glad tidings! It has lost none of its power to save to the uttermost those who believe it. Surely the assurance of this ought to stimulate us in seeking to bring it before others.

(2) *The Power.* Is the power of the Holy Ghost any less now than it was in apostolic times? Certainly not. It is true that now, at the end of the dispensation, when the professing church is in a state of division and confusion, there is not the same open manifestation of power as there was at the beginning, but God's power is just the same to-day. Here is something to encourage the evangelist in carrying the message of the

gospel to men. He knows that the work is God's work and that the power for it is not to be found in human eloquence and outward display, but in dependence on the Holy Spirit, who can use the most simple instrument as well as the most gifted servant for the work He has to do.

(3) *Prayer.* Such was the importance attached to prayer that it was even put before ministry in Acts vi. 4, "We will give ourselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word." In looking through the Acts we shall find that the believers devoted themselves to prayer on every important occasion in the history of the work. They prayed when they chose an apostle to replace Judas (i. 24), when they chose the deacons (vi. 6), when Peter was in prison (xii. 5), when Barnabas and Saul went on a missionary journey (xiii. 3), when the elders were appointed in the church (xiv. 23), when Paul and Silas went forth to preach (xv. 40), etc. A valued servant of God said years ago that in those days when he and others went to preach the gospel in a new town or district, they spent a week in prayer before the work began.

(4) *The workmen.* One thing that marked the servants of God in apostolic times was energy and perseverance. They had difficulties, trials and discouragements to meet, but they went on with the work and God blessed their efforts. Times and surrounding circumstances change : we to-day have to contend with a growing spirit of indifference and infidelity, as well as the form of godliness without the power, but we have the same God and the same living Saviour in glory as they had. Let us not be weary in well doing but look off unto Jesus and persevere as seeing Him that is invisible. Soon the day for service will be over ; Oh, to use the little time that remains for the glory of Christ, the furtherance of the gospel, and the gathering in of souls.

F.G.B.

## Three Appearings—2.

Hebrews x. 10, 14, and 19-22.

**W**E have been gazing into the opened heavens by faith to see Christ there, and there too as our Representative. They were visibly opened to Stephen at his martyrdom that he might give that last startling testimony to the Council which demonstrated the truth of our Lord's confession for which it had judged Him worthy of death (Luke xxii. 69-71) "Behold" he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Paul's ministry was given afterwards to lead us *by faith* into heaven.

Now let us consider what is true in regard to Christians. Read the verses indicated above. There are two great points. First, we have a place before God according to His will. It is that of worshippers once and for ever purged. "By the which will we are sanctified." The expression "sanctified" implies we are set apart for God for priestly service though we could not be priests unless we were sons—our proper dignity—as we learn elsewhere. In regard to Christ Himself, we have in ch. v. first, the quotation "Thou art My Son" and immediately following, "Thou art a Priest" and in ch. vii. it is the Son that is consecrated. What marks the present moment is, that in it, God is bringing many sons to glory. The world has rejected the grace of God and God is working to carry on the purpose of His will. We are brought into the presence of God not merely as saved sinners but in all the grace in which He has set us according to the sovereignty of His will. Christ came in order that He might give effect to the will of God (v. 7). God will have a company of priests (foreshadowed by Aaron and his sons)—a company called to worship, into whose hearts the love of God has been poured by the Holy Ghost given unto them.

The second point is, that "by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." The perfecting here is in reference to the conscience. All that is connected with our responsibility as men has been settled for ever. No further question as to that can be raised on God's part or ought to be raised on ours. Perfected in perpetuity, having no more conscience of sins, we are free to enter into the place which He has been pleased to give us. We could not be in the presence of God with one spot upon us. We are not restored to a place or to things which man lost. That is never God's way—it is a perfectly new place—a place of sonship, in the presence and knowledge of the love of God that we may be able to serve the living God according to His will. It is important to have a right thought as to the sanctuary, to get the mind away from anything that is material. The holiest is the light in which Christ, if we may so say, has brought God to us. There are two things connected with our entering in. First, it is "by the blood of Jesus" and second, it is by "the new and living way which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh." Why have we boldness by the blood of Jesus? Because the blood is the witness of the reconciliation of righteousness and love in dealing with sin. In the perfect, finished work of Christ on the cross God was fully glorified and all His attributes fully met, yea, magnified. The holy, righteous One, the spotless Lamb of God bore the penalty which was due to the sinner at the hands of a *righteous* God; and He was at the same time the Son of God, in the *giving* of whom God's *love* was fully manifested (John iii. 16).

Consequent on the death of Christ, the veil of the temple was rent in twain, for in the death of Christ God came out to man in the full revelation of Himself. Christ has come from the heart of God to the cross; we travel the opposite way from the cross to the heart of God—the new and living way of verse 20. The one



who sees God's love made known and His righteousness met can have no misgiving as to the holiest being his place, no hesitation as to entering in for the enjoyment of the presence of God. Having a great Priest over the house of God; the sanctified one, responding to the invitation of verse 22, will not be alone—the great Priest is there. How could we entertain the thought of entering into the holiest if He were not there? And He is Minister of the holy places. “Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.” It is the first grand duty of faith to use our great privilege. “Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience” is (the heart of) the Christian being right with God, not harassed by a bad conscience. “Our bodies washed with pure water”—practical purgation from the pollution of the world. “Pure water” is the power of the Word morally. We are to be a reflection of God Himself—“holy and without blame before Him in love.”

May God graciously give us a better understanding of the place divinely given to us that we may acceptably fulfil the service to which He has called us in His great grace.

R. E. C.

## The Value of the Word.

“**I** KNOW that after my departure grievous wolves shall enter in not sparing the flock, and from among your own selves shall men arise speaking things perverted, to draw away the disciples after them.” “Wherefore watch ye,” says the apostle to the elders, “remembering that for three years, night and day, I ceased not from admonishing each one with tears.”

This little glimpse, which necessity wrung out from the apostle's heart, lets us see his entire devotedness. It was not business, nor the spread of truth even, still

less the prevalence of his own opinions for good. It was one who loved Christ, and pressed this above all on those who took the lead. Untiring, tender, watchful care filled his heart with the deepest feeling habitually and at all cost. Such he would have *us* feel, as those he addressed that day. Who is sufficient for these things? The sufficiency is in and from God.

So he continues, "And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all that are sanctified." Whatever be the days of danger, difficulty and ruin, God abides faithful, the Saviour unchangeable, Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.

If all the apostles, since they and the prophets laid the foundations, have passed away, the word of His grace remains, as does the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. He only had divine power even when apostles were there. There is no excuse therefore for unbelief. Faith shines the more in a dark day, and devotedness is called out by the sense of His dishonour who is dearest to the heart.

Nor is there anything in comparison with the word of His grace in ability to build us up. Boldness of thought and beauty of language are all in vain if there be not the truth; and the truth is never so sure, and strong, and holy, as in His own word, which is truth. This searches the conscience, this strengthens the heart, this nourishes faith and makes the blessed hope abounding and mighty in the love which is the strength of all that is good. For love is of God, and God is good, and as His word builds us up now, so it gives us the inheritance among all that are sanctified. The word of God truly received delivers from the love of this present age, from the world and the things of the world.

W.K.

## **“He Faileth Not.”**

**Zephaniah iii. 5.**

**“H**E faileth not,” What blessed truth !  
To those who are His own ;  
For they who know His grace and love  
Can trust in Him alone.

“He faileth not,” What gracious words !  
To burdened souls distressed ;  
For Jesus says, “Come unto Me  
And I will give you rest.”

“He faileth not,” How comforting !  
To sorrowing hearts bereaved ;  
For then He gives sustaining grace  
In every hour of need.

“He faileth not,” What cheering words !  
When earthly friends grow cold ;  
His perfect love remains the same  
Nor can its depths be told.

“He faileth not,” Oh precious thought !  
To those who wait their Lord ;  
For “I will come again,” He said ;  
He must fulfil His word.

“He faileth not,” Oh praise His name  
For grace so full and free ;  
With joy our hearts in reverence bow,  
And worship only Thee.

S.A.B.L.  
(97 years old).

## The Unchanging One.

**I**T is an unspeakable mercy to have men and things all reduced in our thoughts to their proper dimensions—to have everything fictitious laid bare, and everything hollow made manifest. Without doubt, a few years make a vast difference in our judgment of people and circumstances; and above all, in our judgment of self. At our first starting there is apt to be a great deal of what may be termed *romance*, which all vanishes before the stern realities of actual life.

But then we must take care that we do not exchange nature's romance, which may exhibit much that is truly generous, for nature's *cold and narrow-hearted selfishness*. This, alas! is too often the case. There are two ways in which we may be affected by discovering the hollowness and vanity of men and things, namely, first, we may be driven in upon ourselves; secondly, we may be driven more closely to Christ. In the former case the heart becomes withered and shut up; in the latter it becomes enriched and expanded. In the former case I become like an icicle congealed by the cold atmosphere into which my own belief has driven me; in the latter I get real power from God, to come forth and act on the scene which had repulsed me. . . .

Men and circumstances change no doubt, but, blessed be God, we have to do with One who is "the same, yesterday and to-day and for ever." May we keep our eye steadily fixed on Him, the unchanging One.

We shall never get strength by looking at the condition of things around us . . . but there is something which can carry us through, and that is personal devotedness to the Lord Jesus Christ. "Follow thou Me" is a simple, definite, powerful command, uttered by our blessed Lord; and when this command falls on the heart, there is that which will sustain us in the darkest apostasy.

C. H. M.

## The Perseverance of Faith.

**W**HAT marked the faith of those worthies of whom we read in Hebrews xi. was, that it shone out brightly in circumstances of difficulty and trial. When everything is going on smoothly we are carried along on the crest of the wave, like a ship entering harbour on full tide. How different when she has to make her way in at low water when rocks and reefs are beginning to appear.

Then again, what puts faith to the test is the *length* of the way; yet we read of these that they “died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and sojourners on the earth.” They persevered, they went on, spite of difficulties and discouragements, for they knew *whom* they believed.

Just consider all that is said of them in this one verse (13). They did not receive the promises, yet faith enabled them to see them afar off and to embrace them, and the practical result was that they were strangers and sojourners on the earth. Faith made what was unseen as real, yea more real, than that which was seen. Had they looked at the waves—the adverse circumstances—like Peter on the lake of Galilee, they might have become discouraged and returned to the land from which they came out, but faith enabled them to overcome and continue as strangers in Canaan.

Does not this encourage us also who live just near the close of this dispensation? We too have hopes and expectations—they are truly *heavenly* hopes, and we look for a heavenly country in association with a heavenly Saviour. And if we learn, amidst the experiences of the wilderness, what man is—what we are—we learn also what God is in a way we never could have known Him in the most favoured circumstances in which we could be found.

## “The Borderland.”

Orpah and Ruth—Ruth i. 14.

OUTWARDLY there was not much difference between these two Gentile young women. They were both widows. Both had married Hebrews who were aliens in the land of Moab, and the book of Ruth where their history is recorded unfolds some of the most beautiful and touching stories in the Word of God. Their story treats of the principles of grace. The redemption of the *inheritance*, rather than of *persons*, is clearly prefigured in this book, and at the same time also types of the reception of those Gentiles who will, in the latter day, identify themselves with Israel.

The mother-in-law, Naomi, having heard that there was bread in Bethlehem, is about to return with her two daughters-in-law to Judah, her native land. But after starting she urges both to leave her and return to their former homes. The test comes as the borderland between Moab and Canaan is approached. Both young women were equally loved by Naomi, and this love they evidently strongly reciprocated. But the *borderland* is the supreme test! Is it to be Moab or Bethlehem?

The ties which connected Orpah with her own country were too strong for her to relinquish, and when the choice has to be made, “Orpah kissed her mother-in-law but Ruth clave unto her.” Orpah returns to her people. She may have had faith in her love for Naomi but her heart was elsewhere. For that reason she *turned back* and becomes an example of the truth set forth in the words, “Where your treasure is there will your heart be also” (Matt. vi. 21). There was something left behind in Moab from which she seemingly could not break away. How many the writer has known,

who, like her, made a fair start in confessing Christ, but yet when tested, had not the spiritual energy to continue; so, like Orpah, *looked back* first and then *turned back* just as the children of Ephraim who "being armed, and carrying bows *turned back* in the day of battle" (Psalm lxxviii. 9). For Ephraim, the difficulties *in front* of them—the day of battle—was the test. There is no doubt but that Orpah was sincere in her intention to return with Naomi to the land of Judah; for both she and Ruth had said, "Surely we will return with thee unto thy people" (verse 10). The danger began by *looking back* and was followed by *turning back* when the borderland was reached.

What a solemn lesson we are taught in the act of this young Gentile woman. We are reminded of some who in our Lord's day had the best of intentions but when the test came had not the courage to carry them out (Luke ix. 57-62). The first had said "Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." But he had not counted the cost for he would lose every *comfort* of life if he followed the One who had no place where to lay His head (verse 58). The next became jealous of his *character* before the world when asked by the Lord to follow Him. It was no doubt a proper and natural thing to attend to the obsequies of a parent, but none of these things could stand in the way of the most important step on earth (verse 59). The last, with every intention of following the Lord allowed his family *connections* to stand in the way and the Lord has to tell him, when he fails in his decision, that "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and *looking back* is fit for the kingdom of God" (verse 62).

But a brighter picture is presented in the case of Ruth, although she has to meet a further test when her mother-in-law urges her to "return after thy sister-in-law" (verse 15). Her objective was Bethlehem and

she was not to be put off. Her fixed determination to cleave to and follow Naomi, in the midst of difficulties, is a beautiful and a cheering instance of faith.

It is a just inference to draw, that during the time of Naomi's sojourn in the land of Moab her two daughters-in-law had heard her speak of the God of Israel and the land of Judah, but the effect of this upon the hearts of the two young women must have been different. Ruth had no doubt been attracted by what she had heard, as well as exercised by events that had happened, such as the death of her father-in-law and her husband. True exercise of heart in divine things is usually a gradual work, so when the test came in her case she was prepared to meet it, and no words of her mother-in-law could dissuade her from her purpose; "Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge, thy people shall be my people and thy God my God" (verse 16). If the exercise of heart in divine things is gradual, so also is decline a gradual process. How important then it is that we should not fail in whole-hearted devotedness to Christ but cleave to Him as Ruth clave to her mother-in-law.

As before stated, Bethlehem (afterwards called the city of David, Luke ii. 4) and Naomi's God and Naomi's people, had become Ruth's objective; her heart and mind are fixed upon them. But the developments in this story may be pursued in the Scriptures themselves. The writer's object is simply to show the contrast between these two Gentile young women and the lesson to be learned from their characters and their ways. The test comes for us all at "the borderland." Is it to be Christ or the world with us?

J.P. (*Montreal*).



## The Path of Faith and Fellowship.

Illustrated in Jonathan and his Armour-bearer,  
1 Samuel xiii. and xiv.

**T**HERE is no day so dark, there are no circumstances so difficult but that in that day and through those circumstances the path of faith may be trodden : and God will own it, add His blessing and give victory.

It would be difficult to imagine a more deplorable condition for any people to be in than were the children of Israel at this time. They were defenceless. But a short time before, we read, that no sword or spear was found save with Saul and Jonathan, that even to sharpen an axe they had to go to their enemies. It was in such defenceless condition they were invaded by their inveterate foe with a powerful army of chariots, horsemen and footmen and spoilers that went forth in bands.

Small wonder (apart from faith) that many of the children of Israel hid themselves in caves and mountains and dens and pits ; others fled across the Jordan ; only a few hundreds followed the king, trembling. And the king ? He tarried in indecision under a pomegranate tree at the utmost parts of Gibeah.

But there was one who was not carried away with this sweeping tide of despair. . Doubtless, Jonathan felt the condition of things as keenly as any but he looked not alone at the difficulties but to God who was above them. He considered not only the number and power of his enemies but the One on whom he could count to meet them. And Jonathan's faith soon found expression in these remarkable words to his armour-bearer, "Come and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison that is on the other side."

And they went. But he told not his father. Like another yet more illustrious Benjamite in a later day,

he "conferred not with flesh and blood." But Jonathan soon found that the Philistines' garrison was in a skillfully chosen, a truly formidable position, rocks on this side, rocks on that side and strongly held by a well-appointed foe. Here was a test for Jonathan's faith. But Jonathan's faith stands the test. As the rocks appear, as the difficulties arise, Jonathan's faith rises with and above them and still his word is "come"! But, note, there is an advance on his previous appeal. He does not now say merely, "the garrison of the Philistines" but "the garrison of these uncircumcised." He puts them in their proper place before God. *They* could not count on Jehovah as their God and call upon Him for help against their enemy, the children of Israel.

Here is a lesson for us. It is of the very first importance to promptly recognise our spiritual enemies as such, who will give and should receive no quarter. Parleying too often leads to pandering; being undecided too frequently ends in being undone; but decision is a first step to deliverance.

Jonathan's faith expands with its exercise and he now gives utterance to this very fine saying, "It may be the Lord will work for us; for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few." Oh, bright and beautiful words, in a day of darkness and despair, in a time of hiding and fleeing and trembling and tarrying! How every word glows with the pure light of faith which flashes encouragement all down thirty centuries to drooping spirits in our decadent day.

The response of the armour-bearer is full of interest and instruction. One can hardly suppose that he of his own initiative would have gone to the attack of the Philistines' garrison against such tremendous odds; but, under the inspiring words and heroic example of Jonathan, he went. On the other hand, one scarcely cares to think of what the result might have been had

he used his influence to dissuade Jonathan from the enterprise. He might have urged, "I have borne your armour until now and am in no condition to climb rocks in the face of such a superior foe," or there was the more potent plea that Jonathan was the king's son; he had already given promise of able and successful leadership, he was the people's hope, the nation's asset, it was his first duty to conserve such a valuable life and not to risk throwing it away on such a hazardous adventure. Such advice would, doubtless, have received commendation. Oh, no! instead, he gives an answer of full, whole-hearted fellowship. "Do all that is in thine heart; turn thee, behold I am with thee according to thine heart" he says; and how the free noble words must have sent the blood coursing through Jonathan's veins, warming his heart, strengthening his hand and confirming him in his faith and purpose.

It is of course impossible for everyone to take the lead and it is not in the nature of things that everyone should be a hero of the first rank like Jonathan, but may we, when any servant or servants of the Lord have a work of the Lord in hand, not meet it with cold carping criticism but be found giving whole-hearted fellowship after this sort.

Jonathan's action was the result of simple faith in God. It was not the outcome of religious fanaticism. Nor was it, that, borne on the crest of a wave of popular enthusiasm, he was urged to a deed of daring by the admiring gaze and encouraging plaudits of the multitude. No, he was calm with the calmness which true faith in God alone can give. He was willing to be guided and his faith immediately suggests a test. They would discover themselves to the enemy. Wretched tactics but blessed faith; and the nature of the taunts received from their foes gives Jonathan just the guidance that he desired. And *now*, no danger shall deter, no consideration hold them back and forth go the

devoted two on hands and feet to meet "the host encamped against them."

But he first breaks forth with an expression of surpassing excellence. The path of faith had isolated Jonathan from the king, from his family, from the people. He was not missed by the king, his absence was not noticed by the people. And yet, at this crisis of his career, his life, humanly speaking, not worth a moment's purchase, of whom does he think? Does he entreat his armour-bearer, should he survive, to acquaint the king of this culminating deed of valour in the path of duty against the king's enemies? Does he confide a last loving message of farewell to his family? No: he thinks of Israel. The solemn address of the venerable seer recorded in the 12th chapter had, doubtless, made a lasting impression upon him. Most serious warnings the aged Samuel had indeed given, but he had mingled with them blessed words of faith and hope. "For the Lord will not forsake His people for His great name's sake; because it hath pleased the Lord to make you His people," he had said. And the inspired words had fallen as good seed taking deep root in the heart of Jonathan now to burst forth in rich and precious fruit. For Jonathan's faith going right away from himself takes in the whole people of God; and, linking the great name of Jehovah with them, predicates their deliverance at His hand. God must answer and honour such faith—the faith that cast His people on His advocacy as the meek and mighty Moses in even more critical circumstances had done in an earlier day. God could not deny Himself. And so we find that He not only transfers trembling to the Philistines and the earth, and works a great deliverance for Israel, but gives the people gratefully to testify that Jonathan had wrought with God that day and on that account to save his precious life from the folly and jealousy of Saul. How different from Saul, who, making a great show of zeal—so soon to be

manifested as the utmost folly—brought the people under bondage and a curse, in order, as he said, “that *I* might be avenged on *mine* enemies.”

A. J. H.

## “Go Unto Joseph.”

“Thou, Thou art worthy of all praise:  
Blessed is he who praises Thee.”

**Y**ES, it is blessed to praise God, as our hymn says. But that is only possible *through Jesus*, that is to say only those, who know the Son of God as their Saviour, and believe in Him, can, through Him, praise God the Father. Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, testified before the chief men and elders of the nation of Israel that there is none other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved. And Jesus is, according to the word in Rom. ix. 5, “*Over all, God blessed for ever*” ! The one who knows Him can truly bless and praise, can leap for joy, and walk in peace in a world full of discord and unrest. All blessing, all true enjoyment is through Him.

We have read together a portion of Joseph’s history (Gen. xli. 46-57). God has given us in the Old Testament many histories—beautiful and impressive narratives, in order to shew us who He is, and what He has given us, but above all, to enable us to recognise who the Lord Jesus is. His purpose was, and is, that we should learn to know Him, whom to know is life eternal.

How much that is beautiful and glorious in this respect is contained in the history which we are going to consider this evening ! May God enable us through His Spirit to discover these glories, and to enjoy something of them !

“*And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt.*”

That was an important and eventful moment in the life of those two men—as well in Joseph’s as in

Pharaoh's. In Psalm cv. also mention is made by the Holy Spirit of this moment. There Pharaoh is called "the ruler of the peoples." Pharaoh was indeed the mightiest prince of his time, the highest monarch on earth. But this mightiest among the children of men was lacking in wisdom. And all those who surrounded his magnificent throne possessed as little as he did the wisdom necessary for discerning the meaning of the dreams which so disturbed him.

Then Pharaoh's chief butler remembered what had happened to him two years earlier. Why had not the man in all that time thought any more of the Hebrew youth from whose mouth he had heard the interpretation of his dream, and who had so urgently begged him to remember him when his dream should be fulfilled?

Yes, why? The above-quoted psalm gives us the answer to this question. "He (Jehovah) sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant; whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron, until the time that His word came: *the word of Jehovah tried him*" (verses 17-19). At the time appointed by God, not a moment too early, and not a moment too late, the dungeon-doors opened, and the innocent one was presented before Pharaoh and to the whole world, but before that the same God had something to teach His servant, who was languishing in prison. Oh, may we, none of us, ever forget that God holds *all* in His hand, and that He orders *all* according to His own perfect wisdom! All the enigmas, all the "Whys?" will one day be gloriously solved and answered.

Joseph (such was God's purpose) was to become the saviour of the world, and God carried out His purpose in a perfect way. Everything must work together to accomplish the counsel of His will. Seen in this light, it is of great significance that the chief butler forgot Joseph for two whole years, though this in no wise

does away with the man's responsibility. But to those who love God *all* things work together for good.

And when we now see Joseph standing there before "the ruler of the peoples," what a spectacle! All suffering is over for God's servant; the prison lies for ever behind him. Is not that a refreshing thought? Not only when we remember Joseph, as he suffered so innocently in the fields of Dothan and in Potiphar's house, but, above all, when we look beyond this pure youth, and fix our eyes upon Him, of whom he was a type, upon our Lord and Saviour. For Jesus the sufferings went much deeper than for Joseph. He must—and this thought pierces us to the heart—He must go down into death and the grave for us. Oh, how did He suffer in Gethsemane in the fore-feeling of what was to come, and how on the cross itself, and above all, in those three hours of darkness! We are deeply moved when His suffering passes before our souls, for we also—you and I—were the cause of it! But this nameless suffering, this deep humiliation, belong for ever to the past. For Him the cross will never return. He who once bore our sins and was made sin for us, has been received up into heaven; yea, He has taken His seat on the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. i. 3). He is there in the presence of the All-Highest.

Are we not involuntarily reminded of this heavenly sight, when we read the words which have been preserved for us with regard to Joseph and Pharaoh? Joseph is the only wise one: all who were esteemed wise among men stand there as fools. Joseph gives the interpretation of the dream. Joseph gives counsel. And so also we know our Saviour as the One who "*of God is made unto us wisdom,*" and whose name is "Wonderful, *Counsellor*, mighty God, Father of eternity, Prince of peace" (1 Cor. i. 30; Is. ix. 6).

And now let us hear what Pharaoh replies to the surprising communications of Joseph:

“Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art. Thou shalt be over my house; and according to thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou . . . . See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. . . .”

“And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph’s hand, and arrayed him in fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck. And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had, and they cried before him, ‘Bow the knee!’ and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt.”

What a spectacle! I repeat. Joseph in robes of finest white linen, wearing the sign of the highest dignity and power!

Twice already had he lost a garment: the “coat of many colours,” which the hand of love had prepared for him, and of which his brethren had robbed him, and the garment of Potiphar’s steward, which Potiphar’s wicked wife retained in her hand, when Joseph fled from her waylaying. And now he stood before the eyes of all in the fine white raiment, which testified not alone of the grace of God, but also of Joseph’s faithfulness.

*The late J. Rot, of Holland.*

## A Word on Galatians Illustrated by the Orders given to the Kohathites.—4.

Num. iv. 1-20; vii. 1-9; Gal. v. 1-10; vi. 12-14.

But to return to Numbers iv. There was a special injunction as to the Kohathites that we do not find in the case of the other Levites. The Lord said: “Cut ye not off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites: but thus do unto them, that they may live, and not die, when they approach unto the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in, and appoint them every one to his service and to his



burden : but they shall not go in to see when the holy things are covered, lest they die." There was danger for them that did not exist in the same way for others ; for they were in the place of greatest nearness to God. God will not suffer in His presence that which is not worthy of Himself. He does not interfere with the world in its sin. He lets that go on its way until the judgment. But He will be sanctified in those that draw near to Him, and for them especially exists the danger of being cut off if unsubject to the order of the sanctuary. This was what did happen on the day of the consecration of Aaron. The nearer we are to God, the more careful we must be to do everything according to God's order. Only after the holy things were covered were they to come and take them. They were separated by God to this special service, but they were not allowed to exceed it or look upon the holy things.

What instruction is there for us in this? Is it not, not allowing the natural man, the curiosity of an unsanctified heart, to satisfy itself with that which God has put in His house to set forth the glory of Christ? The natural man must not be allowed to trespass here, even to admire. God has given us His truth in order that the truth may command us, may rule our hearts and form our ways ; it is not for the natural man to admire or to criticise it. And those who were in the greatest danger of doing this were those who were brought the nearest. God will have the conscience exercised as to His presence, as to what it is to have to do with Him. The sense of this in the soul is like the ballast in a vessel. The unladen ship must have ballast. All may go well if the wind happens to be gentle and favourable, but without ballast, if a storm rises, the ship must be lost. God, having brought us in Christ into a position of the greatest nearness and privilege, and having given us a nature capable of enjoying Him, will not have our natural minds working about His truth, or enjoying it as a natural man might enjoy it.

Want of care as to this gets us out of the current of God's thoughts, and leads us into the state of the Galatians, who having begun in the Spirit, went on to make a fair show in the flesh. We may enjoy God's truth in a fleshly way; but then God comes in in judgment.

May our hearts be so exercised before Him that we may become apt to learn more of His thoughts about service and testimony in communion with His own dear Son.

That which is nearest to the Lord's heart is the church for which He gave Himself. "Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it." Have I got anything in my heart that answers to the Lord's as to this? God has brought us into communion with His own firstborn Son, and will have our hearts set upon Christ's interests, our thoughts occupied with Him, that we "may be able to understand *with all saints* what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we might be filled with all the fulness of God." United by the Holy Ghost to all saints in Christ, you cannot isolate yourself from them without practically giving up the testimony and service He has appointed, and ignoring holiness as God has set it forth in Christianity. The Kohathites must work together.

Of course we do not find the church as the body of Christ in the Old Testament, but we do find there the "order" of the house of God, and in those who are brought so near to God as the Kohathites were, we have a distinct indication of what He seeks in those whom He has now made nigh in His Son.

First, they are under the power of the truth; they bear it on their shoulders, valuing it, and caring for

it as that which is most precious. Secondly, they walk together; and what keeps them together too is the position of service in which they are set in dependence upon God. Thirdly, they do not seek to satisfy the craving of the natural heart with God's holy things; they walk as to them in God's presence in the Spirit; so as not to satisfy the lust of the flesh. These are the three characteristics of the Kohathites.

What a comfort and joy it is to the heart to know that God has brought His people so near to Himself that He may bless them there according to His own thoughts! Surely He desires for us that we may be practically under the power of the place in which He has set us "IN CHRIST." The tendency of human nature is always to measure things by the amount of outward blessing or success. It characterises very much so-called christian work in the day we live in. But if I am really on God's ground, I shall be content with knowing that His eye is ever on His saints, and that He thinks of the appointed place and measure and and sphere of service that He has allotted to each of His own. In this He is sovereign; but if living in the sanctuary and furnished with His thoughts, we shall get intelligent in discerning His ways, and find ever fresh occasions of joy in tracing them out. Personally we have to ask ourselves, Am I in the place where He wishes me to be? Am I occupied with the service of His Son in the path of obedience, and in constant dependence upon Him, allowing no principle of the flesh or of the world to come in between me and Him so as to hinder my adopting His divine "order"? All the rest must be left in His hand.

The Lord has put His name upon us, and calls us to do whatever we have to do for His sake. "I know thy works." Weakness is no real hindrance, for if felt as it ought to be, it only draws us nearer to Him, and becomes the opportunity for His grace to shine forth, and His strength to be made perfect in it. To

such He says, "I have set before thee an open door which no man can shut." God will have us hold the truth in communion with Himself (otherwise it has no power over the soul), in order that we may be found going quietly forward as His witnesses, "led of the Spirit," and with the constant sense of being in His presence under the power of the truth He has revealed to us.

We shall find that it is the cross of Christ which furnishes the secret of power for testimony: "always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body." May it be more and more so with us, through the infinite grace of God.

W. J. L.

(CONCLUDED.)

### The Watching Servant.

**B**LESSED are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching; verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." What joy! What grace! It will be the glory of the Saviour Himself, to give us to enjoy the blessings of heaven in the Father's house, ministering all with His own hands. It is well worth while to suffer for Him a little, and for a little while, and then to possess heavenly blessing, communicated by the hand, and heart of Jesus Himself. We shall reign with Him, and enjoy the fruit of the work which we have been permitted to do for Him; if it is only a cup of water given in the name of Jesus, it shall not lose its reward. But far better still will it be to sit down in peace, enjoying those eternal blessings in the Father's house, which Christ will abundantly minister to us—precious testimony of His approval and of His love (See Luke xii. 35-44).

J. N. D.

## The Word.

“**T**HE Word was God. . . . the Word became flesh” (John i. 1, 14). These two statements concerning the Word, answer the one to the other. The first asserts unequivocally His absolute Deity, the other asserts with equal force His true and perfect humanity. There was but the one Person—two natures, the divine and the human, but one Person.

Every glory that surrounds our Lord Jesus, every attribute or quality which we find in Him, is dear to the Christian’s heart. No wonder that the Apostle should say at the close of the epistle to the Corinthians, “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha.”

Like the perfume composed of “sweet spices with pure frankincense,” each of a like weight, tempered together pure and holy, which Moses was commanded to make (Exod. xxx. 34, 38), none was to be made like it. Jesus, in all that He was and in all that He is, stands alone. He is unique. There is none like Him. Some of that perfume, or “confection after the art of the apothecary,” as it is called, was to be beaten very small and put before the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation. There, in the very presence of God, every particle of it, every little bit, would emit its fragrant perfume ascending before Him.

What a Saviour! He is divine and His divinity adds its untold worth to His sacrifice upon the Cross, as well as to every office He fills. He is truly man; full of grace and truth, and His every act and word was as fragrant perfume before God. His was a path of absolute self-surrender; perfect dependence on, and perfect obedience to, the Father’s will.

And with all the true sensibility and feeling of a truly human heart, Jesus can sympathise with His people in the trials and sorrows of the way; while His priestly intercession, carried on in heaven itself, never fails.

But all flows from an infinite and perfect love; eternal like Himself, and which knows no break, no failure, no decline.

May we not say, in the words of Solomon's Song, that He is "the chiefest among ten thousand. . . . yea, He is altogether lovely"?

## A Voice.

Matthew xi. 2-19.

**W**E might say that the greatest men of God whose history is given us in the Word, form so to speak the back-ground of the picture on which there is but one person who stands out prominently, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is thus that a painter, wishing to make the subject of his painting stand out in relief, usually paints it against a dark back-ground. We find this habitually in the Word, when it depicts for us men of faith who are especially honoured of God.

In the case of John the Baptist, one is struck by the character of moral grandeur which we see in him, and which is recognised by the Lord Himself. John was "more than a prophet." But what rendered him great was, not only moral qualities inherent in his person, but the infinite glory of Him whose forerunner he was and, alone of all the prophets, he saw Him whom he announced and could cry, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

John was the porter who opened the door to the Lord, entering the scene as His minister. He it was who bore testimony to Him who was the Word, the Light, the Life, the Christ, the Lord, the Lamb of God, the Son of God (John i. 4, 5, 20, 23, 29, 34).

No prophetic ministry had had so elevated a character. Yet, lest we should confound the Lord with His servant, the Spirit says, "He (John) was not the light." The Pharisees asked him, "Art thou the Christ. . . ?" and he answered: No. There was in John a moral greatness which showed itself in the

deep humility with which he was clothed. It is indeed beautiful to see him effacing himself completely and declaring that he is nothing.

When asked, "Who art thou?", he replies, "*A voice,*" setting man entirely aside. Then he announces the One who was to come after him and whose shoe's latchet he was not worthy to unloose. He takes, with respect to Christ, the place of the least of servants. Abigail was animated by the same spirit. When David asked her to become his wife, she replies, "Let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." It was not, with her, any effort to speak thus, any more than it was with John the Baptist.

Has anyone, by his own efforts, ever succeeded in forgetting himself? Never! In order to do this, the heart must be filled with Christ and there must be no place for another. Such was the case with John. But there is something still more wonderful: the Lord does not let His servant abase himself without taking, Himself, a still lower place than John. He goes down to the river Jordan to be baptized by John with the baptism of repentance. The whole moral glory of Christ shines in this fact, which John declared to be impossible; as was the case also with Peter when the Lord came to him in order to wash his feet.

Here Jesus associates Himself with those who came to the baptism of repentance, confessing that the only place which it was right for them to take was the place of death and judgment. In what wonderful grace He, the Holy One and the Just, identified Himself with the guilty in whose hearts God was working by His Spirit, and who became thus the excellent of the earth, of whom He said by His prophetic Spirit, "In them is all my delight."

H. R.

## The Path of Faith and Fellowship—2.

Illustrated in Jonathan and his Armour-bearer,  
1 Samuel xiii. and xiv.

**W**HAT vast encouragement there is for us in God's recognition and blessing of this separate path in which Jonathan walked. Let us take it to ourselves and never leave the path of faith though it be as narrow and difficult as, until recent years, was the old coast-guardsmen's path on the cliffs. May we at the same time keep our hearts as boundless in their sympathies as the ocean that stretched out before them. Like them too, may we not only guard the interests of those who are safe but give warning to those in danger and a helping hand to those "ready to perish."

Who had the people's interests most at heart? Who served the people best? we may ask. Jonathan in the lonely path in which his faith led him, or one, say even the captain of the king's host, who was with the king and the priest and all that was proper in that day? Favoured, honoured, surely, was that young man, the armour-bearer to be associated with Jonathan in his separate path. And his words of fellowship are inscribed by the side of Jonathan's words of faith so that they shine together with intermingling lustre, preserved for ever in the imperishable Word of the living God.

Whatever the difficulties of the day we are living in, however deep-seated the decadence, however bitter the brokenness, however humiliating the disintegration, God is the same—unchangeable in all His attributes. Nothing can exhaust His fulness whether of love or of power. It has been well said, "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." It might also be said, "Man's extremity is faith's opportunity" for faith brings God's resistless power into circumstances which must give way before it. If it be urged that this is not a day for what might be regarded as great deeds; that our path is more like that of our beloved Lord who waited



patiently for Jehovah and lived by every word which proceeded out of His mouth; the sure reply is, that He has graciously told us what will meet with His approbation in this day of ruin. It is separateness from the world and its ecclesiastical organisations; keeping His word—the test of love which He gave in His farewell address—and not denying His name. This takes us right against the current of things down here and for it we need energy of faith as well as enduring courage. We are in the very midst of Laodicean boastfulness and lukewarmness—a state so nauseous to the Lord that it will inevitably lead to all that is mere profession being utterly cast out by Him. But it is the darkness which precedes the dawn. The day star has arisen in our hearts. Out from the darkness, above the Babel of Christendom, above the roar of the surges and the raging of the storm, clear comes the cheering cry, the encouraging message from our well-beloved Lord Himself, “I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast that no man take thy crown.” Shall we then on account of our low condition, the power of the enemy or anything else whatsoever, give up, with this His own loving appeal ringing in our ears and stirring the very depths of our hearts? Surely, no! And mark, even now, He is not presenting Himself merely as the Holy and the True, the One who looks for reality rather than display, but also as the One “that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth”—the true Eliakim—the treasurer—the keeper and administrator of God’s treasury of unsearchable riches—to whom, indeed, all things in heaven and on earth are given. So the great apostle, by the Holy Ghost, tells us, “My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” And then, above all, may we not say?—as the Beloved Son in ineffable favour He is the free dispenser of the Father’s grace.

“March on, beloved, nor like a laggard stay!  
 March swiftly on! yet err not from the way  
 Where once the holy feet of Jesus trod—  
 The path of faith, made for the sons of God!”

A. J. H.

## “Go Unto Joseph”—2.

Genesis xli.

**W**E have already seen how Joseph lost a garment twice: the “coat of many colours” which the hand of love had provided for him, and the garment which Potiphar’s wicked wife retained in her hand, when he fled from her waylaying.

But allow me in passing to draw attention to this and above all, to impress it upon the hearts of the young people in our midst—what would have become of all this glory, of all the ways and purposes of God *with* and *through* Joseph, if this young man had lent an ear to the voice of temptation? Oh, let us flee from sin! From *every* sin! But above all—you young men—from the sin of unchastity, of immorality!

The royal and priestly robe now enwrapped Joseph’s members. And when he now rides through the land of Egypt in the royal chariot, and the herald cries before him, “Bow the knee!”—Potiphar’s wife, too, must bow her knees before him. Every knee must bow before him! Before him—Zaphnath-Paaneah—the “saviour of the world,” the “preserver of life.” For under this name will Joseph henceforth be spoken of in Egypt. All must have to do with this Zaphnath-Paaneah, the revealer of secrets, and saviour of the world. Every tongue must confess his name, and he will become lord of all, possessor and benefactor of all.

And now, beloved, what is this spectacle, beautiful and striking though it be, when compared with that which we shall see in the future? Does not Paul say,

after speaking of the humiliation and perfect obedience of Christ—an obedience even unto death, yea, unto the death of the cross, “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess *that Jesus Christ is Lord*, to the glory of God the Father”?

How infinitely does that surpass the glory of Joseph!

As it had been shown to Pharaoh in the dream, and communicated by Joseph in the name of God, so it came to pass. Egypt experienced an abundance hitherto unknown, but then, seven years later, famine came upon the land and all surrounding lands.

But corn is there! Joseph has arranged everything beforehand. His full granaries offer plenty of corn and bread. The people turn in their need to Pharaoh. But they go (as we say) to the wrong address, just as Naaman the leper did many years later, when he went with his king's letter of recommendation to King Jehoram (2 Kings v.). “Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, ‘Go unto Joseph! What he saith to you, do’ ” (Gen. xli. 55). Joseph is the preserver of all. Joseph has corn. And he gives to all who come to him. He sells corn to the Egyptians for their money, then for their cattle, and lastly for their land (ch. xlvii.).

But to his brethren he sells freely—for nothing. They return to Canaan with the money in their sacks. How that reminds us of a word of the prophet Isaiah in later days: “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat! Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price” (Is. lv. 1). Or of that other word from the mouth of the Lord Himself, which we find at the end of the book of Revelation: “I am the Root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! and let him that heareth say, Come! and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Yes, grace is ready to give. Man has indeed deserved nothing but punishment and judgment. But grace sets *Him* before our eyes who has endured the judgment, borne the punishment, and now offers us all His blessings freely.

Rich, adorable Saviour! Oh, the fulness of grace in Him! From this fulness we too receive "grace upon grace." And as Pharaoh once pointed the Egyptians to Joseph, so God to-day points us to His beloved One, and the Holy Spirit calls, "*Go unto Jesus!*"

"The famine was sore in all lands. Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? (Gen. xli. 57; xlii. 1, 2).

"*Why do ye look one upon another?*" Just a few short remarks upon these words in conclusion.

Are there some in our midst who are hungering, and who have a sincere desire to learn to know Jesus? Oh, why then will you still lose time—why still hesitate? While you are looking at others—at parents, brothers, sisters and friends—while you "look one upon another," the precious day of grace is passing by. Perhaps you answer, "Yes; *but*——." "*But*" what? Does the burden of your sins weigh you down? Jesus will take it from your shoulders. Have you nothing to bring to Him but your heavy-laden, weary heart? He would so gladly give you rest freely! All you need you can find in Him. But that word is for you also: "*Go unto Jesus!*"

Did Joseph's brethren *buy* anything?

Ah no! They only *received*. When Joseph saw his brethren coming to him with the purpose of buying corn from him, and recognised them at once (though they

did not recognise him) it would have been so natural if a thought of *revenge* had arisen in his heart. But far from that! He would shew *grace*, through *kindness* would he bring them to repentance. Just as it is written about God: "Despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Rom. ii. 4). Through grace he brought them low, through love he broke their hearts. Yes, with admirable wisdom he brought them to their senses, and led them to candid confession, in order then to exalt and bless them.

Thus would God act towards you, towards every sinner. The devil, the liar from the beginning, perhaps whispers to you that you have sinned too much and too deeply. But God's grace is sufficient even for many and great sins. When, after Israel's fearful sin in worshipping the golden calf, and after the intercession of Moses for the guilty people, He revealed Himself to His faithful servant under a new name, we hear these words from His mouth: "Jehovah, Jehovah God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin," etc. (Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7).

"*Forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin*"! For the first time is this wonderful fact expressed in the Word of God; not that God had not before that time forgiven sins—he had done so—but never before had it been uttered. And to-day we can add to it: God who in Christ, and for Christ's sake, goes much further; who not only forgives, but also gives us eternal life, *life in the Son*.

Oh, may God grant that we all who are here assembled in the same place, shone upon by the same electric light, and sheltered by the same roof, may also be found together in the blissful courts of heaven, where

the true Joseph, the exalted and glorified Son of man, will open to us for ever His well-filled storehouses, and where our souls will be satisfied as we behold His splendour and beauty!

*The late J. Rot, of Holland.*

## Advent Testimony.

**I**T is matter for thankfulness that a testimony, more or less clear, is being borne to the truth of the coming of the Lord. Let the world scoff as it may, let even some amongst professing Christians refuse it and say, "Where is the promise of His coming?"; yet none of these things change the fact that *He is coming*.

When the Lord Jesus came into this world the first time, few were looking for Him, the mass of the nation of Israel were either indifferent or unbelieving. The chief priests and scribes had the Scriptures in their hands and could quote them, but they had no heart for their own Messiah when He appeared. Yet there were those who waited for the consolation of Israel and who looked for redemption in Jerusalem (Luke ii.). Their *hearts* were set upon the coming Messiah; this was the secret of their expectant attitude.

Such ones as these did not say, "Oh! we have heard these promises and prophecies for years, and yet there is no sign of the fulfilment of them, so we have begun to think we must have been mistaken and have given up the expectation of any immediate coming of the Messiah."

No such thought, we may rest assured, ever came into the minds of Simeon or Anna or any of those godly souls whose whole hearts and souls were set upon the expectation of the coming One. Their faith may have been tried, but they were not discouraged, but rather richly rewarded. That faith was of the true type; like that of saints of old who "Not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, were persuaded

of them," etc. : and the result of this persuasion followed.

Let each reader earnestly desire and pray for the revival of this hope of the second advent of the Lord, in this our day. But we are assured that if it is to have the vitality and freshness in our souls that it should have, and not become a mere doctrine or theory, there must be a state of soul and heart answering to that found in those of old, to whom the coming of the Messiah was *everything*. There must be real attachment of heart to the Lord Himself.

Then again, let it be clearly understood that it is not the end of this age we are looking for, nor is it the ending of the state of semi-anarchy which now exists in the world and the bringing in of peace and good government, nor is it the time of earthly prosperity which will be brought in when Christ reigns which forms *our* proper hope. Not any or all of these things is the true goal which *we* who belong to the church of God are going on to. No: it is the coming of a *Person*, even "God's Son from heaven, . . . Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come"

No doubt things will be set right in this world when Christ reigns in power and glory, and they never will be till then. But let us not forget that the hopes and calling of the church are *heavenly*. "Our citizenship has its existence in the heavens, from which also we await the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour"; it is a heavenly hope, and we await a heavenly Saviour.

Now this is a truth we must bear in mind if we are to rightly understand that aspect of the coming of the Lord which specially refers to the Christian, as contrasted with the Jewish hope of the kingdom. If the church is that which *belongs* to heaven even now, how simple and suitable that the Lord Jesus should call us from the earth to meet Him *in the air* (1 Thess. iv.) and so pass into heaven, to which, in spirit, we already

belong. The "Day of the Lord" (1 Thess. v. 2), on the other hand, is a day of judgment on the world, when Christ comes in power and glory to reign.

Two things, then, come especially before us in connection with the hope of the coming of the Lord; both of them most essential if that hope is to be a "living bright reality" to us and not a mere dry doctrine, even though a true one.

First, that it is the *One* who is coming who forms the beloved object of the hope; it is Jesus Himself, the bright and morning star. It is the One the mention of whose name (Rev. xxii. 16) calls forth that response—in which, indeed, the Holy Spirit joins—"Come". How could the bride, the church, and the Holy Ghost who dwells in the church and who has created those bridal affections for Christ, do other than respond to such a presentation of Himself, and say "Come"? It could not be.

Secondly, the coming of the Lord is the church's *proper* hope. When that assembling "shout" is heard, all His saints will be raised or changed, responsive to Christ's own voice, and pass into the glory, to be "for ever with the Lord." Could anything be comparable to such a meeting, such a hope? Surely the thought of it even now, amidst the trials and disappointments of the wilderness, is sufficient to quicken our steps, cheer our souls, and fill our hearts with praise and thanksgiving to the One whose love will never rest satisfied until the whole church is with him in glory.

F. G. B.

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Nature makes us impatient with circumstances because we do not sufficiently realise God, and draws us into situations where it is impossible to glorify Him.

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Now the heavens are open to faith as we pass through the world to Him whom we see in glory.



## King Jehoiachin.

2 Kings xxv. 27-30; 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 9-10.

**K**ING Jehoiachin was one of those kings of whom it was said that he did evil in the sight of the Lord as his father had done before him. It was just at the close of Israel's sad history, and Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, sent and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly vessels of the house of the Lord.

After a captivity of thirty-seven years Evil-merodach, who was then king of Babylon, lifted up his head out of prison, and spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon, and changed his prison garments, and he did eat bread before him continually all the days of his life; his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king.

Is not this, my dear reader, one of the very precious pictures that God has seen fit to give us from time to time in the Old Testament; one which brings before us the infinite grace and sovereign love of God towards sinners? Surely it is.

King Jehoiachin was son of a captive king; as we, too, have been captives in the power of Satan, some for a greater and some for a shorter time, until released from that terrible bondage through the grace and love of God. But now we can rejoice that we are delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son of God's love. We have been set free through the wonderful provision made for our need in the Person of God's own beloved Son, who died in our room and stead upon the Cross, and there met every claim of a righteous and holy God against sin.

How the heart of Jehoiachin must have leaped with joy as he heard the kindly words of Evil-merodach after his long imprisonment, finding that he was no longer under the stigma of being regarded as a criminal or in

danger of death at the hands of his captors! And we see all through the actings of the great king, that he had not only the power but the will to carry out his purpose of grace.

And not only this, but Jehoiachin's throne was set above the thrones of the kings who were in Babylon, his garments were changed from prison garments to kingly robes; no doubt befitting the presence of the great king who gave him his place at his own table continually.

Surely this reminds us of what the God of all grace has done. In sovereign mercy He has given us a place in Christ, accepted in the Beloved. He has clothed us with the robe of righteousness—made us to be “the righteousness of God in Him.”

Do you think Evil-merodach had to coax Jehoiachin to come out of his prison dungeon into all the felicity of the king's house and to eat bread before him continually? No indeed! There is no doubt that there was never a moment in the life of Jehoiachin when he was more rejoiced. So it is with the sinner who takes the first draft of the water of life. What a moment of joy it must have been for the poor prodigal when he felt the father's kiss and the father's embrace; knowing, too, that the power of the citizen of the far country was broken for ever.

What a slight it would have been on the king's generosity if Jehoiachin had rejected the bread that the king offered him and did not care to sit at his table! But is not this what many dear young Christians are doing who have made profession that they are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, yet, notwithstanding His blessed invitation, “Do this in remembrance of Me”, continue to fail to carry out His last request to remember Him? Moreover it was, as we might say, under the very shadow of the Cross that our blessed Saviour instituted that memorial so well calculated to

speak to our forgetful hearts and draw them out after Himself.

In the case of Jehoiachin, it was not only that the king had lifted up his head out of prison, spoken kindly to him, given him a change of garments and a continual place at his table, but there was also an allowance given him of the king, "a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life." Wondrous grace!

But, wonderful as this grace was, it is nothing compared with the grace of God and His sovereign love towards us who were once poor sinners of the Gentiles afar from Him. Now clothed with the best robe and seated at the father's table, with the ring of everlasting love and the shoes on our feet, it is ours to rejoice in what His grace has done.

Thus we can thank God that the whole path is provided for by the same grace that saved us. Soon we shall hear that quickening "shout" which shall translate us into His presence for ever. May the blessed Spirit of God so tune our hearts that we may be able to say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Come and take Thy blood-bought people home—come and take Thy rightful throne; then the day of everlasting joy will dawn upon this sin-cursed earth.

R. W. K. (Précis)



*Fragment.*—When the people are far from God, they attach themselves to ordinances; it is the mark that all is going to ruin. "Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these." From the moment that God is of little importance to the conscience, ordinances become objects of superstition and take the place of God.

J.N.D.

## The Hour.

“Father, the hour is come.”—John xvii. 1.

ONE hour there is on history's page  
Pre-eminent o'er all the rest;  
'Twill shine and shine from age to age,  
While earth, while heaven itself, shall last.

O'ercome by time's oblivious power,  
While earthly glories all decay,  
The memory of that blessed hour  
Shall never, never pass away.

A watchfire on a lonely hill,  
Conspicuous o'er the waste of years,  
That friendly beacon, blazing still,  
The weary way-worn pilgrim cheers.

Thou'lt say—What deed of glory gave  
Such lustre to that single hour?  
Go, ask the earth, the sun, the grave—  
These all confessed its thrilling power.

Day, wrapped at noon in deepest night,  
The trembling earth, it shook with dread,  
The sun at noonday lost its light,  
The opening grave gave up its dead.

Child of the world!—'tis not for thee  
To feel its blest consoling power:  
Dead—dead to God, thine eye can see  
No glory in that wondrous hour.

Christian—'tis thine alone to know  
And prize it more than all beside;  
So bright with love, so dark with woe,  
That gracious hour when Jesus died.

—SIR E. DENNY.

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As to the distinction between “conscience” and “heart”—the affections are in the heart, and conscience is my responsibility for right and wrong.

## “Remember.”

**I**N the book of Deuteronomy we have the words which Moses spoke to all Israel, by the command of the Lord, just at the close of their forty years wandering in the wilderness. Some seven or eight times over he impresses on them the need of ever remembering the lessons God would teach them by His dealings with them in the past.

They were to *remember*: (1) That they had been bondmen in Egypt—this is repeated four times, (2) the day they came forth out of Egypt, (3) what the Lord did in Egypt, (4) all the way the Lord had led them, (5) how they provoked the Lord to wrath in the wilderness.

How well God knows what is in the heart of man and how prone we are to a spirit of pride and self-complacency which would take credit to ourselves for the very blessings which He has given us. Oh we *do* need to keep constantly before us the fact that we owe everything to *grace*—God’s infinite grace. There is a serious danger lest, even the knowledge and truth God gives us, should be used to make something of ourselves, or should lead us to *think* (even if we do not *say*) that we know more than others, or have something others have not got.

In that remarkable outpouring of soul given us in the song of Moses, Deut. xxxii., he magnifies Jehovah’s wonderful grace and goodness towards His people, as the source from whence all their blessings flow. It is almost a prophetic review of Israel’s history; and he speaks of a time when “Jehovah alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him” (ver. 12). But, alas! soon he has to change, and in verse 15 he brings in that little word “but”—the dark side of the picture—“But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked,” etc.

Moses foresaw that the very mercies of God would be used for self-gratulation; with the result that they would forsake God and lightly esteem the Rock of their

salvation. Do we, too, not need to be kept constantly sensible of *grace*, and that we have nothing in ourselves to boast of? Truly we are never safe—not even for one moment—unless kept in the consciousness of our own nothingness and in daily dependence on God for strength. As the Lord said to Paul, “My strength is made perfect in weakness,” and Paul adds, “When I am weak, then am I strong.”

## The Red Heifer.

**Its Application as a Type. Numbers xix.**

**I**N these days, when young christians are often much occupied in Sunday School and other work for the Lord, there is a danger that they may overlook the study of those deeper truths which are necessary to the attainment of full liberty, or freedom from self and its dominion. Without the knowledge of our being dead with Christ, if self has been manifested in some serious fault, there arises a question as to the reality of our conversion, and Satan gains an advantage and greatly troubles us. Many dear christians take refuge in the blood and ask the Lord to wash them again in His precious blood, as if they had never been converted. I have often heard earnest ministers thus pray for themselves and their church members.

Now God's remedy for His people, when they have contracted defilement in the wilderness, is not the blood of the sin-offering, as in the case of the sinner, but the ashes of an heifer to which running water had been put in a vessel, sprinkled on the unclean. That is to say, not a fresh offering of the blood, but a remembrance of that blood which was shed once for all, and the application of the truths implied in that death to the heart and the conscience.

In the death of the blessed Redeemer on the cross all that was high and excellent in the natural man, the first Adam (the lofty cedar), as well as all that was

lowly and contemptible (the hyssop) was condemned and reduced to ashes. The glory of man and all his boasting were burnt up like the scarlet wool. Sin in the flesh was condemned, but also my piety, my righteousness and my good-will to serve God in my own strength. Nothing is left of all that I could be proud of, nothing is left of the old creation in the first Adam, and nothing now left for me but the grace of God in Christ Jesus, in a New Creation where all is new and all of God. Our old proud self rebels against this, and we are inclined to say as Peter said: "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I" (Mark xiv. 29). If we do not bow to the truth that it is God alone who can "keep us from falling and present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24), we may have to learn it by sad experience.

Let us cast a glance at the third and seventh days mentioned in Numbers xix. It is to be feared that we often think too lightly of what is needed in the restoration of a soul that has failed in faithfulness, and touched the unclean thing. Through the cross of Christ the world is crucified to me and I to the world. It is in a state of death and corruption. "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 Jno. ii. 16).

If I have defiled myself with these things, the first day is the day on which I feel that the eye of the Lord is upon me as to this matter, and my heart and my conscience smite me, as was the case with Peter when the Lord looked upon him in the high priest's palace. There is no application of the living water and the ashes on this day, but the bitterness of repentance is left to work in the heart. There is a great danger of these first days being overlooked, and a hasty confession is often supposed to put everything right. But the Lord does not act so. He wishes us to feel something of that godly sorrow that "worketh repentance to salva-

tion not to be repented of" (2 Cor. vii. 10) and that produces the fruits found in the following verse, which only those who have felt deeply can produce.

It was on the third day that the ever gracious Lord sent a message and also appeared to Simon; the consequence was that Simon was able to take his place among the disciples in the evening as one forgiven, and occupying his usual position. It must have been, on that third day, a time of deep exercise for him, and of honest confession of his fault and sin, however loving and gracious the Lord was in administering His forgiveness. Thus on the third day the water and the ashes were applied to his heart and conscience and he was forgiven.

Yet the solemn and searching antitype of the seventh day was to come by the sea of Tiberias, when the wound was again attended to, and when the *source* of the failure was brought to light, that is, the overweening self-confidence of the Lord's devoted and energetic servant. This time he had to learn that all his own strength was but weakness, and should be considered as reduced to ashes, even as it had been before God on the cross. When he was young he girded himself, another should gird him in the future. Thus, on the ground of forgiveness on the third day; and now on the ground that his self-confidence (the cause of his failure) had been judged, communion with the blessed Master is fully restored and the care of the flock is committed to the restored one.

It is very remarkable too that in verse 7 and in verse 20 of the same chapter (Jno. xxi.) in which Peter is weaned from the thought of *his* love to Christ, another disciple is mentioned whose only thought is of Christ's love to him, and who was thus enabled to pass in and out of the high priest's palace unscathed. Both were in the same circumstances of danger, but the one who only thought of Christ's love to him was preserved, while the one who thought his love for Christ was so



strong, succumbed to the temptation of the subtle foe. What a mercy that the Lord had said : "Sift you as *wheat*," or Peter might have thought he was only chaff. What a comfort that Amos ix. 9, assures us that in the sifting : "Yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth."

## " Drifting, Drifting !

Hebrews ii. 1, 2.

" **F**OR this reason we should give heed more abundantly to the things we have heard lest in any way we should *slip away*" (New Trans.) or as it is stated in another translation "We must therefore pay closer attention to what we have heard, in case we *drift away*."

A visitor to Niagara in the depth of winter who was passing along the side of the current towards the Falls, observed in the middle of the river a wooden crate, containing the body of a sheep which had *slipped away* into the river in the process of unloading from the railway truck, and, of course, was drowned. A huge eagle bore down upon this object and, in order to steady itself in the turbulent waters, sunk its talons into the fleece and flesh of its prey. After gorging itself it lifted up its head screaming with delight and defiance ! This it repeated several times, when, suddenly, it discovered its danger, it was *drifting* close to the Falls ! Spreading its beautiful wings, that had never before failed it in an extremity, it found it could not rise : for the severe frost had bound its feet to its prey inextricably, and thus was swept over those mighty Falls to its destruction.

The godless world, in its ignorance, is likewise slowly and surely drifting. Those of them who are called to pass away go, clinging to this world. Their treasure is on earth and when they leave it they leap off into an unknown future ; while the believer, on the other hand, in his course, advances with his face forward ; for his

heart and his treasure are already in the place where he is going.

But believers often drift when they lend an ear to those who teach false doctrine, and are in that way seduced into a condition to imbibe the evils prevalent in the present day. Instead of *turning away* from such teachers and judging both them and their false teaching, they become fascinated with what they hear and drift further! O, let us not be deceived in this day of high knowledge and low walk. We are living in perilous, difficult times, when false doctrine is so much more prominent than formerly—more widespread and more subtle than ever before. Modernism is the most dangerous infidelity which has invaded Christendom and it is not confined to any single country. It is world-wide.

The believer needs more than ever to be on his guard, keeping the eye by faith fixed upon that blessed and glorious One at the right hand of God; for once we get out of communion with God and with His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, the Spirit is grieved and we begin to *drift* and unless, and until, we judge ourselves and our state, we continue to *drift* farther and farther and our conscience becomes deadened to everything that is divine. The secret of a true christian life and service is communion with the Lord. One of the causes of declension of soul is the neglect of private prayer, of the study of the scriptures, and not esteeming the company of God's people. Decline in spiritual life begins with the neglect of secret prayer. The prevailing deplorable spiritual condition with its lack of power and reality in divine things, and the increasing worldliness of those who profess to know the Lord are but the fruits of a prayerless life.

No true child of God who daily seeks His face can *drift* into such a condition. As a dear brother once said, "The very atmosphere seems to be charged with antagonism to the Lord Jesus Christ and to revealed truth!" Indifference and coldness of heart

among God's people becomes more apparent; it is the spirit of Laodicea. Real communion with the Lord will keep us in these days of declension. It will keep us always fresh in His love.

It might be, dear reader, you too have lost the reality in secret prayer you once possessed. But you know how to get back, do you not? It is not only necessary to judge our *actions* but the *state* of soul that produced them.

In closing, let us remember the words in Jude 20 and 21, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." This attitude will keep us from drifting away.

J.P. (Montreal).

## The Lord's Coming and Appearing.

EVERY intelligent reader of the Word of God knows that an important event separates the present period, troubled as it is, from the future tribulation which will come upon "the whole habitable world" (Rev. iii. 10), He knows also that a second important series of events, a last manifestation of the Lord's judgments before the millennium, will inaugurate the reign of Christ.

The first of these is the Coming (*parousia*) of the Lord, in grace, to take His own to Himself. When Christ comes *for* His saints, He will raise all the *believers* who have fallen asleep since the beginning of man's history, and He will change all those who are alive upon the earth at the same moment, so as to introduce them into the Father's house above. This meeting with the Lord will take place "in the clouds . . . in the air" (1 Thess. iv. 15-18). As was the case of old with the children of Israel, "not a hoof shall be left behind," so He will not leave the least vestige of His beloved ones in a world on which His judgments are about to descend.

What a joy it is to His own to see that the hope of Christ's coming is being revived in the hearts of believers! It is like a powerful wind before which the barriers by which Satan has contrived to separate the sheep, the members of Christ, must fall. It may be that many of these have not yet had their eyes opened to recognise the evils of these barriers and to humble themselves because of them, but the moment will come when they will see that the sects to which men give the name of churches, have been but the means of neutralising the collective testimony of christians.

What do we see as we look at the religious beliefs into which Christendom is divided to-day? The mixing up of the children of God with the world; a confused state of things in which a part is composed of profession without life, and a part is made up of those who possess life and the Holy Spirit. Is it not also the grouping of Christians around principles, true or false, which have usurped the place of the blessed *Person* of the Lord—and even indifference to that which denies or dishonours His name?

What joy to see the shackles in which the children of God are held in captivity drop off at the Lord's Coming! To see the doors open, as those of the prison at Philippi did of old, and the bands of all to disappear in a moment! In the midst of the increasing corruptions of the age, the Spirit of God, like a wind which blows where it lists and of which we hear the sound, is preparing the saints for this event which is soon to take place—*the Coming of the Lord*. The assembling shout, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God are soon to re-echo as the Lord descends into the air for His own.

In view of that moment, the Holy Spirit is active in uniting the children of God by means of a common hope. "It is that which is necessary to the glory of the Son of God," said a brother, "that He should find, when He comes, not merely dispersed and isolated Christians, but a *people who are waiting for Him*."

This is why also we see, just at the close of the Word of God, not only that "He who hears says, Come," but, in the first place, the collective witness, "*The Spirit and the bride say, Come.*"

Dear reader, to-day the signal is being given afresh—He is coming: it is Jesus Himself! Have Christians heard it? It is now about 90 years or so since the midnight cry, "Behold the bridegroom! go ye out to meet Him," was sent forth the first time, after ages of ignorance on the subject of the true christian hope. Listen to this last call! Put aside your own petty pre-occupations, take down your worm-eaten barriers! Remember that the last book of the Bible closes with the words, "Surely I come quickly"; does your heart respond, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus"? . . . .

O Lord, grant to Thy beloved ones to keep the "word of Thy patience" to the end. Dost Thou not wait patiently to have us with Thyself? Thy desires go out to Thy bride and to the moment when, having consummated the union of Thy Church with Thyself for ever, Thou shalt present her to Thyself, glorious, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. But, as all who are Thine have not hitherto kept and lived in the power of this hope, may their ears and their hearts be now opened to these words which Thou dost address to them, perhaps for the last time, "Surely, I come quickly"! Grant also to Thy redeemed ones the strength and courage to hold fast what they have—Thy Word and Thy Name, until Thou dost come, and to walk in holiness in view of Thine appearing, so that they may not lose their reward in the day when Thou shalt be revealed.

H. R.

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The coming of Christ from heaven is the pole-star for the Christian. If a Christian is not looking for this coming, you may be sure that his testimony is not according to the mind of God.

G. V. W.

## Moses' Intercession.

Exodus xxxii. Numbers xiv.

**G**OD Himself has said of Moses, "My servant Moses is faithful in all Mine house." And certainly we cannot read the history without seeing that his patience and faithfulness was often severely put to the test. At the very moment when God was giving him the law and the instructions as to the tabernacle, on the mount, the people, who were bent on evil, had set up an idolatrous golden calf as an object of worship, saying, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." How soon they forgot God and changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass!

But, need we wonder, when we look around and see that Christendom has done, in principle, much the same, viz, set up an idolatrous worship in place of the worship of the true God? Has not Rome got her wafer-god, and do not many who are still professedly outside her communion worship the same idol? But we need not go so far to find the same tendency, for the natural desire of fallen man is to crave for something for sight and sense; something we can see with our eyes and which appeals to our senses. This is what we are all disposed to turn to.

But the very sin of the people, terrible as it was, only gave occasion for the bringing out of God's true character—His inflexible holiness, and yet His grace—all the more clearly. It also gave occasion for Moses' faith to shine out all the more brightly.

On the one hand Moses is jealous for the glory of God, and when he came down from the mount and saw their sin, he called upon all who are on the Lord's side to gird on every man his sword and execute His vengeance on the rebels. On the other hand, when above with God on the mount, with what touching entreaty and argument he pleads with God for the people!

"Oh, this people have sinned a great sin and have

made them gods of gold," said Moses. He does not try to minimise or excuse their sin, but confesses it fully. "Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin. . . . and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written." Could unselfish love to the people as the people of God, unbelieving as they were, go farther?

Observe how God says to Moses, "*Thy* people, which *Thou* broughtest up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves"; but Moses prays and says, "Why doth Thy wrath wax hot against *Thy* people, which *Thou* hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt? . . . Turn from Thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against *Thy* people." It was as much as to say, "However great their sin may be, they are *Thy* people." And verse 14 adds, "And the Lord repented of the evil which He thought to do unto *His* people."

Surely we have in Moses' attitude here an example for every servant of God to-day! It is easy to find fault and become discouraged by the constant lack of faithfulness to Christ as well as the failures and wrongdoings of God's people; but do we remember what they are *to Him*, what the Church is to Christ? And do we intercede for them in something of the same spirit as Moses did of old? Not, indeed, in a patronising kind of way as though we were better than others, but in the spirit of Daniel and other godly men, who identified themselves with the people and said, "*We* have sinned," "*we* have transgressed"? To do this we must be in communion with God about His interests and His people.

And further, let us note the offer which God made to Moses here. "Let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them; and I will make of thee a great nation," this was His word to Moses.

Observe that that offer was made on another occasion also, after the rebellion of the people when the

spies returned from searching the land. Never was such an offer made under similar circumstances, but it only gave occasion for bringing out still further that unselfish love to God's people and that single eye for His glory which marked the one whom He called "Moses My servant."

So we read in Numbers xiv. 12, God's word to Moses, "I will smite them with pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they." In reply to this Moses pleads every motive connected with the very glory of God as a reason why He should spare the people. What would the Egyptians and the nations say? Again, God was a God of patience and longsuffering who forgave iniquity, albeit a God who would by no means clear the guilty.

And God answers that He has pardoned, but adds that all the earth should be filled with His glory, and none of those unbelieving men, who had tempted Him now these ten times, should see the land of promise. If God's pardoning mercies are great—and truly they are—His governmental dealings with His people are also a very solemn reality.

But let us not forget or overlook the lessons we have had before us from the example of Moses, whose unselfish love for the people and devotedness to God's glory was so marked a feature of His character. How many sad and disastrous breaches amongst the Lord's people might have been saved had we acted in the same spirit as He did. As members of Christ's body, united to the glorified Head and to one another, there is all the more reason why we should bear with and plead for each other in the same spirit of grace in which God Himself has acted towards us.

F.G.B.

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The magnet always turns towards the pole ; the needle always trembles a little when the storm and tempest roar, but its direction changes not. The needle of the christian heart always points to Christ.



## How to Behave Thyself in the Assembly of God.

**T**HEY are not human motives that form and fashion and produce the morality of a Christian, any more than it is human power that accomplishes his salvation. It is "the grace of God" that "teaches" him as well as "saves" him.

This is very remarkably shown in a passage in Timothy: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Tim. iii. 16), the force of which is very frequently overlooked. The apostle would teach Timothy how he ought to behave himself "in the house of God"; and he then presents the formative power of all true godliness in the words, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:

God was manifest in the flesh,  
God was justified in the Spirit,  
God was seen of angels,  
God was preached unto the Gentiles,  
God was believed on in the world,  
God was received up into glory."

This is often quoted and interpreted as if it spoke of the mystery of the Godhead, or the mystery of Christ's person. But it is the mystery of godliness, or the secret by which all real godliness is produced—the divine spring of all that can be called piety in man. "God manifest in the flesh," is the example and the power of godliness, its measure and its spring. Godliness is not now produced, as under the law, by divine enactments; nor is it the result of the spirit of bondage in those (however godly) who only know God as worshipped behind a veil. Godliness now springs from the knowledge of the incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. It takes its spring and character from the knowledge of His person

as "God manifest in the flesh"; the perfectness of His obedience, as "justified in the Spirit"; the object of angelic contemplation, and the subject of testimony and faith in the world; and His present position as "received up into glory."

This is how God is known; and from abiding in this flows godliness.

J.N.D.

## The Hope of His Calling.

Ephesians 1. 18-23.

**T**HE Apostle Paul prayed, "That ye may know what is the hope of His calling": What is that calling? It is to be before God unblameable in love, beloved children of God. We are about to possess the blessing of such a presence fully, to participate in all the privileges of the family of God. How far do we participate in and possess them by faith now? How do we conduct ourselves whilst waiting for their full realisation?

"And what the *riches* of the *glory* of His *inheritance* in the saints." We find here three words which have often awakened earnest desires in our hearts. What will not men do in order to possess riches which perish, to obtain the glory which comes from men, to possess themselves of inheritances in a passing world where everything is defiled by sin? Let us be wiser than the children of this age—we who have in prospect the riches of the glory of *God's* inheritance.

The glory of God will soon fill the whole universe; He will subject all things to Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth, and we shall inherit all with Him. Thus God will inherit all things in His people, although His people possess them, being associated with the Son of His love and in the same glory as He. Then "The Father of Glory" will be fully satisfied.

But to-day this inheritance is still in bad hands; the

enemy has usurped it, that is why it is necessary that there should be a power which can give us possession of it, called here "the exceeding greatness of His power towards us." It is this power which has taken Christ from amongst the dead, where our sins had put Him, "and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality . . . and hath put all things under His feet."

If, on the one hand, we have to know the greatness of our privileges, how much more, on the other hand, have we also to know this power which is active on our behalf. Is there a single power which can be a hindrance to our blessing; which can oppose itself to the counsels of God in our favour, since God's power has triumphed in death over all hindrances and has associated us henceforth with Christ Himself as members of His body?

The God of our Lord Jesus Christ has wonderful counsels for His own glory and our greatest blessing. Let us, then, ask Him to enable us to know them better, so that we may be able to enjoy them even here below, whilst waiting for the moment when we shall be like Him and when we shall enter into the full possession of these things.

A.G.

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The "unity of the Spirit" (Eph. iv. 3) is the realisation, in walk down here, by the power of the Spirit and in spiritual life, of the unity we have in Christ. . . .

"Is Christ divided?" asks the indignant apostle. Is He not the Head of that one body, the church, to which they all belonged? It is a whole Christ to whom all His own belong. To think of dividing Him would be as irrelevant as absurd. They might divide, not He: what an inconsistency if they valued Him! B.T.

## “I Am . . . .”

L.M. Tune: “Holley.”

“I am the Way”—Let sinners hear!  
The way to that blest land above,  
From paths of sin and guilty fear  
To realms of life and light and love.

“I am the Truth.” ’Tis Jesus speaks!  
“The Truth”; as God Himself is true:  
True freedom for the soul that seeks  
The paths of wisdom to pursue.

“I am the Life”—What words of cheer!  
From the eternal Source of love;  
They banish dread, they dry each tear,  
And bring us solace from above.

“I am the Door”—My sheep I call;  
By entering in they shelter find—  
Held by My hand, they ne’er shall fall  
Though all the powers of hell combine.

Blest Rock of Ages!—Thou shalt stand,  
If heaven and earth should pass away:  
Safe in the hollow of Thy hand—  
Thy mighty arm our strength our stay.

*(From the Dutch.)*

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Remember this, that the place you are in is that of an epistle of Christ. We are set for this, that the life of Christ should be manifested in us. Christ has settled every question with God: He appears in the presence of God for us, and we are in the presence of the world for Him. “In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.” If I know that He is in me, I am to manifest the life of Christ in everything. If He has loved me with unutterable love which passes knowledge, I feel bound in heart to Him; my *business* is to glorify Him in everything I do,

J.N.D.

## Evangelization.

**A**MONGST the many privileges that the Christian has, one of the chief is that of seeking the blessing of perishing souls around. Our service to Christ in this way is indeed feeble and limited, but let us not flag or lose heart in that great interest which is so very dear to our Saviour-God—the salvation of souls.

The Christian who is going on with God *must* be interested in the gospel of the grace of God in some way. It cannot be otherwise, for God is a God of love, a love which goes out to all and which will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. If we are in communion with Him, the heart must go out, as His heart does, towards the poor sinner.

Of course it is true that everyone is not called or gifted to speak from a platform, but all can find *something* to do and all can pray for blessing on the work of the gospel. And God is able to open a door of service for us if we earnestly ask Him to do so.

In these days when the progress of Modernism and sceptical ideas has so undermined people's belief in the Bible and the truths of Christianity, there is, as a consequence, much indifference, but this only calls for more earnest prayer and persevering effort to reach the unsaved. In distributing gospel magazines and speaking to many people in villages and towns, one has been struck by the fact that, though the mass are indifferent or careless, yet *some* have desires after that peace and rest of soul which Christ alone can give. And one generally meets some, even in dark localities, to whom Christ is precious.

Let us not allow our hands to hang down or our knees to become feeble. The need is great, the opportunities are many if we are in earnest in seeking for them, time is short and the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. A real, deep interest in the blessing of others has also a good effect on the believer, in

delivering us from our own petty preoccupations and grievances, and drawing out the heart to take an interest in the great and wide interests of Christ in this perishing world. Let us pray that labourers may be raised up to work in the gospel field, and let us be ready to say with the Apostle Paul "Notwithstanding, every way . . . Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice."

### Christ Himself.

**I**T is happy and establishing to the soul to bear in lively faith and recollection that it is the very same Jesus who was here on earth that is now in heaven, and whom we are to know "through His own eternity." When we keep this in memory, every passage of His life here will be introduced afresh to us, and we shall feel and own that we have in the evangelists a more wonderful page to meditate, yea, and in some sense a much happier one too, than we once counted upon.

In the days of His sojourn among us everything was a reality to Him; all was living and personal. He did more than touch the surface. When He healed a wound, or removed a sorrow, He in a way felt it. "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses". . . .

He knew the unuttered language of that needy soul that touched Him in the crowd, and felt that touch in all its meaning. He was filled with delight at the faith of that Gentile who pierced the *thick* cloud of His humiliation, and reached the divine glory which shone in His person beneath it; and He alike feasted on the bold—but not too bold—faith of that sinner of the city who pierced the *dark* cloud of her own sin and shame, and reached the divine grace which could heal it all (Luke vii.). He understood the hasty step of Zacchæus as he climbed the sycamore tree, and the

thoughtfulness of Nathanael as he sat under the fig-tree. He heard the strife of the disciples by the way as they went up to Jerusalem; heard it in the tumult of the lusts within, ere it broke out in wars and fightings. And He knew the love as well as the self-confidence which drew Peter from the ship to the water.

Surely, then, it is for us, as we read the wondrous story in the recollection of this, to feel after *Himself*, as we mark the hand that did the deed, or track the foot that was treading the path. Every act and word would be felt with something of a new impression; and if so, what more blessed advance could we be making? Would it not be edifying in a high sense indeed, if we could be thus acquainting ourselves more really with a living, personal Jesus? At this time of ours, beloved, there may be a tendency to forget His *person* or *Himself*, in the common testimony that is now borne so extensively to His *work*.

The region of doctrine may be surveyed as with a measuring line and a level, instead of being eyed with an admiring, worshipping heart, as the place of the glories of the Son of God. And yet it is this He prizes in us. He has made us *personally* His objects; and He looks for it that we make Him ours. . . .

The Spirit delights to tell of the *work* of Christ, and to bear it in its preciousness and sufficiency to the heart and conscience. Nothing could stand us for a moment, had not the work been just what it was, and so counselled and ordered of God. But still the work of the Lord Jesus Christ may be the great *subject*, where He Himself is but a faint *object*; and the soul will thus be a great loser.

J.G.B.

## A Man of God.

**T**O be a man of God according to the Scripture meaning of that phrase, one must be a constant, earnest and prayerful student of the Word of God. By reference to 2 Timothy iii. it will be seen that the Apostle Paul exhorts his son Timothy to *continue* in the things he had learned being mindful of those who had instructed him (vv. 14, 15). As another has said, "The Scriptures are divinely inspired. They teach, they judge the heart, they correct, they discipline according to righteousness, in order that the man of God may be perfect—or complete." The word "perfect" in chap. iii. 17 means *adjusted* or *fitted*.

We find that Paul addresses Timothy as a man of God (1 Tim vi. 11), "But thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." This is the true character of a man of God. Endurance is one of the traits of a man of God, one who can face and go through difficulties without flinching.

In these trying and difficult days men of this stamp are greatly needed to meet, by the Word, the assault of the enemy upon the truth of God. When one who ministers the Word of God is *fitted* or *adjusted*, he will endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy ii. 3). He will be prepared to meet, with the Word those antichristian movements now so prevalent, such as "Millennial Dawnism" (camouflaged now under the name of "International Bible Students' Association"), "Seventh Day Adventism," "Christian Science," Universalism, Modern Theology, and a host of other evils.

The man of God never temporises where, or when, truth is in question. To temporise when a matter of right or wrong or a vital issue is before us, is to be lost. The right must be *unhesitatingly* upheld. May we think of these things in the presence of God. May



He fill us anew and clothe us with power so that we can stand and withstand in the evil day.

It is related of Sir Robert Peel, one time Prime Minister of England, that he was invited by a number of his admiring political friends to a banquet. This was held in the mansion of a peer of the realm, who was the chairman on the occasion. When the banquet was over and the ladies had withdrawn, story-telling commenced, which is often usual on such occasions. One man told a story of a somewhat indelicate nature. After a pause Sir Robert arose and looking towards the chairman said, "Would your Lordship kindly order my carriage?" "Why," replied the chairman, "we all thought you were going to spend the whole evening with us, Sir Robert?" "So *I* thought," replied, Sir Robert, "but, my Lord, *I am a Christian.*" There was no countenancing what was evil in this case and the scathing rebuke must have brought the flush of shame to many present, and especially to the man who was the cause of the rebuke.

The present is a deeply solemn moment. The wheels of divine government are moving onward with a rapidity truly soul-subduing. The apostasy is more and more outspoken and more widespread. The writer would put this question "*How far are we affected by it?*" Can we not all realise the fact that there is an indifference and lukewarmness about us, produced by the enemy of Christ. Do we not see some, who, in former years, walked in separation from the world and who loved the study of the Word, now indifferent and cold? The Lord help us to realise our privileges and responsibilities.

J.P. (Montreal),

## The Lord's Coming and Appearing—2.

**I**N a previous article we touched on the *Coming* of the Lord—that is, the first part, or act, in the series of events which are soon to take place. Many of those who write on the subject confound the Lord's Coming *for* His saints and His Appearing *with* them in glory. Others place various prophetic events as necessary to be fulfilled before the Lord's Coming.

To-day the Lord is manifestly active in gathering His own; may we be amongst those who are daily waiting for Him and may the hope of His Coming deliver us from every association which is out of keeping with it. May we also be amongst those who *love* His Appearing, and live, not only in the attitude of waiting for that "blessed hope," but also in view of the "Appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Between the Lord's Coming and His Appearing there intervene nearly all the events of which the prophetic Scriptures speak, viz.: Satan being cast down from heaven to the earth—the Church having been already taken up to heaven—(Rev. xii., &c.), the revival of the Roman Empire with its ten kings and its imperial head at Rome (Rev. xiii.), the return of Jewish people to Palestine in unbelief only soon after to fall under the yoke of the Antichrist, the false prophet, the man of sin who will then be revealed, the great tribulation extending over the whole habitable world, the special tribulation which shall come upon the Remnant of Israel, the rule and afterwards the fall of Babylon the Great, etc.

But for us, Christians, the Coming of the Lord has a supreme interest and *does not in any way belong to prophetic events, although it is the crowning of the era of grace.* It surpasses all other events in importance; for it is then that we shall see Him, our beloved Saviour, as the bright and morning star, in the

splendour of His heavenly beauty, and we shall be like Him. Those who sleep in the night and are drunken in the night will not see this star. Enoch, after he was taken up, was doubtless searched for, but he was no more *found* than Elijah who was taken up to heaven by a whirlwind, or the Church caught up to meet the Lord in the clouds. When the Sun of Righteousness arises in the day of His Appearing, what joy for the saints to contemplate Him in His magnificence and to be associated with Him as His companions in the glory, as His beloved bride on His royal throne!

We have already seen that the second act of His Coming is the *Appearing* or *Revelation* of the Lord *with* His saints. At the first act, or His Coming, He will have translated the saints from the earth to meet Him in the air, so as to introduce them into the Father's house. It is as Son of God that He will come to take them to Himself. At His Appearing, called also the coming of the Son of man (Matt. xxiv. 44), He will bring back all the heavenly saints with Him and establish His kingdom by the execution of judgment.

His *Appearing* is one of the subjects constantly spoken of by the Old Testament prophets: His *Coming* is a "mystery" which is only revealed in the New Testament (1 Cor. xv. 51-55). But this mystery is so intimately bound up with the Lord's Appearing that this last event is presented in 2 Thess. ii. 8 as "the Appearing of His Coming," that is to say, as being the second act of it. Nevertheless an interval, filled with an innumerable succession of events, separates the two acts from each other and embraces all the judgments of which prophecy speaks which precede the establishment of the millennial kingdom.

It is very important to remark that the term *the day of the Lord* (Isa. xiii. 6, 9; Ezek. xxx. 3; Jer. xlvi. 10; Joel i. 15; ii. 1, 11, 31; Mal. iii. 2; 1 Thess. v. 2; 2 Thess. ii. 2, etc.)—a day of judgment—has always to do with His Revelation or His Appearing (Zeph. i. 14;

ii. 3) and never with His Coming. The *Coming* of the Lord, which is the crowning of the day of grace, will introduce us into the heavenly glory : His Appearing is the bringing in of His millennial reign of righteousness and peace, and will introduce the people of Israel and the nations into earthly glory. This reign, in which the heavenly saints will be associated, can only be established by the execution of retributive justice entrusted to the Son of man.

All the redeemed will have part in His *Coming*, apart from the question of their conduct, for *grace* alone will then be in question ; nevertheless the hope of the Coming of the Lord is ever the spring of a walk of true holiness and love amongst faithful Christians (1 Thess. ii. 19 ; iii. 12, 13 ; v. 23). After they have been introduced into the glory, the saints who have been raised, or changed, will appear together, in the *day of Christ*, before His judgment seat, there to be manifested personally, although the Lord, at His Coming, will have made them like Himself in glory. But they will be there in order to receive their crowns in reward for their faithfulness, or, it may be, to lose them, if their life here below has not answered to the practical righteousness and holiness which the Lord looks for from His own.

We cannot insist too strongly on the fact that the Lord's Appearing, although it is entirely different from His Coming, is related to it in an intimate manner and cannot be dissociated from it. It is to be feared that the present awakening, although so worthy of being welcomed with much joy by those who have long had the hope of the Lord's Coming, may be weakened, if these two sides of the truth are not firmly maintained and distinguished.

Already many writings on the subject give ground for much apprehension. We cannot be clear either on the import or on the object of prophetic events which, in a future day, will agitate the world, unless we see that these events do not form part of *our* hope. The

*Christian* hope is the Coming of the Lord in grace, joined with His Appearing in glory, although they may be separated the one from the other by the pre-millennial judgments (1 Thess. i. 3, 10; Col. i. 27, iii. 4; 1 John iii. 2, 3).

The conclusion at which we have arrived from what has just been before us is, that the question of the *responsibility* of the saints is not raised at the Coming of the Lord, and that it will not be *settled* until after their introduction into glory, at the judgment seat of Christ. Then, at the Appearing or Revelation of the Lord with His saints, will the fruits of holiness in their walk, of their faithfulness in service, of their energy in the struggle, of their perseverance in pursuit of the end, of their sufferings for the name of Christ, be fully *manifested*.

To sum up, then, what we have had before us : the Lord's *Coming* is the moment when He will gather in all the fruits of His *grace*; His *Appearing* is the moment when these fruits will be manifested in brilliancy and glory, when He will associate His own with Himself in the glory of His reign, and will publicly testify His full approval of those whom the world had despised and made to suffer because they bore the name of the crucified One.

H. R.

## The Choice of Faith.

**T**HE choice of faith surely supposes the longings of the soul; and He who "satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" will certainly answer the desires of the heart that wants His company.

There is a difference between service and communion, which is strikingly seen at Bethany when the Lord Jesus visited that village, and Martha welcomed Him to her house. (Read Luke x. 38-42.) Feeling the honour of entertaining such a guest, she was busy preparing the

meal, but became engrossed and distracted in waiting at table, and soon began to complain. Her sister Mary made a happy choice when she seated herself at the feet of Jesus, and listened to His word. She thus knew the secret of that delight which everyone has found, who, in anticipation of millennial joy, has learned to sit under the shadow of the superior tree of the wood, and enjoy the fruit thereof. "I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste" (Solomon's Song ii. 3). O what losers we are, and how we hinder the joy of the heart of our gracious Lord, if we fail to do this! How can we look forward with longing desire to that happy time when He will bring us "to the banqueting house"—the house of wine? What can be sweeter to the soul than the gracious words of Him who spake as never man spake? But in this excitable age of "rush," when money has become such an object of desire and attraction, it is to be feared that the excellent practice inculcated in Deuteronomy vi. 7, has lost (if it ever had) in many a household, the paramount place which it ought to have everywhere. "Thou shalt teach them [the words of the Lord] diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Besides often quoting Scripture, it is evident that for *us*, both morning and evening reading are encouraged by this word of inspiration. But rushing to catch the train, or the street car, or the "bus," makes it impracticable in the early morn quietly to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to His word. How often He thus loses the company of His dear people, which He so desires! And their souls also lose the nourishment which His words supply. Even if the service be for Christ, the neglect of private or family worship will grieve the Holy Spirit of God, who delights to take of the things of Christ, and to announce them to us. If the happy choice of faith to sit at the feet of Jesus be

superseded by service, would a whole day's *work* out of touch be worth to the soul one half-hour's *communion*? Such fellowship is mutual: for let us remember that, in these closing days of the church's history on earth as a witness for Christ, He is not appealing, in Rev. iii. 20, to the masses in the different denominations as such, nor to meetings outside organised religion, but to individual hearts, to let Him in for mutual joy. There is a story told of a young lady who wished to present to her father a pair of slippers of her own making. While occupied with such good service she had no time quietly to sit down with him, and chat together. Thus service superseded communion, though her desire was to do all the work for her beloved parent. O beloved saints of God, let us not allow service, however good in itself, to engross our hearts and hands and to keep us from the regular reading of the Word, and from the throne of grace. In a certain household where family worship was neglected, the only child was taken away. The conscience-stricken father visited a minister of the gospel; and bursting into tears, made the following confession: "You remember my girl, sir? She was my only child. She died this morning suddenly. I hope she has gone to God. But if so, she can tell Him, what now breaks my heart, that she never heard a prayer from her father's lips. O that she were with me but for one day again!" Can you picture a happier family scene than where parents gather the household morning and night to read and speak together over the Word of God, sing a hymn of praise, and pour out their hearts in prayer? Those who do so have found the one thing needful, and chosen that good part, which they shall not be deprived of. Such a choice will also show expression by attending public reading and prayer meetings, which are sadly neglected in these Laodicean days of indifference.

In John xi. we find Mary again at the feet of Jesus when death had snapped the human link of fellowship

with her brother. As soon as she heard from her sister Martha the welcome words, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee," "she arose quickly, and came unto Him." And He, "the Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," was there ready to comfort the bereaved heart: for "in all their affliction He was afflicted." "When Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying unto Him, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled." Yea more: "Jesus wept." Blessed Sympathiser! He knew and felt, and still knows and feels, what sin and death have brought into the world. Thank God, we know that now (for faith), Christ has, through His own vicarious death, annulled the power of death, and has also annulled him who had the power of death, and had, by means of it, for many a long year, kept men in bondage and fear (Heb. ii. 14, 15), yet the solemn fact remains, that, when a dear one dies, communion for the present is interrupted. Thus a physical and lonely separation is realised: for the bereaved can neither see nor speak to the deceased; but where there is true submission to the will of God, the broken-hearted are drawn to the feet of Jesus, and there pour out their sorrows. In His own way He ministers comforting words of life, and enables us to look up and to look forward; so that present sorrow is outweighed by faith's anticipation of meeting the dear ones again. At His coming the grave will no longer have the victory over their bodies; and they will be able triumphantly to say, "O grave, where is thy victory?" Blessed prospect!

J.R. (*Canada*).

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Apostolic witness to Christ's spotless humanity:—  
 He "knew no sin" (Paul); He "did no sin" (Peter);  
 "In Him is no sin" (John).



## The Bride Brought to Isaac.

Genesis xxiv.

**I**N verse 36 of this chapter we find that Abraham had given all that he had to Isaac. One thing however, was wanting—a bride, but a father's love made him not unmindful of this.

In the gospel of John we read, "The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hand." But the church is the crown, so to speak, of the divine purposes. It was hid in God, as Ephesians tells us, and it was given to the apostle Paul to complete the Word of God by the revelation of this mystery. "The church is the last in the revelation of God, but deepest in the counsels of God," one has said.

There is an analogy in the creation. One thing after another was created, man last. He was placed in the garden and given the lordship of everything. The animals were brought to him and he named them. He was set over all in his dominion, but there was yet another thing to be revealed and that the best. It was the woman that was given to him that completed his happiness and opened his lips in words of exultation which the Holy Spirit has used in respect of the Lord to the church—words which tell us of our perfect and indissoluble union with Himself (Eph. v. 23-32).

In Genesis xxiv. the trusted servant sent by Abraham to seek, in a distant country, a bride for his son, is a beautiful type of the Holy Ghost gathering out a bride for Christ in this far-off country, and of her home-bringing through the desert to the Father's house. No name is given to the servant and it is noticeable he says nothing of himself but speaks only out of a full heart, of Abraham and Abraham's son. His whole soul is engaged in fulfilling the desire of his master for his son. How sweetly this self-suppression and absorbing devotedness to the father and the son sets forth the present mission of the Holy Spirit.

Every believer in the Lord Jesus is part of the bride, the church. It is not only a question of being saved—saved from the consequences of one's guilt, delivered from the wrath to come—nor is it only being taken to heaven, but we are brought into relationship. Joseph\* and Solomon are types of the Lord in government and glory, but Isaac is a type of Him in His affections. We have here one for the heart.

In verse 53 the servant brings forth jewels and raiment and gives them to Rebekah. He seals her with precious things from the father's house. The Holy Spirit seals with His presence every believer in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ and consequent glorification.

Rebekah's relations try to hinder her going directly, but such was the devotedness of the servant, such his earnestness of purpose that he could brook no delay. "Hinder me not. . . . send me away that I may go to my master" is his eager appeal. How this reminds us of that other type of the Holy Spirit in the 15th Luke—of the diligent sweeping for and rejoicing over when found, the lost piece of silver, the redemption coin.

They call Rebekah who says at once "I will go." She was willing to place herself simply, absolutely under the guidance of this servant who had shown his disinterested eagerness to fulfil his master's will. Are we thus willing to place ourselves under the guidance of the Holy Spirit without the administration, the world-wisdom of man—the "eyes" of Hobab well used to the wilderness?

They send her away and the servant takes her and goes *his* way. Mark, not *her* way. In the antitype what confusion the taking *her* way has led to.

The servant had made ample provision for the journey as befitting one who had such a trust as we find in verses 2 and 10. It is remarkable how much one camel can carry; he had provided ten. The Good Samaritan

\* Joseph is also a type of love to his brethren.

of the 10th Luke who had rescued the robbed and wounded man on the road to destruction knew, oh, how well! to whom to say, "Take care of him," in my absence, until I come again.

Then, on the journey home, I do not doubt but that the servant tells her of the scene in the 22nd chapter—of Isaac's self-renunciation, of his willingness to become a burnt-offering to Jehovah, of the precious fellowship between the father and the son. What a blessed time for Rebekah to be told about Isaac, Isaac now her object! And how the Holy Spirit delights to occupy us with Christ, to set forth His wondrous work on Calvary's Cross, His devotedness, His love, His meekness, His sufferings and glories, His preciousness to the Father and to us.

But now the evening comes (ver. 63), the closing scene and a special interest attaches to it. Expectancy is raised to its highest pitch. Isaac goes out to meditate in the field at *eventide*. We too are nearing the end of the earthly history of the church. It is the close of the day in which the Holy Spirit is leading home the bride of Christ. How does the Lord regard it? And how does it affect us? What was the subject of Isaac's meditation? "He lifted up his eyes" supplies the answer. He was occupied with the coming bride. Is the blessed Anti-type less interested in His church? Oh, think of it, beloved, rejoice in it—Jesus our Lord is on the look-out for His bride.

Isaac lifted up his eyes. In that long, patient, earnest gaze, his heart goes out. The end of the long day's journey is in sight. The patient waiting is over and now he saw, and behold, the camels are coming. And what is her occupation at this moment?—the long expected, the eventful moment of her journey? "And Rebekah lifted up her eyes"—no more to look on the dreary waste of the wilderness—and she saw Isaac. That look meeting his, is not for words to describe. Beloved, how soon the blessed counterpart may be ours!

How rapturous the prospect ! To see Him with our own eyes, to see Him as He is and be with Him in blessed intimacy ! In the last touching love-scene of Revelation xxii., the Lord, having twice said "Behold I come quickly," uses His own personal name, "I, Jesus" and presents Himself as the Bright and Morning Star whose brilliance is only for the nearest object to His heart who is waiting for Him. The simple and immediate response is, "Come," to be followed by the eager stirring words "Surely, I come quickly," with its quick response, "Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus."

Rebekah lighted off the camel. She takes a lower place as she sees Isaac. How suitable. May we, too, in the imminent expectancy of seeing our well-beloved Lord be lowly in spirit in the ever-deepening sense of His preciousness and pre-eminence in all things.

A. J. H.

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### My Soul's Desire.

'Tis after Thee my soul, O Lord, aspires,  
I long and wait whilst Thou art still away,  
In desert lands, 'tis Thee my soul desires,  
More than the watchman for the break of day.

. . . . .

"For yet a little while thou must, My child,  
Abide :—as thou My footsteps dost retrace ;  
Walking with garments spotless, undefiled,  
Until, above, thou shalt behold My face."

. . . . .

Ah yes, blest Lord, Thy words most precious are :  
To follow Thee ; e'en though to bear my cross,  
To have Thee as my helm, my sail, my chart ;  
For this, indeed, I count all else but loss.

And 'tis to this *Thy* heart, too, doth aspire,  
For Thou, in glory, shalt at length appear ;  
Blest answer to love's constant, deep desire ;  
The Morning Star shall shine, so bright, so clear.

A.L. (*translated*).

## “Let us go on.”

**H**OW necessary was this exhortation, addressed to the Hebrew believers, “Let us go on unto full growth” (Heb. vi. 1). The writer of that epistle has to say to them, “Ye are *become* dull of hearing. . . . Ye are *become* such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.” Milk was what suited babes, strong meat suited full-grown men.

How sad when we hear a Christian say, “I am quite satisfied with knowing I am saved, I do not desire to go into deeper things”! These Hebrew believers had, it would seem, once been brighter and more advanced, but they had gone back instead of forward in their knowledge of divine things. Attached as they had been to an earthly religion, with its meats and drinks and carnal ordinances, there was a special danger of losing sight of a *heavenly* Christ and looking back to what God had brought them out of at their conversion.

For quite another reason the Apostle Paul has to say much the same to the Corinthians, “I have fed you with milk and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, nor yet are ye able.” With all they were boasting of—gifts, speaking with tongues, and displays in their assemblies—they were in complete disorder and there were strifes and division amongst them: in fact they were *carnal* and not *spiritual*. How then could he lead them on into deeper truths?

What, then, is the true remedy for this state of babyhood in which so many Christians seem satisfied to remain? It is just this—a heart which finds its all in Christ and which is set upon following and pleasing Him. Such an one will advance in the true knowledge of God and of Christ. And as God, in His grace, has so richly blessed us in giving us His Word in our hands and His Spirit to teach us, is it not ingratitude on our part to fail to avail ourselves of this rich provision?

What should we think of a man who came in for a

valuable estate and who never took the trouble to explore the mansion, the gardens, the fields, etc., and become acquainted with its beauties and advantages? We should certainly think him unaccountably slothful and indolent. But men do not act so in the things which appeal to their worldly desires and tastes: Are we to be less in earnest than they are?

The present moment is our time and opportunity to learn more of Christ and of those blessed truths which are found in the inspired Word. Let us bear the exhortation to *go on*, not to look back or to stand still. God is faithful to bless His Word to the soul that diligently seeks Him: there is food there for the simple and unintelligent as well as for the most advanced and Spirit-taught Christian.

### Some Aspects of the Lord's Coming.

**A**S we are drawing near the close of another year and the things which shall be "after these" are looming up and round us; the heart and mind of the believer naturally turns with increasing desire to the coming of Him for whom we wait, and for whom the whole creation waits to release it from the "bondage of corruption." It is a great mercy that the Lord is again stirring up the hearts of His people; and that in an ever widening circle, although with greater or less intelligence, the personal return of the Lord Jesus is anticipated.

There are several aspects in which this great and glorious fact is presented to us in the Scriptures. Let us look at some of these:—

(1) *The end and issue of trials here.* In this connection it is presented by the Apostle James who exhorted his brethren to "count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations" and in the last chapter of his Epistle he bids them "Be patient; stablish your hearts for the

coming of the Lord draweth nigh"; and he comforts them by reminding them of the experience of Job, which teaches that "the end of the Lord is very pitiful." Great indeed must be the comfort to those passing through trial such as the believers from amongst the Jews experienced in the Apostle's day, in knowing that there is an end to it all, and that soon Christ, the rejected Messiah, would appear for their deliverance. Blessedly sustaining, too, must the hope be for those who are suffering persecution now, such as our brethren in Russia; and may the Lord give it its proper place in all our hearts. But one fears sometimes lest possibly this aspect of the Lord's return should be brought down to the selfish desire to be rid of all our troubles. Rather should we be exercised before God that the difficulties which He allows may be turned to account for His glory and our blessing.

(2) *Encouragement while faith is in exercise.* In Peter's first Epistle we find this dear servant of the Lord writing to those who had long known the God of Israel and been partakers of an earthly calling. They had, however, through precious, God-given faith, accepted the Messiah who was crucified by their nation, and consequently given up all that was known to sight and sense—the altar, the sacrifices and the priesthood. They had nothing to rest upon but that which *faith* took account of. So the Apostle encourages them by telling them of the heavenly and eternal inheritance which was theirs and of the "*grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation (unveiling) of Jesus Christ.*"

How beautifully does this fit in with Peter's address in Acts iii., where he spoke to them concerning Jesus Christ, "whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things." His disciples watched Him as He was taken up from them into heaven and the angels announced to them that "this same Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Peter therefore writes

encouraging them to hope to the end and it would be all right—He will come to you just as He did to us when we were toiling in rowing, and then all our difficulties were at an end.

The heavens—which now conceal Him  
In counsels deep and wise,—  
In glory shall reveal Him  
To our rejoicing eyes.

(3) *The being with our Great Deliverer.* Here a personal note is struck which will resound through all eternity. So wrote Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonian converts when, in chapter i., he reminded them that they were converted to *serve* and to *wait*. To serve “the living and true God” in contrast with “idols” which were neither “living” nor “true,” and to wait for the coming of Him whose Person and work had been announced to them, “even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come.”

How simple! How blessed! They were waiting for their great Deliverer—the One who had delivered them from wrath by submitting Himself to it in their stead. One is reminded of the simple utterance of the woman who fell into the Clyde and whose first words when she had recovered consciousness were, “I want to see the man that saved me.” And we are of the same company, dear fellow believers, we are looking and longing to see that blessed and glorious Man, Jesus, the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us.

(4) *The satisfaction of the heart's affection—HIS and ours.* But there is another and higher aspect in which we may view this “blessed hope,” viz., that of personal relationship; and in order to do this the Scripture warrants us to look at the matter from the point of view of Him, for whom we wait. In doing so we shall find that we shall lose sight of *our* love in the greatness of *His* love. The bride in Solomon's Song first states her relationship to her beloved thus, “My



beloved is mine and I am His" (ch. ii. 16). Then, as the greatness of His love grows upon her, she reverses the order and says, "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine" (ch. vi. 3), but a little further on she is so filled with the greatness of His love that she rests in it (ch. vii. 10), saying, "I am my beloved's" merely, but so beautifully adding, "and His desire is toward me."

And is this not the attitude of soul in which He would have us wait for Him? He has bought us with His own life's blood and wants to have us with Him. So we read in Matt. xiii. 44, He sold all that He had to possess Himself of the treasure; and better still, in Eph. v., the Spirit tells us that "Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it . . . that He might present it to Himself."

Thus it is His great eternal love which is before us, and in the account of the glorious consummation of His betrothal, when "the marriage of the Lamb is come" (Rev. xix. 7-8), "To her was *granted* that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white." She knew her Lord's taste and her desire (and necessity) was to be arrayed accordingly. Let us connect with this our Lord's most precious promise in Rev. iii. 10, and we shall understand something more of what is meant by "the word of *My* patience." Oh! to be waiting *with* Him for that moment upon which His heart is set! As He says, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am." And the effect of it is, "Every man that hath this hope in Him *purifieth* himself even as He is pure." We have already seen in reference to the bride, "to her was *granted*", etc.; again, "the Spirit and the bride say come," and the Spirit would produce in us *now* what shall be perfectly true of us *then*.

One can only, in this short paper, call attention to these, as amongst the aspects of the coming of our

Lord, and conclude with two verses from a poem which ever stirs the heart.

There, amidst the songs of Heaven,  
Sweeter to His ear  
Is the footfall through the desert,  
Ever drawing near.

He and I, in that bright glory,  
One deep joy shall share—  
Mine, to be for ever with Him;  
His, that I am there.

J. M. W.

### Effect of the Hope of the Lord's Coming.

**A**S we look back over the history of the past, as given us in the Word of God, we cannot fail to be struck by the many ways in which the patience of God has been shown towards man, a sinner. Before the Flood man was left to his own resources, and the result was that evil rose to such a height that God swept away the whole race save eight souls. Then man was tried under law, tried under the prophets, tried under grace, and finally he will be tried when the "hour of trial" which precedes the final wrath, shall come upon the whole habitable world.

Has one single test been lacking in all the ways of God towards man? Ah! there lacks just one last test. After the manifestation of His wrath, God will submit man to the test of *the glory*. Will ten centuries of the millennial reign—a reign of peace and righteousness, when evil will be held in check—will it be possible that *this* shall change the heart of man? Alas, no! for when Satan is loosed for a little season at the end of this marvellous reign, all those of the nations, except the elect, will rise up against God and against His Anointed. The judgment of the dead will bring to an end, by an everlasting destruction, the whole history of man as a sinner. (2 Thess. i. 9; Rev. xx. 11-15.)

Beloved! how infinitely different from this is our lot! The judgment is behind us and the Cross of Christ is the eternal witness that it is past. The glory will soon receive us and will shine upon us for ever, when we shall be in the Father's house with Christ. He is about to introduce us into it; but, in His absence, He leaves us still here below, it may be for a single day, desiring that we should make Him known to the world, by the reproduction of the traits which marked His path, in our conduct till He come.

The offering of Himself, which He made to God, whether in His life or in His death, was *seasoned with salt*, as it is said, "Every sacrifice shall be salted with salt" (Mark ix. 49; Levit. ii. 13). The salt was, in His case, practical holiness; the entire separation of His whole Being to God. On the eve of His departure He said to His disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Matt. v. 13). The action and the presence of His Spirit, acting in the heart of believers, to *produce practical holiness* in them, is now the only barrier against the final development of corruption in this world. This is why the Lord says to us, "Have salt in yourselves" (Mark ix. 50). "If the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out" (Matt. v. 13; Luke xiv. 34).

Without a life of practical holiness, without having our hearts separated from the world and its lusts and desires, can we be of any use on behalf of Christ, and represent Him here below during His absence? In accommodating ourselves to the world we take away all savour from the name of Christ and we draw down a serious judgment upon ourselves. Have we not seen a proof of this during the times of trial through which we have passed of late?

The Lord says to us still, "Ye are the light of the world" (Matt. v. 14). What a privilege! He said

of Himself, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (John ix. 5).

He was the light, and this light shone out from Him in order to lighten all things, whilst He was walking amidst men. And now He makes us to be this light, for we are "light in the Lord" (Eph. v. 8). We are left here below to continue His testimony amongst men, for, as the salt is in ourselves, the light shines out. Have we put our testimony under a bushel or on a lampstand? Has our light shone before men as a city situated on a hill which cannot be hidden? With what humiliation must we not recognise that we have failed in practical holiness, that we have failed as a witness for the Lord!

But there is still time! If the light is under a bushel, it is not yet extinguished, and He is not the One to extinguish the smoking wick. Let us diligently put our lamp on a lampstand which will cause it to be known to "all those who are in the house." We are about to be translated into the Father's house where we shall shine as the sun (Matt. xiii. 43); then the light will be perfect, but we are the light of the world to-day before men. Let us walk as children of light.

When the Assembly shall have been taken up to meet the Lord in the air, the world will be plunged in profound darkness; "The night cometh when *no man* can work," and men stumble when they walk in the night (John ix. 4; xi. 10). May we have a heart to maintain, in this world, the heavenly character of Christ, and to answer to our calling whilst there is time for it still! "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the *day of God*, . . . be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless."

H. R.

## Christ and the Church.

WE do not hear much of the truth of the Church of God now-a-days. We hear a good deal of the various Churches or religious bodies of Christendom, but not much of *the* Church of God as Scripture presents it.

What then is the Church? It is, as we find in the Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, etc., a body formed on earth, united by the Holy Spirit to the glorified Head in heaven. It could not, therefore, have existed until Christ took His place on high and the Holy Ghost came down at Pentecost.

At the close of his prayer in Ephesians i., the Apostle Paul speaks of Christ as being Head *over* all things, but Head *to* the Church, which is His body; the fulness or completeness of Him who fills all in all. Save in the *local* sense, of various Assemblies, which together form the one Church of God, there is no such thought in Scripture as separate Churches. There is but the one Church, the mystical body of Christ, to which *everyone* who is quickened with divine life and sealed with the Spirit belongs.

All the distinction between Jew and Gentile, which had been so carefully kept up prior to the death of Christ, has been done away; the middle wall of partition has been broken down, the enmity abolished, and both are reconciled to God in one body by the Cross. There is therefore but the *one* body on earth, united to the one Head in heaven, even Christ.

To find the origin of this place of blessing into which we are brought, we must go back to the purposes and counsels of God before the world was. It was God's purpose before the world was created to have a people, chosen in Christ and destined to be holy and without blame before Him in love. And Christ, true to the carrying out of those counsels, will one day present the Church to Himself without spot or wrinkle or any such thing (Eph. i. and v.). But there is also the additional

truth, that "Christ loved the Church," and all her blessings, past, present and future, flow from that love.

But what we would like to press upon the reader, as well as upon ourselves, is the practical side of these truths. Do we realise them? Do we walk in the power of them? When we meet a fellow-Christian (call himself by what name he may), do we remember that such an one is a fellow-member of the one body with us? Is he not quickened with the same divine life, united by one Spirit to the glorified Head, and destined, with us, to sing the praises of the slain Lamb in heaven? And even if we are sometimes tried by the crookedness or peculiar dispositions of some—as indeed they may be sometimes tried by us too—how it would help us, to remember that they are equally dear to Christ as we are.

We have not touched upon the other aspect in which the Church is presented in Scripture, viz., the house of God, where He dwells by His Spirit. This is also a very important truth and perhaps we may take it up at another time. When we come to speak of this we should have something to say as to the church's present practical state and responsibility as a witness for Christ on the earth.

It was to this truth of the Church of God that Paul was raised up as the special witness. No doubt it was foreshadowed in the word of the Lord to Him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? . . . I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Just as much as to say, "Saul, those few Christians at Damascus whom you are going to drag to prison and to death are a part of Myself." It is in connection with his being made a minister of this truth that Paul calls himself "less than the least of all saints," and he owns that it was according to the gift of the *grace* of God given to him.

And so it is, too, with everyone who is called of God, a possessor of eternal life, and a member of the body of Christ. All such owe their place of blessing to

sovereign grace, and they have therefore nothing to glory in but that grace. The merchantman who sought the goodly pearls and found one pearl of great price, estimated that pearl at a value which he himself put upon it; in itself it may not have been of much use to anyone else. But being a connoisseur, a competent judge, he estimated this particular pearl at a great price, and sold all that he had and bought it.

So Christ gave up all in order to possess Himself of his Church, of that which, however unworthy in itself, was precious in His eyes above all else. It is the sense of this *grace* in the soul which keeps us from self-occupation and from pride. It also gives us to understand better the magnitude of the love of Christ, and what that love has done, and will yet do, for its objects.

In the epistle to the Colossians Christ is brought before us as our life and as Head of the body, the church; being the firstborn from among the dead—Head in resurrection. There He had gained a complete victory over death and over Satan. And Paul was the special minister of this “mystery,” which was hidden from the ages and generations, but is now made manifest, namely, “Christ in you [Gentiles], the hope of glory.”

How real the danger was lest these believers (or we ourselves) should lose hold of this blessed truth! “Not holding fast the Head,” this was the danger: losing in the soul the consciousness of our living union with the glorified Head in heaven. All that is needed for the supply of the members on earth flowed down from Christ, who is our life, without anything between.

The effort of Satan was to occupy them with something else, worshipping of angels, ordinances, etc., so as to displace Christ, and to bring something in between the soul and Him. But surely the One in whom dwells all the completeness of the Godhead bodily, and in whom we are complete, is sufficient. If only the heart is satisfied with Christ and filled out of

His fulness, we do not want to turn back to the elements of the world : new moons, sabbath days, etc., are but the *shadow* of things to come ; the *body*, i.e. the substance, is of Christ.

Oh, that we, all of us, young and old, took home the apostle's warning to our hearts to-day, for the danger is just as great, perhaps greater, than then !

F.G.B.

## The Choice of Faith—2.

ONCE more Mary is at the feet of Jesus, as in John xii., and there she evinced a measure of spiritual intelligence which very few, if any of the other disciples shewed before the coming of the Holy Spirit ; for she anointed the Lord's feet, and that with a view to His burial. In verse 7 the Greek word for "against" is "with a view to." From Matthew and Mark we learn that she anointed His head, thus owning Him as King ; but there also with a view to His burial. Thus both head and feet were anointed.

How beautiful the testimony which the Lord gave of her in Matthew xxvi. 10-13, and Mark xiv. 8 ! In expending the "very precious" and costly contents of the "alabaster box" for His honour "she hath done what she could." How that should appeal to our hearts, and stir us up to self-denying acts of faith, and to count nothing too precious, nor apply to our own personal use that which could and ought to be expended on Him who is worthy of it ! Truly we may say of this devoted sister of faith, "Whose faith follow."

This happy choice of faith, to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to His word, is not only profitable for our instruction in this brief life, but its results will reach to eternity. When a saint becomes weak in body, and shows signs of soon leaving this scene of suffering, what is more precious and profitable than to repeat, and listen to, the "wonderful words of life" ? The presence of the Lord as our Shepherd is thus realised,



and the dying one is not afraid to pass "through the valley of the shadow of death"; for "perfect love casteth out fear." And when, through grace, we see Jesus face to face, and enjoy "the inheritance of the saints in light," shall we then value less all that we have learned of Him *now*?

O let us lay up in store the precious words of Scripture while we have such a golden opportunity to do so. In heaven every cup of joy will be filled to its utmost capacity and our joy shall be full. But *here* may we sit at Jesus' feet and learn of Him in all His blessed ways of grace and love. This choice of faith with a view to the future will yield a hundred-fold in the rich harvest of coming glory.

In closing these remarks on the choice of faith, the writer cannot refrain from drawing attention to the fact that the end of the age is looming, and the time has already begun "when they will not endure sound doctrine," and the ears of many are being "turned away from the truth" (2 Tim. iv. 3-4). Yea, the truth is already being disbelieved. "For this cause God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie (2 Thess. ii. 11-12). "The day of the Lord"—i.e. a day of judgment on the world (2 Thess. ii. 2-3)—"shall not come, except there come a falling away first," and the Antichrist, "the man of sin, the son of perdition be revealed." If the nations have arrived at the point indicated by the feet of the great historical image of Daniel ii., without doubt Christendom is now on the threshold of *the* apostacy predicted in 2 Thess. ii. 3.

The Bible is fast losing that paramount place which it ought to occupy, and is worthy to have, both in the home, and in the pulpit. "Modernism," with its corrupting criticism, is surely paving the way for coming disaster and shipwreck to all who identify themselves with it. Its word is eating, and will yet eat, "as doth a canker" (2 Tim. ii. 17-18); and the faith of many is already overthrown by the modern imitators of

"Hymenæus and Philetus." One of these modern sceptics, a man (at one time) of great influence, but now dead, once said in his advice to a mother on "Teaching a child the Bible," "never to forget that for her child to be sceptical about the Bible would do him no such injury as for him to distrust his mother."

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure" (2 Tim. ii. 19) and the Bible is the living Word of the living God, "quick and powerful," and it will yet hold its own however great the opposition of men or Satan may be. It is like a solid cube; whichever way it is upset, it is still *right side up*, and will remain so when "Modernism" shall have crumbled to pieces and passed away into oblivion. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet the hope of salvation." Let us frequently, as "the Lord's remembrancers," remind Him of His promise to come again (John xiv. 3), and ask Him graciously to fulfil His very last words to us: "Surely I come quickly."

O do not delay, Lord,  
That bright, happy day, Lord,  
We long to be with Thee, in glory to dwell.  
What loud bursts of praise, Lord,  
Our lips then shall raise, Lord,  
As the echoes respond to the notes as they swell.  
J.R. (Canada).

## Christendom.

**W**HAT varied thoughts and feelings are awakened in the soul by the very sound of the word "Christendom." It is a terrible word. It brings before us, at once, that vast mass of baptised profession which calls itself the Church of God, but is not: which calls itself Christianity, but is not. Christendom is a dark and dreadful anomaly. It is neither one thing nor the other. It is not "the Jew, or the Gentile, or the Church of God." It is a corrupt, mysterious, mix-

ture, a spiritual malformation, the masterpiece of Satan, the corrupter of the truth of God and the destroyer of the souls of men, a trap, a snare, a stumbling-block, the darkest moral blot in the universe of God. It is the corruption of the very best thing, and therefore the very worst of corruptions. It is that thing which Satan has made of professing Christianity. It is worse, by far, than Judaism; worse by far than all the darkest forms of Paganism, because it has higher light, and richer privileges, makes the very highest profession and occupies the very loftiest platform. Finally, it is that awful apostasy for which is reserved the very heaviest judgments of God—the most bitter dregs in the cup of His righteous wrath.

True it is, blessed be God, there are a few names even in Christendom, who, through grace, have not defiled their garments. There are some brilliant embers amid the smouldering ashes—precious stones amid the terrible *debris*. But as to the mass of Christian profession to which the term Christendom applies, nothing can be more appalling, whether we think of its present condition or its future destiny. We doubt if Christians generally have anything like an adequate sense of the true character and inevitable doom of that which surrounds them. If they had, it would solemnise their minds and cause them to feel the urgent need of standing apart, in holy separation from Christendom's ways, and in distinct testimony against its spirit and principles.\*

C.H.M.

[\*Let us remember that "Christendom" includes the Roman Catholic Church, the Greek Church, and everything else in this world which, bearing the name of Christ, has a form of godliness but denies the power of it. "From such turn away" is the solemn exhortation of Scripture.—ED.]

## To Be His Alone.

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Jesus, to Thee I now belong,  
Master Divine;  
Fruit of Thy love—so great, so strong,—  
For ever Thine.  
Thy service claims my life, my soul,  
For Thou art mine.  
Let that deep love my life control,  
My heart entwine.

Long I despised that tender love  
And power to save.  
Sought rest where naught *that* rest could give,  
To sin a slave.  
Now freed by Thy almighty power:  
To Thee who gave  
Thyself—the One I now adore,  
I'd henceforth live.

O! happy is the one who finds,  
Close to Thy side,  
That place of rest and peace of mind,  
Thou dost provide.  
Thy love I know, nor seek I aught,  
*Such* love beside.  
Saviour! 'tis Thou my soul hast bought,  
For *me* 'Thou'st died.

A.L. (*translated*).

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Jesus did not say, Go, but "COME ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile" (Mark vi. 31).

"This, this is rest, Lord Jesus,  
Alone with Thee to be;  
The desert is a gladsome place,  
With Thy blest company."