

A  
VOICE  
TO  
THE FAITHFUL.

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“He that striveth for the mastery is temperate  
in all things.”—1 Cor. ix. 25,

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# A Voice to the Faithful.

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FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN.

IN CANAAN.

THE first effect of occupying a heavenly standing is felt in ourselves—our own state is peculiarly affected by it, and in a way, however much previously longed for, not known, until we have crossed Jordan, and known in power that we have died with Christ. The effect is circumstantially set forth in Joshua v.

## THE HEAVENLY STATE.

The first great fact made known to the soul in a heavenly standing is that the flesh can have no place. This is circumcision. As I am dead with Christ, the Spirit of God will keep me practically to the truth of it, and there-

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fore I must now mortify the deeds of the body. This is Gilgal. Here I have rolled off the reproach of Egypt. Here I have the blessed sense of, for the first time, as it were, breathing the air of heaven, that I am not a debtor to the flesh, to live after the flesh, but that in true circumcision, I worship God and practically rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. This is the great moral deliverance to which my soul is introduced on heavenly ground. Flesh is excluded here. Farther on, one in Christ can say, "Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth;" there is a sensible freedom from any of its influences. But here, on entering this new standing, I begin by circumcision. Flesh has no right to act here, and therefore death is applied to it. I am not to be hindered by it, I am therefore at Gilgal—all the former thing has been rolled away. It is not only that—I have entered on a new and heavenly life, with the power of God's Spirit in me to maintain me in it; but I belong to heaven; and therefore

## FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN. 8

the first thing required, is circumcision, that the flesh may be completely excluded. It is the practical action of the Spirit of God; the soul made sensible that we "may not do the things that we would." Probably there is not a more elevating moment in our history, morally, than the one when we first in this new ground, feel and know that there is a greater power in me than the flesh, and by Him I can walk superior to the flesh. Unless we are in a heavenly state, we are never fit for heavenly testimony and conflict. Therefore the first condition of the heavenly state is circumcision; and this is an established thing. It cannot be otherwise, hence the place is called Gilgal, denoting that the place is characterised by this condition; here inevitably, and always, the reproach of Egypt is rolled off.

Now, here too, were the twelve stones taken from the bed of the river Jordan—another monument ever assuring us that we have died with Christ, so that not only are we circumcised, mortifying the deeds of the flesh, as the first con-

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dition of our heavenly position, but we are ever reminded thus, as by these twelve stones, that in circumcision we are only carrying into effect, in practical life, what is positively true for us in the eye of God. "Ye are dead."

Next here we eat the passover, having crossed Jordan: on the tenth day—the day the lamb was taken for sacrifice, we celebrate the accomplished work of Christ on heavenly ground, in the power of the Holy Ghost outside and beyond all human pravity and interference; and this is Canaan—morally heaven on the earth. Here not only have our souls the sense of the full deliverance wrought by Christ in His death, out of Egypt and all that lay upon us—but we are in the *place* where blessing reigns, according to the perfection of God's love and wisdom. Hence the day after the passover, the manna ceases; Christ on earth in His wondrous path of humiliation here, is not the food of the soul transferred to a heavenly scene, where all is of God. True, on earth, the only food for the saint is His flesh and blood,

## FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN. 5

and if possible, more wonderful as indeed it is more unattainable in practice than the corn of the land, for the enjoyment of that food is another of the great elements of the heavenly state.

Hence circumcision; the twelve stones; the passover; and the corn of the land, represent the manner of the grace which constitutes a heavenly state.

## HEAVENLY TESTIMONY.

When, through grace, we enjoy the heavenly state before God, it follows that before man we are in heavenly testimony. We come forth not only refreshed with wine, but strong in the Lord and the power of His might. The Man with the drawn sword in His hand, prepares and provides us with power for the conflict. The first great thing that one in a heavenly state feels in this world is that everything here is contrary to God. Everything is opposed to him, and there is no succour but from heaven. As long as the heavenly man walks in this dependence on the Lord, in uncom-



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promising hand to hand conflict with the world, he is superior to it, because "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." Jericho is a figure of the world—but in Joshua it is only presented as it appears, in the eye of man; the spiritual man, as we find from Ephesians vi. 10, &c. sees that it is wicked spirits who are the real supports of the power arrayed against us, even though men be used as their tools or agents.

Well, the opposition in the world against the heavenly man is compact and from every side; and he is to have two characteristics, set forth in type in Joshua vi.—by the armed men and the trumpeters. First to put on the whole armour of God, to be so personally true to our heavenly position, that Satan cannot find an opportunity of wounding or defeating us. If I am not girt about with truth, and have not on the breast-plate of righteousness, how can I maintain a brave front in patience? because it must be in patience. The patient continuance in the right course baffles the

## FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN. 7

adversary ; and then besides the armour to secure me from Satan, there is continuing in prayer, and watching thereunto with thanksgiving ; and then victory for the Lord's glory is sure to follow ; and this is used for the blessing and deliverance of those who are marked by the scarlet line.

## THE ENEMY WITHIN.

Now however, a new and unexpected enemy arises, and one which has proved much more successful in weakening and deteriorating the testimony than the world. Achan represents this enemy in Joshua vi. It is the work of a heavenly man perverted into a worldly sensual one ; he corrupts ; a " little leaven leavens the whole lump ;" he in the name and garb of a heavenly man, introduces by himself the worst principles of the world into the midst of the people of God. The "root of bitterness springing up troubles you, and therewith many be defiled."

Hence, failure and declension cannot be attributed to the power of the world,

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when persistently resisted; for as long as it is outside, it can only persecute and kill the body, but once the characteristics of the heavenly man are surrendered, the saint becomes worldly or sensual; the Spirit of God is grieved, and the position of the heavenly man, impregnable to all the power of Satan and the world, crumbles into a mere form of godliness without the power: and the testimony is not only lost, but becomes a reproach, the beautiful work broken down by axes and hammers.

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THOUGHTS ON THE PAULINE  
EPISTLES.

## COLOSSIANS.

As we gaze on the new Man in Ephesians—"the eyes of our heart being enlightened," our reckonings, by *faith*, in Romans are elevated and measured. Our *death* is outside of ourselves: our *life* is outside of ourselves: dead to sin, alive to God, *in* Christ Jesus. The

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vessel moves on by faith below; for the just *thus* shall live. Faith takes in the full measure of the Man in glory, as Ephesian truth is entered into.

Now, while faith receives the fact that every hindrance is gone in the cross and death of Him who rose from among the dead, and that a new order of Man is in, and has opened up, a new place of blessedness in heaven, we shall find that the epistle to the Colossians gives us the actual and practical effects. It is the realised condition of the soul who wholly refuses the old thing, and wholly accepts the new. Thus Romans is a link with time; Ephesians, a link with heaven, and in new creation; while Colossians is the link practically binding the two. Leave it out, and the highest of all the epistles may become mere doctrine, and the world may still confine and harass the saint on earth.

“The truth as it is in *Jesus*,” gives “the Resurrection and the Life” displayed in glory—we in Him there. Colossians gives the new man put on, as “*the Life*,” in actual fact. We are

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“co-quicken<sup>d</sup> *with* Him” (συνεξωποιοῦσεν σὺν αὐτῷ) now. His double glory of Resurrection and Life, is seen, as in counsel, in Ephesians. But as “THE LIFE,” Ephesians adds nothing beyond Colossians. The whole energy of *hidden* Life in God is now acting in the power of righteousness in glory. And because it is the condition of soul for the present interval of “all grace,” the epistle is wholly to Gentiles. They are first there. (Chap. iii. 11; Luke ii. 32; Acts xxvi. 17.) The sheep (Israel) refused the King. As cast out, He is received by “dead dogs” outside the fold. *As dead*, they have no power to refuse. The Hope of glory, thus outside the camp, finds beggars on “dunghills” (1 Sam. ii. 8), lepers, and Rahab herself. (Josh. vi. 23.) The outcast Messiah is hailed by the ruined, lost, and dead. “As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.” The wave-sheaf, the whole *fulness* of the coming glory of new creation is there. (See Rom. xv. 16.) He was “the End of law” in Romans; He is “the Begin-

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ning"—the Alpha, here. He is *in* new creation in Ephesians—displayed there; the life of that creation is to be known in us now. In Him we are *circumcised*: with Him we are *baptized*. That is, all is put off that hinders us from rising up "in the firmament of his power," that "everything that hath breath may praise the Lord;" while all is gone too, that can hinder us from pressing *on* in the "great waters" below, as we "do business" there. We have both power and strength, as in Christ, and under the Lord.

The double danger to the soul who refuses the man in Romans, and accepts the Man in Ephesians, is, first, to lower the thought of where Christ is—worship angels, &c. This snare Paul meets, in the epistle to the Colossians, as he attacks philosophy and "the *mind* of the flesh." He is in an "agony" lest the measure of God's treasure may be brought down to human thought. The second danger is to return to the scene out of which the cross has freed the believer, therefore he says, "why as

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though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances?" he is not "alive in the world." Thus in Colossians is found the guard to both Ephesian and Roman truth.

In this epistle, we have not only affection to Christ, but the *power* of it. He who is the channel of love is God (chap. i. 10-17), and Man in God. (Ver. 18.) This is the Firstborn out of death—"the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power." It is love, but "in the Spirit." And Paul longs that the saints should rise into the realm of life-glory now, where God is *known*. The Father (grace and affection) has translated those who are "meet" for light in new creation, but who bodily cannot go thither yet, into "the kingdom of the Son of his love."

Thus, in this epistle, we have rather the condition of Christ than His place. The eye rests on Him as the One who *consecrates* the saint upon earth and who is the centre of all God's counsels and plans in Ephesians. I say, He is the fulness of all—though these counsels

are not the theme of the epistle. It is the divine One we find here; man has been ended; the wave-sheaf has gone up (Lev. xxiii.) and in the power of the morrow after the sabbath, we can "keep the feast" (1 Cor. v. 7, 8), and eat unleavened bread: we have that which can sustain us in joy therein, as we delay not to "offer our fulness." (Ex. xxii. 29.) Thus we know the treasure we are responsible to carry in us. Romans viii. 10 has its depths unfolded to us, and our souls become "as a watered garden." As Jehovah says of Zion: "He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody." (Is. li. 3; Col. iii. 16.)

In chapter iii., we have, first, the state of the mind brought out—"Set your mind on things above where Christ sitteth." (Vers. 1-11.) The new mind is the seat of capacity for the power of light and glory. It is transformation—not *re*-formation; the One who is in the



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seat of glory is to give all supply where He sits. Hidden Life—the risen and exalted One who breathed a new atmosphere in John xx. 22, sustains the inner man in incorruption, and we can sup with Him at the table like Lazarus.

Secondly, from verses 11–16 we have the state of the *heart* as to affection. It is not life hid in God, as in the beginning of the chapter; it is the One who is the object of love. This is the sphere of Mary, as the former was of Lazarus. And, thirdly, we have from verses 17–25, chapter iv. 1, the sphere of Martha; for there it is the walk—service. Her grace manifests itself in her (now) large household. Thus we have in this chapter, the state of the mind, the heart, and the feet. Love comes downwards from the region of incorruptibility, and enters the house where all the old ties are held under the Lord. Hence, from verse 17, it is “the *Lord* Christ.” Thus, mere amiability in nature is tested and not mistaken for true grace, the latter being “seasoned with salt.” (Chap. iv. 6.) Love can rise upwards

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and come downwards. It is pure, because it is from above; and can settle any "quarrels," for such *may* arise (ver. 13), in the house where old relationships are duly owned and placed under the Head. The world, however, is seen as "without." (Chap. iv. 5.) In Colossians, we are not seen, as in Romans, as in the world under God's government, obeying "the powers that be;" nor are we exactly as in Ephesians, viewed as in the chaos made by Satan. We are "*translated*" into a sphere of profession (chap. i. 23), where we receive the power of glory on the one hand, and have carried every "hoof" out of Egypt and beyond the Sea (Ex. x. 26), on the other. Such is our condition morally during the present interval. All things are ours, as we reckon ourselves dead. Possessors of Ephesian blessedness, this epistle is the fruit thereof *now*—"we are fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the full knowledge of God."

Thus we see that this epistle has a distinct line of its own. It is the step

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from Romans to Ephesians, for the justified one to the heavenly Man. But what is chiefly brought out is the present condition of the Head in hidden life. The ark is on Mount Zion without a veil, as in David's days. Hidden from man—revealed to the saints now. By-and-by, as in 2 Chronicles v. 1, we shall “appear” with it in glory.

Thus, does it seem to me, that these three epistles—Romans, Colossians, and Ephesians, are connected. Colossians is the link between Romans and Ephesians. Life in power and glory, the substance of the new creation itself, joins, as it were, our place on earth with our place in heaven. It is not so much place as the state suited thereto.

In this epistle, Paul and John meet. The latter looked down into death as he “believed” (John xx.; Rev. i. 18): it is out of death that he brings life. The former looked up (Acts ix.) and saw the Sun of righteousness on His new path—Christ in the glory of God. In Colossians we have both. Hence, this epistle is surely much needed now-a-days as

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truth for our walk. Is it not significant how the apostle yearns over, not only the saints he writes to, but those also “at *Laodicea*?” (See also chap. iv. 13, 16.) He goes on to the end of the church’s history in time, as it were. And who is the One unfolded in Revelation iii. 14–22, who presents Himself to the soul in the midst of Laodicean ruin? The Fulness—“the Beginning of the creation of God.”

The Lord give us to seek and possess suited garments in which to meet Himself. And He gives them Himself. If we are accepted in the Sheaf, may we be acceptable also. In Him we have both acceptance and acceptability.

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## THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

## “HIS REST.”

THE ideal of man is rest. The end in the mind of God, when everything will be finished according to His pleasure—*His rest*, is the rest which He sets before us. That the day of rest was a

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is not your rest, it is polluted." What is so remarkable in Jacob is that he continues to be religious; builds an altar, and does not appear to have surrendered any of the truth which had been committed to him; but he failed, and exposed himself to the judgment on the world, because he sought his rest in it. Surely whenever we do, we shall find that the world "hath cast down many wounded; yea, many strong men have been slain by her; her house is in the way to hell, going down to the chamber of death."

Under these three heads there are innumerable subdivisions, like so many roads, one or another presenting something to draw away the heart with a promise of rest here—a cessation of toil. Many a one works on assiduously, buoyed up with the hope of being able at some more or less distant time, to cease his labours, and retire and enjoy the fruits of his industry. Every desire and intention of the kind in the saint, betrays, when allowed, that the heart is not simply and truly set on His rest.

## THE LINE LOST, AND REGAINED. 27

In conclusion I would say, that there are two things which keep and sustain the heart which is set for His rest. One is the word of God, which ever detects and exposes what is of the flesh ; and what would detain us in the wilderness ; and this by insisting on, and inculcating the mind of God, which is the very opposite to man's natural mind. The other is the intercession of Christ, providing everyone led by the word with His grace, because in His sympathy He knows our need ; and thus we are supported and cheered, while adhering to the heavenly road on which He ever walked while down here. No one then is either pursuing the right road, or receiving succour and help for the journey, who is not steadily and heartily fixed on heaven—God's rest, as his home and destination..

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## THE LINE LOST, AND REGAINED.

THE backslider in heart is filled with his own devices. It is a signal warning to us how the saint who turns aside in

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any degree from the line of truth which he had reached, exhibits in every subsequent step his own devices, and not the leading of the Lord. He may sometimes succeed in a worldly way ; but the truer he was for the Lord, the more apparent will be his blunders, in everything, and in his efforts to retrieve himself, he will appear to every one as a fool. This is often sadly manifest when there is an attempt to minister in the Word or otherwise. There is the desire to retain our position once justly occupied, when the fitness for it has been forfeited. This is always with trial and sorrow to the godly. It is formal and interrupting, like those gifted Corinthians, who, walking in flesh, were occupied with the gifts and not the edification of souls.

The slip of such an one is in principle like that of Noah ; he unduly indulges himself, and is carried further than he intended, and is uncovered in his tent.

Lot drops out of the true path of his calling. Attracted by the green fields of Sodom, he eventually is a citizen of

## THE LINE LOST, AND REGAINED. 29

that country, and marries his daughters to men of the city ; he blunders in every step, until he at last sinks behind a cloud, and never appears to have regained the path of faith. Jacob from his first wrong step in compliance with the carnal shrewdness of his mother, never seems to be free from collision with his fellow men until he returns to Bethel. True restoration is never effectual until one returns to the point of departure. Where the stitch was dropped, there it must be taken up. Every step of Jonah's course, from his first turn in self-will, was only more and more foolish and perilous. Restored, he enters on the very path he had diverged from. Peter though he is personally devoted to the Lord, seems to have no true wisdom for any course, until he was proved by the word of Christ in John xxi.

The admonition in all these cases is that one blunder leads to another. "They feed on ashes, a deceived heart leadeth them astray ; they know not at what they stumble." Barnabas led away by natural affection surrenders



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the leading of the Spirit of God, and in the next step confirms it by going back to Cyprus, his native country, thus confirming the carnality of his course. So that in everything, the man of God, once off the line, betrays to the spiritual mind that the Lord is not with him.

Now two things mark return to the line which has been forsaken. First, there is a time of deep contrition before the Lord. Psalm li. describes this time with David; Jonah ii., that of Jonah; the night of wrestling, that of Jacob; John xxi., that of Peter. It is the heart brought so close to the Lord that the departure is disclosed, as it is in His sight. From this point, like a phoenix from its ashes, one emerges to do the very work from which one had turned away; so that the line is regained, and one is on it again, like David, after Ziklag; Jonah, before Nineveh; Peter at Jerusalem; or Mark with Paul in his closing hours. The one who had forsaken the apostle in the bright dawn of his work, is now restored to be "profitable" to him on the eve of his martyrdom.

## “ PISGAH.”

INCURABLE!\* Incurable!  
What meaneth *this* to me?  
That *I* on Pisgah's heights must dwell  
Fair Canaan's land to see!  
The wilderness so well nigh past,  
Upon its verge I stand,  
And heart and eye are filling fast  
With visions of the Land,

Incurable! Incurable!  
It is, my God, to be  
Leaning no more on man for help,  
But wholly cast on Thee.  
And there to learn Thou art enough  
Whatever may betide;  
The path can never be too rough  
If Thou art by my side.

Incurable! Incurable!  
Yet not a care or fear,  
Christ and the Father's house above  
His grace sufficient here.

\* “Incurable,” a word faith will not use.

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Leaning on Him as hours of pain  
And weariness pass by,  
His faith and patience to obtain  
To suffer joyfully.

Incurable! Incurable!      .  
It is mine eye to keep  
Upon the blessed Ark of God,  
*Not* on the waters deep.  
Jesus the path of death hath trod,  
Thro' Jordan's floods for me,  
And now upon the throne of God,  
My risen Lord I see.

Sun of the never-ending day,  
On Thee I fix my gaze,  
Life's twilight shadows flee away,  
Beneath Thy healing rays.  
For death I wait not, but for Thee,  
For Thou wilt surely come,  
And ere another dawn, may be,  
I shall have reached my home.

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# THOUGHTS ON THE PAULINE EPISTLES.

## GALATIANS.

WE have seen that the three Epistles we have been considering are not directly addressed to assemblies as such—though of course assemblies were in Ephesus, Colosse and Rome. In the *sevens* in scripture, we usually find the division into three and four. In the seven Epistles in Revelation ii. iii., this is marked by the word to the overcomer changing its place in the last four Epistles—coming *before* the words, “He that hath an ear,” &c., instead of after. The threes will generally be found upwards, Godwards and individual, the fours, earthwards, manwards, and in outward testimony. In the three first addresses to the assemblies in the Revelation, we find the word to the overcomer is in connection with individual blessing from God to the soul—no one need know it save the one blessed himself.

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Whereas in the word to the overcomer in the four last assemblies, it is blessing in connection with outward acknowledgment from God—others may see and have to confess to it. We have three Epistles to individuals written by Paul, to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, and we have four general Epistles in connection with outward testimony in the house of God on earth, by James, Peter, Jude and John.

Even in the prayer given to the disciples in Matthew vi. 9, 13, we see that the three first petitions are looking up to the Father for His own glory, &c. The four last look down to earth and man. (Matt. xiii.)

We have glanced at three Epistles of Paul, Romans, Ephesians, and Colossians which give the conscious entrance of the individual into his full place of blessing as in Christ. Taken out of the old place of Adam-responsibility, his status gone in the old creation, he is given a *new* place in Him who is seated in heavenly places, where he is fully blessed, and sustained above the old

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scene and in the new, in divine power in "the Head, the Beginning." Thus, being enriched and supported and having reached the Head of the body which is the assembly (Eph. i. 22, 23), he is sent down to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit below. The individual and upward view we have considered in those three Epistles, and in the four remaining, Galatians, Corinthians, Philippians, and Thessalonians, we shall find the dangers and trials, &c., of the church of God as it crosses the earthly scene brought out in four phases. As Eliezer is leading Rebecca, as it were, across the desert, he guards her against the snares and wiles which might entrap her. In Revelation we see the beloved disciple who leaned on the bosom of Jesus, the one who exposes the evil for *judgment*. Whereas, in the Pauline Epistles, we see the one who breathed out slaughter against the "ME" of Acts ix. 4, the very one who exposes the evil to heal and recover, where no hope, so far as human eye could see, could be entertained for the

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assembly, like a Moses blessing in grace in Deuteronomy xxxiii. He is the one to bring out the fulness of grace's resources: Aaron's rod of bloom and fruit is ever displayed by him. He knows the resources of grace and of divine righteousness. He unfolds the glory of "the Sun of righteousness," whose rays can wither up what is worthless, and fill, with power of glory, the feeblest movements of life—given from Himself. Like a Nathan who could come to a David in the power of grace and in the spirit of meekness, never giving the erring up, but humbling, and then rousing him to strike, as it were, his harp once more in the "house of Jehovah." (2 Sam. xii. 20.) Such is the energy and the mission of the great apostle of the Gentiles, who follows and recovers and sustains the church through time, as we trace her career in a kind of moral order, through Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Philippians, and 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

In Galatians, we see her attacked by man as he brings the obsolete religion

of the flesh, and the law, to ensnare her—a religion, too, once owned by God, and which she is now snared to seek perfection in. What a subtle wile is this! Just emerged out of all the shadows and types of the old things, Satan uses his arts to beguile the Rebecca as she leaves nature's abode.

How magnificent the mode of recovery do we behold in this Epistle! Man is, first, wholly ignored. Such is chapter i. :—"Paul an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from among the dead . . . who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil age, according to," &c. It is the person of the Deliverer that is set forth: Some would suppose Paul might have said—"Who shed his *blood* for our sins." No, it is, "Who *gave* HIMSELF." Paul sees the blood so precious that he never once names it in this Epistle. It is the One who shed it who gave it its value, (see Rom. iv. 24), He delivers. Jehovah-Jesus is the Victor. Not only is



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His blood the price paid; but in His death, we are separated from the "age" of which Paul speaks. The blood not only gives me pardon—it *ends* my old-Adam life. I cannot legally use the *man* again: he and the rule for him are gone to me, because he is crucified. If I want the man, I must, if conscientious, be legal; if not, lawless. The former, since it seems to favour morality, philanthropy, &c., is the more difficult to expose.

After the apostle brings himself as an example of one who could even persecute and waste the church of God, in his zeal *for God* under the law—for law always devastates the assembly of God, however just our thoughts of order and unity may be; he speaks of himself as in time, in a short parenthesis in verses 15, 19. From his mother's womb, he had been separated by God. Here was his entrance into time. Then comes the call by grace. Then the revelation of the Son of God *in* him—the conscious entrance into the power of the new creation and the glory of the grace.

Thus is Saul ended. The Son revealed in him, is the *beginning* of his new walk, as sent into the world after being taken out of it. (John xvii.) Could the Son be put under law? Well, *He* was the One to move and act and express Himself through Paul. As he declares in chapter ii., "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." And, as he looks along the course of time, he adds—"and the life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me," &c. If *He* is to be expressed in and by Paul, even the first apostle of "the twelve" shall not stand in the way, but must be rebuked "before them all," when he did not walk according to the truth of the gospel.

As my purpose, however, is to look at the moral effect of these Epistles, rather than unfold the doctrine of them, I would just notice the two blessed facts brought out in chapter iii. First, the Spirit is the energy on earth, the power to repress the flesh and to reveal Christ: "Received ye the Spirit," he says, "by

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the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith ?” Again, “ Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh ?” Then we find the power of God’s righteousness (not law righteousness), displayed in the “ Isaac,” that is—Christ as the Heir by resurrection. (Chap. iii. 16–29.) It is the ministration of the Spirit and the ministration of righteousness that exceeds in glory. Man is gone : the “ seed as the stars” is there alone, for the present interval. It is “ to Abraham, *and* to his seed”—Christ. What the apostle is overthrowing is the Cain side of flesh (the effort to give to God out of nature—even on its good side, as man would say), and therefore he sets forth not negation or restrictions, but the positive resources of God’s creation. The energy *below* is the Holy Ghost who came to earth after man was ended in the cross ; and divine power is *above* in Him who is (as Isaac in Gen. xxii.) risen from the dead.

Then in chapter iv., we have the new *source* whence all comes from God now. Hagar, “ The Jerusalem that now is,”

## PAULINE EPISTLES.

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vanishes. More : Sarah, the millennial blessing under the new covenant, the future earthly Jerusalem. is laid aside before the glory of the "Jerusalem above which is our mother." The saints are "children of the light and of the day ;—grace's offspring, for light is grace. It is more than the law written on the heart—vastly more. The Spirit below writes on hearts satisfied in glory (2 Cor. iii. 3), while God's righteousness, subsisting in the Man who dwells there, gives Him for a living object and a limitless measure—the fulness of God ! Can we receive it ? Nay. *Because* we cannot take it in, we worship. This "Jerusalem" is the source of our being now, she is neither the old nor the new covenant. Both the flesh and nature itself are superseded for fruit-bearing. The new energy below is ours : the sheaf (Christ risen) is revealed, and gone up, and *given* (John iv. 10) to us also ; the fountain of grace and light is declared our mother. Grace will be displayed in the Sarah-covenant, but this is the "abundance of grace." (Rom. v.

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17.) How truly then, do we see the force of the words of Romans vii., as we read this Epistle—"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from among the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God." Thus "we serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

To be practically from under law, I must have a higher standard and a commensurate power. The better the conscience of him who takes as his principle, a lower standard than God's, having the law for his rule—the more bitter the opposition to new-creation truth. *Law hides it altogether.* We are often found "biting and devouring one another" (ver. 15), in so-called justice, while there is no spirituality to be meek enough to restore the failing. The word "restore" in chapter vi. 1 means, perfectly to recover and build up again, as a broken limb is set and healed. I am to point an arrow at myself as I go

to help my erring brother. It is "*considering* thyself."

I would just remark the man-humbling and soul-exalting close of this Epistle. In chapter vi., we have in verse 14, everything *gone* that could hold the believer below. The cross effects this. In the next verse, everything *come* in Christ—a new creation in Him. In verse 16, we have every resource for our journey below, if we accept the "rule"—a limitless one—of the new creation. We have a double crown on our heads—peace and mercy. It is Egypt gone, life in Canaan come, the fare for the wilderness assured.

The measure is a high one, impossible to flesh and blood. Would-be Jews around may seek to press this upon us, as they extol "the concision;" but the feeble ones can rejoice in the Isaac—the risen Christ, and own the power on earth—the Holy Ghost for, and in us. Thus, however feeble, we can "do *all* things through Him who gives us power," and without Him we can do *nothing*. As in the request of Elisha at Jordan, it will be all

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or nothing with us. If we see Him, we have the "double portion" (see Deut. xxi. 17); if not, all on earth is indeed a blank, that is, if we have been led to Jordan and our resources all gone.

Paul could say, "I bear in my body the marks of"—not legal exaction, but of *Jesus*. He knew what real renunciation of self was, and the results which followed; he knew too, that "the *Lord* was faithful." He would have His grace and divine power come forth to restore the erring Galatians.

May He give us to see the way fully to escape Sinai, on our wilderness way. Morality is not holiness, though holiness includes morality. It is a delusion to suppose we can fulfil a low measure. Christ in glory is the only measure given us now, our rule of life in heaven; the Jerusalem above is the spring of our existence, and the Holy Ghost is the power we possess—the rule on earth. Thus has the cross triumphed. We may *begin* our journey like the earth on the fourth day—revolving round the sun, the power that sustained her. The

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Lord grant us to see that there is *fulness* of blessing in the gospel of Christ. If we are dead to law, it is because we have a new beginning: we have circumcised fruit (Lev. xix. 23-25), "holiness of praises to the Lord." Thus, in our wilderness career, we can refuse to own the man here—either to make him religious, as the Colossians, or to eradicate and repress him, under law, as the Galatians. How sad it is that we may begin—even get deliverance—in the Spirit, yet retrograde, because we want not the full measure of the Christ where He dwells in the new creation. The rule (*κανων*) of the new creation above, is expressed by the lowliness of Jesus below. The power is given that we may be able to descend to earth, and there fruit is seen on the tree, and *constantly*—from day to day.

Whenever the Man—the Son in glory—needs law as a rule of life, then only can they who are in Him, need such a standard, who have the Spirit here and the full power of the new creation in heaven. Whenever grace's resources



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are insufficient for every need of the pilgrim, even amid failure and confessed dependence as powerless to move on, then may we look for relief elsewhere, and comfort for our way. "He will give grace and glory." Law will not aid nor give power to live for God.

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## THE WORSHIPPING STATE.

Nothing perhaps more clearly indicates in a corporate way the poverty of our faith than the low style and character of our worship when gathered as saints in the presence of Christ.

Children of the Father in known relationship according to His eternal counsels; sought out of Him to be His true worshippers; taught of Him to take up the endearing name of "Abba" on our lips; experiencing from Him a love, the quality and measure of which can be gauged by nothing short of what the Father's heart delightedly gives forth to Christ; having closest access to Himself in the unclouded joy and de-

## THE WORSHIPPING STATE. 47

light of an eternal favour already begun—it is thus we have to say to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! Fruit of the travail of His soul if we think of the past; members of His body as to present association with Him in holy but unreserved intimacy, and heirs of His glory to be shared with Him at His coming which is our only future—it is as thus eternally united to and blessed with Christ that we have to do with Him! Anointed, sealed, indwelt of the Holy Ghost; strengthened, moved and moulded by His power—thus has the Spirit of God to do with us for the glory of Christ until He come!

These are our *personal qualifications* for worshipping in spirit and in truth, and they are characteristically those of every saint of God since Pentecost. Were ever saints before so wondrously, so blessedly qualified for ascribing that worship which is desired by the heart of God? The holy angels who stand before the throne in heaven's unsullied purity cannot render it, and millennial saints blessed with the manifested

## 48      A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

presence and gracious rule of Jehovah-Jesus, King of kings, and Lord of lords, will never be able to yield to Him a worship such as ours might be now and must be eternally.

But there is more ; certain conditions exist amongst us which are conducive to worship and all important to that end. We have the whole revealed mind of God, as indeed have others, but the word is not bound amongst us ; we yield it unfeigned reverence and subjection, and we call nothing "order" which is not found there. Above all we have the presence of Christ—that which emphasises our blessing beyond all compare. For He, who in bodily form—the exalted Son of man—sits crowned with glory and honour upon the throne of the Father and illuminates all heaven with His presence, this "same Jesus" is as really present in another way wheresoever two or three are gathered unto His name. As in the one scene corporally, so in the other scene spiritually, is He Himself present who said "there am I," and our hearts

## THE WORSHIPPING STATE. 49

answer with exultation, "we have found it so!"

The bare mention of these salient features of Christianity which are our common heritage as saints may suffice to establish to any reflecting mind that our worship bears unwitting but decisive testimony to the poverty of our faith. Was there a tithe of this blessedness known to David's heart when he said, "My cup runneth over," or when he said "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips"? Yet how painfully convinced one often is that many go to the Lord's table whose heart's language on entering the room has never overtaken, much less out-stripped that of the godly Jew, "My cup runneth over" — "My mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips."

The apostle says, "our passover, Christ, has been sacrificed, let us celebrate the feast;" how suggestive is this as to the Lord's supper, not the living, not the suffering, but the

## 50      A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

*dead* Christ, before our contemplation, as also in another place, we “announce the *death* of the Lord until he come.” Sacred, indeed, the subject; solemn, indeed, the occasion; no season could be more calculated to subdue all that is of nature, and to repel effectively the intrusion of all that which has been judged in the cross; and these are the wonderful conditions and circumstances of our souls’ high festival! There our souls being satisfied as with marrow and fatness, we must praise with joyful lips! It is the anti-typical passover, but where do we eat it? As a matter of fact in the wilderness, but as a matter of faith within the borders of the land: not out of sight of the wilderness, it may be, but far, far out of sight of Egypt where it was first eaten by another though a faithless generation! Between Egypt and God’s Israel roll the Red Sea and the Jordan, they are within the land of God’s counsels concerning them; never before had they so celebrated the feast. How different to the Egypt passover, when

## THE WORSHIPPING STATE. 51

judgment was impending and shelter from it the paramount thought; how different to the wilderness observance, while learning to the bitter end, the flesh and its workings; though, haply, at the same time learning the ways of God! Now they were a people in possession, chosen, called, redeemed (by blood and by power) disciplined, educated and enriched, signally honoured, wondrously blessed—"a people near unto Him." (Ps. cxlviii. 14.) But how much more so we, of whom indeed they were types! How one feels rebuked for our lack of faith when gathered in celebration of the feast to find souls occupied with their own part instead of with His part; Israel might fail to enter into this, but shall we? Is it everything to me that He has brought me to Himself, but nothing to Him? Do I not long to know the depths of His joy when He rests in His love? Can we be occupied only with the shelter we have found in the blood or the ways of His grace to us in the wilderness instead of with the cynosure of God's counsels,

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the blessed Forerunner who has entered into glory, the Beloved in whom we are already graced before God ! The Holy Ghost surely conducts our hearts to Him there, and there He seeks to detain them while in company of spirit with Himself we look back together to this darksome scene and that dread hour at which He bare the curse, but vanquished death and took spoils from the enemy ? Consciously one spirit with the Lord and in His company, we remember Him as once He was, but is not, nor can be again ; we have communion of His body and His blood, that body given, the life taken, that blood shed ; we “ one loaf ” on earth, members of His body now and waiting to be glorified together with Him when He shall come ! But “ in spirit there already,” I have to do with Him as and where He is, alive for evermore, within the veil, within the holiest ; I know Him there ; I am in Him there ; faith puts me within, I have entered, I am seated, I am greeted of Him, I am abundantly happy, I am overjoyed with the reality of the

## THE WORSHIPPING STATE. 53

heavenly scene, everything around me as full of gladness as radiant with beauty ; I am in the unruffled serenity of an atmosphere in which no care can exist, in the unclouded light of a region where is no darkness at all ; I am in the immeasurable blessedness and the inconceivable joy of the new creation, all else is eclipsed by a brightness above the sun, the "old things are passed away, all things are become new, and all things are of God!" Sensible of a wonderful capacity for spiritual enjoyment, yet not thinking of myself, so deep the joy, so profound the peace, my soul regales herself upon "the hidden bread,—of Christ once humbled here," amid the illimitable blessedness surpassing human thought! The wonderful fact that I should be there, and the more wonderful work of grace that brought me there, might fitly give birth at other times to gratitude and thanksgiving as the soul surveys the wisdom and the grace of God's salvation ; but just now my soul is filled with heaven-born joy, and worship—only worship—the ecstasy



## 54      A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

of bliss—is in keeping with the scene that surrounds me. Such worship becomes then the spontaneous issue of an overcharged heart finding its only relief in an adoration as free as it is bright, as joyous as it is blessed, as holy as it is happy ; God and the Lamb, the Sun and Centre of the scene, absorb every emotion of the soul ; every heart is like a swollen river rising above its banks, and its overflow is the worship which 'He who has inspired it deigns to accept and loves to receive from His own ! Oh ! that we had learned—not that He has gifted some for it—but how richly He has qualified every saint of God to minister to His joy when He has gathered us around His blessed person, to be the adored Object of every heart, and the leader forth of praise from every lip, while we enjoy together the foretaste of heavenly glory !

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## THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

### A HEAVENLY MAN.

THERE can neither be a correct desire as to what I should enjoy, nor a true standard by which to judge myself, unless I know, in terms at least, the calling of God.

When after the flood, man, set afresh on favourable terms on the earth, disclosed his independence of God, in the building of Babel, God for the first time called out Abraham from his country, and kindred and father's house, to come into the place that He would shew him. This in figure set forth that the earth, as such, was not the place for God's people. Abraham went forth, not knowing whither he went. Faith was the great light which directed and marked his way. It rests on the word of God and not on anything that occurs within our senses here. Into the land of Canaan they came. Canaan then is the typical place of a heavenly man.

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“heavenly things,” but as one is in Canaan; he as one is a heavenly man on earth. A believer may know the “earthly things,” the work of grace in his soul, but all his associations are with earth, like a willow tree. But sonship, acceptance in the Beloved, priesthood, Christ as Head of His body—the church, the One to give gifts unto man, can only be enjoyed by a heavenly man. And finally, as to testimony, no one can represent the rejected Christ in heaven, but a heavenly man—one who receives grace and power from Himself to stand for Him, where He is not. So that nothing can be simpler, however humbling because of our distance from it, than that our calling now is heavenly, and that while this casts us on God for grace in every step, yet it does not make us unnatural, but more truly in accordance with God’s intention in the old creation in which we still are.

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## “THE DAY IS AT HAND.”

CERTAINLY we are on the part which runs down to the end; and certainly we ought to get every child of God in the light of the Coming. Jesus Christ is coming back, and what tremendous changes must take place on earth, in the heavenlies, in heaven, and in hell below. I know all this, and I know the bearing of all this on Christendom, and men now in it. Surely we may well look up to be enabled to speak a word to those around! If we have the truth of the coming of the Lord, the more responsible are we; and it is in the light of that grand action of God, the Christian sees light. If He is coming back, where is His church? If He is coming back, how did He leave His people; and are they as He left them? The Holy Spirit was the Guardian or Paraclete on earth; where is He? He has not gone away; but those put under Him, have slipped away from hallowed ground, down into the world, flesh and Satan; and Satan

## 64      A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

has blinded their eyes, as to the insult and grief put upon the Spirit. On the other hand, how blessed a thing that we have not to preach man's failure ! but notwithstanding all that man has done, God remains God still. His love is as bright as ever. His humiliation, obedience, death, resurrection, and ascension as important as ever ; expiation accomplished, and righteousness established for the believer in Him on the throne. Himself alive from the dead in heaven, until He rises up to come and fetch His people thither ; and the Holy Spirit of promise still here, to vindicate and make good the claim of the Lord Jesus over sinners, and on saints.

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·    FRAGMENT.

THE tide of apostasy has set in, and we have to lift up our heads and be faithful for Christ, and be nothing, till He makes us everything ; as much nothing then as ever, perhaps more so, but possessing Him.

## MINISTRY; ITS GROUND AND NATURE.

THE ground on which ministry is placed in scripture shews the amazing truths and divine dealings involved in Christianity itself, how wide, how vast, both the purposes and ways of God are, though it meets us where it becomes God that it should, both in majesty and grace, in His love and saving goodness to poor sinners dependent on it. It flows from the nature, and from the purposes and ways of God in connection with the glory of Christ; from His nature, in that He reveals Himself, and that in the activity of His love, His ways and purposes, as unfolding that purpose in Christ, and that through the work of Christ. Many details, and personal application to our state, of course come under these two great heads. It is not prophecy or promise. They had their place before Christ came. But Christianity is the revelation of God Himself,

## 66      A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

and of His mind and wisdom in Christ. God is essentially and in the first place love; but withal light, a purity which at the same time manifests everything as it is. Promises and prophecies unfold the plans of God on earth, His government, the law, His perfect rule for what the creature knowing good and evil ought to be. But in Christianity, in Christ, God is revealed, and revealed in grace. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Love suited to us, the truth as to everything. Love and light, God's nature brought down into practical revelation here. It was impossible that, God being revealed, that could be shut up to Jews.

No doubt Messiah came according to promise, a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. But though God had a special people for special purposes, the centre of His government of this world, He could not, when Himself revealed, be the God of the Jews only. The first principle of ministry, then, in Christianity is God

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as love revealed to the world to sinners in grace. God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son. This, then, is the first great essential principle of Christian ministry, God manifested in love, God revealed in His nature, and this infinite and perfect, and God revealed too in the activity of His love. God is love, that is the great thing, but then God so loved. This was manifested even in Christ down here. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. But then two things came out—the state of man, and the guilt of man. For my love, it is written, I had hatred. Now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father, and then God was a holy, righteous God, or nothing would be right or stable, and could not receive man in sin and guilt into His holy presence, to abide there in joy and righteousness.

Man's nature and God's nature and authority would have alike rendered it impossible. But Christ died. There, on the one hand, the cross met the guilt,



## 68      A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

on the other, love in God was proved to be above sin in man. Where sin abounded grace did much more abound. The blood which proved it was set on the mercy-seat, to use the ancient figure, and the activity of love could go forth to the world in righteousness, and for those that believe the scape-goat has carried their sins into a land not inhabited. Love is above the sin, has taken it into consideration, and through it on the cross propitiation is made; and while it thus gives access to God according to His nature, where He in whom all is accomplished is believed in, the conscience is purged, so that we enter joyfully, without fear, into His presence, into the holiest, by a new and living way. Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us, blessed be His name, and God has set Him forth a propitiatory, through faith in His blood, and, believing, we can say, He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, our conscience is purged, no more conscience of sins, and our sins and iniquities remembered no more. Grace reigns,

through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

God has manifested His love towards us, in that He gave His only-begotten Son, that we might live through Him—for an evil nature that hated God could not enjoy Him—and herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and gave His only-begotten Son to be the propitiation for our sins. This is the record that God has given unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son: he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. It is in resurrection that both are united, Christ having gone down to death for our sins. He hath quickened us together with Him, having forgiven us all trespasses.

Let me introduce, as a parenthesis, a word as to the order of this in the divine ways. Life given and secured in grace, and responsibility, are the constant exercise of man's mind and conscience when turning to these points, and how to reconcile them. Life and responsibility were represented in the

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two trees in the garden of Eden. Man failed in his responsibility, and in that state was shut out from participation in the tree of life. The law took up the same question, introducing both principles, giving the perfect rule of man's then responsibility, in the law, but putting it first in order to life. This do, and thou shalt live. Christ came, and while He bore for us before God the consequences of failure in our responsibility, so as to settle that for ever for those who believe, He became the source of a new and holy life, He is that life to those who believe. Thus, and thus only, are these principles reconciled through grace consistently with the nature and character of God, holy and righteous, but perfect in love. Such was the starting-point and subject of Christian ministry, besides the kingdom. God revealed in love, man exalted to God's right hand in righteousness, the Holy Ghost come down to be its power and seal. Love triumphant over sin, and God's righteousness setting man in glory, and this when the Word made

flesh had, as made sin for us, in grace and obedience gone down to death, undergone the curse and judgment of sin, and Satan's power, and come up out of it, past sin, and death, and Satan's power, and God's judgment; risen, and entered into glory. As Son of man He must be lifted up: but He had been, and God had given nothing less than His own Son in love to the world. Where sin had abounded, love had much more abounded.

We go forth thus, on God's part, from God. The love indeed testifies that all were lost, dead in sins, for it is in Christ's love in dying because they were, we learn it, but we go with the testimony of this love, be our gifts great or small, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses, and if rejected, man's utmost sin and God's infinite love met in the cross, to prove, but put away sin, and bear and blot out the sins of all that believe on Him. One we must own as ours, and the other as God's, but in Christ made sin for us, that we might

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be made the righteousness of God in Him. And so, Christ being risen, it is the accepted time, the day of salvation, and as though God did beseech by us, we beseech men to be reconciled to God. Such is ministry, if we look at the nature and work of God manifested in Christ. It is love, active love to the lost, in result the eternal testimony even to angels of what that love is.

If we consider the purposes and ways of God, His wondrous plans and dealings of God shine further out in it. It is not simply divine power operating, which it indeed wholly is, but that power in and by man. It was part of the prophetic testimony that Christ should ascend up on high, as we have seen, to be the subject of ministry, but also to receive gifts in man, for so it runs in the Hebrew Ba-adam. The victorious man, whose place is the witness of Satan's defeat and God's righteousness, as the Man who had gone through death, the fulness and end of Satan's power, sanctioned by God's judgment, and perfectly glorified God there, and

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now, consequently, by the righteousness of God sitting as man at His right hand. The victorious and glorified Man receives (Acts ii. 33) the promise of the Father, the Holy Ghost, to send down to delivered men, associated by redemption, and the Holy Ghost thus sent, with Himself. Oh, what a thing, however humble the instrument, is true ministry! How is ruined self gone when it is true, and grace and power from God, though in an earthen vessel, its true and only character!

Hence we find it thus spoken of in Ephesians iv. 7: "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and received gifts for men." Such is our wondrous ground of ministry, Christ having gained a complete victory over Satan, and triumphantly led him captive through the cross, and gone up into the glory as man, prepared for Him in the counsels of God, and as man received the Holy Ghost for believers below, not

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only seals them with it for the day of redemption, but, according to the measure of His gift, makes them the vessels of testimony to His glory and the work of redemption, and those who were once slaves to Satan vessels of the power in which the warfare is carried on against him for the deliverance of others, and the building up those delivered, according to the glory in which Christ is, in spite of, and guarded from, his wiles, and the edifying of Christ's body.

Such is one great aspect of the ministry. Another follows in the same place. He who is ascended is the same also that descended first into the lower parts of the earth. He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things, and He gave some apostles, &c. Christ not only sits at the right hand of God, but He fills all things in the power, of redemption. He has not indeed yet risen up from His personal seat at the right hand of God, to make good by power His title to all, but, for faith, all is filled with it, not merely that God is

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everywhere, but that He who went below the creature place in death is far above all creature world in glory, and that through going down into death and hades; and faith can find no place from death to the throne of God, which is not the witness, not only of His title and power, but of that redemption glory by which He fills it in title as a delivered world by grace, and which He will possess, even as man, in power and glory. As yet He sits on the Father's throne, but with all power in heaven and in earth, the Father having delivered all things into His hand as man, but will rise up to possess heaven and earth; Lord of the dead and of the living, but divinely filling all for faith, in power, from the grave and hades to the throne of God. Thence in the assertion of His title, and redemption and glory, He has given apostles, and prophets, and pastors, and teachers, and evangelists, till we all come to a perfect man.

But as yet this is only a witness of it, He sitting at the right hand of God. But this testimony, though from the na-



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ture of God and the title of Christ, sent out into all the world, yet directly concerns, in its present effect, only the many sons, bringing to glory the joint-heirs, only they are out of all the world. The present power which set aside Satan's by the miracles of the world to come (Heb. vi.), when Satan will be wholly bound, there is no promise of the continuance of (1 Cor. 12), but of what concerned the sure bringing of the sons to glory, there is (Eph. iv.) till we all come. The foundation — apostles, prophets — that is laid, then pastors, teachers, evangelists. In Corinthians the gifts come from the Holy Ghost present down here, who sovereignly distributes to every man severally as He will, and their exercise regulated, and even stopped if need be. In Ephesians they are given from Christ on high, in the care that cannot fail of forming and edifying the church, and perfecting the individual saints to His own likeness and stature. This has in general a double character, as expressed in Colossians i. The ministry of the gospel to every

creature under heaven, and the ministry of the church to complete the word of God. Still, the perfecting of individual saints comes first even where the church is spoken of.

The great principles of service in ministry are, first, that it is service. Lowliness of heart and mind; for the presence of God, and especially His love, always makes lowly. Self and man is nothing, and knows it well before God, and love in its nature banishes self, hinders our seeking it. Next we are the vessels of that love, for Christianity is God Himself working in love, as we have seen; and we have the blessed privilege of going forth as witnesses of this, according to our gift, but always in the spirit of it. But this love is in Christ full and all-sufficient, but carrying this with it, the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead. With this there must be divinely given intelligence, the word of God, what we have seen of the plans and purposes of God; now, only so far accomplished as

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the personal exaltation of Christ, and our quickening together with Him, leading into the unity of the body of Christ, and so man, according to the power of the Holy Ghost, is a teacher.

But this ministry, too, is exercised in love, giving meat to God's household in due season. The pastor, though connected with this, goes farther. There is the positive care of souls, experimental acquaintance with their wants, and the suited application of Christ and His word to them, and all this in entire dependence on Christ, without whom we can do nothing : for after all grace comes from God, though He may deign to use us. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God gives the increase. The love of God, then, is the spring of all, its manifestation in salvation through Christ, and the work He has accomplished, and then the knowledge of His purposes, God's revealed wisdom, its subject matter, and the souls that belong to Him, the objects of a ministry of which Christ is the source and the power.

## SEEING AND FEEDING.

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There is another aspect in which we may present ministry, inasmuch as it is the ministry of the Spirit. The word is the sword of the Spirit—so only we can wield that sword. This also on one side is individual, the gift and power being of the Holy Ghost, the administration of it being under the Lord, and in this respect individual; but then the Spirit being there, each gift acts as a member of the body of Christ, and as the agency is in the power of the Spirit, which made the body one, so it returns in its effects to it, the work of the ministry, we read, the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come. But this would take us on to another ground than its nature and essential character.

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## SEEING AND FEEDING.

THERE are two ways of receiving the word of God, one I may call seeing, the other feeding on it; as it is expressed in James i. 23, 24, thus: “For

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if any be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass. For he beholdeth himself and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was." Here is the warning, lest any should be only the first, and not the second. The first is compared to a man beholding himself in a glass, and going his way, forgetting what manner of man he was, though for a moment he had seen it clearly enough. No figure can more distinctly describe the first than beholding oneself in a glass. The eye in a moment grasps the image, it is clearly and fully before it, but however clear and vivid it has no formative power. It is not from any lack of clearness in seeing it, but there was no hold on the mind beyond memory and thus the effect was soon effaced by the varied things which subsequently engage the attention, just as in another figure the thorns choke the word. On the other hand, feeding is the soul hearing the word, and keeping it. The engrafted word in divine power, dictat-

## SEEING AND FEEDING.

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ing to me a line of action in accordance with itself, supplying me with material for it. This is the doer of the word, and that man shall be blessed in his deed. There is a brilliancy in seeing to both the teacher and the learner; which while very attractive is often deceptive. There may be a very lucid and vivid exposition of the truth, perfectly genuine and fraught with all the marks of conviction; for at the moment it is clear before the mind as a face in the glass. There is a flow and animation in utterance too, which becomes more enthusiastic as the subject more unexpectedly and largely opens up to view, so much so that it has been said, "it is wise not to speak of a thing when it is first seen." Every servant of God knows when a truth, or a branch of it is, as it were, suddenly disclosed to him, and that if he then speaks of it, he is most energetic or declamatory, and though he be very sincere, yet he has not then the same practical weight. If he had fed on it, he could dwell more on its effects and beauties, and thus minister

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to souls a great reality deeply interesting, as it is not merely a vision, but the sustainment of the soul in living energy here, as it is said to Timothy, "Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all." Take heed to thyself and to the doctrine: continue in them: for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

Again, the servant will find that when it is seeing, that furnishes him with matter for his subject, and lends interest to his address, that it is his own side of things which occupies him, and on which he can insist with so much ardour and effect, like a Samson beating down his foes. The negative side of truth affords a great scope for the mind of man, and there can be a very severe exposure and denunciation of man, while there is little or none of the positive side of truth, the revelation of Christ—which after all is the real food for the soul. The servant who presents truth on which he has fed, presents and inculcates it quite differently from the one who merely

## SEEING AND FEEDING.

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sees it. The latter may be clearer and more comprehensive and animated, but there is as much difference between them as between the fruit of a tree and the leaves of it. The clear vivid expositor may convince me of the tree, and even captivate me with the beauty of it, as my knowledge is confirmed by him, but the one who has fed on it, occupies me with the fruit; something immeasurably greater is conveyed to my soul. Like only produces like. When it is only light which confers knowledge, there can be consequently only the same kind of knowledge. A man seeing a thing, however clearly, could not impart the same idea about it, as the man who had learned the course of it practically. And it is in practice too that one learns what is practicable, so that the difficulties are thus found out, which are never apprehended, in the mere sight of a truth; and with the difficulties, as I am dependent on the Lord, I prove the way and power of His grace to surmount them. A man could very clearly see the route and the stages of the



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journey from Egypt to Canaan, but the one who had also travelled it could in a peculiar way prepare you for both the exigencies and resources experienced there.

One word more as to the learners: there is great danger in a day like this, when the effort abroad is to help the mind as much as possible, by means of pictures and vivid descriptions, to work an instantaneous impression, that learners in divine things should fall into the same snare, and that in reading or hearing, they should be more occupied with the line or knowledge imparted, than with the instruction or edification which it is to effect—even that I am to be a doer of what I hear. This is the great and distinctive difference between hearing or reading a scientific lecture and the word of God. In the former, the better I can remember it, or retail it, the better and the larger my knowledge, while on the other, it is not so much what I remember, but what my conscience takes in, as a contribution from the Lord to me; and from which

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He will expect a return, for the word is the material by which He forms me into His own mind and manner. I have no doubt that note-taking and other helps to the mere memory, defeat and hinder the work of feeding or edification in the soul. If one remembers, the tendency is to deceive oneself with the idea of possessing the truth. True, the line, or the knowledge of it is retained; but it is of little good in itself if not fed on; whereas what the soul really feeds on there is no fear of one ever forgetting, for we have grown thereby, and the way we act proves it. Strength is the result of feeding; and the evidence of strength is the ease with which we meet every variety of circumstance which may arise; passing triumphantly through every difficulty unruffled, not only in manner, but in spirit.

May the Lord give us not only to see, but to feed on what we see.

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## 94      A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

to all progress. It is not in things grossly wrong, but in things right and lawful in themselves, but they are fatal to the testimony when I am brought under the power of any. The second—to walk in faith, is a comfort to me, when the first is accepted and observed; and the third—no power but by the Spirit of God, gives unbounded confidence to the heart simply guided by, and dependent on the word of God.

Thus the blessed God in the lowest state of things assures us that “there shall be a tenth [a remnant], as a teil tree and as an oak whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves.” Nothing for the public eye—no leaves, but yet the substance is there—all the power of the grace given us of God.

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 FRAGMENT.

THE Lord is working now in and with His saints, that they might not suffer loss at the judgment seat of Christ; but that He might have things of *beauty* to present to Himself.

## GERSHOM.

Exodus ii. 22.

WHILE the wilderness we travel  
Nought save dreariness around,  
Not a gleam of earthly sunshine,  
Only storm and tempest found.

Rich the joy of surely knowing  
Home and rest are all above !  
Won by Him on earth a stranger,  
Proving timeless, changeless love.

See Him stooping down from glory,  
Lowly, humbled, sorrowing here ;  
Scorned of earth, by man rejected,  
No bright spot His heart to cheer.

See Him all along His journey,  
From the mountain\* to the cross,  
Save His Father's love how lonely,  
Meeting shame, contempt and loss.

\* He reaches His highest glory as a man on Mount Tabor, and then descended to Calvary.

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Want and woe in man's sad story,  
Never wearied His blest ear ;  
Widowed hearts and orphans' sorrows  
Found in Him relief and cheer.

See Him in His hour of travail,  
Contrast to our path below ;  
We have Him for every sorrow,  
He had nought save deepest woe.

Wrath of God in fiercest judgment,  
Borne alone upon the tree,  
Love that passeth every knowledge,  
Now flows forth unstraitened, free.

Raised from death, His Father's glory  
Claims Him Victor for His throne ;  
There alone His ransomed know Him.  
There alone their joys and home.

Here they wander through death's valley  
He beside them, yet on high ;  
They like Him on earth but strangers,  
He with them for ever nigh.

Soon His shout will greet His pilgrims,  
Welcome long-loved home and rest ;  
Now by faith enjoyed and entered,  
Then with Him for ever blest !

## PROPITIATION, SUBSTITUTION, AND ATONEMENT.

PROPITIATION is properly for sins, as Hebrews ii. and 1 John i., and Romans iii. 25, 26, is to the same effect. Only Christ having taken the condemnation for sin, persons who do not search out words exactly may speak of the effect as for sin. Sin as calling for it was not properly known in the Old Testament. Leviticus i. does not, as far as I see, apply to this, except in a very general way. It was as a *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* that God condemned sin in the flesh, in Christ for us, so that there was no condemnation for us. (Lev. i.) All is sweet savour, though blood was shed and atonement made. Man's state is no doubt assured, that is, sin, but the condemnation side is not what is in view, but acceptance; but in *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* sin is properly in view. In propitiation sins are in view. Substitution is a human word, though a right one, but properly it is sins, that is, the scape-goat in contrast with the

## 98      A VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL.

Lord's lot. Sin, as such, is never forgiven. God condemned sin in the flesh, but Christ took this place, was given *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, and knowing no sin, was made it. The condemnation of sin in the flesh took place, and that in death, and we are dead with Him. For faith it has ceased to exist, the condemnation of it gone. Death in Christ involves both. Guilt is from sins. We are dead to sin with Christ, but He has died for our sins. This last is what is properly atonement and meets judgment. Death to sin is a question of state, not of guilt, though of exclusion from God. A question of defilement (not guilt) refers, and rightly, to what was done in the sanctuary, which was defiled, not guilty, which in full apprehension of the work has its importance.

The scape-goat had to do with personal guilt, the blood on the mercy-seat with approach to God, but the sanctuary was cleansed. The word "atonement" is very vague and never used in the English New Testament, but once, where it ought not to be. In the Old Testament

## PAULINE EPISTLES.

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בִּסֶּר to make atonement, refers to the removal of positive guilt out of God's sight; and as I have said, sin properly does not come into question in the Old Testament, though birth in it is recognised in one place. (Ps. li. 5.) Only everywhere the sweet savour of Christ's acceptance is figured. Man's simple condition is recognised, and the work that is infinitely acceptable is in view of this. But this, though it assumes it, does not deal with sin in itself. "Lost" and "guilty" are different, one my state, the other my responsibility and guilty failure.

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THOUGHTS ON THE PAULINE  
EPISTLES.

## 1 AND 2 CORINTHIANS.

As we pass on from Galatians to Corinthians, we turn from the legal to the lawless—from the house of God in its aspect towards the Jew, to its arrangements towards the Gentile world.



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Corinth was one of the worst of bad cities. There it is the Holy Ghost has exhibited, for our profit, an assembly of saints on the ground of the assembly of the living God. We are now, as it were, on full Pauline ground, as he was the apostle to the Gentiles.

In Galatians, the *assemblies* of a district are addressed, just like the camps of Israel, expressing the order, beauty, and grace of the camp in its *outward* ways before man. It is the oneness of the house of sons, on higher ground by far than "the sons of Israel" of old. In Corinthians, an *assembly* only is addressed. It is like the camp of Levi (Num. i. 51-53; ii. 17) in the midst of "the camps." For, after the tabernacle, in Exodus, was pitched outside the camp, we find, in Numbers, Levi only was to surround it, forming a nucleus or centre. It is thus, more the *inner* arrangements of the church we shall trace in our epistle. It is seen more in its unity.

In the former epistle, it *is* the *Lord* is faithful. Here it is, "*God* is faithful"

(Chap. i. 9.) It is the assembly of God: &c. Christ is the Son-servant, as in Mark. The saints are called into the fellowship of God's Son. (Chap. i. 9.) He who was "made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might become the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. v. 21.) Sin and corruption are the themes on the one hand, amid boastfulness and lawlessness; on the other, Christ crucified, as the end of all man's wisdom and self-exaltation, is the remedy, and the righteousness of God, the power to expose evil and raise above it. "*Out from God, he is made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the LORD.*" Christ is not only the end of law for righteousness: He—subsisting in righteousness of God—overthrows all the pride of Gentile wisdom and Jewish sign-seeking. On earth, it is Christ crucified; this is the theme of the first epistle; in heaven, it is divine righteousness in glory—this is the theme of the second. In the first,

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it is more the Red Sea as separating from Egypt. In the second, the Jordan and its results.

It is evident that the Corinthians had refused the full measure for a heavenly man, as much as had the Galatians, though in another way. The latter were "fallen from grace," law being resorted to to keep the flesh under. The former, while accepting the grace of God, sought to make it a license for the flesh. How witheringly does the apostle speak in chapter ii. In chapter i. the saints are in Him, who is "*out* from God, made wisdom," &c. Hence, Paul came among those who "reigned as kings," "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." This is very blessed and encouraging for those who know they are unable to cope with the vain-glory and flesh-exaltation of man. The way to meet it is to be as *nothing*. Paul had been in paradise in order to have resources for this nothingness; he would know nothing among the wise of this world, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

How galling to those who gloried in man so much, to find there were two classes of believers—the “spiritual” and the “carnal.” (Chaps. ii. 15 ; iii. 1.) “The natural man” was distinct from either. To be “perfect” (chap. ii. 6), man, lawless, as well as legal, must be seen and owned to be gone in the cross. Even the one who planted and the one who watered, are only vessels in God’s hands—Jesus Christ is the only foundation for God’s assembly.

When God’s standard—“the Heavenly One”—is ignored, divine power cannot be known for walk. “The earthy one” was the head of the “natural” family. “As is the heavenly such are they also that are heavenly.” Before God all the heavenly family are “as He.” The carnal would not thus be owned. The Corinthians sought to be earthly. Paul will not allow of it. In days of old there was the Ahab class and Elijah, the two extremes. Obadiah sought to be joined to both. It could not be. So Jonathan sought to connect David with Saul. Impossible! At Corinth, the

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world was not refused ; its glory, status, and wisdom, were accepted. The heavenly line was declined from, though professedly on the ground of the assembly of God.

Hence in chapter vi. the one who professes to accept grace, when flesh is allowed, actually *goes to law*—even though he refuses to be *under* it. Selfishness is thoroughly rampant. The body, not “kept under,” hurries us onwards in the will of the flesh. The Galatians *looked* more consistent ; hence, the snare of legality is more difficult to detect. But, at Corinth we see the awful lengths to which flesh can run when the cross is not applied thereto, even though grace be gloried in.

In chapter vii., it is beautiful to see how Paul insists on the Creator’s orderings for man, as in human life, to be duly owned. However lawless man may be—however carnal wisdom may seek to make exaction ; the one who rose above everything below, and counted all things loss, never despises the creature of God. It is “good” and even

“sanctified.” (1 Tim. iv. 4.) The power of life in Christ may rise above what is even “lawful;” but it never speaks lightly of aught in the old creation arranged by God. It is the heavenly man of Philippians who writes thus to the Corinthians.

The fact is, the one who knows most of the sphere wholly above nature—where *all* is gone, “old things passed away,”—is the one who fully respects all our ties on earth in the wilderness. The two spheres are quite distinct : and to be fully owned by the saint. In the lower sphere, we are “having food and raiment, *therewith* to be content” and the flesh is kept out, if we know the higher sphere where divine righteousness dwells.

The close of chapter ix. (and chap. x.) is solemn. Paul is the example ; he says, “*I* keep under my body, lest I myself should be a castaway.” What are *you* doing ? Was Paul afraid of being finally lost ? Nay. But he knew what true responsibility is. In chapter viii. 11, he shews that the weak brother

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perishes, if the strong causes him to stumble. This is the same principle of responsibility; God views my act as to its full results, just as if the brother *was* lost. I am accountable, and held so. How suitable the arrow for the conscience! Hence, Paul adds, “*All our fathers were under the cloud,*” &c. All professed separation from Egypt, but only Joshua and Caleb were true.

From chapters x.—xiv. we have truth for the guidance of saints in the assembly of God as long as the desert-way lasts. In chapter x. we have the centre start—the very kernel itself—the communion of the blood, and the communion of the body of Christ. Our place on earth is changed. We shew forth His death. It is “one loaf”—not twelve, as with the shew-bread. We do not forget the wilderness as we “keep the feast;” but we have the sheaf of “the morrow after the sabbath” (Christ risen) to feed on *in the land*. Thus we can eat unleavened bread. The shew-bread was laid from sabbath to sabbath, that is, during the seven

periods of the old creation. *We* announce His death till He comes till then, and in unity too.

In chapter xi. the guests at the table are considered. What a state they may be in ! One hungry, another drunken ! What robes before men. Yet even here the wondrous rod of grace and power is displayed. "If we judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." Divine righteousness cannot bear with sin ; but it has power to convict, chasten, and fully restore. May we understand more of its blessed unfoldings.

Chapter xii. is more outward, the gifts come in which bring a wider thought than communion (chap. x.), and the guests at table. (Chap. xi.) Chapter xiv. is wider still. We, as an assembly, are seen before the unconverted ; who may come in (ver. 23) and behold the order of the assembly. Chapter xiii. (love) is, as it were, a link between the preceding and following chapters. Chap-



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ter xii. exemplifies "the spirit of power." Chapter xiii. the "spirit of love." Chapter xiv. "of a sound mind."

Chapter xv. shews us that Paul has to "declare" the gospel to the Corinthians. An imperfect view of the gospel of God is often at the root of many evils. It is not only sins cleared away; but "as is the Heavenly One, such are they also that *are* HEAVENLY." Not only is this the standing they took, if they were believers; but they are to look *on*, not *back*. It is "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the *image* of the heavenly."

The second epistle follows. We find the resources of life in glory pouring forth in 2 Corinthians. I can only glance at this, as already I have gone beyond my intention of merely touching on the moral bearing of these epistles.

Paul's attitude between the two epistles is that of awaiting the repentance of the offending ones. Then comes in the fulness of "the ministration of the Spirit," and the ministration of God's

righteousness. *Practical* death is the result. It is the Jordan aspect of Christ's death. He is leading on to that view of the power out of death which Elisha saw when Elijah divided the river with his mantle. He is viewing, not so much a suffering Christ, as a dead Christ as to this scene; but in doing so he rises to the place where he is now.

If glory is the goal for us, *death* must be the answer to it (2 Cor. i. 9) practical death. Thus only can "the abundance . . . . of the gift of righteousness" be enjoyed.

In the first epistle, Paul stands, as it were, on earth—looking around on "all the assemblies." (Chap. xiv. 33.) In the second, he soars away into the sphere where all the sustenance of the assembly of God is found, and pours down the full resources of the God of grace and glory. He can tell them he was *there*. (Chap. xii.) He is an ambassador from thence. (Ver. 20.) What wondrous grace! Not only is the failing restored, but power is given to

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enable us "always to bear about in the body the dying of Jesus." The cross ended all man's wisdom in the first epistle: the dying of Jesus is to be daily expressed in the power of life-glory in the second. Glory without death will end in the *scarlet* of the woman of Revelation xviii. In 2 Corinthians we have not only death for the conscience but for the *heart* too. Yet *Christ* is sufficient for everything.

It is Jesus only. It is He where He is, and His cross and death are the weapons of our warfare. (2 Cor. xiv.) *Here* we die daily, *there* we "become the righteousness of God in him."

How suitably we find the practical working of the body of Christ in these epistles! It is out of the world of sinners that the individuals who, as co-quickeners with Christ in divine righteousness, form that body, are taken. The thought of this unity is not brought forward in Galatians—though our sonship is. It is out of the waters of the deluged world the "one pearl of great price" is raised—as

to the *individuals* in it. Washed, sanctified, and justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. In the Corinthian aspect, the assembly is shewn forth in the earthly sphere; the old-creation relationships of all in the body of Christ are sanctified. (1 Cor. vii. 14.) My body is “for the Lord;” for I am as joined to Him, “one spirit,” and a member of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. My body—as “washed with pure water” is a holy vessel. Indeed the great theme of these two epistles, as to the individual saint, is his mortal body, as a vessel for Christ.

Paul is watching over this “pearl”—as he says, “I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”

Many may enjoy the truth in 1 and 2 Corinthians in a measure, who want not the consecrated power of the Paul of Philippians. Practical holiness is the fruit of righteousness. As I am *transformed* into the image of Christ’s glory, I display the beauty of holiness. I not

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only refuse all that is of this evil world around me; I rise above nature altogether—nature having *no fruit* for God. This leads us to Philippians where we see “the dayspring from on high” *reproducing* Himself in a mortal vessel, able to count everything loss—not only in a polluted *world*, but in the whole *earth* “made subject to vanity.”

The Lord give us to see the divine purity and beauty in Him in whom we have become God’s righteousness. Man’s measures are but “fig-leaves” after all, however his moral sense may admire his standard of morality. “*Out from God*,” Christ is “made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”

So far, does it seem to me, do we find Eliezer leading the Rebecca on through the desert. Through grace, delivered from the snares of Sinai as the legal man attacked her; through grace, delivered from the pollutions of the world, the flesh in its deepest corruptions. We have reached “the plains

## THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY. 113

of Moab, on this side Jordan by Jericho." It is the Jordan-side of the sea: the legal and the lawless one is thus distanced—the practical effect of being dead to law, and dead to sin and from the elements of the world—in Christ Jesus.

The next truth to be developed is the Jordan in its *Gilgal* aspect, and with reference to the heavenly place of the saint. Philippians will give us the history of the heavenly man on earth: nature itself, not despised or disowned, but superseded by grace, in an epistle where sin is not even named.

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## THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

## HOW TO REFUTE INFIDELITY.

ATHEISM, or the entire and absolute denial of a Supreme Being, is not the great subject to be encountered in this day, nor is it the subject controverted in the Bible. But the revelation of God according to His nature, is on every

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consequence of sin, but He was made sin for us and bore our sins in His own body on the tree.

But this is not all. Though there are not now the same kind of miracles as testimony of the goodness of God, there are even greater works in a moral way. The grace of Christ now transforms the man in mind and heart, more distinctly and perfectly than he was relieved of disease and bodily suffering by Christ's hand when He was on earth. Hence, the greater works now since His ascension to the right hand of the Father, are the true evidences of His power here, and by them, seen in us practically, can the infidelity of the hour be refuted. The lame beggar (morally) elevated, walking and leaping and praising God, is incontrovertible evidence of the mighty power of God in His goodness and grace to me, and that there is none other name given among men, by which we must be saved.

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## CONDITION AND POSITION.

“PREPARE thy work without and make it fit for thyself in the field, and afterwards build thine house.” Proverbs xxiv. 27.

There is nothing more humiliating or indicative of unworthiness than adopting a place or name one is not entitled to. True grace in the boundlessness of God's goodness, gives me a place or position before I have any fitness for it, or am in any way deserving of it, but the contrary. But then it never presupposes that I occupy any part of the great position to which I am entitled and called, without being in condition for it. That in principle would be similar to the man at the wedding table, without the wedding garment. Of course he had no title to be there, but he sought position without condition, and this is to be guarded against, even when the title is unquestionable.

Jonathan had undoubted title to his



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seat at the king's table, yet the king excused him as not being in a condition to occupy it.

It would be unhappy to oneself as well as unsuitable for fellowship and therefore affecting others, if it were approved, that one could occupy a position (though positively entitled to it) when not in a condition for it. The very position itself demands a condition suited to itself.

We are entitled, nay "have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which he has 'consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh,'" but surely no one could enter, except with his "heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and his body washed with pure water;" that was his condition for it, and that was surely before he entered in. The very attempt to enter in would lead to this preparation, as the only true condition for it; and very often, it is because there is no desire or seeking to enter in, that one can continue in a condition unfit for doing so. The prodigal

## CONDITION AND POSITION. 125

son was fit for the Father's house before he entered it.

The effort of the Pharisee is to impress on those around him that he is entitled to the position he assumes, though really he has no claim anyway to it. A man of simple integrity in the world, would not assume or venture to occupy a position for which he was unfitted, and had no title. But what is despised and refused in worldly matters is often adopted and excused in religious things. A hypocrite is one who assumes to be religiously what he is not; whether it be pretending to be more for God than he is, or from fear concealing what he really is.

It is simple and natural for the cleansed leper with loud voice to glorify God, acknowledging the service rendered to him. He was fit to take the place of a worshipper, because he was in the consciousness of the goodness of God. But when one, for example, takes his place at the Lord's table, he gives the impression that he not only has title to be there, which every believer has,

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and that the Lord has called him, but that he is answering to the terms in which he was invited, "Do this in remembrance of me." If he be there to remember only of his sins put away, and does not "examine himself" (1 Cor. xi.), his condition is not up to his position and he assumes a position for which he is not fitted.

Again if a believer connects himself with those who avow distinct separation from all worldly order in the assembly of God, in entire dependence on the Holy Ghost, is he in a condition to assume the position, if at the time he has no intention of breaking from the world, or from associations where human order or system is approved? I do not speak of the measure, but of the purpose of heart; and one may have made very little progress in separation, but the question is, is he impressed with the gravity of taking a great and most blessed position, and does he feel it solemnly incumbent on him to be in a condition answering to it? For otherwise he assumes and gains credit for

## WORKING WITH CHRIST. 127

what he is not, and he slights the position by his irreverent disregard of a condition corresponding thereto, so that it might be said to him in a modified way, "Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?"

The Lord lead every saint in this day to see the high and glorious position to which he is entitled by the work of Christ, and in the Spirit to have such a sense of its moral height, that while eager to adopt it, he may be earnest in obtaining the grace which fits him for it.

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## WORKING WITH CHRIST.

How little in general we work *with* Christ! We look at people and their state, as it appears to us, and try to meet it; but how little there is of the other side! watching God's way with them, looking to see how *He* is working, and then acting in concert with Him; giving the suited word when He has prepared for it; waiting patiently when He waits. Patient waiting and giving up people are so different. He never gives up, though

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He waits long ; and if we do, then He calls some one else to do what He wants done. It is so hard to keep nature out of our services. I should like to get a sense of what each one is to Christ ; that He has a special purpose with regard to them, and that if I am in His mind about them, He will be able to use me in carrying out that purpose.

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## FRAGMENT.

THERE is a wonderful difference practically between the way one who is dwelling in the peace of God does things, and one who is not. The former is the only fit person to go into service. It is a great mistake for one who is not walking in God's own peace to go into service ; he gives the colour of his own state to whatever he does. If you are in God's peace you are quiet and calm ; you do not make yourself prominent ; there is no effort about you. You are an expression of the peace which you possess ; and the " God of peace " is manifestly with you.

## MARKS OF BEING IN CANAAN.

THERE are three marks to be acquired and adhered to, before one can be in Canaan, as Abram by faith was. The first is the practical response to the word, "*Get thee out of thy country.*" No one can set out for Canaan, Canaan is not really the object of his faith, unless he can break from the political interests connected with his own country. He cannot truly adopt another country, unless he has resolved to sever himself from his own. He can no longer be one of this great social political system, because another country, laid hold of by faith through the word, claims him ; and to reach it, is the resolve and delight of his heart. A believer cannot really have accepted by faith the call of God to another country, while he is part and parcel of the order and government of this one. Hence the first mark of being on the way to Canaan, is breaking away from every political position and honour here. When this is done, there is manifest proof that the heart has accepted

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the call of God, and has begun the journey.

But even when this has been done, there is very often a long interval before the second mark is acquired, which is, "*And from thy kindred.*" To break away from one's own relations; to become as it were an alien to one's mother's children, is a step of no small magnitude and self-sacrifice. But it is evident that if this second mark be not confirmed, you are only like one who has retired from all public life. You are politically dead; but you live still socially, in your own country, enjoying the society of your own people, and possibly the best loved and most respected by them, like Lot, who "sat in the gate of Sodom." You can only acquire this mark by refusing distinctly and clearly association with them, on merely a natural level. I believe as a rule that when one is able to take this step fully, he is over the most difficult one in the journey, though if he has not done it quite heartily, the *third* mark will never be arrived at,

## MARKS OF BEING IN CANAAN. 131

Now this third mark is, "*And from thy father's house.*" All the pride of life and one's own consequences as a man is connected with this. A "father" in scripture represents the one from whom I have derived. Can I bear to abrogate my father's house, and leave myself without a derivation? Practically many a one who has surrendered place and position in the world, who has honestly and distinctly reached the first mark, and is endeavouring to reach the second, does not see that there is no evidence that he is in Canaan, until he bears the third mark, until he has made this great renunciation. Hence, Abram's father had actually to die before he came into the land of Canaan. To be without a father morally, to have no derivation, effects a wonderful moral change in one. How could the traces and badges of former position and calling be retained, if I had really entered on an entirely new career, not at all belonging to my old country? The world, our old country, appoints certain badges and costumes to distinguish, and secure respect for its



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citizens. The minister of God in one, the military citizen in another, the man of position in another; and all this is called the fashion. Can I really have left my father's house, and am I without a derivation when I preserve traces of my former position? True it is a long time before the world's dye is worn out of our ways and appearance, but do we feel that this is to be deplored, and are we truly and indefatigably endeavouring to get rid of it in every way, or do we rather retain, it in order to secure some consideration from those who, like ourselves, have not entered Canaan? It is of the deepest importance that we should see that we really have not come into Canaan,—that there is not simple faith working in power in us, in answer to the call of God, unless these three marks are borne by us and insisted on.

May the Lord use this little word to awaken us to "forget the things that are behind," the things that belong to the country from which we came out, for His name's sake.

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## DISCIPLINE IN THE SCHOOL OF GOD.

EZEKIEL.—*Continued.*

### Chapter xii.

It is a great encouragement that the “same afflictions are accomplished in our brethren that are in the world;” that the servant of God in other days, suffered like things as we do now. Ezekiel has to contend with the same unbelieving spirit in his day as we have in our day. If they say in this day, “Where is the promise of his coming?” they said in that day, “the days are prolonged, and every vision faileth.” (Chap. xii. 22.) The less the natural mind can see of the ways of God or His purpose, the more the spiritual man is simply cast on the word of God and assured by it in faith. Hence the answer to this infidel taunt is “The days are at hand and the effect of every vision.” To make it true to the prophet, again the word of the Lord came

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Chapter xv. It is the vine-tree ; nothing in itself naturally, yet it was the emblem of God's people on the earth to delight the heart of God and man. When it took its place among other trees it was nothing ; "how much less shall it be meet for any work when the fire had devoured it," for God "will set his face against them."

Chapter xvi. is a review of all God's ways in grace to Israel, and details how wickedly they turned out : hence it is said to the prophet, "Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abomination." It is very necessary that the servant should not only see the judgment of God in the vine-tree, but that he should clearly and distinctly set before the Lord's professed people, their fall and departure from the place and condition in which God had set them. Perhaps there is a deficiency in our ministry on this head ; namely, that we do not sufficiently cause Jerusalem to know her abomination. A servant is never able with point and vigour to expose the declension of others, unless he has

been preserved or rescued from that declension himself.

From this to the end of chapter xxxix. the prophet is not only educated into the mind of God regarding all the nations in connection with Israel; but to him is declared the counsel of God. And now after this vast range of judgment he can wind up with the gracious tidings of the blessed God. "I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgments that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them . . . . Neither will I hide my face any more from them, for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel saith the Lord God."

*(To be continued.)*

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## THOUGHTS ON THE PAULINE EPISTLES.

### PHILIPPIANS.

In Luke, we see the Holy One passing through the scene of man's ruin in the power of "the Eternal Spirit," and

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through the cross, opening a door into paradise. It is "By the which will we are *sanctified*, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. The will of God was perfectly expressed in Man. It is more than the ending of the first man. It is the earth bereft of the "Sent One." The withdrawal of this Holy One from among men is the end of anything for *sense* to see of God below. The expression of the beauty and grace of heaven is gone in "the circumcision of the Christ." Now, "we [the saints] are the circumcision" having passed away with Him who left the scene as one *without a character*, being "numbered with the transgressors." (Is. liii., Luke xxii.) He takes a dying robber, crucified as in *man's* righteousness—into Paradise, and takes him thither in *divine* righteousness.

The Christ of Luke was the expression of the Holy place on earth. He was the Holy Perfume, the Shew-bread, the Candlestick. He passed away from earth and was "carried up into heaven." (Luke xxiv. 51.) The saints are to be

the expression of it now. Men below are to see the saints as the shew-bread placed on the table from sabbath to sabbath, during the seven days of time, while the light (Phil. ii. 15, 16) of the candlestick shines during the night. Such is Paul in Philippians. This is consecration.

Saints, elders and deacons are all on a par here. (Phil. i. 1.) Galatians was rather the *camp* of the people of God: Corinthians, the holy place as the *court* of the tabernacle. The Epistle we now consider is the display, in man, of Him who was "the first tent" (Heb. ix. 2) when on earth.

Neither Luke nor Philippians takes in mere profession: each is written to reality, to *saints* only. Luke is intensely individual; and so is Philippians; yet it is addressed to a local assembly. (Chap. iv. 15.)

In Corinthians we had, doctrinally unfolded, a contrast between the defiled world and the God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. The believer, as "heavenly" (1 Cor. xv.),

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must insist on cleansing himself according to this standard. In Philippians, it is the heavenly one too, but heavenliness in contrast to man as man—even in innocence; it is the Divine, supporting the heavenly character—the golden taches supporting the blue. Philippians ii. is in contrast with the man who used his own will: the two men are there, as in the beginning of Luke (chap. iii.), the one who exalted himself and was thus ruined; the other who “emptied Himself,” and passed into His glory through the death of the cross. “Wherefore God hath highly exalted him.” This is the weak dependent One, whom we traced in the gospel where grace was displayed as displacing nature and its energies.

What, then, is the snare of the church on its way through the desert, as seen in this Epistle? It is the weakness of *nature*. Sin is not the theme.

The Philippian saints would fain cling to a *visible* man: of course being assured that he was true, and able to help them, and this is precisely our

danger. We find nature empty ; on whom are we to depend ? Are we to own some Moses or Elias *with* Christ ? It is often a critical time. Paul knows this, and he must WEAN the Philippians. Hence he says—"Wherefore my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Why not get rid of the fear and trembling by leaning on such an one as Paul ? Surely he was competent to guide and teach them ; "It is God," he says, "who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." I believe many a true-hearted Philadelphian who passes on from the impurity of Sardis towards the "*Holy* and the *True*" of Philadelphia, is snared in his course, because he dreads the result of unceasing dependence on the Lord. Paul was a Gideon, but he took care that no one should have any materials for an ephod (Judg. ix. 24, 27), through his instrumentality. He "forgot all behind ;" he leaves nothing with the saints but Christ;



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even the expression of love which the Philippian saints send to him, he only receives it for Christ. (iv. 17, 18.) The odour of the ointment fills the house, but to Paul it is a "sacrifice, acceptable, well-pleasing to God;" he sends it up on high as it were, that none of it may be lost below; and receives nothing for self.

Chapters ii. and iii. give us the two sides of consecration. As "the circumcision," we rise higher and higher in the power of God's righteousness, while we "die daily" even in human existence below. Ever rising on the wing (chap. iii.) and ever on the path of the humbled One,—the Man of Luke. (Chap. ii.) Were we only occupied with Him as we trace Him in humiliation, where should we receive energy for our supernatural course? Hence it is "I count all things loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, . . . and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the

righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death." "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The gem is set in the gold of glory, but it is not seen there by man's (the uncircumcised's) eyes. *Death* is the setting for it before man on *earth*. Stephen said nothing about the "glory" to his audience in Acts vii. His eye fed on the glorified Man, but what he displayed here was the Man of Philippians ii.—the humbled Man. This is an Elisha, walking here in the spirit of the ascended Elijah, and this is a Philippian, one "filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." (Chap. i. 11.) It is not talking about our place in glory that will prove us to be there; it is "always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus." Thus, His life of lowliness and self-renunciation is manifested in our body. We may speak of

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glory; but it is "the glory of the *Christ*" (2 Cor. iii.); and we are in Him.

In the beginning of chapter iv. we find again the danger that may arise from weak nature. Jars may arise, and Paul says, "I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord." He knew how to deal with it. How many movements of nature among saints might be settled and extinguished by judicious and loving care such as Paul displays here. How apt we are to raise up flesh in our brethren, when we might display the beauty of Christ before them, thus making them of the same mind in the Lord! If in ourselves we condemn all movements of aught that is not of Him, we shall be the more able to meet the differences which we may find among our brethren, in the spirit of Paul.

The church has seen one man at least in mortal flesh, who glorified her Lord, below as far as a poor earthen vessel could. He who ruined man in Eden saw one magnificent proof of what

eternal life could display in an earthen vessel. The Holy Ghost records it all.

Paul in Philippians is in imperfection, what Christ is in Luke in perfection,—the heavenly man passing through the earth, as the vessels of the tabernacle, were carried through the wilderness covered with a cloth of blue. The blue is the thing seen in both, with this difference that with Christ it concealed glory too great for the eye of man to behold, yet “he could not be hid.”

In this Epistle we have the answer to Luke xiv. 26, 27, 33, the three impediments to the disciple's course. Where is the man who “hates” his father and mother, &c., yea, “his *own life* also?” Paul in Philippians. He gives (ch. iii. 5, 6) *seven* (the perfect number) links of earthly perfection in a good Jew. He was not an Ishmael: but an Isaac, he was “circumcised the eighth day,” he was not an Esau, who despised his birth-right; but “of the stock of (not even a “Jacob,” but) Israel.” Among the twelve sons of this patriarch, he was of the tribe who took, with Judah, true

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ground when Israel apostatized. He was "an Hebrew of Hebrews"—both parents true descendants of Abraham. Such was the four matters of boasting *earthwards*. Then, *Godwards*; his separation was complete, his zeal great, and his walk outwardly blameless. These things are "dung" now. Then, what man bears his cross and comes after the sent One? Paul in Philippians. He can weep over those who do not see that the cross is the end of all human glory below. (Chap. iii. 18.) And who is he that forsakes *all* that he hath? Paul again. It is not only the things that were given to him he *counted* loss; but "*I am counting all things as loss.*" As a steward-son of light (Luke xvi.) he proves he has been *in* the "Father's house," (Luke xv.) for he invites to the joy thereof. Rejoice (he says) alway, and adds, "Again I say, rejoice." Not a particle of care has he; and enjoins others to let their "yieldingness be known to all men." He has forsaken all; yet he can take up all once more for the Lord, as he presses on to "the

resurrection from among the dead." He is in a hidden resurrection, morally, having reached perfection, since he has *perfect sight* to see the "all things now ready" in the banqueting-house of glory, but he longs to be beside his Lord, as perfected with Him; the body of humiliation changed; and weakness, "fear and trembling," gone for ever.

Lord Jesus, we turn to *Thee*, even from the great servant of Philippians. The Holy Ghost carries to us the incense of his consecration to *Thee*, so humble—so dead, is the vessel. But even *he* failed: he displayed the weakness of nature, and the same Spirit discloses this also. His *model* was Christ (chap. ii.) his object Christ (iii.), and he would not have us lean on him, but on the One he expressed so wondrously. He still would say "Work out your *own* salvation with fear and trembling:" let *God* be all things, having no care, that *His* Christ alone may be your example and mark.

And what remains for our consideration in the moral order we have been

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considering in these Epistles? We have seen, in Philippians, the heavenly man on earth, in full energy for descending in the wilderness-place, and ascending in the heavenlies. We now turn, strange to say, to evil once more, in 1 and 2 Thessalonians; just as in the transition from Luke, where the "creature" is still owned by the Creator, to the *devil*-chaos of apostasy in John. In the latter we see the *person* of Jesus the Eternal one of counsel, in contrast with and triumphant over, the *person* of the wicked one; and in the two Epistles to the Thessalonians, we shall see the person of the divine Son brought out in power against the devil manifested in his trinity of evil.

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 THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

 THE PRESENT PORTION OF THE  
 BELIEVER.

"A GIFT is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it, whithersoever it turneth it prospereth." The posses-

## THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY. 149

sion of any good thing imparts a sense which far greater things, in the most assured expectancy, never can. Hence the importance of ascertaining what is the present portion of the believer. Every believer, from Abel down, has something specially bestowed on him through grace, which was his "precious stone," and whithersoever it turned it prospered."

Abel's was that his offering was accepted of God: this palpably and convincingly was assured to him. Let him die, this prospered, and the present was not only perfected in the future, but he had a present thing, so that he was in quite a new state to what he was before he had received it.

Enoch walked with God, that was his present portion and gift, that whithersoever it turned it prospered.

Noah was saved through the ark, and blessed on the earth; that was his present portion, and he knew the good of it.

Abraham was the friend of God, with a favour so great that whithersoever it turned it prospered.



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notable addition to my present portion. Where two or three of us are gathered to His name, He is in our midst, for comfort, counsel, or help of any kind.

We are learning to "comprehend with all saints the breadth and length and depth and height of all His counsel and to know the love of Christ . . . that we might be filled into all the fulness of God." And to this must be added that we receive gifts from our ascended Lord for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body until we all come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

In this world, where man is a weak creature, we are called to "be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, to resist all the wiles of the devil." To know assuredly that I can do all things through Him who gives me power, that is, that there is power from Him for me to do anything, so that in every or in any case, I should be

superior to the adverse power here ; all contingent on our simple dependence. “If ye ask anything in my name, I will do it.” Hence prayers and supplications become us, as dependent ones, but they only indicate where our resources are, so that not only for ourselves, or our own individual need do we pray, but “for all saints.” Still more “supplications, prayers, intercessions are made for all men.”

Whether then in the light and glory of His presence, or in the obstructions and weakness of our present creaturehood, we have a present portion incomprehensible in magnitude as well as of unutterable blessedness. “The lines are fallen unto us in pleasant places, we have a goodly heritage.”

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## “PAUL A SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST.”

“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”

Christ! I am Christ's, and let the name suffice you,

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Aye, for me, too, He greatly hath sufficed,  
Lo, with no winning words I would entice  
you ;  
Paul has no honour and no friend but  
Christ.

Yes, without cheer of sister or of daughter,  
Yes, without stay of father or of son, "  
Lone on the land, and homeless on the  
water,  
Pass I in patience till the work be done.

Yet not in solitude, if Christ a-near me  
Waketh Him workers for the great employ ;  
Oh not in solitude, if souls that hear me  
Catch from my joyance the surprise of joy.

Hearts I have won of sister or of brother,  
Quick on the earth, or hidden in the sod ;  
Lo, every heart awaiteth me, another  
Friend in the blameless family of God.

Yea, through life, death, through failing,  
and through winning,  
He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed ;  
Christ is the end, for Christ is the begin-  
ning ;  
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.

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## THE PRESENT PORTION OF CHRIST IN THE BELIEVER.

THE divine side of every subject is necessarily its brightest and best, and the more elevated our point of sight, the more truthfully we possess ourselves, not only of the proportions of the respective parts, and their relation to each other, but of the full character of the whole. In divine things God's special part must be the antecedent and primary one, and it is this which gives a true character to the rest. Had not the wave-breast and heave-shoulder been first presented to God, and His satisfaction in the whole thus secured, the residue would have been unhallowed, and that which was the true portion of the priests, merely a carnal thing. So, as one is ever finding in the path of a saint, things which God has ordained, painful enough if looked at only with such feelings as properly arise in the human heart, yet their character signally changed when, seeing His part in them

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and viewing them from no lower standpoint than His own, we not only accept but appreciate the aspect they present to Him. We are then led to adore as much the wisdom and prudence of His ways, as the love and grace of His eternal counsels! On the other hand, like Marah's waters, the cheeriest circumstance in my lot, as it first appears, if I be truly treading a pilgrim path in company with Him in the comfort of His faithful and tender love, proves the most gloomy and dispiriting unless, or until, God has had His full part in it through the test of the cross. Brought to Himself we learn our first wilderness lesson in the discovery that the most coveted thing here possesses inherent bitterness beyond all human means to correct, and not until after that the second lesson, that the bitterest thing here, He will sweeten as we practically learn death in the cross of Christ. Faith then sees the hands of the mighty One which rent to pieces the roaring lion, to be dropping with honey from the comb; out of the eater comes

## THE PRESENT PORTION, ETC. 163

forth meat, and out of the strong comes forth sweetness. (Judg. xiv. 5-14.)

That Christ our Head is in heaven and that we are not, is palpable enough; but a connected and consequent line of truth is revealed which exerts a wonderful influence in modifying the hard outlines of the latter fact, namely, that He is our life, and we are in Him there, while we are His representatives, and He is glorified in us here! Our union with Him by the Holy Ghost is a blessed and benignant corollary to the fact that at present "we are absent from the Lord." Once He was with His own, but they were not united to Him; it is now the converse of this, we are united to, but are not with Him; but both shall be brought to pass on that fair morning about to dawn when we shall be for ever with, nor cease to be united to, Him, according to the eternal counsels of God!

Meanwhile we have to work out here that which shall constitute His present portion in His saints, the very first essentials to which are that we should

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let our "loins be girded" (the expression of practical separation from the world to Himself), and have our "lights burning" in testimony to it about Him. (Luke xii. 35.) When He is manifested in the world again, "*He shall come to be glorified in his saints ;*" evidently His visible and resplendent presence will have as an adjunct, the saints clustered as a galaxy of beauty, all His own, around His beloved person, forming a glorious zone of radiating beams, transmitting while displaying, the light of His glory! Now that which will then be produced in a completely effective, literal, and manifest way, is just what we have morally and spiritually to make good according to the sufficiency of His grace, during His absence. When He was in the world He was the brightness of God's glory and the express image of His person—every ray of divine glory that emanated from Him to man, He expressed in full relation to Him who sent Him, and when going away He gives to us His own place before the

## THE PRESENT PORTION, ETC. 165

Father, and equally before the world. He had counted upon the presence of the Holy Ghost being not merely a bubbling spring within them for their own refreshing, but of so mighty a volume as continuously to flow forth river-like for the blessing of others. (John vii. 38.) He counted, too, upon His presence with the Father, supplying motive and power for "greater works" to be done of them during His absence than had been done by Himself, and then in that unequalled John xvii. He says, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world," and in the same chapter, "*I am glorified in them.*" Surely no language could prefer before us more forcibly than these hallowed strains an inexorable claim, nor confer upon us in answering to it a more singular dignity!

And if we turn now from the blessed Master to the blessed servant, Paul, we see how thoroughly his whole soul was not merely swayed but governed by the power of that fundamental truth, that



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we are here in established and accredited identification with a glorified Christ on high. In the first few chapters of 2 Corinthians, as is well known, the power of His life is unfolded in various aspects, and the light of His glory displayed in its operations. "Thanks be to God," he says, "who always leads us in triumph in the Christ, and makes manifest the odour of His knowledge through us in every place. For we are a sweet odour of Christ to God in the saved and in those that perish." (ii. 14, 15.) Clearly every saint ought to be thus redolent of Christ, whether in service or aught else. Then in chapter iii., "We all looking on the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, are transformed according to the same image from glory to glory," &c.; according to which the glory of the glorified One is produced in a multitude of polished mirrors upturned towards Himself, and which His own loving hand with tender care is unweariedly burnishing, to receive and reflect with ever-increasing fidelity, the grace, beauty and excel-

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lency of His image! In chapter iv. he speaks of the radiancy of the glad-tidings of the glory of the Christ, the image of God, adding, "because it is the God who spake that out of darkness, light should shine, who has shone in our hearts for the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," shewing the positive fact fully recognised, that the light of the glory has shone into our hearts that the knowledge of it might shine forth again, as expressed before our souls in the face of the Man in glory! Then, verse 10, "Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body," teaching how essential it is that the dying of Jesus should be borne about in our mortal bodies that His life may be an exhibited thing in us in spiritual power and moral glory. Again, in chapter v., "He died for all that they who live should no longer live to themselves, but to him who has died for them, and risen again," indicating that we are to be vessels displaying a

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life which has Him for its essence, and object. And this life is so thoroughly a new deposit in the vessel, or a new graft on the old stock, that we see at once the fitness of God's choosing foolish, weak, base and despised things, that it might be clear that it never sprang from the qualities of the individual. Then in Colossians iii. 17, "And everything whatever ye do in word or in deed, do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father by him." This presents a demand so large and so comprehensive that it might well appal any soul taking it legally, but how blessed is it when seen to be rather the privilege of connecting the value of His name with everything we do, and finding divine power in it, also, for the doing it in a way to yield Him the glory which is His right!

Unquestionably every true-hearted disciple will account it a wondrous grace conferred, that he should be ranked among the confessors of a glorified Christ, and made competent by the

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Holy Ghost given us so to witness for Him that He should be glorified in these bodies of ours. In the very scene, too, in which in His own person He was refused, and refused by a world which being morally unchanged, loves those who are loyal to His name no better than it loved Him who crossed its path in purest grace!

“Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you;” and again, “I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.” (John xv.) Surely this fruit to Christ, which is really Himself seen in His members, is His present portion in the believer. And while every bit of it is fruit that will abide for eternity, it possesses in the freshness of its bloom in so uncongenial an atmosphere, a peculiar attraction to His heart; being the product of His culturing care and heavenly sunlight, divinely applied by the Holy Ghost, during the night of His enforced absence! Thus every saint of God.

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should be as a night-blooming Cereus to the eye of Christ, which in the darkness of an approaching midnight, unfolds all its perfections; the dead of night supplying the very conditions suited for bringing into display the otherwise undisclosed beauties of its magnificent bloom!

Let me be impressed ever so strongly then, with the deep and solemn importance of my own present portion as a believer, with its wondrous privileges, yet is it a real joy to know there is a step beyond this; a higher, nobler, more unselfish consideration is that of the present portion of Christ in us! His portion in the present, and ours, are equally unique, and at many points must in their very nature coalesce, but one cannot be insensible to the difference as to motive, between being occupied with that which shall make good to him his own portion, and the being occupied with working out or enjoying that which is ours. The apostle recognised this and in a very painful way, when he said, "All seek their own, not the

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things which are Jesus Christ's." (Phil. ii. 21.) If intent upon His having His own present portion, I shall know no deeper joy than is found in seeking the things which are Jesus Christ's *for His own sake!*

While we cannot maintain too emphatically the force of the apostle John's word, "He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 John ii. 6), yet is it well on the other hand, to set forth the incomparable blessedness of *being privileged* to feed with joy the heart of our gracious Lord during the period of His deprivation of His rights in the world, and, alas that one should have to add, in the house of God also! But the refused of Jerusalem and its temple was the illustrious guest of Bethany; "there they made him a supper!" Is it not our sacred and august privilege as saints to constitute a Bethany for Him, saying, too, in more than words, "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits?" Will He not reply in every ear which affection for

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Himself has opened, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honey-comb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk; eat O friends, drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved?" (Cant. iv. 5.)

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## THE CROSS—ITS BLESSINGS AND ITS CLAIMS.

THE first and the natural resource of a soul awakened, through grace, to a sense of need, is the cross of Christ. The need of relief from the weight and pressure of a conscience burdened with a sense of sin, is felt in all its intensity; and the relief sought for is found in the wondrous fact that the One who hung upon the cross, bore my sins in His own body there, and in God's sight they are gone for ever. The relief is immense; the burden is gone, and the heart is free to be occupied, like the poor sinner in the end of Luke vii., with the One who

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has brought me that relief. But is that all that the cross of Christ brings with it? Far from it indeed. That is but the first lesson it teaches, and if I have not learned more than that I have not got to God's side of the cross at all. I may stand and contemplate, by faith, the immensity of the love which brought the Son of God down to that scene of shame and death for me; I may rejoice in the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, and of acceptance with God, and yet so bad and treacherous are these hearts of ours, that we are quite capable of taking all these blessings, and then turning our backs on the cross, and finding our resources, if not our joys, in the very world which crucified the One to whom we confessedly owe our salvation. We are willing to accept the blessings of the cross, but we are not willing to own its claims. And in these closing days of the history of the church on earth, there is special danger of this. Many, if not all, of those who may read this paper are in possession, doctrinally, of truth which has



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been entirely lost since the first days of the church on earth, but was recovered through the grace of God. But how far is that truth reproduced in our lives down here? How far can we say that we have, as before God, accepted the cross of His Son as He sees it, and sees all through it? How far can we say that the cross gives its colour to our associations, our connections, our business, our houses, and all in them, our dress and the dress of our children, in short to all the details of our daily path? Are these trivial things, think you, to mention in connection with the cross? Not, surely, if I know its real import, and what the God who forsook His beloved Son on the cross, reads in that scene. It is just in these things, seemingly, though not really, of small account, that we shew how far we really understand the true meaning and import of the cross. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." A lesson that is learned from God's side of the cross is never forgotten.

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It is not only that the first man, in his badness, was morally and judicially ended there, but that all that was good and beautiful in man, as seen in the Son of man, was ended there too. "The Son of man must be lifted up." All that was of the first man must pass away, his history must end for ever, in order that the second Man, alive from the dead, and having for ever broken the power of death, might come out the Head of God's new creation, and take humanity with Him into the glory of God. That is what God has got from the cross, and it is the knowledge and acceptance of it that enables me to glory in the cross—to glory in that which was my deepest and greatest shame as a man, from the very fact (and what a blessed fact!) that the cross has ended for ever before God, the man that set it up and nailed the Son of God to it. On the world's side of that cross there is death, and after death the judgment,—on God's side of it the new creation.

In the Epistle to the Galatians, which

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was written to those who were trying to improve the first man, the cross is brought in three times. In chapter ii. 20, "I am crucified with Christ," that is, the man is gone. In chapter v. 24, "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts." That is not a practical thing which I have done myself, but what the cross has done for me before God, and I accept it. What belongs to the man, and comes out of him, is gone also. In chapter vi. 14, "The world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." What appeals to and acts on the man is gone too in the cross. It stands as an impassable barrier between me as belonging to, and associated with, the risen Man, and all that I was as associated with the man under death and judgment. What then is or can be left? The new creation, and nothing else. (Ver. 15.) Now how far, beloved brethren, can we say honestly, as before God, who knows the secrets of our hearts, "I accept the cross, not only with its blessings, but with its claims?"

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How far can we say, as we look around us, in our associations and surroundings—There is *nothing* of which I should have cause to be ashamed, if I were to find standing by my side the One who was on that cross for me? There is nothing on which His eye could not rest with perfect satisfaction! I accept with praise and thankfulness all the wondrous blessings His cross has given me: and it is the greatest privilege and joy I have to own the claims of that cross to the full, in and over everything that belongs to me! In the great truth that “If one died for all, then were all dead,” I recognise and own what *was* my status and condition before God, now gone for ever; and in the blessed fact that, through grace, I am now one who “lives,” I see that His death has ended my history as a man, and I desire that all connected with me may be the expression of the practical reality that I am not living to myself, but “to him who died for me and rose again.”

May the Lord make this the lan-

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guage of hearts that are learning daily more of the wonders of His cross.

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### THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

#### DEATH IS OURS.

DEATH is a consequence in divine life, "We who live are alway delivered unto death." It promotes progress. It is not easy to understand nor accept this principle. Life comes from God, and it seems unaccountable, and unreasonable, that the reception and promoting of the gift of God should entail positive, sensible death here. The first idea in a believer's mind is that he has now, through grace and by faith in Christ, escaped the penalty of his sins. The wages of sin is death; "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." True, all sins are forgiven, and the life given is to swallow up this mortal body. This fact is the full proof of forgiveness. The resurrection of Christ who suffered death for us, is the

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assuring testimony that righteousness can now be imputed to us who believe in Him, who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

We are to live for ever in the body in which death once reigned. The mistake of believers is that on the reception of eternal life they think or suppose that they can now enjoy perpetually, and without check, all that the life in the flesh enters into. The believer has received life in Christ, and eventually that life will swallow up his mortal body. But not until Christ returns. Every blessing to the saint is incomplete until Christ comes. Hence though he is in Christ, and Christ in him, the Holy Ghost dwelling in him, the power and spring of all, he is still in the mortal body. He has been placed, by virtue of Christ's work, not only free of all sins, but the body dead. If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin. The body is mortal. He who raised Christ from the dead is to quicken our mortal bodies by His Spirit which dwelleth in us. We are, at the present

## CHRIST SUPREME FOR TIME AND ETERNITY.

THERE are two experiences; one the greatest for time, the other, the dawn of eternity. The first is when Christ is seated on the throne of your heart—His coronation day. It is not merely that He is in your heart, but that His sway there is fully recognised. It is spiritually the same as occurred in Genesis xxi. When Isaac was weaned, Abraham made a great feast for him. Everyone in the house does homage to him; they celebrate his right and title. It was a great day. The greatest day in time is the day in which the heart keeps festival in celebration of Christ's right to be enthroned there. It is a moment of surpassing delight when His throne is in my heart; when Christ is only heard to speak; when Jesus reigns alone. Though rejected on the earth, He is proclaimed king there. This is the great festival of time; this makes

the merry heart a continual feast. It is like the "whole year" which Elijah spent with the widow (1 Kings xvii.): every care, every need foreseen and provided for, by the great guest in the house of the desolate one.

The other experience; the dawn, or introduction into the eternal day, is when you accept that all that is beautiful in the first creation, has terminated in the death of Christ; not only that all the bad is under judgment in Adam; but that "old things are passed away, all is become new, and all is of God;" and now you find yourself in the light of the eternal scene. It is Genesis xxii. You have traversed Mount Moriah. You have practically accepted that everything is gone in Christ's death. Your eyes have opened on the eternal day. You have found yourself before God in that new day, in the sweet savour of Christ; the ram on the Mount; "Jehovah-Jireh."

The order of the old creation sets before us these two experiences. The tree lives and thrives in winter, because



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of its roots ; it bursts forth into unhindered manifestation of its life in summer, because the climate and seasons induce it to do so. The winter is time, and the summer eternity. We live in Christ at home during the winter ; we bask in the sunshine of His presence in foretaste now of an endless eternity. It is Christ in both ; He reigns in our hearts, and we shall reign with Him ; but the better we know the festive time when He reigns in our hearts, the more shall we enjoy in prospect and foretaste reigning with Him. If we do not like His full sway in our own little kingdom, how can we relish His unbounded, unlimited sway over everything ? "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much." Crown Him king in your own heart, and the great day of His kingdom and glory will also burst in on your prepared and delighted heart.

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## THE PRIESTS, AND THE PEACE OFFERING.

### LEVITICUS III. AND VII.

OUR communion with God in what He is, stands out as the great object in this book, and in its various sacrifices. This must necessarily be founded, not only upon what makes *us* meet—but on what glorifies Himself, in having such as we are in His presence, as worshippers. On our part likewise, it is needful for us to know that God has provided this; or else, how can there be liberty, in *our* fellowship with the Father, in love: or, boldness to enter into the holiest in light?

In either case, and in both, this perfectness and preciousness is found *only* in the sacrifice of Christ—and is constant, and unchanging in Him. Indeed, it is the abiding value, and sweet savour of the whole burnt-offering without a blemish before the Lord, that enables

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God to call us into fellowship with Himself, upon the intrinsic excellency of Christ; and constitutes His joy, in having us *there*.

This is the first—and an indispensable element, in order that our souls may realise this peace of the sanctuary in chapter iii.

It is not the judicial peace which we have *with* God in our justification, from sin and its guilt through our Lord Jesus Christ, and by faith, as in Romans iv., but peace in communion with God, through the Spirit, where He dwells, and as suited to Himself, in the peace of the sanctuary; as being ourselves there, and this too in the acceptance and perfectness of Christ.

What makes Leviticus iii. so very precious to us, is the fact of this offering or sacrifice being made the reciprocal object between God, and the priest, and the worshipper—and it is not till we are grounded and established on *this* point, that there can be the first steps taken, in restful and happy intercourse with God, in what He is, and is with us.

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Otherwise an individual will slip aside, and think of himself and be troubled; instead of being wholly occupied with the essential value of the offering of Christ—whether looked at inwardly or outwardly—as presented to God for a sweet-smelling savour.

It is important to notice this fact more in detail, and in doing so to remark, that the sacrifice was to be without blemish; and further, that its value in communion, as the peace-offering, consisted more in what it was found to be in its death, than what it was in life—though in its life it must needs be without a spot, and perfect. All this is the groundwork of *our* fellowship with God, and we are there with boldness, because it is upon what Christ was, and is. The nature of God required the blood of such a victim—and oh, what assurance comes in upon the worshipper, as “he lays his hand upon the head of his offering, and kills it”—yea, knows that this self-same blood has opened the new and living way into the holiest *for him*! We are accepted *in the sweet savour of the burnt sacri-*

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fice, by which God is glorified—and the blood which is sprinkled upon the altar, has likewise purged our consciences from sins, once and for ever, as the true “circumcision who worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.”

It is sometimes thought that the altar may likewise represent the claim of God upon the worshipper—be it so—but even then he has to look at the value of the victim offered up by fire upon the altar; for in no case, nor on any consideration, ought he to allow his faith, or his devotion, to wander away from the sufficiency of the peace-sacrifice to God. How else can communion exist, or be maintained with us, upon what God is, unless it be answered on our part, by the perfectness of all that Christ *was*, so that the holiness of God being fully met, and every claim of the altar satisfied, the peace of the sanctuary becomes the atmosphere *we* breathe, and in which we *live*? “His *own* hands shall bring,” &c.

But we may now pass beyond all

these details (which often improperly detain an unpractised soul) and gather up our assurances, and strength from the fact, that God alone *can* estimate the perfectness of Christ, as this unblemished sacrifice, upon which our acceptance and communion with Himself is established. On this account, He claimed *all* the fat that covered the inwards, and all the fat that is *upon* the inwards, &c., and decreed that Aaron's sons should burn these upon the altar of burnt-offering, for a sweet savour, made by *fire* unto the Lord. In this way, we learn that God's part in Leviticus iii., was found in the preciousness of this peace-sacrifice; that the priests found their delight in it, as they were taught its value before God, by the fire on the altar; and the worshipper who offered the peace-sacrifice, found his satisfaction and joy, in sweet fellowship with the priest, and with God Himself, in what ascended up as a sweet savour.

This, and more than this, is formative of our communion at the Lord's table, for the fat was "the food of the offer-

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ing," and was claimed by God, as His part—as well as the blood, for the blood was the life, and it was poured out, to make an atonement to God. And this is unspeakably precious, now "that the Father seeketh such to worship him, as worship him in spirit and in truth"—for there cannot be the one, or the other of these, unless the fat which covered the inwards, and marked the perfection and the vigour of *all* that the peace-sacrifice was essentially, in its living nature, is seen to be the food and delight of God. "All the fat is the Lord's"—and this tells us that what Christ was, in His preciousness during the activities of His life; or what the perfectness of Christ was in His death upon the cross, when searched by the fire of God's holiness; only brought out the food of God from the altar, and then ascended up, as "a sweet savour to the Lord." There can be no peace in the sanctuary, much less worship and communion with God in praise and joy, where the fat and the blood, in the energy of life, and more than all, in the efficacy of death—

the death of this unblemished Lamb,—are not in the first place seen to be God's part.

In our communion with God, at the Lord's table, this is claimed by Him still, in "the bread which we break, and the cup of the new covenant in the blood of Christ which we drink," in remembrance of Him. "The fat is the food of the peace-offering." The priests, or Aaron's sons, had likewise *their* part in the peace-offering, and this came next, and oh, what a place and portion had they! Not indeed to estimate fully, the nature and preciousness of the sacrifice, for this belongs to God alone—but to learn in their priestly functions, the value of the offering by the uses of the blood, and the fat upon the altar before the Lord, in communion. The priests shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about—and Aaron's sons shall burn all the fat on the altar, upon the burnt-sacrifice, which is upon the wood, that is on the fire. Though it be truer now than then, "that no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father;" yet in



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the sanctuary, the sons of Aaron were made acquainted in their measure, with the sanctifying value of the offering, as it intrinsically was before God and them. They were also brought into fellowship with God upon the virtue of the blood they sprinkled, and the fat they burned upon the altar—not to meet any question of sins, for there are none left—but to be before Him, and in communion with Him, upon the sweet savour of the peace-sacrifice, in which they were welcomed, and on account of which they were there.

But besides these uses and applications of the fat and the blood, according to the rights of the sanctuary, where God dwells (for how could any one be there else?) Aaron and his sons had their own proper portion and part in the peace-offering. The blood was for atonement, and all the fat was the food of God; but the priest that brought the fat of the sacrifice to the Lord, and burned the fat upon the altar, was to wave the breast, for a wave-offering before the Lord. How blessed this priestly action

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of the sanctuary is, none really know but those who are practising it, in communion with God in the holiest. It is in these priestly acts and services, that the break-down of worshippers is manifested; and it may be profitable, though a mournful thought, to consider how Christians rob God of the worship which He expects as His due, and His right, through the craft and enmity of Satan! He dare not deny the title and meetness of believers in Christ, to be at home in the presence of God; but he can try to make them question their liberty and privileges in Christ. He will keep them out of the sanctuary, and its peace and joy, if he can, by raising doubts and fears about holiness and God, and thus hinder their meeting Him there; and in virtue of the anointing and our priesthood, learning the sweet savour of Christ, in which we are eternally accepted by God, and blessed.

But to return—the priest that offered the blood of the peace-sacrifice, was to have the right shoulder for his part,

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and this was to be eaten by him. In this way and manner it was, and is, that God must be known and worshipped; yea, adoration will spring out of employments such as these with Himself, in the enjoyed peace of the sanctuary, and in the holiest through the rent veil, where He dwells, in love. In correspondence with this, we gather together, round the table of the Lord below, to shew forth His death, till He come, and to remember Him in the love by which "he gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour." In communion with the Holiest, it must be through the perception of the full and unchangeable value of Christ to God, who dwells there—and in whom we are for ever accepted. In fellowship with the light, and with God who is light, it is by the knowledge of Him who has called us into it, by the Son of His love—never questioning the fact—but "giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." A more diligent occupation

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at the altar as priests, in our proper functions before God, and in communion with Him, would necessarily keep us in the peace of the sanctuary; and in this abiding nearness to refuse the flesh, and the world, and Satan. The fat and the blood, which are the Lord's portion and part, would make us value more "the breast" as a wave-offering, yea, and bring our heads, may be, to lay on the bosom, in personal confidence and love; as well as qualify us for the use of "the right shoulder," for an heave-offering before God, and to lean upon its strength.

The priests who are thus employed with the sweet savour and the peace-sacrifice, will be the most conscious that they are imperfect in the knowledge of Christ, and of the Son, as the Father knows Him—but it is nevertheless these sons of Aaron whose hands wave the shoulder, and the breast before the Lord! He can estimate to the full, what the preciousness of Christ is which they, or we, heave, and wave before Him. He, whose delight is in it, and who loves to

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call us to share in his own joy, by having us there—is thus deepening our own delight, in His! It yet remains to say, “but the *breast* shall be Aaron’s, and his sons’”—which is perhaps the crowning and darling thought, to one who cannot do without Christ; and who loves to be identified with Him too in these services as the priest of God. *This* is His portion, and willingly does “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” thus distinguish Him, and us—for by whom could come in among us, this unblemished peace-sacrifice, except it were by the Lamb of God. From whom else could be claimed all the fat that covereth the inwards, and the blood, (the perfect measure of what Christ was in life, and in His sacrificial death) save from that One, who offered Himself up unto God without a spot, through the eternal Spirit? How came about these sacrifices for sin, or from whence came the burnt-offering, or the meat-offering, with its oil and frankincense—except from Him who said, “Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God?”

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Again we may ask, How came we to have a Priest passed through the heavens unless it were Jesus, the Son of God—or how God any worshippers, and called with a heavenly calling into the holiest, except it were by the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus?

Do we not by a few inquiries like these, readily understand why the voice from the sanctuary should give it in charge, “but the breast shall be Aaron’s and his sons’.” For who could estimate as the Son of the bosom, the unfathomable love which gave Him forth; or which led Him to give Himself back again to God in death? The breast of the typical peace-sacrifice was to be waved before God, by the anointed priesthood. And what are our occupations at the table of the Lord (unless content to be there merely as forgiven sinners, and accepted saints) if it be not in these deeper feelings and spiritual actions, waving the heave-shoulder, and the wave-breast, in communion as a continual “remembrance” of the preciousness of Christ, and of the Priest’s

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delight to lead us into our heavenly services, and the Father's joy to welcome us as His worshippers into unbroken fellowship by it ?

“ But the breast shall be Aaron's, and his sons' ” out of the offerings of the Lord made by fire, was the statute law of the sanctuary, nor will we break it, or suffer it to be broken. Nay we will the more jealously maintain it, when as worshippers we feed on our part of the peace-sacrifice ; or in communion with our blessed Lord as a Priest, He feeds on the wave-breast *with us*, as His portion ; and each and all, in the sweet savour from off the altar, by the fat and the blood, which are the Lord's especial part, and by which He is glorified in us.

How can there be a sanctuary of God in any other way, at least so as to suit what He is, or what we are, in holiness and grace, except by the unblemished sacrifice of the peace-offering—a Priest made after the power of an endless life, and worshippers called into the holiest, by the new and living way ? “ But the

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breast shall be Aaron's and his sons','' must be *our* food from off the altar, where the fat and the blood are the abiding sweet savour to God.

May the Lord give us to tread His own holy courts, with washed and unsullied feet, though with boldness, as belonging to His sanctuary of gold; and to come forth under the consecration of the blood upon the right ear, and the thumb, and the great toe, as separated whilst in the world, unto God and His glory!

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## THE CHISELLING TIME.

CAN we "count it all joy to fall into divers trials, because the trying of our faith worketh patience"? It is a very wondrous work that is going on with every saint. Each is in the course of preparation for the place which each will hold in the holy temple to the Lord by-and-by. It is properly the wearing away of the outer man, in order that the inner man may be more renewed. The exercise of



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the soul through the Spirit, in a sense makes an increase of the new, on the ruins, or "perishing" of the old. If there were none of the old, the new in us would be wonderful; and hence, there is a chiselling process going on, that the old may be gradually worn away, and so attenuated morally, that the new might be more visible and prominent. By-and-by, the sound of the hammer will not be heard. Now we hear the din of it on every side; and as we submit to it, in our own hearts, there is the reaching to "perfect and entire wanting in nothing." Do we understand the intention of the One who in perfect love is using the hammer--knocking off this bit and that bit, removing everything which interferes with our progress according to His pleasure?

It is a great cheer and help to the heart when it does understand this. "Whoso is wise and will *observe* these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord."

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## THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

### POWER: WHAT IS IT?

POWER is the ability to act right, at any moment or in any case. It is not enough for power that the thing I do is good. Though it be good, yet if it is ill-timed or out of place, it is not power. It was not power in the old prophet of Bethel, (2 Kings xiii.) to press his hospitality on the prophet sent by God. It was very amiable, but it was not power, nor was it power in the latter to accept of it. It was power in Abel when he offered the firstling of the flock, and the fat thereof. He did the right thing, and outside, and independent of, anything to be seen around him. When I am in power, I am superior to natural influences, and I act for God as the occasion requires. Faith in God always ensures power, and then I act for God, irrespective of man, and his judgment. Cain took more time and pains to prepare his offering than Abel did. It was every way at a greater cost, but there was no

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shall share in the mercy vouchsafed to me ; whereas when I trust to my own strength, I shall, like Peter at Antioch, not only expose myself to open rebuke, for my manifest feebleness, but involve others through the influence of it. Galatians ii. 11-14.

Power, then, is doing everything divinely appropriate ; the right word and the right act, always equal to the occasion, and sensibly so, because of Christ's present grace ; unswerving in the pursuit of my service, and unruffled in my manner, however aggravated. Great, glorious, and most blessed, is it to be set here though encompassed with infirmity, and assailed on every side, in the power of Christ. May we be found more in the great dignity of our calling.

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CHRIST in humiliation wins our hearts ; Christ in glory satisfies them. We learn suitability to Him by being in His company.

## FOLLOW ME.

OUR path is very simple and blessed in this day—to keep from evil and follow the Lord. “If any man serve me, let him follow me.” I cannot follow, without renouncing every impediment; and that necessarily begins with myself: but I am not thinking of the surrender, though it be a plain necessity; I am set on following. Like a dog following his master, it is the master he is thinking of, and cost what it may, he follows. I begin to follow with the simple determination that neither river nor fence, nor any force, can prevent me from reaching the object of my heart. I ask not an easy path. I simply inquire, “Is this the way *He* went?” I have the word; the dog has only the scent; does he not put me to shame? “If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me, him shall my Father honour.” It is here the “honouring”—the decoration, takes place.

## ITTAI.

“WHEREFORE goest thou with me?”  
Said the king disowned—  
Said the king despised, rejected,  
Disenthroned.

“Go, return unto thy place,  
To thy king of yore—  
Here a pilgrim and a stranger,  
Nothing more.

Not for thee the cities fair,  
Hills of corn and wine,  
All was portioned ere thou camest—  
Nought is thine.

I am driven where I may,  
Banished from my own—  
Shame, rejection, I can grant thee,  
That alone.

Turn and take thy brethren back,  
With thy people dwell,  
I have loved thee, I, the Outcast;  
Fare thee well.

Then unto the crownless king,  
On the Kedron's shore,  
All the wilderness before him,  
Ittai swore,

## ITTAI.

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“As the Lord lives, and the king,  
Ever lord to me,  
Where in death or life he dwelleth,  
I will be.”

“Go, pass over,” spake the king,  
Then passed Ittai o’er;  
Passed into the place of exile,  
From the shore.

He, and all his little ones,  
Granted by that word,  
Shame, rejection, homeless wandering  
With their lord.

“Go, pass over”—words of grace,  
Spoken, Lord, to me—  
That in death or life, where Thou art,  
I might be.

Dead, and crucified with Thee,  
Passed beyond my doom;  
Sin and law for ever silenced  
In Thy tomb.

Passed beyond the mighty curse,  
Dead, from sin set free,  
Not for Thee earth’s joy and glitter.  
Not for me.

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Dead, the sinner past and gone,  
Not the sin alone,  
Living—when Thou art in glory,  
On the throne.

Hidden there with Christ in God,  
That blest life I share ;  
Christ it is who liveth in me—  
*Liveth there.*

“He who serves Me,” spake His lips,  
“Let him follow Me,  
And where I am, shall my servant  
Ever be.”

Follow—where His steps lead on  
Through the golden street,  
Far into the depths of glory  
Track His feet.

Till unto the throne of God,  
Of the Lamb—I come,  
There to share the blessed welcome,  
Welcome home !

There with Him whom man despised  
In the light above,  
Those whom God His Father honours,  
Such His love.

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## EFFECTS OF THE WORD PREACHED.

THE Spirit of God has been pleased to place on record three distinct accounts of the conversion of St. Paul. The first in Acts ix. is related by the historian, and explains Paul's appearance on the scene as a worker for Christ. The second in chapter xxii. gives us Paul's own account of it, addressed to his countrymen. How vividly was the scene still impressed on his memory! The third, in chapter xxvi. is the apostle's second recital of it, before king Agrippa and Festus, and the great officers of the Roman court at Cæsarea.

In Acts ix. we learn some of the effects produced on him by the appearance of the Lord Jesus in glory. He trembled. He was astonished. He was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink; and, thoroughly broken down, the once self-righteous Pharisee engaged in real prayer. At



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length visited by Ananias at the end of three days, scales, as it were, fell from his eyes, he received sight, arose, and was baptised. He received meat, too, and was strengthened. The effect that the Lord's appearance had on him is there dwelt on, and all must feel how suited that was. It was fitting, when introducing him into the history, thus to dwell on the impression that the seeing the Lord in glory made on him, and to give proofs of a divine work in his soul.

In Acts xxii. Paul recounting his conversion dwells upon points, which might have told upon his audience, composed as they were of his countrymen, at that moment in a perfect frenzy against him. The good report that Ananias had of all the Jews at Damascus is pointed out, and the way that he spoke of God, and of the Lord as the Just One is set before them; but nothing of the personal matters about Paul, on which the historian had previously dilated. In addition, the apostle described what till then we had not been made acquainted

## EFFECTS OF THE WORD PREACHED. 227

with, the vision which he had in the temple at Jerusalem, and the command then and there to go to the Gentiles. If anything in Paul's history could have calmed the popular rage against him, and have convinced the Jews that he was acting under the guidance and direction of the Lord Jehovah, it would surely have been the speech of Ananias about the God of their fathers, and the Just One, and the vision in the temple, which they owned was Jehovah's own house. All then that he recounts in chapter xxii. was well suited for his purpose. The voice from heaven near Damascus, the mission of Ananias in that city, and the vision afterwards in the temple at Jerusalem, all shewed that Paul's calling to the work was of God.

But more than that was to be made apparent. He was to demonstrate that it was especially to Gentiles that he was sent. He had touched on that when addressing the Jews in chapter xxii., and his standing before Agrippa, bound with the chains, was a consequence of the hostility of his countrymen to the ways of

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God in grace with Gentiles. But now before Festus and the chief captains, and principal men of the city, Paul for the first time, as far as we know, revealed what the Lord Jesus had said to him, when on the ground outside Damascus, about that work among the Gentiles, to which he was called. It was fitting before such an audience to speak of it, and to let them know from his lips, who were vitally interested in it, the Lord's purpose of grace towards such as were not of the seed of Jacob. The apostle's own conversion was a marked proof of grace. A persecutor thus arrested and converted, saved from what he deserved, and made use of in the service of that Master, to whose disciples he had been so desperately opposed; this was grace indeed. But whilst he was a pattern of the whole of the divine long-suffering, others beside him could share in the favour shewn that day to him. The Lord had poor sinners of the Gentiles in His thoughts, when He arrested the persecutor with those startling words, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

## EFFECTS OF THE WORD PREACHED. 229

So when Paul is addressing the audience, composed largely of Gentiles, he lets them know of the communication he then received from the Lord in glory.

Had we only the other two accounts, this special feature of the revelation then made to Paul, we might never have known of. How full was it ! sketching out in few, but telling words the moral condition of Gentiles, despite their education and intellectual attainments ; their thralldom, too, to a power stronger than themselves ; their need before God ; and the blessing here and hereafter they could enjoy, as believers on the Lord Jesus Christ. Delivering thee (*ἐξαγορεύμενος*, *lit.*, taking thee out) from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith, that is in me." (Acts xxvi. 17, 18.) Such was his commission, which he proceeds to tell Agrippa, he began to carry out.

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How the truth should act the Lord made known. Many a one, surely, who heard the apostle, could have testified to the power of the word, and the effect it had then. We know what Paul desired that the word should be. (1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.) Individuals, as Lydia, the jailor, and Dionysius, the areopagite ; assemblies, as those at Thessalonica, Corinth, and Ephesus, could bear witness to the fruitfulness of the word when ministered by him. But where was the counterpart to be found to what the Lord had told him should result from his ministry ? It was found where we should not have looked for it, in an assembly among which he had not personally laboured, namely, that at Colosse. And writing to them from Rome, he gives thanks for the very results seen in them, which the Lord had told him were to follow from his work : “ Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the

## EFFECTS OF THE WORD PREACHED. 231

Son of his love. In whom we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins." (Col. i. 12-14.)

How really is this the counterpart of that which the Lord had told him, but in a different order! The Lord before Damascus described the effect of the work on souls, in the order in which it would be felt. The apostle writing of it to the Colossians, takes his stand with them as in the possession of the hope of the inheritance, looking back on all that they had been brought out of. We can understand this, and the reason for the change of order is suggestive. The Lord described it as it would take place. Paul and the Colossians view it as looking back on all that from which they had been delivered. And all the effects of which the Lord had spoken, we read, were exhibited, and shared in by those saints at Colosse.

Now this is of value to us, who have not the apostle amongst us. We know the word by him was in power by the Holy Ghost. Doubtless, too, he pleaded with souls that they should be wise, and

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be saved, with an earnestness of desire which none could surpass. But at Colosse he had not worked, yet there it is that we learn that the true results of the word had been displayed. Epaphras probably had learned it from Paul. But where the apostle had not been, there the Holy Ghost described how the truth had rightly worked. What a comfort for us! We see from Acts xxvi. what should be the effect of the word. Colossians i. 12-14 shews that it could produce such fruit, and that apart from the personal ministry of the great apostle of the Gentiles.

And now situated somewhat like the Colossians, with the truth Paul preached, but without the presence of the apostle, it is to be proved whether results corresponding to those described in Acts are still produced, where the truth is ministered in dependence on the Spirit of God, and in accordance with the divine revelation vouchsafed us in the written word.

Masters and servants, husbands and wives, children and parents found it

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suited for them. What is it doing now? What confidence it should give us in the word, that ceasing from dependence on instruments, but trusting to the word itself, both teachers and preachers may go forward to this work in the consciousness of the power of the weapon to be used, when really dependent on God for direction and blessing in their service.

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## THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

THE assembly of God as first formed, from the fact that so many of those who composed it, being the apostles and immediate disciples of the Lord Jesus had themselves more or less intimately known Him, was necessarily deeply wrought upon in a divine way by His personal character and moral glory. Individual contact and converse with Himself would surely involve this wherever there was faith, and would probably affect and impress the saints of that day in a manner, and to a degree



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quite inconceivable to us. Every such divine impression would also be blessedly heightened and enhanced, when the ascended Lord, agreeably with His promise, baptised them with the Holy Ghost, and not only would such impressions be intensified at that time, but every remembered fact and circumstance, every treasured word and thought connected with Himself, doubtless acquired through the ministry of Christ, upon which that other Comforter entered—a purport and significance which until then had been concealed from every eye and heart. Moreover there was the definite promise that He, the Holy Ghost, should bring to their remembrance all the things which the Lord Jesus had said unto them.

But how surpassingly beyond this was it, and this is our present subject, for the Holy Ghost to witness of the Son of man glorified in heaven, to tell of His exaltation as man to highest glory and honour, to unfold the ministry of tender, patient, faithful love upon which in untiring grace to His saints He had just entered

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from the throne of the Father, and His paramount relation to the assembly of God and the new creation! In view of this, Paul distinctly deprecates a knowledge of Him after the flesh—the person of Christ in His new place and relations being his gospel of glory to be made known to the nations.

How those early days of new-born Christianity, as brief as beautiful, were followed by quickly-gathering gloom and ever-deepening darkness, we know, alas! too well; and probably of all that got entombed beneath the accumulating superstitions of the dark ages, nothing was more deplorably buried in utter forgetfulness than every truly divine thought of the person of Christ.

Nor did the Reformation recover this to the church. We thankfully own how much was brought to light of the *work* of Christ in its eternal value to the soul. But as to the other, the recovery of what is now so well known to many saints of God, all that goes to make up what is the special object of the Holy Ghost's testimony, was reserved to a much later

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date, even to a time within the recollection of not a few amongst us. For when, some five and forty years ago, a servant of God, still witnessing for His Lord, visited at Cambridge University the most eminent evangelical "divine" of his day, and spoke to him of the person of Christ, the latter acknowledged that he knew not what was meant. So thoroughly had the revelation of Christ as the glorified Man on high, lapsed from the apprehension of the christian portion of the community.

The incalculable value of its recovery is comparable only to what was recovered at the Reformation, when the knowledge of the way of salvation by the work of the cross was disencumbered of the traditions and superstitions of men. The later recovery has restored to us the knowledge of the One who did that work, in the new glories personal to Himself as the risen Man ascended to the right hand of God, as Head of His body, the church, and beginning of the creation of God: for it is deeply important we should observe that the person

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of the glorified Christ at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, is the mighty key-stone of that arch which immutably upholds for all eternity each of those crowning glories of divine handiwork, the new creation and the assembly of God !

All that the person of Messiah after the flesh would have been to Israel, had He been received in the glories that pertained to Him in an earthly and governmental way, we will not say is equalled, but rather, is immeasurably surpassed in what pertains to Christ's person now in that new and heavenly way which has eternally taken precedence of the earthly glories which shall assuredly surround Him by-and-by as the Hope of Israel ! For them as His earthly people, there was the person of Messiah, Son of David, king of Israel. But He being refused as to all this in His bodily presence, and later on in the testimony of the Holy Ghost by Peter (Acts iii.), there is then according to eternal purpose, the incoming of a revelation to Paul of the person of Christ as

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beyond the earth (where He was cut off and had nothing) being as first-begotten from the dead, the exalted Head both of the assembly of God—His body, and the creation of God of which He is the beginning; in all which as we know to the joy of our worshipping hearts—He is never less than over all God blessed for ever! Viewing this as having entered (oh! how little) into God's thoughts about "this Son of man," how precious and how momentous is everything that the word of God contains, and which the Holy Ghost unweariedly unfolds, of His ever-blessed person around which, drawn by centripetal force, every heavenly, divine glory is clustering for eternity!

It is thus, indeed, that the Spirit of God presents Him to us in Ephesians and Colossians, where His humiliation, presentation to Israel and the like have no place, but His *acquired glories* are the theme, He being first seen in each epistle as to His redemption-work as the One raised from the dead. (Eph. i. 20; Col. i. 18.) And the more our

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souls enter into this, apprehending its value and blessedness, and the more we recognise all that it carries with it in glory to Christ and in joy to the heart of God, the less shall we be surprised that Satan should for so long a time have employed his energies in shrouding the person of Christ as though he were to be *incognito* beyond the cross. For just as the enemy succeeded in blinding Israel to a Messiah in the flesh, so has he ever since sought to blind Christians to a Christ not after the flesh, that is, to the person of Christ in glory. Nor shall we wonder, either, that the working of the infidel mind has been energised of him—since the recovery of this truth—in direct antagonism to it; one of the most celebrated trans-atlantic opposers of revelation, having stated that “the church has dwelt with noxious exaggeration on the person of Christ,” adding that “the soul knows nothing of persons,” thus endeavouring to reduce Christianity to a question of words and ideas for men’s minds to reason upon, if not to reason away, so that

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intellectual prowess may win the day, and conscience be stifled if not superseded.

When the Lord retired from the temple for the last time, then was fulfilled, "behold your house is left unto you desolate," His retreating footsteps having written Ichabod upon its pavement. And when they had ruthlessly destroyed the temple of His body (raised up within three days as He had said, but thenceforth to be seen only by those who had faith) the eyes of natural men closed upon the person of Messiah, His life was taken from the earth, as He also said, "ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Thenceforth it is "Lo-ammi;" Judaism, indeed, may continue as an ism, but Israel has departed from her God, and is no longer recognised of Him as such. His word, "not my people" is now her judicial name, and the next distinguished person who will visit the temple is Antichrist, the one whom He foretold them should come in his own name, and

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whom notwithstanding his pride and arrogance, they would receive when their ever-growing apostasy should culminate in flagrant and unblushing blasphemy!

Meanwhile what is left is, on one hand the world and Satan, its god, and on the other Christianity and the person of Christ, finding its beginning from the glory itself, when as Son of man He was received of the Father to His throne, having "ascended up above all the heavens, that he might fill all things." (Eph. iv. 10.)

It is emphatically to this that the Holy Ghost witnesses as the Lord had said, "He shall testify of me," who should then be the ascended One in glory. Thus while the cross, or work of the Lord Jesus in redemption, is that of which He testifies to sinners, and by which peace comes to the soul, it is the person of Christ—the One who did that work—thenceforth the Man in the glory of God who is the inexhaustible, unfathomable object of the Holy Ghost's witness to the believer, and by means of



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which all in Christianity that is beyond justification by faith which the Reformers instrumentally recovered, is blessedly unfolded in its precious and profound character, and in its wonderful immensity, as well as variety of blessing. Essential then as is the knowledge of forgiveness of sins, and justification before God on the ground of the work of the cross made known to the soul by faith, we see how far this stopped short of putting those who are Christ's into conscious enjoyment of their magnificent heritage in Him. Shepherd and Bishop of our souls and Captain of our salvation; Advocate with the Father and High Priest in the presence of God; Son over His house and the bright and morning Star; all this and much more, is HE as exalted Son of man; such is the person of Christ. And if we consider the first result of His session at the right hand of God—the descent of the Holy Ghost as the promise of the Father, it is essentially connected with the glory of His person and the place He took as Man. Again this is not

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merely comfort and power, and the presence of a divine Person within us, and as dwelling in the assembly constituting it the habitation of God, but it definitely brings about that wonderful verity that we are united to the person of Christ, being also sealed by God as His in the same act; by virtue of which, too, through that same Spirit of adoption, we know and address Him, "Abba Father." Thus it is to the person of Christ we are united, not to Jesus, Messiah, or Son of God, but to Christ as Man in glory! Further, it is the special operation of the Spirit of God so to occupy us with Him, as and where He is, that we are changed into the same image, this transformation being the peculiar, the characteristic effect wrought through the Holy Ghost engaging our hearts with the revelation of the glorified Christ. And, once again, the Holy Ghost loves to exercise our hearts in the fellowship of the Spirit in ardent desire to see Him, to behold His blessed person when He shall come to receive us to Himself! Thus (1) the

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presence of the Holy Ghost : (2) union to Christ ; (3) the same relationship as His to the Father ; (4) transformation ; (5) translation to glory at His coming, are all connected with the person of Christ, the glorified Man upon the Father's throne ! It is thus seen what boundless cause for thanksgiving we have in this recovery of the truth of God, and also why Satan, Emerson, and other such adversaries should have made it the subject of both open and covert attack, since nothing so surpassingly momentous for the blessing and joy of souls has been recovered during the past three centuries. May we not affirm that this is really the necessary complement of Christianity, for though, as is fully admitted, individuals got salvation through the truth brought to light by the reformers, no one instructed in the word would now venture to say that, honoured men as they were, they had anything like an adequate apprehension of the wonderful character and scope of Christianity according to God ?

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A religion that is composed of creeds, dogmas and abstractions, Satan and his craftiness can tolerate, because it leaves room for questions and contentions, for carnal weapons and carnal conclusions ; but the soul that knows Christ Himself, *as He now is and where He now is*, engaging, as He loves to do, the affections of the heart, there in holy intimacy and happy communion with Himself, and has the joy of conscious union with Him and of relationship to the Father, by the Holy Ghost dwelling in him ; and while now being transformed into His image is looking for perfect likeness to Himself when He comes to fulfil His own sweet words of comfort and of cheer, is not likely to be moved away from such blessedness by any of the subtleties of modern infidelity, or its open antagonism to the person of Christ.

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Lord, has been greatly distressed at finding how little practically, he was able to maintain among men, and the things here, the complacency and peace which he had enjoyed with the Lord. When the Spirit is revealing the deep things of God for me, I am lost in delight, and there is nothing to ruffle me; but when I resume my place down here, I require, like Paul, personal discipline, in order that I may not receive the grace of God in vain; because the moment I return among men, I am again in connection with the flesh, which is enmity against God. And hence I must submit to the process of dying to everything here, which would stand in the way of my practically expressing the traits of the new and divine position, which through grace I know is mine.

The Lord grant that we may the more continuously and earnestly seek to know His thoughts and counsels about us, so that we may have larger and fuller revelation of what He has prepared for them that love Him. But may we at the same time, be prepared to

## INSIDE THE VEIL, ETC. 255

submit to the discipline,—“the delivering unto death,” which only can ensure a practical manifestation of the grace, which in heart we enjoy. As the hands are a long way before the feet in ascending a ladder, so is the apprehension of truth a great way before the walk according to it. The feet cannot reach where the hands are, without patient continuance in the truth, and without unflinching zeal to leave everything behind in order to reach it; because there is no progress but as the feet are conscientiously following the hands; neither is there any progress in the grasping of truth, unless the feet advance as much as the hands.

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## INSIDE THE VEIL, OUTSIDE THE CAMP.

IF I know Jesus in heaven, I cannot find myself in the camp here, for He suffered outside it. If I feed on Him in heaven, I must take the ground He took on earth. I must go forth to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

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It is inconsistent to say that I am enjoying Christ in heaven if I am not connecting myself with the place He took here. It is the same person that I feed on at the altar, whom I follow outside the camp. I cannot part company with Him. When I am consciously feeding on Him within, I walk with Him in His rejection upon earth, and I offer by Him "the sacrifice of praise to God continually," that is "the fruit of the lips confessing His name." Wherever I go I have Him; and I am not only occupied with God, but I come from Him to serve others. It is a blessed place He has set us in. Whatever the difficulties we meet with here we must never waver as to our standing in that scene of God's unclouded delight, where His love and welcome salute us. Feeding at the altar, our characteristic here is outside the camp, with a spring of joy and praise in our hearts; and the action in keeping with this is all "sacrifice to God." The soul having found its true place, the power and freshness of it fill the heart.

## THE CHRISTIAN STATE.

By and through the death of Christ, as every believer knows, is the propitiation for our sins. (Rom. iii. 25.) "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." Here is fulfilled the word, "When I see the blood I will pass over." Here only can the conscience find a ransom—the ransom provided by God Himself—as He says, I have found a ransom. The eye of faith resting on the blood of Jesus learns to its deep relief that God now can be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. The blood interposes between judgment, and one is sensibly free from the fear of it. This is the first effect to the soul of the death of Christ. The thief on the cross enjoyed this as the light of grace disclosed to his soul on the very threshold of judgment, "the just for the unjust to bring us to God." The conscience is relieved from the intolerable sense of doom and judgment.



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Next, I am confirmed in all this by the resurrection of Christ. “If Christ be not risen our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins.” He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. The resurrection is the testimony of the perfection of the work—He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. Hence it is in His resurrection I am assured of how perfectly, and according to the mind of God He has borne the judgment of my sins. Therefore it is, “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” He died for our sins, but was raised because He had glorified God, under the judgment due to us.

The resurrection proves the nature of the death. And it is only when we believe that God hath raised Him from the dead that we are accounted righteous, and being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and then “we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have

received the reconciliation." As soon as we enter into the full effect of the death of Christ, so soon do we enter on the effect of the exaltation of Christ, though the effects are quite distinct, and always retain the characteristics of the act which is the ground and source of them.

First, then, we are reconciled to God by the death of His Son. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, so that our iniquities are forgiven and our sins are covered. We are in the blessedness of the man to whom God does not impute sin.

Next, our old man is crucified with Him that the body of sin might be destroyed. The purpose of God declared before the flood—namely, "the end of all flesh is come before me," is now fulfilled in the death of Christ. There the old man has been judiciously dealt with; not merely are the sins atoned for by His blood, but there is a judicial termination of the first man in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that not only are all my sins atoned for by His

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death, but there is an end in judgment before God of the body of sin, and hence it is no longer merely *through* Christ that the believer receives blessing; of course he could not have received blessing in any other way; but now seeing the old man has been crucified there is still more—it is *IN* Christ. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life *IN*, not *through*, Jesus Christ our Lord. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus—the old man was crucified with Christ, and now the believer is in Christ, and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. There are other great effects flowing from the death of Christ which the limits of this paper will not permit me to notice. One more I may add. In Galatians I get a very important effect; as in Romans, all my sins and the body of sin have been removed from the eye of God in the cross of Christ, so now in Galatians, the effect of it regarding myself is set forth. I am crucified with Christ. The failure of the Gala-

## THE CHRISTIAN STATE.

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tians was after they had begun in the Spirit, seeking to be made perfect in the flesh. The Roman had to learn his full acceptance with God;—the Galatian, that there was nothing left man in the cross that we could act on or improve. If it were all set aside judicially how could it be dealt with as still existing, and be subjected to the law? Hence it is very important in order to preserve one from subjecting the old man to any process for improvement, to see that it is crucified with Christ; hence it is the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. The Epistle concludes with the important words, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avail-eth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” (Chap. vi. 14–15.) The world is set aside in the cross to ME, and I unto the world. It is not only here as in Romans, how the cross

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has set us free from every thing in the eye of God—but that I am free from the world in my own eye, through the same cross. I need not refer to any more of the effects secured to the believer by the death of Christ, but I now turn to present some of the effects which are ours because of the exaltation of Christ. In Acts ii. 33, we read that the gift of the Holy Ghost was consequent on the exaltation of Christ. Now as the death of Christ has secured to the believer entire and complete deliverance from the ruin and misery under which we lay; so has the exaltation of Christ obtained for us the transcendent blessedness of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The christian state is incomplete without the baptism of the Holy Ghost. For as the death of Christ clears the believer of all that was against him before God, so does the promise of the Father sent down consequent on the exaltation of Christ, set him up here in the scene of his deepest moral degradation; in the power, sensibilities, joys, and resources of the Holy

Ghost in every way according to the mind of God. As our blessed Lord received the Holy Ghost here as a man, so has He sent down the Holy Ghost to be the believer's comforter and power to keep us in His name and footsteps here. Though one believes in Christ, yet he is not one "of His" unless he has the Spirit of Christ. It is not enough for the believer that he is assured by faith that Christ finished the work for him—he is not in the true christian state until he receive the Spirit of Him who has by His own death cleared away his sins. Christ is both the sacrifice for the condition I was in, and He also baptises me with the Holy Ghost. After I have entered into by faith, the efficacy of the first, He gives me the second. Now though the first is the most necessary, for without it we should have been lost, yet the second is the corroboration of the first. And besides, it places me in divine resources on the spot where I had found the well was deep, and I had nothing to draw with. Where I have alas, been in the lowest

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depths, almost crushed by the abject poverty of my own resources, there if I drink of the water that He gives, I shall never thirst, but it shall be in me a well of water springing up into eternal life. Then the forgiven soul is also an anointed one. The first sets me free from the load and judgment under which I lay, but the second constitutes me, because of the vastness of the blessing conferred on me, the most wonderful and exalted creature on this earth—so that while having nothing, I possess all things—I enjoy in myself, as the temple of the Holy Ghost, inexhaustible resources. Who can conceive, much less describe, the magnitude of the christian state in this world of vicissitude and evil?

I cannot here speak of the varied actings of the Spirit of God in us, but I suppose the first, which empowers us as sons to address the Father, is the greatest. Surely it is incomparable, this ability to say Abba Father, with the Spirit of the Son. Feebly and imperfectly indeed, but still the sense of such a relationship

is of itself surpassing every earthly distinction or position, and I submit that it is impossible for any one truly to believe that the Holy Ghost has come down, and not to receive of His benefits. Surely if one was thirsty, and a stream of water was flowing by, he would eagerly drink of it; how much more if I am sure that the Holy Ghost was sent down by my Saviour who died for me in order that I might drink, and thus know how He satisfies the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

Lastly, how could a heart really true to Christ, reach Him in heaven now, but by the Holy Ghost, or *recognise* Him in the midst of His gathered people but by the same Spirit? Surely the flesh could not reach Him nor behold Him. Hence the heart that is true to Him like Mary Magdalene, feels His absence; nay more, that we are abiding on the earth, whence He has been rejected. What else could the heart say in such circumstances, but the words of Mary, "I know not where they have



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laid him.” As surely as Elisha received of Elijah’s spirit when his eye rested on him taken in glory, so surely does the Spirit of Christ conduct the longing heart to where Christ is. It will be observed by everyone having received the Holy Ghost that His action is ever to turn the eye to Christ when He is according to the word, seek the things above and according to the example set forth in Stephen. “He being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven.” The great check or delay to the full blessing of souls, and to the knowledge of the christian state, is the reluctance of believers after having tasted of the healing virtue of Christ’s blood, to make His personal acquaintance. Faith appropriates the first, but the other cannot be reached but by the Holy Ghost, and therefore at the complete exclusion of man in the flesh. The Lord use these remarks to awaken souls to their great state for His name’s sake.

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“ BY THEIR FRUITS SHALL YE  
KNOW THEM.”

By their fruits shall ye know them. The matured products of life are properly the fruits. Hence, the acts and ways express the true character of our life. If a man is intemperate in manner or language, it is evident he is not in the power of a new life in himself, which would insist on the suppression of his temper. What is unknown within cannot for any length of time be concealed, when in contact with others. It will always be found that the word or act which discloses the mind, has sprung from a sentiment or suggestion sanctioned in private. There is much less of the sudden and immediate than we think. There is often an attempt to appear in an approved light, but if this has not been carried into practice in private, we shall be betrayed in public. Realities must come out in acts. Life must be within before it can bear fruit. When our acts and ways do not bear the mark of the life of Jesus, they necessarily are

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of the flesh. For if there had been a real life-work in our hearts, the fruits would be good.

It is a great thing to attribute the failure to lack of power within. If you are not contented, how can you appear contented? If you assume it, you will only be the more exposed presently. The fact is, grace forms the virtue in ourselves first, before we can bear fruit. One must have the ideal; and not only so, but this must be followed by the sense of what grace enjoins and effects in oneself before there can be any genuine expression of it. If one does not admire and adopt for oneself quietness and unselfishness, one cannot have them toward others. You are not to go to war until you have eaten of your own vineyard. If your acts were to be different to others, from what you adopt in private, your identity would be compromised; so that in every conscientious person, the manner and ways which characterise him, indicate what is allowed and encouraged in his own heart. For fruit, there is first the bud—the inten-

## OUR RESOURCE.

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tion. This may be nipped, and then there can be no blossom; that is, there cannot be the beauty and fragrance of grace; though often, blossoms are not *set*; that is, there is not vigour enough to hold on till the fruit is formed. Botanists say that wholesome fruit forms under the blossom. The fragrance of the orange grove precedes the fruit.

Cultivate in yourself the qualities or fruits which the Lord calls you to manifest here. It is after they have been for His pleasure and the delight of His heart in your own private garden that they are brought out into public for the good of others.

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## OUR RESOURCE.

WHAT is our resource when everything around tells of failure—of deepening and increasing failure? Nothing should touch the heart more than to think what the church was normally—what were the activities proper to it in its perfection; and to see how man has been that which has spoiled the manifestation

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upon earth of that unique structure—Christ's own peculiar building. The element that has spoiled it is *man*. But when the human element has come in, and wrought all the confusion and disturbance which we see around us, what have we to look to? "*That which was from the beginning.*" That is our resource. That is the truth we have presented to us in John's epistle.

I get the practice of a true soul in times of ruin, in the last words of David. (2 Sam. xxiii.) He, in a sense, sees everything spoiled; failure in his house, &c., but his comfort is, what God is in Himself; and, instead of looking at the wreck, he looks at the One who is "the Light of the morning, when the sun riseth, a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain." The Sun, risen up after a night of storm, bursts out upon the scene as bright and vigorous in itself as ever. Christ is as filled with all the blessedness of Himself as before there was any failure. And that practically is what the soul has to

find out now. That is the place of strength. What especially marks the remnant at any time, is, that they are occupied, not with the development of evil, but with that which was the original revelation from God. Simeon was of the remnant character when Christ came into this scene, and he is so taken up with Him that he can leave everything on earth.

The prayer in Ephesians iii. 16-19 is consequent upon the saints knowing their place in this wonderful structure—the church—Christ's body. The first prayer (chap. i.) is that they might know the hope of His calling, and the riches of the glory of His inheritance, &c. The second (chap. iii.), that they might find out the *One* from whom all the blessing springs. "That Christ may domicile in your hearts by faith," &c. The church, the body of Christ, is the complement of Himself. I am to occupy myself with the One who is the foundation of it all.

Christ is my Resource amid the wreck of everything, and I get sustainment in

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the knowledge of what Christ is, and thus, instead of my losing Christ through the failure around, I get a deeper sense of Him than ever—I am thrown back on Himself. I see the character of the difficulties I have to contend with, but I know how to meet them, and have power to contend with them.

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## THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

## THE SIN OF CHRISTENDOM.

THE great and peculiar distinction between the church and every preceding dispensation, is the gift of the Holy Ghost. True, redemption was not accomplished in any preceding dispensation, but then it was through the Spirit assured in hope to the heart of each believer, while in this period, consequent on the exaltation of the Saviour, after having in His cross brought out full reconciliation, the Holy Ghost was sent down to the earth. Every believer now is entitled to enter into full recon-

## THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY. 273

ciliation with God ; all of the old man having been judicially dealt with in the cross, and God having been glorified on the earth : Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and “being exalted by the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.”

The first thing to be insisted on in this day is the simple undeniable fact that the Holy Ghost—a divine Person, has come down to earth to make it His sphere of action, that, consequently, an entirely new order of things is established here. The Holy Ghost always was the acting One. He garnished the heavens, and always was the One to inspire or perform any divine act ; but He has come down from heaven to abide here. It cannot be gainsaid, if we accept the plainest statements in scripture, that the Holy Ghost has come down here, consequent on the exaltation of Christ ; and that He has remained down here all these years, and that He is now in the



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posting large handbills and notices on the doors of the apartments of the other eight, announcing that they will preach or deliver lectures on the way and mode by which they were restored to their senses. Surely the parents would not support such a course in their too-ardent sons, and would prefer that they should adopt gentle and less conspicuous means under the circumstances. How much more seemly and lovely were they in company with their parents, still unknown and lost to those insensible of their loss, suppliantly and carefully seeking to awaken them to the wondrous intelligence they had to impart! And so now, I am assured, there would be more success, and surely more comeliness, if the mode indicated in the words I have quoted, were more heeded and observed. "Praying in the Holy Ghost" at once sets forth my true place of assuming nothing, bearing the sense of our humiliation, but though accepting the lowly place, yet confiding in God, and able to partake of, and enjoy the present support and guidance of the

## OVER THE RED SEA.

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Holy Ghost, once so grievously overlooked and unrecognised.

Oh may the faithful in this day be stirred up to hate even the garment spotted by the flesh, and with repentance for the church's failure and dulness, to make common cause, and uphold the great and amazing grace of the presence of the Holy Ghost on earth. Amen.

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## OVER THE RED SEA.

OH! our blessed God and Father—

Now in peace we worship Thee!

By the Spirit sealed, we gather

As Thy sons to joy in Thee.

Happy in Thy full salvation—

Nought but praise our hearts doth swell;  
Brought to Thee—past condemnation,

Now we join Thy grace to tell.

Praise! our sins are all forgiven,

Cleansed are we from every stain;

Praise! for we to Christ are given,

Called by His most "worthy Name."

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All our enemies are silenced,  
Stand we justified and free ;  
Praise! Thy wondrous love hath triumph'd,  
" More than conquerors " are we.

Praise! for though our sins had bound us,  
Captives under Satan's sway,  
Proofs of vict'ry now surround us,  
Free, we tread the desert way.  
We, so late enslav'd, defilèd,  
Are the people of Thy choice ;  
Saved, redeem'd, and reconcilèd,  
In Thy favour we rejoice.

Praise! that from this world we're sever'd,  
None have we to please but Thee.  
Praise! that we to Christ are gather'd,  
And in Him Thy glory see.  
Past the desert Thou wilt bring us,  
Feed us, lead us, be our stay ;  
Glad we go, leave all behind us,  
Heaven shall end our pilgrim way.

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## “THE FAITH OF GOD’S ELECT,” AND “THE TRUTH ACCORDING TO GODLINESS”—WHAT IS IT?

THERE is but little danger of Christians separating the Old Testament from the New, who study the scriptures as a whole; but there is great need of “rightly dividing the word of God,” lest *such* should reduce everything which it contains to a common level, and thus miss the varying ways of God with “his elect people.”

What Moses and Aaron (for example) were commissioned by Jehovah to do, and did, by patterns, for the construction of the tabernacle in the wilderness, would have wrought confusion in Israel, five hundred years after, when David and Solomon were authorised to build and furnish the magnificent temple of rest and peace in the city of Jerusalem by other models.

So likewise the priests and Levites of

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that entire economy, whether in tabernacle days or in temple times, could not be trusted to officiate by word or deed, no, not for an instant, in our order of christian worship under another anointing "by the Holy Ghost." They must not even enter by their qualifications into the sanctuary which the Lord has pitched in the heaven, and *not* man, and into which our great High Priest has passed, "even Jesus the Son of God," and we with Him by another election. But beyond all this, must we not say, that Mount Sinai and the giving of the law, and the whole range of that establishment under a covenant of works (as a means of favour with God, and blessing on the earth, between the people of Israel and their Jehovah), need be as sternly refused by us, who have heard "the gospel of God," concerning His Son Jesus Christ? By means of His finished work, we are by faith, standing before God in heavenly grace and truth as "an elect people" for the Father's house, and rejoicing in hope of the coming of our

“THE FAITH OF GOD’S ELECT.” 291

Lord, and of our being caught up to meet Him.

Any Christian instructed in “the glorious gospel of the blessed God,” and true to the heavenly calling, and the apostle and High Priest of our profession, must see that even the divinely skilled Bezaleel of a former period, would work folly in *this*, and in the church of the living God. All his patterns, and costly materials were for “a worldly sanctuary” and for an elect people, recognised and dealt with by God, as belonging to the earth and only in the flesh. No! outwardly perfect as was Moses the mediator, and Aaron the high priest, and Solomon the king, in all their glories, and wonderful as that entire economy was in its time, yet “a greater” than all these has “come out from God,” and has since “gone back to God, in virtue of the greater work that was given him to do.” It is *this* which in these last times constitutes “the faith of God’s elect, and the truth which is after godliness.”

To these statements may be added the

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important fact, as to all previous ministrations (to this of the Holy Ghost sent down from the Father and the Son) that they "made nothing perfect," wonderful as was the ministry of Moses and Aaron, and the subsequent ministry of the prophets, and the marvellous ministry of the Messiah and His disciples to "the elect nation of Israel." Yet all these did but make way for the full revelation of the Father, "by the Son of his love," and subsequently by Paul the apostle of Jesus Christ, "under the anointing of the Spirit of God."

The measure and form in which this divine ministry from the heavens is given out by Paul to Titus, may well serve as an example of its character and supply material for our further consideration. "Paul a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness, in hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began; but hath in due time manifested his word through preaching,

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which is committed to me, according to the commandment of God our Saviour.” It is after this manner, that Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, presents himself to Titus, and “the new election” out of the Gentiles, and indeed to Timothy, his other “son *in the faith*,” when appointing them to their especial work, whether at Ephesus or Crete. Titus was to set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain elders in every city, and Timothy was to charge some that they teach no other doctrine, nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying, which is in *faith*.”

These respective charges by the apostle to his two delegates, give the true character (and more particularly the path) to “the faith of God’s elect and the truth which is after godliness,” that formed their services among the saints, and which are now committed to us. For instance, “godly edifying (under *this* ministry from the ascended Lord, and head of His body, the church) is stated



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to be in faith," and stands opposed to the former economy of law and works, which stood in outward ordinances for the Jews. They were a professedly "elect nation" in the flesh, which in great measure was gathered together, therefore under "endless genealogies and questions," and not in faith—much less "the faith of God's elect, and the truth which is after godliness." Christianity is connected with the glorified Son of man, at the right hand of God, and is ministered by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, for another race of people "*men in Christ*" who are born again, not according to the flesh, and the will of man, but created anew in Christ Jesus, and born of God. Men without a genealogy because of divine origin—and united by the quickening Spirit to the second Adam, in life and righteousness and eternal glory, according to the counsels of God from before the foundation of the world.

Indeed, previous to this new order of ministry in life and righteousness from the risen and exalted Lord, by the de-

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scent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, the distinction and difference between flesh and spirit, law and grace, earthly things and heavenly things, were pointed out, and taught, and divinely recorded in the gospel by John. It is only as we there follow our blessed Lord through the length and breadth, and depth and height, of that marvellous revelation of His personal love to this new company which He calls “His own,” which are in the world—that we begin to see “the elect Son,” with the elect children of the Father, whom He is gathering out to Himself, and into His own delights elsewhere, as the departed One!

How in keeping with these unfoldings of Himself are their acknowledgments of Him, “We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” But “He could not be hid,” is also true of Him all the way that the mysterious child was carried down into Egypt in Matthew, and then up from Egypt, over the way of the wilderness, and across the Jordan with the forerunner into Canaan, on to

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the height of His kingdom glory upon the holy mount. In Mark, too, with the forerunner, He draws His own *elect* out from the originally "elect nation," by the grace in which He suits Himself to the necessities of the poor and needy, day by day, as the Servant-Son, in His unwearied sympathy. Or else, in Luke, as the Son of man, growing up in wisdom and stature, "The Spirit of the Lord comes upon him as the Prophet and Teacher, by whom he is anointed to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, and to bring deliverance to the captives," &c. As the elect Son of man it is afterwards (as a new man upon the earth), that He makes Himself neighbour to the one who fell among thieves, and thus elevates and illustrates "the old law" of love to one's neighbour, by making himself a Kinsman, and Redcomer to him that was half dead. What could the accompanying acts of such an elect neighbour be in the midst of His earthly people whom He sought to recover to God by His example, but to pour in the oil and the

# “THE FAITH OF GOD’S ELECT.” 297

wine. His beast—the inn — and the care of the host, till this elect Son of man amongst men, comes that way again, do but complete the picture of what He was as the pattern man. In perfect harmony with him who had fallen among thieves (though it may be upon another scale), is the prodigal who had ruined himself! In the light and grace of Luke’s gospel, the Samaritan-neighbour becomes the Shepherd—and that sheep is only lost to be found—dead to be made alive again. The fugitive and vagabond who went away from his father’s presence, is welcomed home again upon another footing, and the house filled with music and dancing. But alas! can “the elect nation” see their breakdown thus before God and man? We find this elect Son of man passing out of these spheres with the nation in its ruins, into His own circles with God the Father by resurrection from the dead; and drawing “His own” elect ones within that enclosure on the other side of death and judgment too; lifting up His hands and blessing them,

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as He was parted from them and carried up into heaven, as the appointed Heir of all things, and Head of the new creation.

As a man amongst men, He has walked through the world in company with the opened heavens—as a neighbour he has befriended the fallen, and rescued the man whom the thieves had half killed, yea, introduced him as a *guest* to the host of the inn till He come again, and made Himself responsible to the last farthing. As the kinsman-son, He has brought back the prodigal to the father's arms, "alive again from the dead," yea, put him into the house as a son for ever. Lastly, as the kinsman-redeemer He takes His new place out of death and the grave as the first man in resurrection-life and power, the centre of this *elect* company, whom He has gathered out from the wreck and desolations below, for union with Himself in the eternal glory and bliss above as "the first-fruits of redemption" by the blood of His cross.

Thus in Israel's history with Jehovah,

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there always was “an election by grace,” out of the great external calling of a nation still in the flesh, under ordinances and laws. This nation moreover stood apart from other nations who were without law, and “strangers to the commonwealth of Israel.” In their subsequent history with the Messiah, and through the ministry of the twelve, or the seventy, as in the synoptical gospels, there was an election gathered out of the national and external profession—for as yet the Gentiles were “without God, and without hope in the world.” The gospel of the kingdom of heaven, or of God, was not as yet preached unto them, as to Israel! The time was not come for “the door of faith” (upon which we are meditating) to be opened to the Gentiles. Nor was it till after the death and resurrection of the Lord, and the refusal on the part of “the elect nation” to repent, and turn to God (as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles), that Peter was authorised, by “the sheet let down from heaven thrice,” to go to Cornelius and his

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friends at Cæsarea whom he had assembled together, to hear the word of God *for them*, from the mouth of Peter. It is of great interest to us who were once Gentiles, and of vast import in understanding the ways of God, with men upon the earth, to mark at this point, the enlargement of the circle of "the elect of God," by the introduction of Cornelius and the Gentiles, on the warrant "of the sheet" let down from heaven.

A still further difference in the purposes of God the Father towards "the elect," remained to be brought out by Paul, when Israel had fully forfeited all her privileges, under the Messiah, come amongst them as the promised Seed of Abraham and David, and seeking to be a neighbour, and the shepherd of the lost sheep. Under the testimony by the Holy Ghost and the apostles, after Pentecost, they had further refused the ministry which bade them "*repent*, and God would send Jesus, who *before* was preached unto you," that the times of restitution may come, &c.

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They stoned Stephen, a man filled with the Holy Ghost, and the last witness from God to them, and left themselves without remedy, till a future, and a far distant day. Accordingly, they were nationally and governmentally “broken out of the olive tree,” and “the Gentiles were then dispensationally grafted in,” as regards the ways of God upon the earth.

In heaven, where Jesus had gone, there was another and a far greater change, which Paul declared, namely, that in the risen Christ, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free,” &c. From that time, when Christ could be no longer “known after the flesh” (because He had passed out of that condition, by His death and ascension, to the right hand of the majesty on high) there was a corresponding change, in the circle “of God’s elect.”

The Jews, as we have seen, were nationally “broken out of the olive tree,” but still there was to be from among them “a remnant, according to



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the election of grace," of which Paul was a sample. Besides this, he was commissioned as "the apostle to the Gentiles," to go and preach the gospel to every creature under heaven, and to take out from the Gentiles, "a people for his name." This work which began formally by Paul, is going on by the Holy Ghost who is now gathering out the members of Christ, according to the counsels of God, as everlastingly connected with the Son of His love, and revealed to us, because the time was come for "the faith of God's elect." He is also baptising the members of Christ into "the unity of the Spirit," and thus forming and completing the body, of which Christ is the head.

All that has been said "of the elect," in the various ways of God with men upon the earth in past times, bears fully upon the glory and peculiarity of the elect of God *now*, as belonging to the Father's house, and particularly upon "the faith of God's elect," who are called out into fellowship by the Holy Ghost, with the Father and the Son, in

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the light where God dwells. Our union with Christ as rejected from the world, and as made one with Him by grace and adoption, who is the second Man, and the beginning of the new creation with God, is “the truth which is after godliness.” This new revelation of the Father’s purposes, which He had ordained from before the foundation of the world for our glory, gives definiteness to “the faith of God’s elect,” and the truth which is the foundation of christian morals and practice, of which Paul was a minister. The circle of “God’s elect” in Judaism, and the promises of the Old Testament to the seed of Abraham, and David after the flesh, have to do with “endless genealogies” as their title—and get their accomplishment upon the earth, with a people in the likeness and image of the first man, Adam. The circle “of God’s elect” in Christianity, has the risen and glorified second Man, the Son of God, for its centre, and opens itself out to the faith of “His own” in the eternal glory. Our portion and place with Christ was

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“ a secret with God,” and which in other ages” was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel. Besides this, “ the elect of God,” who are thus blessed in heavenly places with Christ, are to be like Him, as well as with Him. They must put off the image of the earthly man, and put on the image of the heavenly man. We are to be presented in the Father’s house, “ unblameable in holiness, and unrebukable in love, and in his sight !”

*(To be continued.)*

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## THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

THE FIRST GREAT CONFLICT, OR THE  
CHECK TO PROGRESS.

THERE are in the christian infancy two distinct experiences. The first is, when the soul, awakened to the judgment of God impending, sees that Christ is the propitiation through faith in His blood.

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This is an unspeakable relief to the sin-oppressed conscience, in terror of judgment. The sense that safety is assured through the intervention of the One able to effect it, because He bore what was due to us, and that God can say, "When I see the blood I will pass over," is the first and necessary experience of the guilty soul. This must be ever the first experience.

The ruined sinner must first be assured of the grace which meets his need in the sight of God. It is when there is no hope on our own side, that we appreciate the greatness of the grace which clears us before Him. "There is redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." We are set free from judgment, because the sins which had entailed judgment had been forgiven, and I am, as it were, cured.

But in addition to this, there is another experience; there is a sense of being brought nigh to God—that we are come to Jesus. That is, that we have not only received grace from Him, even as the blood intercepted the judgment

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come down into this scene, counting all things but rubbish that Christ may be his gain ; and leaving all things behind, that he might press toward the "mark [even Christ in glory] for the prize of the calling of God on high."

Unless Christ in glory be known, we can neither make the excellency of His knowledge our study, nor can we leave everything here behind, to press toward the "mark ;" because unless we see and know Him there, we have no real or defined goal before our souls.

In fine: man's works and man's need, and what would in some way exalt man belong to the first experience, and thus many are deceived ; but only God's mind and ways are known and acquired in the second. Hence, the more one is satisfied with the first, the more check there is to progress, and the first great conflict has not been entered on. I do not say that there are not anxieties about the state of one's soul, as to one's acceptance, and as to the things that trouble one's conscience, and many such like things ; the experience

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may even go as high as that of the bride in Canticles; but then, one has never really got outside of oneself; one has never been beside oneself in the pure and absorbing light of Christ’s presence; or found oneself in personal nearness to Him—a nearness greater than that of the woman, the sinner in Luke vii.

The Lord help His servants to understand, and to meet the need of His people in this day.

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## “THE LORD’S DEATH; TILL HE COME.”

AROUND Thy table gather’d—Lord,  
We bless Thy Name with one accord;  
Freed from our sins, and risen with Thee,  
We hail Thy word—“*Remember Me.*”

With thanks, most blessèd Lord—we break  
The bread—and of the cup partake;  
For us, we know Thy body given—  
For us, we know Thy side was riven.

Gladly we turn to where Thy love  
Midst woes and agonies was proved;

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When Thou—"the SON"—'mid scorn and  
    shame,  
Didst glorify Thy Father's name.

We witness Thee, O, Lamb of God!  
Pass through the darkness and the flood;  
Led by Thy hand to Calvary's gloom,  
We see Thy Cross—Thy death—Thy tomb.

Blest Saviour, Lord! we freely own  
Ours was the sin that bow'd Thee down,  
That wrung from Thee the bitter cry—  
" *Eli! lama sabachthani.*"

Jesus! Thy precious love we boast,  
Thy finish'd work is all our trust;  
We glory in "the liberty"  
Wherewith Thou, Lord, hast made us free.

Now in the presence of Thy cross,  
With joy we count our all as dross;  
Thou, Lord! alone art magnified,  
Thou, Lord! our hearts hast satisfied.

To Thee with all Thy saints we raise  
Thanks, worship, and eternal praise;  
"Patient"—we wait Thy promised word,  
" *I quickly come*"—Come, Jesus, Lord!

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## “THE FAITH OF GOD’S ELECT,” AND “THE TRUTH ACCORDING TO GODLINESS”—WHAT IS IT?

No wonder that Paul was anxious, lest “the faith of God’s elect, and the truth which is after godliness,” should be tarnished by the Cretans, through their natural habits and conversation, or dimmed at Ephesus in its doctrine, by the costliness and splendour of their false worship, under the goddess Diana. Paul reminds Titus, how “one of themselves, even a prophet of their own said, the Cretans are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.” This witness is true, he adds, “Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith.” It was amongst such as these in that day, and ever since, that “the faith of God’s elect, and the truth which is after godliness” was to be preached, and from off these dunghills, and out of the midst of these Gentiles, would God in sovereign power and grace, bring



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out "His own elect" (during Israel's dispersion), who should be lovers of truth, "Sober, just, holy, temperate," and shining as lights in the world. He calls them out "in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began," that these very Cretans might become as unlike themselves, as they had once been unlike God. With unabated confidence for himself, as to such materials, and in the midst of such giant difficulties, as Crete or Ephesus presented, Paul encourages his two sons in the faith, to hold fast by "the power of God, and his sufficiency" to carry out His own intentions, in calling out from the Gentiles, a people *for* Himself. "God (he says to them) hath in due time manifested his word through preaching, which is committed to me, according to the commandment of God our Saviour." He wrought in former days by a sling and a stone, in the hand of faith, to bring down Goliath, who defied the hosts of the living God, and He chooses *now* to work by "the foolishness of preach-

## “THE FAITH OF GOD’S ELECT.” 323

ing,” to save them that believe, and to bring to *nought* the wisdom of the wise Grecians.

Whatever God chooses to use instrumentally for gathering out “His elect” at different times, be it the rod of Moses, when He makes Himself known by wonders in Egypt, or the captain of the Lord’s host with a drawn sword in his hand, when the time is come for “His elect to possess the land”—the strength and wisdom of Moses or Joshua is to be of one mind with Him, and act as the finger of God. Moses may confidently say, with that rod of power in his hand, “tremble thou earth at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob ; which turned the rock into a standing water, and the flint into a fountain of waters.” Joshua in like manner may speak to the Lord and say in the sight of “the elect Israel,” sun stand thou still in Gibeon, and thou moon in the valley of Ajalon. David may yet further celebrate these goings forth of the Almighty with His people, as indeed he does, and stereo-

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type them in a psalm of praise for us. We are led by a different path, yet we will sing forth the triumphs of their Jehovah by land or sea (as our God and Father) like the anointed of Israel did, “[What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan that thou wast driven back? Ye mountains that ye skipped like rams, and ye little hills like lambs?”

And now, if it pleases “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” to lead us *not* by the visible rod of power, nor by the drawn sword which slew its tens of thousands, when He would make His name great in the earth; but to be followers of a rejected Christ and Lord, so be it. If He call *us* out from the world into other paths, which the seeing of the eye, and hearing of the ear have never known, and to live, “not looking on the things which are seen, but at those which are not seen,” it is to bring us into correspondence, with “the faith of God’s elect, and the truth which is after godliness,” for the things which are seen are temporal, but the

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things which are not seen, are eternal. If the order of battle be not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord, it is to the faith of God’s elect, only far more wonderful, and suited to our heavenly calling. If the wrestling be not against flesh and blood as formerly, but with wicked spirits “ in the heavenlies,” it is because these are now in question, and the rulers of the darkness of this world have their seat therein, and are not yet cast out. If the conflict be thus changed from the earth to the heavens, all that was merely human changes with it, and we are clad with the armour of God instead, and encouraged to be “ strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.” If too, the weapons of our new warfare are even changed in their nature, being no longer “ carnal ;” but mighty through God, and pointed inward against ourselves, for “ the pulling down of strongholds, and for casting down all reasonings, and every high thing in us that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God,” it is for the bringing into cap-

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tivity every thought “to the obedience of Christ.” This is the style and order for those who are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit—of such as are not of this world, even as Christ is not of this world—not yet taken out of it, but kept from its evil. “Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh,” but refuse it upon all points.

Enough has been written to shew the difference of “the *faith* of God’s elect” which is formed on what Christ is, and what He has entered into on high—from all who preceded us, or who wait for millennial blessing. Enough has been likewise said as to “the *truth* which is after godliness” to shew that its new character must be formed upon Christ, and what He was on the earth. Greater nearness to Him, and acquaintance with His Father and ours, will further reveal the peculiarities of “the truth which is according to godliness” whilst we are in a world which has cast Him out, and from which in love, the Lord has separated us.

A closer intimacy with Himself, under

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the anointing of the Holy Ghost, will make “the hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began,” to be the real power and victory by which we walk through the world at its finish—and in its closing days of apostasy. The mighty revolution is at hand, which is to bring in Christ a second time, with power, and great glory—a power which will put all in their proper places, in the heavens above and the earth beneath.

“The faith of God’s elect” waits not upon the time of tribulation, or the growth of evil. The abomination of desolation below, no, nor for the ordering of “the kingdom to come.” We listen for “the shout” and watch for the Lord’s descent into the air, to present the church to Himself, a glorious church, when the marriage of the Lamb is come, and the bride has made herself ready.

May the Lord keep the hearts of “God’s elect” fresh and bright by His own sweet love, and the blessed hope of that moment!

## THE DIVINE SPRING IN WORSHIPPING.

It must be clear to every spiritual mind that what actuates any religious exercise, determines its real character in the sight of God, and inasmuch as He not only reads, but must needs read, the hearts of those who approach Him, every such thing is accurately, because divinely appraised by Him, and only by Him. Probably in nothing is there more defectiveness among saints than in the worship they are privileged to render, and in which they love to engage. Almost necessarily, perhaps, is such worship practically incited by a combination of feelings not always easy to analyse. It ought not, however, to be uninteresting to us to inquire, nor impracticable to discover, by what we are controlled, when in liberty of spirit we draw near to Him in the holy of holies. We doubtless all agree that we worship—properly speaking—only there. We

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have an indefeasible title not only to enter but to *occupy* the holiest; we belong to that scene if we belong to the new creation. Adam had no better title to Eden, than we to the most holy place; nor had he a more valid claim to the tree of life and every lesser delight of paradise, than have we to Him who is "the Beginning of the creation of God," and to whatever lesser boon is ours by the same deed of conveyance. All that Eden contained (save the one prohibited tree) was for Adam to appropriate and enjoy, as much as he would: his title to the whole was divinely perfect, but his enjoyment of it was measured by the extent to which he partook of what God had bestowed, since it is evident he could not have appreciated what he had failed to appropriate. The beauty and perfection of the scene, replete with every earthly endowment, which wisdom, power and goodness could confer, invited himself and his helpmeet to enjoy what Jehovah Elohim had given him, and which was addressed not less to his moral, than to



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his sensuous nature, for everything, thereof, be it observed, was as good as it was gratifying.

Now, notwithstanding he was so lavishly blessed of God, we read nothing of Adam as a *worshipper*; but in the book of Job where the Lord Himself gives a recital of His creation-work as to the earth, He speaks of the delight and the praise of another order of created beings who, beholding what He wrought, were the privileged spectators of this new exercise of creative skill, "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy!" So also when redemption's more beauteous work was about to be unfolded, the pledge of which was there "wrapped in swaddling clothes," an infant of days, but "seen of angels," we read of "a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good pleasure (of God) in men!" (Luke ii. 13, 14.) And if we add to these a new creation scene of glory, we find exactly the same principle obtains,

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“they sing a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open its seals, because thou hast been slain, and hast redeemed to God by thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people and nation, and made them to our God, kings and priests ; and they shall reign over the earth !”

The point is, that in each of these three typical cases (creation, redemption and glory), the joy or the worship which the scene indicates, is *purely unselfish*. Those higher intelligences who beheld the earth's foundations laid, and witnessed all its garnishing, saw also Adam constituted its richly-endowed, its dignified and intelligent head, and being able to trace the significant and sublime character of it, they “shouted for joy !” These two causes surely were the spring of their joyous adoration—God was glorified and man was blessed ; they looked upon a work neither done for them, nor one in which they were agents or instruments, but they had unalloyed joy, the purest of its kind, in beholding how God wrought in

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acquiring new glory to Himself, and in what He did for him who was "the figure of him that was to come." And when God's blessed purposes of grace are about to be disclosed, the praises of the angelic host are of a kindred character. They celebrate afresh His glory, and the delight of God in His eternal counsels, as to another family of His than themselves ; for He took not "hold of angels (by the hand) but he takes hold of the seed of Abraham." So also, in Revelation, Old Testament saints and the church seen in heavenly glory, as represented by the elders, sing and celebrate the worthiness of the slain Lamb, and the blessing not of themselves (though they be included in that blessing, no doubt) but of others. Thus is it in every case, blessing and praise to Him who has so wondrously wrought for His own glory, and recording the value of each precious work, rather than the application of it to its objects.

The lesson I would deduce from this is, that as a worshipper I am so blessed that with a heart at leisure from itself,

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like the sons of God at the Adamic creation, the heavenly host at the Incarnation, and the crowned elders of the Apocalypse, I find a spiritual incentive to worship, as precious as it is powerful, not in my own blessing, but (1) in the discovery of *what God is* now unfolded by the Holy Ghost, according to the revelation given us of Himself as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and (2) in the joy and delight which my soul ever experiences in *what He has done*, not for us, though that is included, but *for the Son of His love* in exalting Him to highest glory as the second Man and last Adam, "the Beginning of the creation of God." In the latter case our fellowship is "with the Father," as in the former our fellowship is "with his Son Jesus Christ."

There are few things that saints lay hold of less quickly and less clearly than these principles of worship, and there is nothing in which egotism plays a more disastrous part. It is true, as already remarked, that a combination of feelings may actuate the soul of a worshipper,

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and probably this is, more or less, always the case ; yet, allowing this, it is well for us to observe that the value of the act must ever be determined by that which sways the heart. Taken as a spring of worship, my satisfaction in the deliverance never can come up to the immeasurable and profound satisfaction I am privileged to enjoy in the Deliverer ! In the one case I am before myself as a delivered person, in the other I have before my soul the blessed person of the Deliverer Himself. In the former case I measure the value of His work by my experience or expectation of benefits it assures to me ; in the other, by Himself who has made that work the foundation of His acquired glories ! How clearly is this latter and not the former implied in the word, “ Therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life,” apart from any reference to the beneficiaries. And again in John xvii., “ I have glorified thee on the earth ”—though men had closed their eyes and their hearts against Him ; and further, “ I have

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manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world," though, as we know, these dear disciples shewed but too plainly that as yet they knew not the Father. (John xiv. 8.)

In each case there is propounded the full value of the work as before God, estimated upon grounds infinitely higher than any results present or prospective; and therefore it is a fair and indeed inevitable conclusion, that if we worship adequately, it is as having conscious fellowship by the Holy Ghost with the Father, in His estimate of the worth and work of His Son, and by the same Spirit fellowship with the Son, as entering into His own blessed appreciation of all He knows and loves to declare, of the Father,—thus we "worship the Father" !

May the saints of God have such unbroken rest of heart *from* self, and *in* Christ the Beloved of the Father, that what enraptures our spirits when worshipping may be those divine things alone which shall be preferred before our souls by the Holy Ghost as He

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conducts our hearts into the eternal joy and blessedness which prevails only within the veil!

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### THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

#### THE RIGHT THING IN THE WRONG WAY.

THE wiser anything is, the more self-evident and convincing it is, where there is any wisdom. The very fact of a proposition being right, carries weight with it where there is conscience. When a right thing is proposed, it commends itself to everyone not destitute of moral sense. To the mere conscience there must be an immense charm in hearing and accepting what is right, and with such an one there could be no departure from the right thing, if there were in man no will of the flesh, which even when the right thing is accepted, spoils it by the manner in which it attempts to carry it out. Thus the right thing is accepted and approved, but because of

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the flesh, it is hindered and damaged in expression—the good is evil spoken of. If one is really conscientious, one can readily and gladly adopt the right counsel, but it is the act which is the result, that declares the extent of the influence of the counsel. If I am controlled by the word and counsel of God, my acts correctly and proportionally display the wisdom of it—I am myself the evidence of it; the body is light.

The first great fact to accept and understand is, that though the heart may through grace approve and determine on the course or line of action proposed by the word of God, yet there is an antagonistic element in us; the carnal mind is not subject unto the law of God, neither indeed can be. When grace is in the soul, there is of necessity a nature which has an affinity for and fellowship with the mind of God, which would lead me into simple acquiescence and practical obedience, were it not for the working of the flesh, which cannot be subject to the law of God. An immense point is reached when one is afraid of oneself,



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but he was not the man to steady the ark, and a great sorrow ensued. It is too often considered sufficient for a man to have an honest and righteous purpose, in his desire to set others right. He may most deeply feel the dishonour done to the Lord, and happily he has His ear, but he may not be at all qualified to interfere personally. A man, as we learn from the Lord's rebuke to Moses, (Ex. iv. 24) must be walking in circumcision in his own house, or he cannot be competent to take care of the assembly of God. The miscarriage in cases of discipline and correction, is, I am consciously persuaded, to be attributed more to one's own unfitness to undertake the responsibility than to the perverseness of those we attempt to serve. At any rate we are taught painfully that the mere purpose, however right, is not enough if there be not the fitting vessel for carrying it out. If there be "no part dark," then there will be a suited vessel; "the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light."

## TO KNOW THEE.

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The Lord give us not only to have the right intention, but to wait upon Him that we should be so under the influence of the truth we propound, that we may express it both in word and deed.

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## TO KNOW THEE.

ONE may have a very true and distinct sense of the virtue and the effects of grace, and yet not rejoice in the interchange of love between the Lord and oneself, known only in personal intimacy. The former is a service,—the greatest service rendered to me by Christ's death, and which I obtain the benefit of, by the touch of faith. "He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." Surely a great and immense relief is known to the soul, when the propitiation is known through faith in His blood. There is the wondrous, never to be forgotten sense of being healed of this death-plague. But this is not all, though it be immense; and many, because of its immensity,

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and because of the relief which it confers, think they need seek no more ; but the Spirit of Christ is not satisfied. He not only loves to serve us, but His heart is not satisfied unless we are loving Him, and enjoying His presence. Hence there is, as to the woman in the gospel, the inquiry from Him, " Who touched me ?" He will not allow the heart He has healed to rest in the relief which His grace has effected, however deep and genuine, and perfectly effective that has been. *There must be a personal link between Him and me.* This is the point where I apprehend many are defective ; and this link is never assured, but at the expense of oneself ; sacrificing everything in order to reach Him. Sometimes one knows what the idol is,—something of self, which stands in the way ; and on this being sacrificed, there is no more obstruction ; there is the falling down before Him, everything else is gone ; He is only and singularly before the heart. Then like Jonathan and David, there is a "*covenant*," a *known* personal understanding between

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me and Him ; I love Him as my own soul.

We get the desires of the heart in the Canticles, but they are not satisfied there ; now they *are* satisfied by the Holy Ghost who assures me of union and of *my right* to unbroken concert with Him. This is not reached but as the soul is set on Him—"thirsting." "If any man thirst, let him *come* unto me and drink." I feel that all the lack and delay in getting this in this day in those who desire it is here. They do not *come* to Him. You may say, How can I come to Him ? To answer that question solves the whole difficulty. If you knew He were in Jerusalem, you would pack up and go to Him. Like the queen of Sheba, you would be intent on finding Him, and knowing Him personally, and this is just what you require to *complete* your happiness. You could not enter the Pharisee's house in the same mind as the woman—the sinner did (Luke vii.) ; but you would assuredly make His acquaintance peculiarly with reference to

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yourself, and this would completely satisfy your heart. The fact is if you were really dead, you would be for ever with the Lord. There is something therefore alive in you which is a barrier between you and Him. This comes down as there is simple purpose of heart to reach Him ; but He is in glory now, and here it is that the teaching of Christ in glory is so important and necessary for the soul. No one can reach Him glorified but by the Holy Ghost ; and hence the moment you really seek Christ glorified, then the Spirit conducts you to Him ; you “ seek the things which are above where Christ sitteth.” Do not give up the journey ; it is a journey of exaction, but a journey that will lead you to a greater than Solomon ; and then you will be so entranced that there will be no more spirit in you.

The Lord lead you speedily into this joy. The heart thirsts before it is ready to receive ; it is like a flower shut up because of the rough wind, but then it opens and expands under the rays of His presence.

## IS NATURE DEAD ?

DEAD to nature is not a scriptural expression, so we must see what scripture says. Deadness to the world, and all that flesh is after, is what is wanting among Christians. As regards natural relationships they are very carefully maintained in scripture. The matter stands thus,—God established certain relationships. “From the beginning it was not so [divorce], God made them male and female.” Sin has come in and spoiled all. A new power has come in which, while fully recognising them as of God, and using them as images of the highest spiritual relationship with Christ and the Father, has nothing to do with them; is above, and out of them. In general those who say much about them, and being dead to nature, do so because they are not. Paul lives alone, and as a rule says, “Let every one of you have his own wife.” The speaking against it is of Satan. (1 Tim. iv.) The Lord had considered the lilies, and how

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God had clothed them. Seeking those things as an effect, is another matter. Adam was to dress and keep the garden when he had no sin ; but we need to have our affections on things above, by a new power, and need a single eye to it to keep us out of the power of what is corrupted. " All things are lawful to me but I will not be brought under the power of any." They even who had wives must be as though they had none, for the time is a constrained one. Nature is of God, but its corruption is not ; and it is corrupted,—under the bondage of corruption ; and that is the difficulty.

But dead to nature is legality. To seek it as it is, is not of the Spirit, though He has given us all things richly to enjoy. My body is of the old creation. My life as born of God, of the new ; and we are left for spiritual exercises in this very way. Nor is the matter therefore so simply spoken of, as some would humanly. It is meant to be a holy exercise, and those who do not spare the body may be satisfying the flesh. The apostle speaks for spiritual

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power and for order. Every man has his own gift, but it is a gift; he wills that men marry as a rule, but tells them the married man cares for the things of the world, that they will have trouble in the flesh, but he spares them. We have died with Christ, our life is hid with Him in God. He is our life, we have been crucified with Christ, yet live, but not we, but Christ lives in us, and this life lives by the faith of the Son of God. But you will find that when applied it is always in view of certain objects which turn the heart from Christ.

All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, &c., is not of the Father. We are dead to sin: to the rudiments of the world. You will further find that these are distinguished, and that the highest christian state does not contemplate this at all. In the Romans, the Christian is looked at as a man alive in this world, as we are, but justified, and Christ our life. Here we get dead to sin, Christ having died to it, and our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of



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sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin, for he that is dead is justified from sin (not sins)—cannot accuse a man of sin in the flesh if he is dead. Colossians goes further, “Ye have died:” and here they are risen also, and so are looked at as risen men on the earth. They are dead to the rudiments of the world, are not alive in the world, subject to ordinances; so we are dead to the law by the body of Christ. In Romans it is also said, “If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin.” But dead to nature, is in all that we are said to be dead to, quite unknown to scripture in word or thought. It falsifies the idea of the bearing of death there. But none of these are the highest measure taken in scripture. These think of sin, though of death to it: but hence of our living in it. Colossians goes a step further, and on to ground which is fully developed in Ephesians, where man’s highest condition in this respect is spoken of; he has not died to anything, he is viewed as dead in trespasses and

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sins ; and then as a new creation—a creation after God. It is just mentioned in Colossians ii. 13. This is fully developed in Ephesians ii. and here note, Christ is not viewed as life-giving, but as raised, when a dead man ; He having descended in grace to where we were, and in an effectual work for us, so that we rise with Him, and into the same place. This is referred to in 2 Corinthians v. 14–17, and in the remarkable summary in John v. 24.

All this stands on a different ground from being quickened and having died. We have changed our place and position—are created anew, but if dying *to* be brought in and dwelt on, people are really in general under law, and do not count themselves dead, and if we talk of dying to nature, which scripture does not, we shall soon find to our cost that nature is not dead. I should earnestly press being dead, crucified with Christ, and nothing else our life ; not of the world, as Christ is not of the world ; that the Spirit of God be the source of all our thoughts and desires to live

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Christ. Death to sin we have—to the world, our old man crucified with Christ, and if Christ be in us, the body dead because of sin. So that all that is in the world, the lusts and pride, is not of the Father. But neglecting the body may be being “vainly puffed up in a fleshly mind;” and dead to nature does not enter into the sphere of scriptural thought. Who is dead to it, and what is he dead to? Is the new man dead? The question would be, Is nature dead? And then we should soon find it is not. We should not eat nor drink. Now we should not do this save to the glory of God, and with prayer and thanksgiving, hence no motive but Christ in anything, the body of sin being destroyed.

What is especially wanting now is undivided devotedness, I dread anything that would weaken that; but dead to nature in word or thought, scripture does not know; and in the highest character of Christ, dead to anything does not come in at all, but a new nature in relationship with the Father and with

## A MEMORIAL OF HER. 359

Christ, and to our sitting in heavenly places. If I talk much of being dead to nature, I am occupied with it.

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## A MEMORIAL OF HER.

To please the Lord is at once the greatest satisfaction and service here. The man who first pleased Him on the earth, "was not, for God took him." He was "translated, that he should not see death." "The seventh from Adam," the man who had completed the generation from Adam, was placed superior to the condition of death which was entailed on him from his father Adam, because he pleased God. The greatest testimony to our Lord on the earth was, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." "Without faith it is impossible to please God, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him out," that is, that I own His nature as conferring favour and blessing on any who make choice of Him. He

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is my object, and He rewards me who makes Him my object. The more I make Him my object, the more He is pleased. He is the rewarder of those who do so.

According as there is a sense of Christ's service to us, so must there be an expression of it to Him. He that is forgiven much, the same loveth much. Love begets love ; as we know His love, we love Him, and love delights in expressing itself agreeably to Him to whom it is due, and as there is a sense of it. Hence we get in scripture the spontaneous expression of love to the Lord as He is known.

In Luke vii. we read of the woman, the sinner, coming into the Pharisee's house, her first real interview with Him. At her first acquaintance she is prepared to express how much she loves Him. The simple fact that she knew that He was her Saviour, and she so great a sinner, led her, without any suggestion or command, to go to Him, purposely to anoint Him with the ointment which doubtless a little while ago she could have appropriated herself.

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And in this lay the great contrast between her and the Pharisee. The Pharisee had more opportunity apparently of knowing Him, but her soul had through faith seen Him as her Saviour, and therefore she seeks Him in order to express to Him personally her sense of His great service to her. This act of hers indicates the true and necessary fruit of a soul assured of blessing through Christ. It is important to see that there is an unmistakable evidence of faith in Christ as the Saviour. Surely no one can believe that Jesus has suffered for our sins to bring us to God, but he must, in some way, by manner and act, express his appreciation of Him, and this in some significant way before the self-righteous, those who assume to be fit for God without the work of Christ. As effect follows cause, so must there be an expression of the heart according to the extent in which it has been touched by the love of Christ and His service, so that he that is forgiven much, loveth much. At any rate a self-surrender is the tribute which the heart

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renders to the Lord, for it gratifies itself while at personal cost it acknowledges His great service, and therefore, the greater the sense of the service, the greater the self-surrender or gift which commemorates it ; and the Lord, blessed be His name, delights in all these expressions. The Pharisee received the Lord into his house, paid Him a certain amount of attention, but there was no gift nor act indicative of personal indebtedness.

Now while there is ever some surrender, an abstracting from oneself in order to own and testify of the heart's sense of the service rendered to the soul by Christ, there is in the expression an advance, very distinct and peculiar in its kind ; according as one grows in personal knowledge of the Lord, then it assumes the character of what our Lord calls "a memorial of her." The first, or the beginning of this expression, is marked by some act or devotedness visible to every eye. The heart, as it is assured of this service, testifies of the fact to any or all, like a man giving up

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his means or time for the spread of the gospel. But when my surrender is because of my acquaintance with the Lord, and what He is to me, not merely what He has done for me, then my surrender is of another kind. It is something that I, as it were, bury with Him. This the Lord calls "a memorial of her." Something that no one on earth gains anything by. "She has done it for my burial." It is the Ruth-love, "Where thou diest, will I die, there will I be buried." It is the refusing anything here that would tend to exalt oneself where the Lord has died. It is the deliberate abandonment of personal position here, where my Lord has been buried. It is like David's mighty men, drawing water from the well of Bethlehem, at the risk of their lives, in order to please their king. Can we enter into our Lord's pleasure at Mary's act? The power and influence on every side, in religion and the world, were now arrayed against Him. He was about to be put to death. In that moment a woman came forward, in Simon's



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house, when our Lord was gathered with His own for the last time on the earth, and by her act declares that however He may be rejected and cast out here, the more evident it is, the more distinctly will she surround Him with what is naturally most precious and fragrant here.

It is not the Pharisee now who objects, but the professed disciples who exclaim, "Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor." The Lord vindicates the woman. "Let her alone, why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me." What we have to enter into is the pleasure this act gave our blessed Lord, and whether we in this day seek to please Him after the same manner. Surely He attached much to her act when He said, "Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." The question

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with us should be, what should we do in order that we might now so answer to His mind that we could draw forth from Him a like commendation, that we could afford Him a like pleasure ?

I think anything which would tend to our consequence in any way, which we surrender because He has been rejected here, would be of this character ; any surrender for Him personally which diminished us among even professing Christians, would touch on it. I submit that here lies the difference between the alabaster box in Luke vii., and the one in Mark xiv. In the former it is a surrender that every one sees, and which calls forth the reflection of the Pharisee, as if the Lord should not receive such attention from a woman, a sinner. Here it is the disciples who object to the surrender to the Lord personally, as a loss to the poor. If I have been very worldly, but through grace have been turned to the Lord, and delight in devoting my time and means to His service, the self-righteous may reflect on me. But if I refuse earthly

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position and distinction here, because of my identification of heart with the death of my Lord, many professed Christians would condemn me, and my comfort would be, "It pleases the Lord and He regards it as a memorial."

In the one case it is like Jonathan delighting to see David the recipient of his gifts, but in the other it is Ruth accompanying Naomi when there was nothing apparently to gain but simply to be in identity with the one dearest to the heart. The Lord values the love that leads one into the path of rejection with Himself. It is the act most creditable to any believer, and therefore of the same order as Mary's which should be spoken of for a memorial of her. There is no greater or better memorial of anyone than personal association with Him, through loss and surrender here.

I might be asked, "How is it to be done?" There are two ways in which we become associated with a rejected Christ here. In either of them we are identified with His death. The highest place love can set us in here is at the

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table of the Lord, communion of His death, and therefore whether in following Him here, or in insisting on the truth of the gospel, in either, as we are true and devoted, we enter on the path of His rejection; and friends or position, everything that the heart naturally holds most dear, are surrendered in order to be in practical identification with Him here. It is simply fellowship with His sufferings. "If any man serve me, let him follow me." No one can really and accurately follow the Lord, as a dog would his master, but must surrender everything which would tie him down to this scene; he must lay aside every weight. As Peter said, "we have left all and followed thee." True, the Lord compensates for the surrender, "manifold more in this present time," yet He also enjoins that "if a man forsake not all that he hath he cannot be my disciple." Surely the Lord delights in any of us bearing Him company. "Ye are they" (He says of His disciples), "who have continued with me in my temptations." Surely as He valued the

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companionship of His disciples on the earth, so does He rejoice in seeing anyone resisting unto blood, striving against sin.

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### THOUGHTS FOR THIS DAY.

“THE END OF ALL FLESH IS COME BEFORE ME.”

THE first and chief thing for my soul is to be assured that my sin, as it is in God's estimate, has been put away according to His mind. It is of all importance that I think of it and seek to enter into what it is in the mind of God. No man but one, the Lord Jesus Christ, has ever, or could ever measure or apprehend what sin is in the sight of God; and He alone therefore knew what was to be removed, so that even if I were competent to remove it, I should be unable to do so, simply because I do not know the measure of the offence man had done against God. The moment I see and regard my sin as it is in God's sight, I am convinced, as I cannot esti-

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mate it as He does, that if it is to be removed, if I am to be placed in the sense of complete freedom from every charge or claim, as a responsible being, I cannot by any means attempt it, and that if I am cleared perfectly according to His mind and holiness, He must have done it for me, thus establishing to my heart His perfect love, and that grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. The great delay or hindrance to quickened souls in reaching peace or deliverance is that they are occupied with sin, as it is in their own judgment and feeling but not as it is in God's ! and this leads to perfectionism in one form or another.

It is often not easy to distinguish whether one regards sin as it is before God, or as it is in one's own mind. The latter I call sensibility and the former conscience. When conscience is at work the sin is felt and thought of as it is before God. "Against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight." When it is merely sensibility, I consider some sins worse than others,