

SCRIPTURE TRUTH

SECOND ANNUAL VOLUME

==== Edited by ====

J. T. MAWSON and H. D. R. JAMESON

“Thy Word is Truth”

Published at 12, Paternoster Row, London, E.C.

INDEX

	PAGE		PAGE
Activities of the Love of God, The	194	<i>Answers to Correspondents :—</i>	
<i>Answers to Correspondents :—</i>		Resurrection of the Body, The	352
Adam	383	Scriptures after the Rapture of the Church, The	61
"Amalgamation of Christians"	31	Sheep-fold, The	381
Baptism	256	Should Christians keep the Sabbath?	160
Beast and the False Prophet, The	319	"Should Prayer be addressed to the Lord Jesus Christ?"	253
"Beyond the Reach of Mercy?"	95	Sin or Trea-pass?	318
Body of Christ, The	384	Sovereignty and Responsibility	253
Cain	383	"Spiritual"	127
Christian Responsibility	96	Strait Gate, The	159
Church, The	191	"Subject to Vanity"	124
Cleansing of the Temple, The	125	Suffering	192
Daily Occupation, The	320, 381	Temptation in the Wilderness, The	318
Death in the Millennium	383	To Sin Wilfully	192
Did the Lord harden Pharaoh's Heart?	352	Trinity in Unity	91
Divine Nature, The	318	Unleavened Bread	191
Do we Need the Constant Cleansing of the Blood?	255	"Verily, verily"	64
Entrance of Sin, The	124	Will all Believers be caught up to meet the Lord at His Coming Again?	125
Eternal Punishment	30, 60, 224	Women preaching	191
Evolution	286	Word, The	61
Falling Away	124	Young Man of Mark xiv., The	384
Fatherhood of God, The	284	<i>Scriptures :—</i>	
Fire	254	John i. 9	95
Flesh, The	63	Romans ii. 6-10	252
Fruit-bearing	382	1 Corinthians vi. 9, 10	381
Gift of Tongues	352	1 Thessalonians i. 2-5	63
God of Peace, The	288	2 Thessalonians ii. 7	126
Healing the Sick	286	"Ask and Ye shall Receive"	139
Infants and the Church	382	<i>Authority of Scripture, The</i>	26
Inheritance	319	<i>Backsliding</i>	296
Inquiry as to Paragraph in September Issue	383	<i>"Better Country, A" (poetry)</i>	263
Is Satan Omnipresent?	96	<i>Bible Study—Galatians, 7, 39, 73, 113, 140, 170, 206, 236, 275, 299, 339, 360</i>	
"Justified in the Spirit"	224	<i>Blessing of them that know the Lord, The</i>	166
"Keys" given to Peter, The	255	<i>"Brethren"</i>	241
"Kingdom of Heaven suffereth Violence, The"	125	<i>Christ our Object</i>	32
Knowing Christ after the Flesh	223	<i>Christ our Sun</i>	348
"Looking this Way"	62	<i>Christian's Life, The (poetry)</i>	35
Lord's Table, The	287	<i>Church of the Living God, The</i>	353
"Mammon of Unrighteousness"	126	<i>Cloud of Witnesses, The</i>	133
Melody	64	<i>Condition of the Road, A</i>	200
Millennial Dawnism	128	<i>Converts and Witnesses</i>	301
New Heavens and New Earth, The	126	<i>Correspondence :—</i>	
Parents and Children	320	How to Win Souls	121, 144, 173, 211
Place of the Christian in the Future Government of the World, The	252		
Prayers for the Dead	192		
Predestination	94		
Receiving the Holy Spirit	62		

	PAGE		PAGE
Correspondence :—		Never Alone	101
Knowing Christ after the Flesh	244, 270	New Relationship and its Resources, The	36
The Gospel to the Dead	375	“ Not by Works of Righteousness ”	227
Dependence upon God for Service	325	Notes and Comments	193, 225, 289
Doctrine and Manner of Life	353	On Both Sides of the Sea	129
Downgrade, The	333	Old Covenant and the New Dispensation, The	213
Echo of the Missionary Conference, An	343	Opened Eyes	362
Effective Ministry	325	Our Expectation	325
Elijah	76	“ Our Father ”	284
Elisha's Call and its Lessons	108	Outlook, The	15, 52, 117
Eternal Punishment—		Pi-hahiroth	97
85, 118, 145, 177, 202, 249, 271, 305, 345,	364	Position and Condition from which Every- thing can be rightly viewed, The,	15
Ezion-Gaber	19	Power of Deliverance, The	301
Faith	301	Practical Godliness	166, 220, 229, 281, 322
Feasts of the Lord, The—		Preaching, On	356
70, 106, 155, 186, 312, 326, 369		Ramoth-Gilead	33
Flesh, The	301	Red Heifer, The	246
Foreword	1	School of God in the Book of Daniel, The 83, 122, 157, 196, 268, 316, 335,	356
“ Gave Himself ”	291	Scripture Comments	161
Generations of the Heavens and the Earth, The	49, 184, 218, 232, 349	Scripture Notes	257
“ Glorious Gospel Story, The ” (poetry)	212	Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, The	23, 57, 90, 151, 214
God hath spoken	223	Sermons that Save	112
Great Contrast, A	169	“ Shew me Thy Glory ”	134, 174
Hallelujah !	380	Sower and the Harvest, The	79
“ He that Overcometh ”	329	Sphere of the Spirit, The	143
Head and the Body, The	48	Storms	43
“ Him that is Able ”	128	“ Tears ”	280
“ His Leaf also shall not Wither ”	205	“ Ten Thousand Thanks ” (poetry)	7
“ I was Afraid ”	68	Thine Only (poetry)	363
Immortality	130, 189	Things turned upside down	139
“ In Him was Life ”	308	Tired of Christ	372
Incarnation, The (poetry)	321	Thou shalt Remember	5
Indwelling of the Holy Ghost—		Thoughts of Him (poetry)	130
182, 199, 278, 334		Thoughts on Service	14, 99, 294
Intercession of Christ, The	231	Three Great Facts	311
Jethro	258	True Unity in the Truth Alone	226
John's Testimony to Jesus	367	Unchanging Truth, The	235
Lahai-roi	65	Victory of Love, The	263
Limitations of Science, The	100	Way of Love, The	302
Lord's Presence and Authority, The	10	What think ye of Christ ?	225
Lord's Presence in the Midst, The	162	Where is the Lord ?	264
Lord's Supper, The	44	Work of the Lord amongst the Young, The	348, 367
Low Thoughts of Self	321	Word of God, The	64
Man of Sorrows, A	2		
Mercy	375		
Missionary Problem, The	260, 309, 377		

Scripture Truth.

“Stand thou still a while, that I may shew thee the word of God” (1 Sam. ix. 27).

WE desire to keep two things prominently before our readers and ourselves, namely, that “*all Scripture is given by inspiration of God*” (2 Tim. iii. 16); and that the truths therein revealed are for the comfort and edification of “*all the saints*” (Eph. i. 15). Indeed, the Bible is the book for all men: its words are the *sine qua non* for light and life and blessing: for it is written, “The entrance of Thy words giveth light;” and Jesus said, “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John vi. 63); they alone are able to make men wise unto salvation, and apart from the entrance and reception of God’s Word men are blind and dead.

We are born again by the Word (1 Peter i. 23); it is that by which we grow (ii. 2); as it abides in us we are strong and overcome the wicked one (1 John ii. 14); it is “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. iii. 16).

We know from the Lord’s own ministry that “Moses and *all the prophets*” contain “the things concerning Himself;” and as these are the things which we most ardently desire to know and communicate, we shall not depart from the one Book which contains them.

It may appear to some weak and futile, in the presence of the pretentious schemes and efforts with which the world is filled, to continue simply to minister the truth of Scripture; the more so because the Bible has come to be despised and set at naught, as was the One of whom it testifies, when He was on earth; but in reality the Word of God is both quick and powerful, and we know that its truth

alone can set men free from every hurtful yoke. The very fact, therefore, that men are turning away from the truth should be a powerful incentive to the servants of the Lord to be steadfast and unmoveable in it.

All the truth has been revealed, and gifts for the ministry of it have been given by the victorious and glorified Christ “for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Eph. iv. 8–13).

We cannot look upon any less a circle than this verse contemplates—“the body of Christ.” What a wonderful link binds us to every member of it! We are united by one Spirit to one glorious Head in heaven, and the life and nature of the Head is in every member of His body.

We do not hereby make light of the confusion and divisions which seem to give the lie to this blessed truth, for we have no more love for latitudinarianism than we have for sectarian bigotry; but we believe that all that God has wrought abides, and that the work of the Lord continues. His purposes will be fulfilled in spite of all opposition, and the church will ere long be presented to Himself “a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but . . . holy and without blemish” (Eph. v. 27).

For this blessed consummation we wait, and with it in view would desire with all who love the Lord to be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord (1 Cor. xv. 58).

A Man of Sorrows.

(H. NUNNERLEY).

Isaiah liii.

SORROWS *personal*, for He was "despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (ver. 3).

Sorrows *relative*, for He entered into those of others. "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" (ver. 4).

Sorrows *vicarious*, for He suffered for sins not His own. "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him; *He* hath put Him to grief" (ver. 10).

Gethsemane with its bloody sweat witnesses to the dread anticipation of this last sorrow, Golgotha to its awful realization. The holy Sufferer entered the smoky furnace, felt the horror of that great darkness: in anguish He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

In this bitter woe He was *alone*; none of the ransomed shall ever know the dark depths into which He descended, the waterfloods which rolled over His soul, the unutterable sorrow of Calvary.

No wonder His visage was marred more than that of any man, His form more than the sons of men, for there is no anguish a soul can taste that this poor and afflicted Man knew not.

Misunderstood by His followers, hated by His foes, harassed by Satan, rejected by "His own," this lonely, solitary, heavenly Stranger found no place to lay His head in a world of His own creation. A journey, begun in a stable, ended in a malefactor's death on a gibbet, and burial in a borrowed tomb.

Crucified in weakness, full of heaviness, none to pity, none to comfort, gall for His meat, vinegar for His drink, despised, rejected, betrayed, forsaken, wounded in the house of His

friends, with thorn-crowned brow and pierced hands and feet, subjected to the crowd's rude stare and unholy gibe, encompassed with dogs, beset by bulls of Bashan, He died a martyr and a victim, and sealed a good confession with His blood.

He had never transgressed, yet He was numbered with the transgressors; He loved righteousness, yet was crucified with the wicked. Death had no claim upon Him, yet He died; Satan no point of vantage in His holy nature, yet, in man's hour, the power of darkness bruised His heel.

Man and Satan having done their worst, the work His Father gave Him to do finished, unsoiled by the sin He had borne and atoned for, He poured out His soul unto death, and committed His spirit to God His Father in perfect peace. He left sin, sorrow, suffering behind and ascended where He was before, where no tears dim the eye, no sorrow comes, no anguish, no suffering, where all is rest, peace, and tranquillity.

The Sorrows of His People.

Is He absorbed, occupied, so engrossed with the glory there as to be oblivious to His people here?

No. Memory recalls the sorrows He tasted when, as the Captain of our salvation, He trod a toilsome, suffering, pathway, tempted at every point like as we are—sin apart. He was thus qualified, fitted perfectly, for the priestly office to which He has been called. His eye is ever on the pathway of His people, His heart toward them, His hand for them. For them He intercedes. Jesus, the Son of God, faithful and merciful, sits on a throne of grace: He is ever accessible. His people may come boldly to Him at all times, what-

ever their need, sure of mercy and grace, sympathy and succour. He is acquainted with their griefs, knows their sorrows personally, experimentally.

ARE THEY IN A FICKLE, CHANGING WORLD?

So was He. One moment men hung with wonder on the gracious words which fell from His lips, the next were eager to cast Him headlong from the brow of the hill. A whole city following after Him one day, the next, praying Him to "depart" from them. One hour acclaiming Him king, rending the air with hosannas, strewing palm branches for His feet, the next, shouting "Crucify Him, crucify Him! We will not have this man to reign over us!"

ARE EVIL REPORTS SPREAD ABOUT THEM?

Who was maligned like Jesus? Mischievous reports, false accusations, deceitful imaginings, caused Him to eat ashes like bread, mingle His drink with weeping. Priests denounced Him, judges in the gate spake against Him, Pharisees declared He was a "deceiver of the people," controlled by demons, an agent of Satan.

ARE HIS PEOPLE LONELY AND SORROWFUL?

Who knew loneliness like the Man of sorrows? Deserted by kinsmen and neighbours; lover and friend standing aloof; His days were spent like a pelican of the wilderness, an owl of the desert, a lonely sparrow on the house-top. Others could go to their own home, but He was friendless, desolate, forsaken.

His tender, human heart yearned for sympathy, sought comforters, found none, went mourning all the day. His life was spent with grief, His years with sighing; a broken vessel forgotten as a dead man out of mind.

ARE THEY MISUNDERSTOOD?

Who was *misunderstood* like Jesus? Parents wist not that He must be about

His Father's business, brethren did not believe in Him, disciples did not understand Him, knew Him not, though He companied long with them; His words were enigmas to them, His works misunderstood, His acts in their true import not apprehended. Reproached by His enemies, feared by His acquaintance, they fled from the Dayspring which had visited them from on high, knew not the time of their visitation, comprehended not the light which shone in darkness, did not understand that He had come to guide their feet in the way of peace.

ARE THEY DISAPPOINTED AND DISCOURAGED IN THE GREAT HARVEST FIELD?

You have toiled, agonized night and day, year in and year out, among cultivated heathen at home, benighted heathen abroad; on Greenland's icy shores or under India's burning sun, Afric's deadly swamps or Siberia's snowy steppes; or, maybe, in some lone country-side or busy, teeming city, in thieves' kitchens or beggars' lodging houses, in slums or ragged schools, in infirmary or workhouse.

Now, weary in body and mind, disconsolate and discouraged, you are tempted to sheathe the sword, to unbuckle the armour.

How well your Lord and Master knew what it was to agonize on the mountain top, traverse Judæa's burning plains, sit weary at the well side, go about doing good, spend and be spent over a callous, ungrateful nation!

No response to His appeals, none fleeing to those sheltering wings, those outstretched arms. Heaven was brought to the very doors of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. Jerusalem, the Holy City, had its King in the midst of it, but knew not the time of its visitation.

Was He indifferent to all this? Let those sorrowful tears flowing down that marred visage, that lament, 'I would, but ye would not,' be our answer.

Did He give up? Was He dis-

couraged? No, He shall not fail nor be discouraged until His work be accomplished, His toil ended. If He was not *successful* He was *faithful*, if not *popular* He was *true*. Both work and reward were with His God, He did His Father's will. His work He finished. So that if, as far as Israel were concerned, He had spent His strength for naught, laboured in vain, His Father's approval was all He sought, His "Well done!" enough.

Blessed Servant! Blessed Master! Make Thy sympathy known to Thy tried servants, let them turn to Thee for succour until, their warfare ended, their toil over, they hear Thee say, "Well done, *good* and *faithful* servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

DO THEY SORROW ON ACCOUNT OF OTHERS?

A loved one lies ill, or is bereaved, or in need. How keenly the mother feels the babe's suffering, how truly a loving daughter the pangs, the racking cough which tears the worn frame of a loved parent.

Jesus knew all this, and knew it *as only He could*. Deep and real as His personal sorrows were, the sorrows of others affected Him profoundly. He felt in His spirit the griefs He assuaged, tasted the sorrows He alleviated, was afflicted with the affliction He relieved, bore the griefs and carried the sorrows of those He healed, sighed as He said "be opened" to the deaf and dumb, groaned in spirit at the grave of Lazarus; ever carried Himself as a sympathizing friend, never as a mere benefactor.

Emmanuel—God with us—was this blessed Jesus; but in Him they saw no beauty, perceived no comeliness; so, despised and rejected, He trod His solitary journey. His familiar friend

lifted up His heel against Him; one disciple denied, another betrayed, all forsook Him; left alone, forsaken and friendless, He met Satan in Gethsemane. How His holy soul shrank from contact with sin, death! How the pure and undefiled One felt contact with the evil one! How He groaned and cried!

But all this is over: He is *out of death*, seated a Priest to succour, a Friend to sympathize, an Advocate to restore, a Shepherd to feed, a Healer to bind up broken hearts, a Physician with a balm for every wound.

Whatever thy sore, whatever thy grief, there is One who can feel for thee, can enter into the wounds of thy lacerated, bleeding heart. Nay, more, Jesus the Son of God can succour thee! He can fill thy heart with the peace of God, calm thy troubled breast.

Make known to Him thy griefs, unburden thy sorrows, reveal in prayer and supplication the secret of thy trouble, and although the pressure may not be removed, the difficulty solved, yet He will make thee superior to the trial, lift thee above the mists of the valley into the cloudless region of perfect peace, the peace of God which knows no ruffle. He will give thee His own peace!—that unruffled serenity which dwelt in His bosom, filled His heart, kept His mind, amid disturbing elements, jars, and discords, when here.

He is able to do this. Nay, more, it is His present service. He washes our feet that we may have *part with Him where He now is*. He lifts the pressure from our spirits that He may conduct us under His priestly hand into the holy of holies, the sanctuary where He dwells. We have but to unburden to Him our griefs, make known our requests, visit continually a throne of grace, and He will sustain, succour, help, deliver, and relieve.

To change a commonplace truth into its first uncommon lustre, it is only necessary to translate it into practice.

The habit of denying self in little things will give us a vigour of spiritual life.

Thou shalt remember.

(WILLIAM BARKER).

Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years (Deut. viii. 2).

WE shall do well to read this chapter with more than customary care. Let me invite you to do so, dear Christian reader, and your gain may be great. On its simple page lie lessons of priceless value and counsel more precious than gold of Ophir.

They were to remember—these Israelites—all the way the Lord their God had led them those forty years, from the day on which He had taken them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt and to bring them into a land of plenty wherein they should eat bread without scarceness, and where there should be no lack. Settled in their thriving cities, at home in their comfortable farms, in the midst of smiling meadows and fields of waving corn, with herds and flocks and every token of abounding prosperity, they were to remember all the way the Lord their God had led them. How they would recall their triumphant start, when, standing at their fathers' side, they sang the high praises of Jehovah their God on the shores of the Red Sea. Back to their memory would come the exultant strains in which they celebrated their great deliverance: "The Lord . . . hath triumphed gloriously: . . . Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea: . . . the depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone. . . . Who is like unto Thee, O Lord?" Thus they *sang* on that day, and their enemies *sank* like lead in the mighty waters.

Other days in their chequered career would come back to them—days when God suffered them to hunger and fed them with angels' food—days of weariness and thirst, when to satisfy their need He brought them water out of the rock of flint—days of conflict when Amalek assailed them to bar their pro-

gress and to drive them back, while Moses interceded for them on the mountain top and Joshua led them to victory in the plains below, the Lord being their banner—days of perplexity, when Moses was in the solitudes of Sinai, and they knew not what had become of him—days of darkness and unbelief and rebellion, when they called for a leader who should take them back to Egypt, when Aaron quailed before the rising tumult, and to still the people made them gods of gold—days of chastening, for as a man chasteneth his son, so did the Lord chasten them—days of mourning, of repentance and tears, when Moses pleaded for the people and God forgave their sin—days when Balaam, bought with Balak's gold, for he loved "the wages of unrighteousness," would fain have cursed the people, but God turned it into blessing. They were to think of all this, lest their heart, at ease, should be lifted up with boastfulness and pride and God be forgotten—that God who, in all His ways with them, had but one end in view—'*to do them good at their latter end.*' How great the wisdom that bade them thus remember, and how great the love! Mightily should these memories of the past have moved their hearts, bowing them humbly before Him in praise too deep for human speech.

And we, too, shall do well to pause, and rein in our rushing thoughts, and bid them retrace all the way the Lord our God has led us. It is fitting that we should. For we too have had our chequered times—days of storm and tempest, days of trial and difficulty, days of deliverance and blessing, days when our own folly and sin brought down upon us the chastening hand of God, and when our hearts could turn to none other than Himself, and be

cast upon His mercy. Looking over it all we can only praise God, who has so patiently borne with us, and who makes all things work together for good to them that love Him. Here, standing on the threshold of the opening year, we would raise our Ebenezer, and sing to His glory, "*Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.*"

"Father of all! whose mercy, ever tender,
Hath crowned with blessing all our fleeting days,
Accept the humble tribute that we render;
Receive our song of praise!

Safe through another year Thy power hath brought
us,
Thy guiding hand has led us all the way;
And Thy kind care hath loving lessons taught us
With every passing day.

For every joy that tuned our hearts to singing,
For health, and friends, and days from trial free,
For wishes granted, our glad hearts are bringing
A song of praise to Thee.

And if for some of us the cup of sorrow
To our reluctant lips Thy hand hath pressed,
We bless Thy name, if on the dawning morrow,
We saw Thy will was best!

We thank Thee for the strength so timely given,
For promises of Thine that were our stay,
And for the precious hope of home and heaven
That cheers our pilgrim way.

For all Thy mercies, Father, we adore Thee!
With loving heart our grateful song we raise,
And wait the day when crowned with joy before
Thee
We give Thee nobler praise!"

And He who has been with us in

days now past will be with us in days to come. We need not doubt that. And as our days so shall our strength be. Only let us cleave to Him with a heart separate from the world and fixed on Christ in glory. It is a darksome time in which our lot is cast. The foretellings of the Apostle Peter in the second chapter of his second epistle are upon us. We see them all around. Therefore we should walk the more carefully and take His Word as the light for our feet. Let us seek grace to serve our Lord and Master in lowly and unobtrusive paths. If from many a pulpit the fundamental facts of Christianity are no longer preached, if the Deity of Christ is denied, His resurrection doubted, and His atoning work no longer felt to be necessary, let us the more stoutly stand for their defence. Let us pray more than ever for those who preach the gospel of God both in home lands and in foreign fields, let us pray much for those whose ministry is intended to edify and encourage the lambs and sheep of the flock of God. Let us be of good courage then. The very darkness of the night augurs that the day-dawn is at hand. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Standing on the hill tops of hope may we be watching for the Bright and Morning Star.

The Word, the Critic.

The Word of God "is a discerner [kritikos] of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. iv. 12). In this way the Word is a *Critic* of what we are, and quite shuts out the idea that we are to be *critics* of the Word. This is the only place where the Greek adjective *kritikos* is used: thus we are clearly shown that man must not presume to judge God's Word, but the Word is to judge man. This is the only way whereby our "thoughts and intents" can be kept in harmony with the mind of God as revealed in His Word.

Not of man the Holy Scripture!
Not of man the Book Divine!
God inspired the precious volume:
Beams from Heaven, through men,
here shine.

God, the Author!
All of God—each glowing line.
H. Luff.

"No powers of earth or hell can mar
God's work or thwart His will;
Whate'er the tempest or the war,
Faith cries, 'My soul, be still.'"

If a child of God pleases the flesh under the colour of liberty, mistaking carnal liberty for spiritual, who can say how far he may go wrong? It is the self-denial of grace that is true liberty.

Ten Thousand Thanks.

(J. WILSON SMITH).

TEN thousand thanks, my Father,
I would render unto Thee,
For all the heavenly blessing
Thou hast bestowed on me.
For Thou, in love, didst choose me
Ere time had yet begun,
That I should be before Thee
Accepted in the Son ;

That I should be in sonship
In the liberty of grace ;
That I might call Thee "Abba,"
Till I behold Thy face ;
That I might now discover
The glories of Thy Son,
Who died and rose to save me
And claim me for His own ;

That I the lovely story
Of His lonely life below,
Of His grace and truth and beauty
Might seek, e'en now, to know.
And thus, my God and Father,
Should know Thee in Thy Son,
In the joy of life eternal,
Through the work that He has done.

And then, for every mercy,
That strews my pilgrim road,
Most gladly do I thank Thee,
My Father and my God ;
For childhood, youth, and manhood,
All guarded by Thy power ;
For grace that now sustains me
In each perplexing hour ;

For peace and joy and sunshine
To fill and cheer my heart,
Till with my Lord, in glory,
I have my blood-bought part ;
When the sorrows and the partings,
Which mark this vale of tears,
Shall be for ever banished
In the endless year of years.

Oh ! keep me ever near Thee
Until that happy day,
When the present tribulation
Shall all have passed away ;
When, in Thy heavenly mansions,
We have reached our destined place,
And shall celebrate for ever
The glory of Thy grace.

Bible Study.—Galatians.

(EDWARD CROSS).

Foreword.

OF all the writings of the Apostle Paul there is none more characteristic of him than his letter to the Galatians. Nowhere do we see his feelings so deeply stirred as here ; nowhere is his soul so manifested. Elsewhere he may be setting forth the good, and his spirit is restrained by the vastness of the view, and by the excellence of the subject ; or, he may be dealing with evil of one kind or another, but the darkness is relieved, or the evil is not so great ; but here his indignation is roused to its deepest depths, so that for the moment it overflows the expression of his affection, and forthwith we see in him another man, his "fury come up in his face," as he contemplates the mine, insidiously, and, alas ! only too effectually laid to the very foundations of the faith, and the truth of the gospel threatened to be de-

stroyed through a different gospel, "which was not another," by those who would "pervert the gospel of the Christ."

"Another gospel," they called it. Not "another," but a "different" one, said Paul. No wonder, therefore, that we see his spirit more "painfully excited" in him than when he saw the pagan city of Athens given up to idolatry (Acts xvii. 16, N.T.). And if in any measure the words in Ezekiel xxxviii. 18 may be applied to Paul here, we must remember that the actual words are used by the Lord Himself against the great enemy of His people, in his final attempt to thwart their blessing. Over fifty times we read of the "fury" of the Lord ; and he that refuses to bend his neck to the consideration of this terrible word is in danger of feeling

the weight of it under circumstances too dreadful to contemplate. The expression is used, like others similar, so that in anthropomorphic language the Lord might convey to our minds the feelings which He entertains towards such as falsify Him before those on whose behalf He deigns to reveal Himself, and how serious a thing it is, by perversion of the truth, to hinder His purpose of blessing for His people. Failing to understand this, we would fail to understand the spirit of the Apostle in this epistle.

Other epistles illustrate other traits in the character of this extraordinary man. In the Thessalonians we see the warmth of his affection towards his newly born converts; in the Corinthians his self-forgetful patience and fatherly forbearance towards those who were as yet but partially recovered from the effects of their natural associations and their heathen ways; in the Philipians the depth of his sympathies towards those with whom he was more closely linked in the fellowship of the Spirit; in Romans, Ephesians, and Colossians, the office of the apostle magnified, as he travels over the vast range of gospel truth from "the sure mercies of David" (Rom. i. 3), to "the mystery of the gospel" (Eph. vi. 19), with which is bound up the heavenly calling of the church and "the hope of the gospel" (Col. i. 5), which finds itself fulfilled in the reconciliation of "all things" in earth and in heaven to God, in every department of which, in the vast universe of bliss, Christ will be "all, and in all."

But here we see him in another character, burning with zeal, hot with the fire of indignation against those who, under the garb of increased religiousness, were destroying the very nature of Christianity, and changing it from a life in the Spirit to one of ceremonial ordinances. It was the road back again, by the way of Judaism, into the paganism out of which they had been called by the gospel (chap. iv. 9).

Yielding as the Apostle is to human weakness, and on many occasions willing to be "all things to all men," so that he "might by all means save some" (1 Cor. ix. 22), and instructing Jew and Gentile to forbear the one with the other, and that the strong should "bear the infirmities of the weak, and not please ourselves" (Rom. xv. 1), there is no trace of such accommodation here; but in the sternest, strictest, most uncompromising terms he pronounces and repeats "anathema" against man or angel, himself included, who would pervert the gospel that he had already taught.

All this makes it plain that we have to do here with a subject of no ordinary importance; and, transporting ourselves from the company of the Apostle to the spring whence the Spirit came by which he was inspired, we are led into the mind of God and the expression of His judgment, through Paul, on all that which so aroused the indignation of the Apostle, and which has been working with such fatal effects in the church of God through these long dark ages ever since.

As regards the date of the epistle, there is no evidence in the story of the Acts by which it can be fixed, and various dates have in consequence been assigned to it. It was probably not long after Acts xviii. 23, when he "went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order," and, as many think, during his stay at Ephesus (Acts xix. 10—*Ellicott, etc.*); while others, again, refer it to his stay at Corinth on his third missionary journey, and written from Macedonia, prior to the Epistle to the Romans, about the time of Acts xx. 2, 3 (*Howson*). But after all researches on the matter are exhausted, its settlement remains still a mere conjecture: and seeing that it is so, we may dismiss the subject as being more interesting than important.

More interesting, more important, and happily better known is the character of the people to whom the epistle is addressed. Kelts, Gauls,

Galatians are but the same word in different forms; and it would be equally correct to call it the Epistle to the Kelts, or to the Gauls, as to the Galatians. To a Latin writer the Galatians are Gauls; to a Greek writer the Gauls of ancient France are Galatians (*Howson*). They belonged to the great Keltic torrent (apparently Cymri, not Gael—*Smith's "Bib. Dict."*) which first overran Northern Italy and Greece, about 280 B.C., from whence some of them passed over into Asia Minor, where they finally settled in the province of Galatia. Descendants of the western branch are still found in France, in Wales (called also Cambria from the Cymri branch of the Keltic family), and in parts of England and Scotland and Ireland.

The character of the people as given by all writers on the subject, from Cæsar downwards, agrees with what we find in this epistle. They are described as brave, warlike, impressionable, intelligent; but, along with this, inconstant, quarrelsome, unreliable: "nihil his committendum existimavit" (*Cæsar*), and of excessive vanity (*Thierry*)—a combination of qualities which, from whatever side they may be viewed, would tend naturally to regard as irksome the soberer and more reflective doctrines of the gospel, with the spirit of patience and submission to the will of God which it inculcates.

Such was the fruitful ground on which the enemy proceeded "quickly" (chap. i. 6) to sow the baneful seed of Judaistic legality, and by means of a "different gospel" to "pervert the gospel of the Christ."

The Epistle is divided into three parts:—

1. Chapter i., ii., apologetic; in which he defends his own apostleship as of equal authority with that of "the twelve." It was divine as to its source, and entirely independent of man.

2. Chapter iii., iv., polemical; in which he establishes the great fundamental truths of the gospel and the

promises of God, as contrasted with law; showing that as the law came between the promises and Christ, the promises cannot be disannulled thereby.

3. Chapter v., vi., hortatory and practical; in which he applies the principles he had already announced.

The whole epistle rests on the great fact of the cross in its application to the law (chap. ii. 19, 20), the flesh (chap. v. 24), and the world (chap. vi. 14); so that the Christian is not under the dominion of either. Delivered from this present evil age (chap. i. 4), he is free to serve God in the Spirit; he has no confidence in the flesh; and he finds his matter of boasting, not in a world built up and around the first man, as the head of it, the *raison d'être*, if it might be so said, of its existence, but in a "new creation" in Christ (chap. vi. 15).

All this is opposed by the principle of law, which by recognizing man in the flesh ministers to his vanity, and by appealing through its enactments and ordinances to his responsibility, changes what is vital and spiritual in Christianity into a religion of outward forms and ceremonies.

But while insisting on the principle of grace as contrasted with the responsibility of man under law, he is careful to maintain the abiding principles of divine government, unchanging through all dispensations. "Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (chap. vi. 7). We must not confound the responsibility of man under law, seeking in vain to be justified thereby, with the responsibility of every moral being as such in whatever dispensation, and fully owned by the Christian, to walk according to the relationship in which he is set, in the fear of God, and as subject to the judgment of Him by whom actions are weighed (*cf.* Rom. xiv. 12; 2 Cor. v. 10).

All this will come out more fully as we look at the epistle in detail.

The Lord's Presence and Authority.

(J. C. TRENCH).

Matthew xiv. 22-33.

22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

STUDENTS of the Scriptures will have noticed for themselves how in each of the synoptic Gospels there is a turning point in the history—the narrative commencing with the relation of the Lord's presentation of Himself for acceptance by the Jewish people as their Messiah, the Servant of God, or the Son of Man, and their refusal of Him; and then the afterpart of each Gospel setting forth the resultant postponement of the earthly kingdom, and the new pathway of reproach and rejection which those who follow the rejected Christ may look for, instead of the very different expectations which would have been realized had the Lord Jesus been welcomed by the nation as their long-looked-for Messiah.

In the Gospel of Matthew, in which the Lord is especially delineated as the Messiah, and which is the most dispensational in character of the Gospels, this changed state of things is observable in a marked degree. The main features may here be briefly sketched.

The Main Features of the Change.

Chapter xi. The cities where most of His mighty works were done would have none of Him. From the days of John the Baptist the kingdom of heaven had suffered violence—the people would neither weep to John's mournful dirge of judgment, nor dance to the piping

strains of grace proclaimed by Jesus Christ. The Lord's forerunner was to them "devil-possessed," and He Himself pronounced "gluttonous" and a "wine-bibber." In result the Lord denounces these privileged cities, and declares that their lot in the day of judgment will be less tolerable than that of the ancient cities of the plains in Lot's day.

But notice in this same chapter how the true ones, if but a small remnant, come into view, as the "babes" to whom the precious things of God were being revealed by the Father, while the "wise and prudent" miss them altogether.

The blessed Son of God, rejected in Israel, retires into His Father's love, and proclaims Himself as the revealer of that Father to those babes who trusted in Him: a testimony in itself wholly new, and unconnected altogether with Israel's hopes.

Chapter xii. The Lord reminds His enemies of what David did when he was rejected and all things were out of course—and mark in this connection how the Lord, now rejected, declares Himself as Lord of the Sabbath day, the now broken sign between God and His people. How could there be a Sabbath when He who alone could make it real was refused? Forthwith

He heals the man with the withered hand.

And here the crisis is reached. The leaders of the nation hold a council *how they may destroy Him!* The Lord withdraws Himself from them, but heals the multitude that follows Him: "He healed them all" (ver. 15). A striking instance of miracle was that of a demon-possessed man, who in addition was both blind and dumb. The demon was cast out, and the poor victim both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed and said, "Is not this the Son of David?" Infuriated by this, the Pharisees attribute His power in casting out demons to Satan. The Lord shows the *folly* of this—for Satan would not cast out Satan—and the *wickedness* of it, by declaring their sin to be blasphemy against the Holy Ghost—that is, the sin of attributing to Satan what was done by the Spirit of God.

They ask Him for a sign, which He refuses. What greater signs could be given than had already been given so abundantly? No other was now possible but the sign of the prophet Jonah—*i.e.* His death and resurrection.

Short of crucifixion, the breach with the nation was complete, and the leaders are denounced as a "generation of vipers," and they are warned that the last state of the nation will be worse than the first. In the end of the chapter He disowns His earthly relationships, however real, and proclaims the new and spiritual relationship with those who do the will of His Father.

Chapter xiii. A new start is made, the Lord appearing as the Sower sowing the seed of the kingdom in the new and mysterious shape it was to assume during His rejection and absence—a kingdom without a visible head, and with evil and good growing together until the harvest.

Chapter xiv. The Lord's forerunner is beheaded—significant of what awaited Himself (cf. chap. xvii. 12). And when the Lord heard the dreadful tidings,

"He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart."

Multitudes follow Him, however, and He feeds them all.

A New Path.

And now the Lord's action is, it can hardly be doubted, symbolical, and deeply instructive for His disciples in the changed state of things in that day, as well as for those who would follow Him in the present day, as preparing them for the new path then about to be unfolded as the direct result of Israel's and, later on, the world's rejection of Him.

He *constrains* (mark the word!) His disciples to get into a ship and go to the other side, while He remained behind and dismissed the multitude; and having done so, He went up into a mountain apart to pray. Evening (we read) had now come, and "He was there alone" on the mountain top—and the disciples were alone on the lake: "the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary." And pay particular attention to the fact that the Lord *deliberately sent them alone on this voyage*, knowing full well when He did so what they would have to face. The picture is complete and shadows forth what was about to take place.

The Lord having left the world (dismissed the multitude) has gone on high alone, there to pray for His own whom He has left behind Him in the world—'ever living to make intercession for them,' for "having loved His own, which were in the world, He loved them unto the end."

Our blessed Master has left us here to cross the stormy and billowy waters of life to go to the other side—darkness, winds, and waves all against us, and difficulties of every kind.

Just when all hope seemed over, in the fourth watch of the night, the Lord appears walking on the element which threatened their destruction. They are afraid. But at once His

strong yet gentle voice is heard above the storm : " Be of good cheer ; it is I ; be not afraid."

Now what was all this designed for ? Surely it was to educate the disciples for the future path, no more possible for them to walk in than it was to walk on water. A path utterly outside the power of human nature and only possible to faith.

Three Necessities.

The Lord had said " It is I." The Speaker was walking on the destructive element—superior to it. Peter is not sure that it was indeed his Lord, and to test the matter he cries, " Lord, *if it be Thou*, bid me come unto Thee *on the water.*" This is very fine. Mark the three conditions :—

I. " If it be Thou"—the right Person.

II. " Bid me come unto Thee"—divine authority ; and

III. " *On the water*"—divine power.

Now these are the three necessities for our path to-day—the Person, the Word, and spiritual power. Given that we have indeed the Lord Himself and His authority, we may step out assured of the power to override all difficulties. To leave the only means known to man for navigating water would, under ordinary circumstances, have been presumptuous folly. To abandon the human, the recognized and accredited in things spiritual, and take the path of faith, the path which the vulture's eye hath not seen, is not the path the " wise and prudent" would advise—eleven out of twelve apostles stuck to the " ship"—but the disciple who had faith in obedience to his Master's " Come," and came down out of the ship, assuredly honoured his Master. " He walked on the water to go to Jesus ;" and although faith gave way, and his eye got off Christ for a moment, and he began to sink—still at his cry a hand is stretched out to him, and he is upheld. " It is not the ship that

rescues him, nor is he taken from the path, but *supported in it.*"

Judaism had broken down. Temple, synagogue, and all connected therewith become empty shams when Christ is rejected and cast out. What was left when " the ship" (so to speak) was no longer safe ? Peter came " down out of" it, and made for Christ, and he " walked on the water, to go to Jesus." Are we prepared to come down out of the ship ? Is the person of Christ and the authority of His Word sufficient for us ?

The Great Question.

Now pass on to chapter xvi., and see how what we have been considering connects with what we find there. The Lord appeals to His disciples after the threefold testimony to Himself had gone forth (viz. that of John the Baptist, the Lord, and the apostles), as to what was the real, matured thought of the nation regarding Him. " *Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am ?*" This was *the* question. All other questions were as nothing compared to it, either then or now.

What was the result for God of the coming into the world of His Son, and of all the ministry rendered, the signs given, and the miracles performed ? The fact has to be stated in all its nakedness that no one knew or cared. What a state of affairs ! Then turning to His disciples, He asks : " But whom say ye that I am ?" Peter had passed through deep exercise in the ship that dreadful night *as to this very matter*. " If it be *Thou*," was his reply to the Lord's " *It is I,*" and now the disciples have a glorious opportunity for confessing what faith there might be in them.

The eleven who had stuck to the ship are silent, and the one who had in obedience to the Lord's command come down out of the ship, and walked on the water to go to Jesus, answered and said : " *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God !*" " *If it be Thou,*" he *had* said—and now he was

to learn something more of the greatness of that glorious Person, and what was contained in that wonderful "*Thou.*" Immediately the Lord pronounces blessing on the speaker, but reminds him that it was only by the Father's revelation he had become aware of it. "No man knoweth the Son but the Father." In chapter xi., as we were seeing, the Son reveals the Father to the "babes," and now here in chapter xvi. the Father reveals the Son, although there are depths which must ever remain unrevealed concerning the mystery of His incarnation—God and man in one Person.

Now that the truth of His Person—who He is—has come fully out by the Father's revelation, the Lord goes on to unfold the secret until now undisclosed: that upon Peter's confession as to the truth of His Person He would build His church, against which the gates of Hades should not prevail. And mark—directly the new testimony is promulgated, "*then* charged He His disciples that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ" (the *Messiah*). "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things . . . and be killed, and be raised again the third day."

In other words, the rejection of the Lord involved the abandonment of the Messianic testimony and the earthly kingdom, and the setting on foot of the new testimony as to the church which Christ, after His death, resurrection, and ascension, would build.

The Presence and Authority of the Lord.

Let us pass on now to chapter xviii. that we may look at the only other passage in the four Gospels in which the church (literally "assembly") is mentioned.

It is introduced upon a question arising as to the treatment of one trespassing against his brother. The Lord points out the course to be adopted. First, tell him his offence

between thee and him alone; this failing, take two or three witnesses; and this not succeeding, tell it, not, as we should have supposed natural, to the synagogue or the council, but unto the church. The church is substituted for the Jewish tribunal.

"But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in [or, unto] My name, there am I in the midst of them."

Now as in chapter xiv. we have the Person of the Lord presented to us in so striking and touching a manner as the resource for faith in the period of difficulty resulting on His rejection by the world and His absence; and as in chapter xvi. we have the Father's revelation as to who that Person is in the full glory of it, and the church about to be built upon the confession of it: so now in chapter xviii. we have the saints of God gathered as the assembly to this blessed Person as the alone centre, assured of His presence in the midst of even two or three so gathered, and assured too of His authority to act in His name.

On no other basis would it be possible that a judgment come to by the assembly could be ratified in heaven, but that which is here stated, namely, the Lord's presence being in the midst of His saints gathered unto His name, to guide them. What holds good for two or three thousand so gathered equally holds good for "two or three," the smallest plurality, who are prepared to tread the path of His will and pleasure. It is His presence in the midst that secures, where there is true dependence on Him, divine discrimination, and consequently a right

decision, and also secures the answer to the prayers offered in His name.

Thus (to recapitulate) we have in chapter xiv. the Person of Christ and His Word as the resource for faith in this present period of His rejection and absence.

In chapter xvi.—the Father's revelation to us of who that Person really is, and the church built on Him as its foundation.

In chapter xviii.—those who compose the church gathered to His name and assured of His presence in the midst, and endowed with authority to act for Him.

The time had not come for the bringing out of the whole truth of the mystery according to the purpose and counsels of God touching the relationship of Christ and the church, as His body and His bride—or as to the house of God, His dwelling-place by the Spirit. That was reserved for Paul in the Epistle to the Ephesians and elsewhere, but here in Matthew, where the subject is first mentioned, do we get the abiding *foundation, centre, and authority*, which remain for faith to seize and hold tenaciously for the guidance, as well as support needed, until our blessed Lord shall come and take His ransomed people home.

Thoughts on Service.

(SELECTED).

IF you have true devotion of heart for the Lord you will consult His tastes and not your own, and you will be ready to spend and be spent for Him. It will never occur to you that what you are doing is a burden when you work in answer to His mind; on the contrary, you will have the assured sense of pleasing Him, and this will be the greatest gratification to your love for Him. Instead of being wearied by your doings for Him, you will feel that they are quite inadequate to express the delight which it gives you to do anything which will meet with His approbation. Your only thought will be to do more, and to do it on the lines which He likes.

Like a fruit tree, you will bud and blossom and bring forth fruit, encouraged at every step by the consciousness that you are answering to

His mind, who planted you and gives you grace to bring forth fruit to His pleasure.

It is a well-known fact that the richness of the soil is never drawn upon, never exhausted, until the fruit ripens. Green vegetables do not exhaust the ground. There may be a great deal of green service, which is not a strain, nor a tax upon the servant; but when there is real fruit there is sure to be both. I call it green service when a person spends what he cannot otherwise use; ripe fruit is when one, in order to please and serve the Lord, curtails his own liberty and deprives himself of many little comforts which might be called needful. In fulfilling this service there is self-denial, but it is not felt to be a burden, because of the delight of the heart in meeting the Master's wishes.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence," for a heart neglected becomes like the dwelling of a slovenly occupant—void of comfort.

The Son of God gave Himself not to

reform the present evil world, as some would have us believe, but that He might *deliver* us from it (Gal. i. 4), and "*redeem* us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus ii. 14).

"Watchman, what of the night?"

Papers from several contributors will (D.V.) appear under this head.

TO say that things in the world are rapidly heading up to a crisis is merely to say what is being constantly said and felt. The question to be answered is, to what end are they moving? The servants of God should not be in any perplexity as to this: they ought to be like the children of Issachar, who "were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chron. xii. 32). This is evident from the New Testament, for there we read, "Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep" (Rom. xiii. 11); and, "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly. . . . But ye, brethren, are not in darkness" (1 Thess. v. 1-4). And yet there are myriads of God's people who seem to have no understanding as to the trend of things, and are tossed about by every opinion of

men. Is this because many who stand in the place of watchmen to them "are blind . . . ignorant . . . dumb dogs, that cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea! greedy dogs which can never have enough . . . that all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter" (Isa. lvi. 10, 11)?

The Word of God makes everything plain, and the one who walks in its light, and is not only a hearer but a doer of it, stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of the world (John xi. 9.) His eye is fixed upon Christ, the one hope for fallen men, and every movement is tested by its relation to Christ.

"What think ye of Christ?" is the great test by which every scheme is tried, and every creed and cause that does not accord Him the supreme place which the Scriptures give Him is of the devil and not of God.

The Position and Condition from which Everything can be rightly viewed.

(J. T. MAWSON).

The attitude of the faithful servants of the Lord Jesus towards any movement or community must always be determined by His own. They will delight in that which He approves, and separate themselves from that which He condemns.

THE Lord has been pleased "to shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass" (Rev. i. 1), and to one of these servants He gave commandment to write the things which he had "seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter" (ver. 19). With regard to these things the Lord has taken up a very definite

position, and there is no excuse for ignorance as to His thoughts about them.

The Lord as Judge.

It was in a strange and new character that John beheld his Lord in this chapter; not here, as He had known Him, weeping for the sorrows of the afflicted, tenderly pleading with

the wilful, and speaking words of comfort to the broken-hearted penitent, but of terrible aspect and unbending mien. It is here to look out upon an apostate world, and to scrutinize and judge the great systems that compose it; and as undertaking this, as God's faithful Witness and Servant, John sees Him.

He comes forth in all the dignity of the Ancient of Days, the unbroken calm of eternity encircling His brow as a halo.

"His eyes as a flame of fire," to search out the motive of every act in the world's strange drama, and to trace from its origin to climax every system that rears its head beneath the sun.

"His feet like unto fine brass as if they burned in a furnace," to tread down in righteous indignation all rebellion against God.

"His voice as the sound of many waters," the compelling voice of judgment, which, sounding above the frenzied clamour of Satan's poor dupes, will rivet the attention of the quick, and call into animation those that are dead.

"Out of His mouth goeth a sharp two-edged sword," to fight against all evil and to smite the wicked with death.

The World to be Judged.

Unregenerate man has continued to build his tower of Babel in defiance of God; and to perfect himself without his Creator is the design that lies at the back of his every activity—whether these activities are political, social, industrial, or religious; and the completion and crown of all the progress in which the world boasts, will be the deification of man, in the "man of sin," "the son of perdition," who will oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God will sit in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4).

Everything is, most evidently, with great rapidity, preparing for this; the presence of the Holy Ghost in the true church of God, still on earth, is the only hindrance to its final development; but when the church is caught up out of the world (1 Thess. iv. 13, 17), which event must be very near fulfilment, then shall this climax of all man's efforts, since the day when Satan declared "Ye shall be as gods," be speedily reached.

In the Revelation we have a panoramic view of the clash of the various forces at work in the world; of the rising up out of the chaos resulting of this marvellous production of fallen humanity, after whom all that dwell upon the earth will wonder; and of the immediate and unsparing judgment of God upon the world for this culmination of all blasphemy.

This judgment will be executed by the Lord as the Ancient of Days, and then to Him shall be given, as the Son of Man, "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him" (Dan. vii. 14).

As we read this book of judgments—and there is a special blessing for the reader, verse 3—we hear ringing clearly throughout its pages the call to the people of God to be in separation from all these things that will call forth His judgment; things which have taken such definite shape of late years that the student of Scripture cannot fail to identify them:—

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues (xviii. 4.)

The Lord and the Churches.

We are not surprised that the Lord is compelled to adopt this stern attitude towards the world of which Satan is the god and prince, for all Scripture bears witness to the fact that evil must come under judgment. In great long-suffering, God may endure for a while the vessels fitted for wrath, giving them space for repentance, but His Spirit

will not always strive with men, the limit of evil is set, there must be an *end* to rebellion against Almighty God.

What does astonish us, however, is to find Him standing thus in the midst of the churches, the circle in which, professedly, the name of Jesus is loved and revered, and that they are the first to come beneath the all-searching eyes of flame. And yet this must be so, for how could He deal out righteous judgment to the vast outer circle, if evil were permitted to proceed and develop without detection or rebuke in that which may be termed His own household?

The church was espoused to Christ as a chaste virgin (2 Cor. xi. 2) and should have maintained a place of rigid separation from the world which cast out and crucified her Lord, but instead she has been beguiled and corrupted; first invaded by the same principles, motives, and aspirations that flourish in the world, she has gone down, by a quick descent, as a great system, until as completely assimilated with the world, she will be spued out of the Lord's mouth as a most offensive thing (Rev. iii. 16). This is the sad history of the church in responsibility on earth, given to us prophetically in the letters to the seven churches.

The Cause of the Great Declension.

The churches would never have been called upon to hear the rebuke of the Lord for unfaithfulness if they had continued in the freshness of first love. "Thou hast left thy first love" discloses for us the opening of the door to the traitor and every evil, for at this point Christ ceased to be paramount. They lost the sense of His great love to them, and He ceased to be the spring of their lives; as a consequence their love to Him began to wane; they owned Him still as Lord and Master, doing His work with diligence, but Himself as the unchanging Lover they had lost, and this was the devil's opportunity.

The Lord cannot brook a rival in the affections of His church, and we can only be acceptable to Him as He sways our hearts and lives as our great and only Lover. An Old Testament scripture (Song of Sol. v. 9-16) presents Him to us in this character, and the contrast between this description of Him and the way He appears in Revelation i. is arresting.

"*His locks are bushy, and black as a raven.*" Here is all the vigour and strength of an undecaying affection; no trace of grey hairs or mark of decline on Him.

"*His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set.*" Here is described the infinite gentleness of that love which is so strong and changeless.

"*His lips are like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh.*" His words woo and win the heart by their gracious and heavenly melody; they are the words of eternal life, sweeter to the heart that knows Him than the honey or the honeycomb, for "*His mouth is most sweet: yea, He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend.*"

It was not the Lord's purpose to disclose Himself in any other character than this to the church, but their infidelity made it a necessity. We see how gladly He reverts to the lover-character when He finds devotion to Himself in the Philadelphian church (Rev. iii. 9): the one sentence that stands out in His words to them is "I HAVE LOVED THEE." *Others* are to know that soon: *they* knew it when thus addressed, it was their choice treasure, and He exhorts them to "hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

The crown is the highest possession, that which perfects and completes every other, and throughout eternity *the love of Christ will be the crown of the church.* The church in responsibility on earth has lost its crown, but, thank God, this may be recovered now: not by the whole profession, but by all

who desire to keep His word, and not deny His name. The way of recovery is clearly stated—*Remember; Repent, Return* (Rev. ii. 5).

“The Disciple whom Jesus Loved.”

It is true that even John had to see the Lord as the One who with stern justice would destroy the wicked, but He was to see Him thus as being one with Him in His thoughts, and in communion with all His ways. He stands in this chapter as Abraham stood in days gone by, before the judgment of God was poured out upon the cities of the plain, when God said, “Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?” Abraham was the friend of God, and John was the friend of Jesus, and every one of us may stand in this relation to Him, for He has said, “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you” (John xv. 14, 15).

It is very evident that this was to be John’s position here, and that he was not to stand in dread of the Lord, as would the workers of iniquity, for as he lay prone on the earth, the right hand was laid upon him, and the tender voice that had so often thrilled his soul said unto him, “Fear not,” and John was able to arise and view with his Master the “things that are” and the things still to come, and as being in full accord with His thoughts he was able to write that which his eyes had been opened to see for our instruction.

No book in the divinely inspired Canon can be of greater use to us now than the Revelation; if we are to be intelligent as to the times we must understand its teaching; but if we are to do this, and to shape our ways accordingly, we must be in the position and condition in which John found himself when he received it from the Lord.

Let us remember that it was the disciple who always designated himself as the one “whom Jesus loved,” who was chosen by infinite wisdom to write the Revelation; he had the qualifications for it. Attachment to his Lord had led to detachment from the world: this is the true Christian position.

John’s story as recorded for us in the Gospel that bears his name is deeply instructive and will help us in this connection. He needed no command to follow the Lord at first, and he is introduced to us as doing this (chap. i. 37); and in the last glimpse given us of him in the book he is still following without any word of command (chap. xxi. 20).

He first speaks of himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved” when treachery and unfaithfulness were breaking forth amongst the twelve, and when we should have supposed that the chief thing would have been to have had a disciple who loved Jesus, and he continues to speak of himself in this way until the end.

Twice only in the Gospel does he record his own words: first, on the night of the betrayal, he, lying upon Jesus’ bosom, said, “Lord, who is it?” and his question revealed the traitor (chap. xiii.); and then on that fair morning by the sea of Galilee, as he beheld One standing on the shore, he said, “It is the Lord.”

“That disciple whom Jesus loved” discerned the traitor, and he knew his Lord, and these two things are the great necessities for us to-day.

He leaned on Jesus’ bosom at the supper table, resting in the Lord as the Lover of His own, and as a consequence he was able to stand beside the cross in the hour of the Lord’s untold sorrow; he was also able to stand by the Lord as His friend and servant when as the Victor over death He unfolds the counsels of God in judgment.

Saints of God, we must get into John’s place, relying only upon the love of Jesus, in the midst of unfaithfulness and basest treachery, having all the glamour

of the world obscured by the brighter light of His glory, who is altogether lovely, and being undeterred from following Him in spite of any course that others may take. Then shall our eyes be anointed with eye-salve, and we shall discern the way of the traitor, and see the hand of the Lord; we shall be enriched with fine gold tried in the fire, and so be proof against all the silver pieces that the world may offer; we shall be clothed in white raiment, keeping our garments unspotted by the world, and so be acceptable unto

His eye whom our souls love (chap. iii. 18).

Near to the Lord whose love we know, we shall not be in ignorance as to the trend of the times, but we shall be able in quietness and confidence to await His coming again, meanwhile approving all that He approves, as His friends maintaining His interests and labouring in His name for His glory, and walking in separation from all that must eventually come under His condemnation.

Ezion-Gaber.

(H. P. BARKER).

Wrong Associations.

And after this did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, who did very wickedly: and he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish: and they made the ships in Ezion-gaber.

Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the Lord hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish (2 Chron. xx. 35-37).

NO doubt there was a good deal of discussion in the year 896 B.C. as to the cause of the great maritime disaster that took place at the port of Ezion-gaber. But probably few understood that the real reason why the calamity had been allowed to happen was the unholy association of one of God's saints with a notorious worldling.

The incident is worth looking into, for the scriptural principle that *unhallowed association always defiles* is little understood by the Christians of to-day.

Let me explain my meaning. Two or three years ago a great meeting was held in London to protest against the blasphemous teachings of the so-called "Higher Criticism" and "New Theology." Many well-known evangelical leaders and teachers were on the platform. Stirring addresses were given, calling upon Christians with no uncertain sound to earnestly resist the attacks of Satan upon the truth of

God. Special mention was made of the inspiration of the Scriptures, the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the atonement, and the gospel doctrines of the new birth and justification by faith. Those present were urged to stand manfully and faithfully for the defence of these great truths.

So far, very good. But within a few days another meeting, of a different sort, was held in another part of London. At this meeting one of those whose utterances had been most earnest and emphatic as to need of resisting the inroads of evil doctrine appeared on the platform with one of the most notorious ringleaders in the evil work that he had denounced!

Surprised beyond measure, the writer addressed a letter of enquiry to the one who had thus transgressed, only to receive a reply that Dr. — had a good object in view, with which he, the speaker, sympathized, and that therefore, in spite of fundamental

doctrinal differences, he did not consider it wrong to associate himself with Dr. — for that purpose.

Probably many Christians would agree with Mr. — that it could not be wrong to associate himself, *for a good purpose*, even with a ringleader of the school of "Higher Criticism" who had scoffed at the idea of the "virgin-birth" of the Lord Jesus.

If this be so, there is urgent need to call attention to the lessons of Ezion-gaber. In order that they may be rightly understood, it is necessary to recall some of the details of Jehoshaphat's history.

One of the first things recorded in connection with his reign, in 1 Kings xxii. 44, is that he "made peace with the king of Israel." This in itself would not seem to be wrong. But it showed a lack of faith on the part of Jehoshaphat. We read that "the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat" (2 Chron. xvii. 10). There was no need, therefore, for any treaties of peace to be made, especially with such a wicked man as Ahab. The fear of Jehovah was a sufficient protection, and His hand was well able to guarantee peace to Jehoshaphat and Judah.

A second wrong step in the direction of evil association is recorded in 2 Chronicles xviii. 1: "Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and *joined affinity with Ahab.*"

We need not suppose that Jehoshaphat joined in any of Ahab's wicked doings or idolatrous practices. Probably he would remonstrate earnestly and vehemently with him on account of his departure from the God of Israel. But the fact remains, and is recorded with evident displeasure by the Holy Spirit, that he *joined affinity* with one who was a leader in the national apostasy that had taken place.

Years passed, and then we read (2 Chron. xviii. 2) that Jehoshaphat "*went down to Ahab to Samaria.*" Ahab, hailing his coming with feasting and gladness, began to exercise his powers of persuasion, and finally succeeded in inducing him to join in a military enterprise. Jehoshaphat falls in with the suggestion, and actually says, "*I am as thou art, and my people as thy people.*"

What a "going down" was this! How deplorable was it for a real saint of God (as Jehoshaphat undoubtedly was) to thus sink down to the level of the world, and to permit himself to be *persuaded* by an enemy of Jehovah, instead of being guided by the word and Spirit of the Lord.

The consequences of this sad alliance soon showed themselves in Jehoshaphat's family. Let all fathers and mothers mark the point! Jehoram his son took Ahab's daughter to be his wife (2 Kings viii. 18). This was the notorious Athaliah, who afterwards slew "all the seed royal of the house of Judah" and usurped the throne herself.

Is not much of the sorrow that is found in the families of many of the Lord's people to be traced to the fact of the parents' unholy association with the world? Is it not a case of reaping what one has sown? For the world is the *world*, even when it appears in a religious guise. Ahab was not what would be called an irreligious man. He had laboured for the establishment of Phœnician worship in the land of Israel. *He was the ringleader of a false religion.* Association with such, on the part of any of God's children, is sure to produce a harvest of sorrow and shame.

When Ahab was dead, Ahaziah his son succeeded to the throne. With him Jehoshaphat repeated his mistake, and had again to suffer in consequence. It was in Ahaziah's brief reign of two years that the ships were wrecked at Ezion-gaber.

It was for no wrong object that Jehoshaphat joined with Ahaziah. It was for an ordinary commercial undertaking. The evil lay in the association. At first, it would seem, Jehoshaphat shrank from the path to which he ultimately committed himself. When Ahaziah said, "Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships," we read that "Jehoshaphat would not" (1 Kings xxii. 49). His scruples were overcome, however, and the unholy compact was formed.

It was formed, let me repeat, for no unlawful or undesirable purpose. It was not wrong to make ships, or to send them to Tarshish.

But the prophecy of Eliezer makes it abundantly clear that what was so obnoxious in the sight of God was the *association* of one of His saints with one who was not such. "*Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah,*" said the prophet, "the Lord hath broken thy works." This is the lesson that needs to be learned to-day.

There are hundreds of God-fearing men and women who still cleave tenaciously to the truths that they have been taught from their youth. They believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and also that He was born of a virgin, and became a Man. They believe that He made atonement by His sufferings and death upon the cross, and that He rose again from the dead. They hold fast to the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. They believe that man is a fallen creature, and must be born again before he can see the kingdom of God.

But they consider it charitable to regard those who differ from them as to these fundamental truths as "very good people, mistaken in their thoughts, but serving God according to their light."

Now the very opposite is true. Men who lay themselves out to undermine faith in what the Scriptures teach are *not* "very good men." I am not calling their morals in question, but they

are doing Satan's work, and are his tools. Loyalty to Christ demands the most absolute separation from such. To remain in association with them is treachery towards Him. To bid God-speed to one who brings not the doctrine of Christ is to be partaker of his evil deeds (2 John 11).

The right attitude of the Christian towards those whose teaching subverts "sound doctrine" is pointed out in the plainest language in the two epistles to Timothy. False teachers had already arisen among the people of God, and the Apostle exhorts his son in the faith to separate from all such. He was not only to avoid their "profane and vain babblings," but was to withdraw from the men themselves.

Read the sixth chapter of the first epistle, from verse 3 onwards :

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness . . . *from such withdraw thyself.*" Could words be plainer ?

Again, in the second epistle, reference is made to teachers like Hymenæus and Philetus, who subverted their hearers, whose word resembled a gangrene, who were fundamentally unsound as to the resurrection, and who had already overthrown the faith of some. These were indeed "vessels to dishonour," and the loyal Christian is instructed to "*purge himself from these*" (2 Tim. ii. 21).

Do not these scriptures make it abundantly clear that the will of God is that His people should be in whole-hearted separation from the teachers of unsound doctrine? We are not to remain in association with them. We are not to engage in missionary work in fellowship with them. We are not to be beguiled into joining them for any so-called "good purpose."

May God help us in His mercy to learn the lesson of Ezion-gaber, and to heed the ringing and faithful words

of both Eliezer the son of Dodavah and of Paul the Apostle!

* * * *

A word of caution must be added. We are apt to run from one extreme to another. Many godly Christians, in their anxiety to be separate from all that savours of apostasy, have made the mistake of magnifying minor divergencies of opinion into causes of separation from their fellow believers—men as true and as loyal to Christ as themselves. Now we find in the Scriptures directions as to those with whom we are to consort as plain as the directions as to those we are to avoid.

In the Psalms we find David on the one hand distinctly refusing the companionship of the wicked (ci. 4). But he just as definitely expresses his determination to seek the company of the godly: "Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me" (ver. 6). He would not tolerate the worker of deceit or the promulgator of falsehood under his roof (ver. 7), but he declared himself to be the "companion of ALL them that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy precepts" (cxix. 63).

Turning to the New Testament we find in the very epistles which warn us against association with unsound teachers, instructions as to the companionship that we should seek. We are not at liberty to choose our own company. Scripture chooses it for us, and bids us seek it.

If John's second epistle dwells upon the sin of receiving and associating with

those who brought not the doctrine of Christ, the third epistle dwells upon the sin, equally hateful to God, of *not* receiving those who were sound in the faith, and who were brethren in Christ.

So, too, in 2 Timothy ii. While we are to purge ourselves from "vessels to dishonour," we are to pursue things that are excellent *with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart* (ver. 22).

Is it not manifest, dear Christian reader, that the days of apostasy, foretold by the apostles, are upon us? False teaching, subversive of Christianity, abounds on all sides. If we would be men of God, 'overcomers,' we must obey the divinely given instruction to withdraw from association with false teachers.

But, thank God, there are many left who fear the Lord, and call upon Him with simplicity of heart. We may not see eye to eye with such on all points. But with them we are to seek companionship. What we long to see is a drawing together on the part of all who desire to be true and loyal to Christ, so that like the little remnant in Malachi's day, they may speak often one to another, and have sweet fellowship in the things of God.

What hinders this is the association of many of the children of God with the teachers of false doctrine, on the plea that they are "such nice people" or "such good men."

May the Lord deliver His loved ones from this snare!

Redeem the Time.

I sometimes feel the thread of life is slender,

And soon with me the labour will be wrought;

Then grows my heart to other hearts more tender.

The time is short.

Past—Christ gave Himself for our sins.

Present—To deliver us from this present evil world.

Future—Glory for ever and ever.

Galatians i. 1-5.

The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus. (J. S. OLIPHANT).

No. 1.—As the Lord.

In this series of papers (which comprises notes of addresses delivered on this theme) the Lord is presented as coming in five aspects, viz. as Lord, as Bridegroom, as King, as Son of Man, and as Judge.

Matthew xxiv. 36-44.

36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43 But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

THIS scripture, amongst many others, gives the general aspect of the coming of Christ as *Lord*. The passage about the days of Noah describes the state of the world as it will then be. "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. . . . They were eating, and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. . . . and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away." This solemn event is thus taken up by the Lord to show that to the world His coming will be like that of a thief in the night: they "knew not until the flood came." Noah had preached righteousness, and they did not hearken to him; and *suddenly* "the flood came and took them all away." And just as it was in the days of Noah, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be; there will be a sudden interruption of the present course of things in this world.

I cannot tell you when this will be. The Lord Himself said: "Of that day and hour knoweth no man." "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up."

It will be well for the fact of the Lord's return to take hold upon us in

its relation to Christendom—all professing Christians. He is absent now, but *He is coming again*, and in view of this coming we are exhorted to "Watch." The time of the Lord's return is not revealed, and nobody can tell the hour when He will come. "In such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." He is coming, you know not when, therefore *watch*.

Three parables in this part of Matthew's Gospel deal with the subject of the Lord's return in relation to responsible Christendom—that circle in which Christ is owned as Lord; these are the faithful and the unfaithful servants (chap. xxiv. 45-51); the wise and the foolish virgins (chap. xxv. 1-13); and the diligent and slothful servants (chap. xxv. 14-30).

The Faithful and Unfaithful Servants.

The Lord's household is here on earth, and the faithful servant gives meat to the household in due season. The unfaithful servant keeps bad company, eats and drinks with the drunken, and says in his heart, "My Lord delayeth His coming;" and when his Lord comes he is cut asunder, and his portion is appointed with the hypocrites.

The Lord's return divides professing Christians into two parties—the faithful and the unfaithful. The faithful ser-

vants recognize that the Lord's household is here, and the interests of the Lord's household are their interests. What is precious to Him is precious to them. They believe the Lord is coming, and their earnest desire is that the household shall be agreeable to the Master of it when He returns; and with this in view they labour faithfully, and "blessed is that servant, whom His Lord when He cometh shall find so doing."

How important in this connection is the command to "Watch." If I am watching, I am ready. The world will not be watching, for it is at an hour that they think not, that the Son of Man cometh. In the address to the church in Sardis Christ says, "If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief," so that the slumbering professing church will be treated as the world.

The Wise and Foolish Virgins.

The ten virgins present to us again all professors, but in the aspect of light-bearers.

Every one who professes to be a Christian ought to be a light for Christ in this dark world until He returns. All the virgins take their lamps and go forth to meet Him. That is our profession.

Where was the light to be found after the world had rejected Jesus? It was to be found only in the church. Each Christian should be a light. The Lord said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." And Paul speaks in Philippians of Christians shining "as lights in the world," "in the midst of a crooked perverse nation." The light that the world put out when it crucified Jesus, shone out brightly again when the Holy Ghost descended from heaven at Pentecost, and the church became the light in the darkness, which signifies morally ignorance of God; but the church has been unfaithful and has ceased to be a true witness, and in consequence the light is very dim.

At the beginning of Christianity the Thessalonians "turned to God from

idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven." It was the expectation of the early church that the Lord Jesus would come again.

But first love declined, and the church became engrossed with the things of the world, and like the virgins the church slumbered and slept, and there was neither watching nor waiting for the absent Lord. The world is slumbering and sleeping on the eve of coming judgment, but for the church to be like the world is a terrible thing. In this way the church sank down to the level of the world: she was lulled to sleep in the world, as Samson was lulled to sleep on the lap of Delilah. His hair was cut off; his Nazarite's vow was broken; the secret of his strength discovered; his irresistible power gone. So with the church. Her alliance with the world robbed her of her spiritual strength, and produced slumber of soul, and lack of vital affection for Christ, her proper Object, and then the hope of His return was practically lost through a long part of the night of His absence.

But the midnight cry has sounded in the ears of Christians far and wide during the last century. God has revived in the midst of the church her proper hope. At midnight a cry was heard, "Behold the Bridegroom," and the virgins awoke.

Now in the parable we read that when the cry was heard all those virgins arose and trimmed their torches and the foolish made the terrible discovery that they were without oil: their torches were going out.

Oil throughout Scripture is a type of the Spirit of God. In the Old Testament, in the case of the priests and the leper, we find three things used in the consecration of the former and the cleansing of the latter: water, blood, and oil. So now Christians are said to be washed with water, sprinkled with blood, and anointed with oil. The believer is born again of the Spirit and cleansed morally by the Word of God—

typified by the water. He is sprinkled with blood—his sins are purged by the blood of the Lamb: and every one who believes in Christ risen and His precious blood for the forgiveness of his sins receives the Spirit of God. Born of water and the Spirit comes first; next the blood cleanses the guilty conscience; then the Spirit of God seals the believing soul. So the Apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians: "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. vi. 11).

And those who can be thus addressed are the wise, who have oil, the grace of the Spirit, and so the light does not go out: it is fed by the oil.

And when "the Bridegroom came," we read, "they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut."

Now the Lord Jesus says, "Behold I come quickly." And if He is coming, there is a state suited to His coming: the virgins "went forth to meet the Bridegroom." Going forth signifies a moral state of separation from the world whilst the heart's affections go out to Christ. Is this our state?

My desire is not merely to instruct the intelligence as to the doctrine of the Lord's coming, but that our hearts and consciences may be affected by the truth. I appeal to you, has the midnight cry affected your life? Has it reached your soul in the depths of its spiritual affections? In the moral depths of your being do you rejoice that the Bridegroom is coming, and are you going forth to meet Him?

Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, "Lord, Lord, open to us." Here we are taught in figure the solemn truth that after the Lord has come there will be no opening of the then closed door. When the Lord comes mere professors will be left outside. They have no vital link with Christ, they have not the Spirit, they are satisfied with mere profession, proving that they have never been

troubled as to their sinful condition before God. When once a soul is truly aroused to this, formal profession yields no satisfaction: he thirsts for the reality; and to all such Jesus calls, "*If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink.* He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. . . . This spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive" (John vii. 37-39).

The Diligent and Slothful Servants.

Every one of us has received a talent, that is, some special ability to be used for the Giver; and there is always something for every one to do for the Lord. What the Lord of the servants expected was that they should trade with the talents: and when He returned and reckoned with them, one came and said, "I have gained . . . five talents," and another, "I have gained two other talents." These received the Lord's commendation, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." It should be our great desire to be thus addressed; no matter how little we are entrusted with, let us make use of it. But the slothful servant said, "I knew thee that thou art a hard man." He had a talent, but he never used it nor traded with it. If he had traded, he would have doubled it. The fact is he had thought only of his own ease, and not of what was due to his Lord. There is something for every one, who is faithful, to do in the Lord's absence; to every one He has given some ability for service; and His hand will give the rewards in His kingdom. May we be as diligent servants, like "men that wait for their Lord," with our "loins girded about, and our lights burning."

May the Lord awake us if we are slumbering. Then the word needed is: "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee."

The Authority of Scripture.

(JAMES BOYD).

The Testimony of the Apostles.

ALL that we know about Jesus has come to us through the testimony of the apostles. Profane history tells us nothing, except that such a person lived and died. His body was taken down from the cross by those who loved Him, and the world set a watch over His sepulchre; but never has He been seen again by any soul of man, save by those who were His disciples. We possess no autobiography of His words and works, for He left none behind Him, except that which He inscribed upon the fleshy tables of the hearts and minds of those who followed Him; but there much was indelibly engraven, to be afterwards declared as glad tidings to the world, and to be entrusted to those who would believe the gospel: at least so we read.

Foolish and superficial minds have made a distinction between the words of Jesus and the teaching of His ministers, forgetting that we are altogether dependent upon those ministers for all we know about Him or His teaching. They must either have been inspired of God to present Him as they have done, or they must have invented Him. But as a worshipper of this Invention may my soul be as long as I am in this world; and as long as I have being, wherever I may be. This Invention (Forgive, O Lord, the word!) became the daily, hourly study of that profound thinker, Saul of Tarsus, from the moment he turned Christian until the moment when he offered himself to die, as a witness for the truth of all that he had preached and taught.

If we follow these men beyond the boundary of our own observation, we cannot rightly pick and choose among the facts which they bring before us; we must accept *all*, or reject *all*. If we can verify certain of their statements, well and good—there is an end of faith: for faith ceases when the report becomes verified. Faith is only in operation when

we have no means of verifying the report. It is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Therefore both faith and hope will come to an end (1 Cor. xiii.). If I can prove the apostles to be wrong in any part of their testimony, my confidence becomes so shaken in them that I am unable to believe them in anything. If they were capable of deceiving me in one item of their report, they were capable of inventing the whole thing. If it be said they did not mean to deceive, but were mistaken, I can only say they do not allow me to suppose they were mistaken: what they say must be believed under pain of everlasting displeasure. Where I have no means of verifying their testimony I must believe everything or nothing. Some things may seem more worthy of credence than others, but this is far from being safe ground for my faith. It is not because things seem likely to have occurred that I believe them, nor is it because they seem incredible that I reject them. In an account of the works of God I should be prepared to be confronted with the most unlikely things.

People talk about the *fallibility* and *infallibility* of Scripture, but it has been pointed out that such terms have, strictly speaking, no application to *report*: a report is either true or false the moment it goes abroad. It cannot be true to-day and false to-morrow. I say the coronation of Edward the Seventh took place in 1902. This is either true or false when it is said, and it abides true or false to eternity. I say the sun will rise to-morrow morning. If the sun rises to-morrow, it was true when I said it; if it does not rise, it was false. It is no question of the fallibility, or of the infallibility of my word; it is a simple question of its truth or falsehood. In Scripture it is written: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"

(Gen. i.). Now He either did, or He did not. How could the writer know? Do you say he might have guessed it? He might indeed; and it would have been strange if he had guessed anything else. But he does not tell us he guessed it: he says *it was so*. The Psalmist says, The heavens were made by the word of God, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth; and that He spake and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast (Ps. xxxiii.). This cannot be a question of fallibility; it is either a revelation given by God, or it is a downright impudent falsehood. A man who professes to give an account of an event of which he knows nothing, and which is pregnant with eternal consequences to the hearer, is a deceiver; and not only a deceiver but a soul-murderer; and he who gives heed to such an one will have no excuse to make if ever called to give account to his Creator. Upon questions which involve such tremendous issues would it not be better for people to be silent until they know that what they have to say on the subject is the truth? If the gospel is the truth an eternity of woe awaits the unbeliever; therefore, before unsettling the minds of men with regard to it, would it not be well to have that which is the *truth* ready to replace it?

But not only do the writers of the Scriptures inform us that the worlds were framed by the word of God, but the writer of Genesis, after telling us that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, says that the earth was waste and empty, and darkness lay upon the face of the deep. How did he know these things? and who told Isaiah that the earth was not *created* in that condition? The prophet says, "He created it not in vain" (Isa. xlv. 18). The word here translated "*in vain*" is the same word which in Genesis i. 2 is translated "*without form.*" These men speak about these things as though they had been present to see for themselves. Who could tell from reading the first two verses of Genesis that the earth was not brought into existence, waste,

empty, and draped in gloom of night? One who knows God is not likely to think otherwise than that what He does will be perfect; still, one might easily read the first and second verses together as an unbroken account of the creation; indeed, the first chapter has often been taken as an account of the creation, not seeing that the first verse speaks of the *creation* of the heavens and of the earth, the second verse of the latter's subsequent ruin, and from verse three until the end we have an account of the *making* of the earth and everything we find upon it. Now it is with that which transpired between the first and second verse that the mind of the geologist is occupied.

Any one can easily see that the writer of the book of Genesis was not romancing. What pseudo-historian would have been content to have condensed the first chapter of earth's history into two short sentences? I know men well enough to refuse the notion that such an account is the product of the human mind. Would not the imagination have delighted to revel in a mythical narrative concerning its pristine glories, its wonderful inhabitants, their revolt against divine authority, their wars, overthrow, and destruction, not only theirs, but the planet's also, which had been the battlefield of their impious rebellion?

It is impossible to believe that any man, uncontrolled by a power greater than himself, would have penned in such simple and sober language the wonder-waking events which come before us in the opening chapters of Genesis. Who does not look backward in the vision of his mind, and endeavour to picture to himself that moment when the Creator of the universe sent forth His omnipotent decree, which brought into existence suns, planets, constellations, comets, and systems, and sent them wheeling upon their various courses, swift, noiseless, and obedient—when He spoke, and it was done; when He commanded, and it stood fast; and when "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God

shouted for joy" (Job xxxviii. 7)? Who does not desire to learn something of its history during those possible millions of years before it reached the chaotic condition described by the prophet, when the inky deep swathed it as in a mantle of mourning? From its granite ribs the secret has been torn, that living creatures, huge and of great variety, roamed its plains, or swam in its watery wastes; but this, instead of satisfying the curiosity, only whets its appetite for more details regarding the history of the planet's youth. But upon these ages the Holy Spirit of God has dropped the curtain, and we have to learn that all that has been placed upon record is for our *faith*, and not for our *curiosity*. The tendency of the human mind is to occupy itself with questions which form no part of the education God intends us to receive, and which have no direct bearing upon the reason, or the remedy, of our woes. The reason why the Bible is found to be the most disappointing and bewildering book to the human mind that ever was written, is because it keeps persistently to the relationships of man with his Creator, and slams the door in the face of that curiosity which prompts him to penetrate into mysteries which do not concern those relationships.

But if any one thinks that in order to be a Christian he has to begin by taking the Bible, as a whole, on trust, and afterwards find out what it says and act accordingly, I can only say he has yet to learn everything relating to the subject. The apostles did not go about as hawkers of books which the people among whom they came were to accept as a revelation of God on pain of His eternal displeasure. They preached Christ Jesus as Lord, and called upon men everywhere to submit to His authority (Acts ii. 36, 2 Cor. iv. 5). They spoke of the sinful condition of man, of the intervention of God on his behalf, of the death of Christ for our sins, of His burial, of His resurrection from the dead, of propitiation by His blood, of His session at the right hand of God, of His coming

again to judge the world, and in view of this the responsibility of men to repent and believe the gospel. They declared forgiveness of sins in His name, and the justification of all who believed. Those who believed were received into Christian fellowship by the outward means of baptism, but vitally by the gift of the Holy Spirit; and to these the various epistles were written. The Scriptures have ever been written to the people of God, and are for their use; they are not destined to make sinners His people, though they contain that word which in mercy is used to that end. But these epistles have authenticated the Old Testament writings to the Gentiles.

I could understand a child growing up in a Christian household, where the Bible was believed, loved, read, and its principles practised, looking from his earliest recollections upon that Book with the greatest reverence, and never for one instant allowing himself to question a single sentence in the Volume. But this would not be the blind acceptance of a book, while knowing nothing of its contents. Rather would it be a Book well known, because of its teachings having been livingly set forth in the lives of those who bowed their knees in the presence of its Divine Author.

God has His own way of working in the human soul, and even a godly upbringing does not always take immediate effect, though He can be trusted to bless it in the end: for He has said that them that honour Him, He will honour. This was my own case. In spite of a godly tuition I grew up absolutely irreligious. From my earliest recollections I was sceptical. I wanted, still want, everything proven. It is plain enough that a mind like that can only be caught through a sense of *need*. It betrays a hardened condition of soul, as well as a haughty spirit. It is not that I was at any time indifferent to the great question of a future state. The very opposite was the case. The question was ever uppermost in my thoughts. Indeed, I never could well

understand how any one was able to shelve such a momentous consideration. I ate my food without raising questions about how it could be converted into blood, bone, and muscle ; but to the Bread of Life I was able to raise more objections than any one who took an interest in my soul was able to meet. For this reason I have said that such a person can only be caught by his need. To my daily bread I had no objection, but the Bread of Life was not palatable : I had no appetite for it. I should have been thankful could I have been assured either of the favour of God, or of annihilation as the alternative ; but no one could assure me of either.

The kind of gospel to which I was accustomed was of a very legal type, and though Christ was spoken of as the alone Saviour of sinners, peculiarly enough and to my mind unreasonably, I was given to understand that I had my part to do. This part was never clearly defined ; and bewildered by this mixture of Judaism and Christianity, I drifted into the region of practical infidelity. I had no light, and judged every one else to be in the same darkness as myself. But an aching void was in my heart which all the pleasures of the world were unable to satisfy.

But there came a moment when a measure of pure gospel broke upon mine ear. It met every need of my soul. It was just the thing which suited my sinful state. It was not "The Divine within me answering to the truth of God," as some have put it ; but it was the need of a poor sinner's conscience met by the blood of Jesus, and the need of the heart met by the love of God. What rest it gave ! To me it was like sight to the blind, like bread to the hungry, like water to the thirsty, like clothes to the naked. It needed no proving. I would not have crossed the narrowest street in the city to have had the Scriptures proven to be the Word of God. What soul in the warmth and light of the noonday sun would waste his time listening to a debate as to whether or no there is

such a thing as the sight of the eyes. As far as I was concerned I felt I was in contact with the living Christ, and that *God was love*. What marvellous light ! You tell me I was deceived ? Blessed deception ! And to be thus deceived to all eternity is surely enough to make one a worshipper of the deceiver.

The Bible belongs to believers. It is not thrust upon men for their acceptance. It is not that which is preached as a Saviour for sinners. It is the property of Christians. That which is preached in the gospel is the grace of God declared to men in the gift of His Son. Repentance and remission of sins are heralded world-wide ; and men are called to repent, and to turn to God, and to do works meet for repentance. Those who saw Him, tell us of His words, works, and ways with men ; they tell of His death for sinners, and of His victory over that dreaded foe, and of the great salvation that is in Him risen from the dead. They assure us that righteousness, life, and salvation, are in Him for every soul of Adam's race ; and that these blessings are ours by faith, and that the believer has them.

The confidence of the dying robber who turned to Jesus in his extremity was not founded upon the harmony of all the prophetic writings, nor upon the agreement of Genesis with geological or astronomical discovery, but upon the moral excellency, grace, truth, and greatness of Him, whom the world had branded as a malefactor. He could have given no sceptical mind any just reason for giving a verdict for that holy Sufferer, in opposition to that given by the whole world : "This Man hath done nothing amiss" (Luke xxiii.) ; but it was not by his *reason* he was saved, but by his *faith*. He knew but very little of all that Jesus had done ; but he knew this, that in all that He had done there was nothing amiss. I also, thank God, am bold to say the same ; for I know that such an One could do nothing amiss. But more than that, "*He hath done all things well.*" To His name be everlasting praise.

Answers to Correspondents.

Eternal Punishment.

G.H.S. You are perfectly clear as to the eternity of the punishment of the lost, but we must dissent altogether from your conclusions as to its nature. Summing up the argument in your letter we understand you to aver that if the wicked are *destroyed* (Ps. cxlv. 20 ; 2 Thess. i. 9) they cannot be in everlasting torment. In other words you consider that if according to these scriptures they thus cease to exist, they cannot therefore be thought of as continuing in the everlasting consciousness of torment and woe.

Now all this proceeds on the assumption that the words "perish" and "destruction" both predicate annihilation, or absolute cessation of being : it is not so in Scripture, and it is to Scripture alone we can go for light on this. Even in natural things we know that there is no such thing as annihilation ; nothing ever ceases to exist, though conditions of being are varying endlessly. I may hold in my hand a beautiful vase and dashing it to the ground destroy it, but it is not thereby annihilated : it is yet all there, albeit in a changed and ruined condition. It is in this sense we read "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself" (Hos. xiii. 9) : Israel had not by any means ceased to exist, but she had utterly failed of God's high thought for her, and lay marred and broken among the nations.

There are many words translated "destroy" in the Old Testament with varying shades of meaning ; the word you quote from Psalm cxlv. occurs over sixty times, and almost invariably in connection with such statements as, for example, "Haman sought to destroy all the Jews" (Esther iii. 6) : we do not need to point out to you that this is not annihilation, for your letter shows us that you recognize that beyond death in that sense there lies what Scripture speaks of as "the second death." But if "death" be not annihilation but

a changed condition of being, we must point out that "the second death" cannot be construed on a totally different line of interpretation, as would be the case if it were intended to define what you have thought it to signify, namely, absolute cessation of being. The truth is that the word destruction never has such a meaning : it implies desolation, ruin, and absolute failure of true purpose and destiny, but never cessation of being.

Take another of the words translated "destroy," *i.e.* that in Hebrews ii. 14 : "That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." In the Revised Version this word "destroy" is better translated "bring to nought," and the expression conveys just the meaning where destruction is judicial, *i.e.* the effectual restraint placed on the energy of evil. The devil "goeth about" to-day : he is not now annihilated, and never will be, but for the believer, *i.e.* for faith, his power is annulled, brought to nought ; and this will be effectuated publicly by and by when in actual fact he is under eternal restraint in the lake of fire (mark, it is a "lake," *i.e.* a restricted sphere) "tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev. xx. 10).

Now as to "perish" in the verse you quote from Psalm xxxvii. : the doctrine you advance supposes the eternal being and bliss of the righteous, and, on the other hand, the absolute cessation of being of the wicked ; and this latter is understood to be the simple meaning of the word "perish." But look at Isaiah lvii. 1 : "The *righteous* perisheth [the same word in the original as that in Psalm xxxvii. 20] and no man layeth it to heart." That surely makes it perfectly plain that "perish" does *not* mean annihilation, for you are quite clear that the *righteous* do not ever cease to exist. In that scripture the word relates simply to the changed condition of being brought about by death here ; and never in any scripture, either as to saint or sinner,

does it bear the thought of an absolute termination of conscious existence.

Conscious existence does not cease : as to the intermediate state this is clear as regards saints from Philippians i. 23, and as regards sinners from Luke xvi. 23. Then as to the eternal state of the lost, it is clear from such statements as "*their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*" It is not for us to question : it is revealed, we believe it, and knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men.

Now on what you say in this connection as to God being a God of love : love is holy, and even looked at on the lower plane of the blessing of the creature, love demands the complete disentanglement and eternal separation of good and evil, so that he who is holy be holy still, and on the other hand he that is unjust be unjust still (Rev. xxii. 11-12). This is the eternal issue.

But whilst bowing in faith to all that is revealed, how careful we should be to state things *just* as Scripture does : Scripture never speaks of *God* "tormenting untold millions of His creatures for all eternity." There *will* be torment, as we know from such passages as Luke xvi. 23, "I am tormented in this flame ;" but that is the inevitable result of a deliberately chosen alienation from the only Source of blessing ; it is the necessary accompaniment of an utterly sinful state under the restraint imposed in the righteous government of God, for evil will be under absolute restraint then. God imposes restraint and makes His wrath felt, but the "torment" is the result of the sinful state which made the restraint necessary, and brought the impenitent sinner under the eternal weight of the wrath of a sin-hating God.

The other word which you use, viz. "torture," is also utterly foreign to the thoughts of Scripture : there is nothing vindictive in the righteous judgment of God.

"Amalgamation of Christians."

H.W.L. writes to ask us if we think, with him, that the "amalgamation of all Christians" is scriptural.

At the root of this question lies a misapprehension which we would fain remove from the minds of believers. Amalgamation is the bringing together in one of elements which themselves are diverse in constitution from each other ; thus mercury can be amalgamated with gold : the two elements are totally different substances, yet they can be blended, and afterwards by the action of heat they can again be separated.

This cannot be applied to Christians. To begin with, they are not diverse from each other in nature and life ; and further, they have not to be blended into a unity by amalgamation, but ARE one already : "Ye are the body of Christ" (1 Cor. xii. 27) ; "There is ONE body" (Eph. iv. 4). One could not ask such a question as, say, "Would it be right for my first finger to amalgamate with my thumb ?" for the all-sufficient reason that they are already of ONE vital unity. We (*all* who are "in Christ") form ONE vital unity to-day : we ARE members of "His body," and so are linked with Christ and one another in an indissoluble oneness. We have not to form anything new, we are one already in the only unity that will abide.

Do not think we evade the question in answering thus : we are alive to all the discord there is to-day through the formation of numberless sections of professing Christians, but depend upon it "amalgamation" is no word for the members of Christ's body. What we need to do is to pray that we may be gripped in the mighty power of the truth of what GOD has formed, that which is—one body here on earth embracing in vital unity every blood-washed saint in every land, and one glorious Head in heaven to whom we are livingly united. And then that we may be found acting simply on the TRUTH : recognizing one link only, viz. that which unites us to Christ in glory and to every true saint on earth, and content to be just what we ARE—just what God has made us, until the day shall dawn when the unity which is (little though it be recognized) will be fully displayed in glory (John xvii. 22).

Christ our Object.

(J. B. STONEY).

If our souls are to glow with spiritual health in spite of the noxious and enervating atmosphere of the world through which we pass, and if our feet are to tread the God-appointed path, undeterred by difficulties, and unbeguiled by the devices of Satan, Christ Himself must be the sun of our lives and the object of the heart's undivided affection. (Ed.)

Christ as our Sun.

THE sunflower has but one sun, and to this it turns all day long, with an expanding heart: the sun has always a message for it, a ray to strengthen, to cheer, and to beautify; and it is as our eyes are consciously set upon Christ that we receive from Him the gentle, exquisite, and invigorating influence of His own presence. The heart must unfold in the warmth of that love which can never grow cold, and we are kept from turning to any rival. Let our constant motto be: "Seek those things which are above where Christ sitteth."

Christ as our Sun gives a Boundless Outlook.

You may say that you cannot always walk in a light that is above the brightness of the sun. Would you, then, lower the standard to a *hand-lamp*, which could only show you your way on a dark night, pointing out the safe path and warning you of mud and ruts? You might indeed get home in safety, but then you would have seen little on the way. The man who is content with the hand-lamp (to speak figuratively) thinks only of himself, lives in his own circle; his own exploits and thoughts are his sun, moon, and stars, and he revolves in his own circuit day by day; he makes no progress, his centre is himself.

But the one who walks in that light which is above the brightness of the sun has a range which is boundless; new and endless wonders in the things

of God greet the eye, and instead of being occupied with himself he is engrossed with the One who enables him to enter into so vast a circle of wonders that he himself is as nothing in the midst of it. Paul found that the more he walked in the bright shining of the glory of Christ the better was he morally fitted to bear it, for he was transformed into the same image (2 Cor. iii.).

It is better to bungle and blunder with the sun as my standard of light than never make a false step with the hand-lamp.

Christ as our Object and Goal.

In following the Lord, and pressing forward to Him as our goal, we find that many obstacles confront us. Long ago, in the country, we would go in for what we called schooling. We would propose to reach a certain place in a straight line, not knowing the ditches, or rivers, or walls, which lay between; but all the obstacles were to test the mettle of ourselves and our horses. Have we purpose of heart to make Christ our Object thus, and to follow Him? Are we in the saddle? Do not let us waste our time desiring: "The sluggard desireth and hath nothing." One step is worth an age of longing, and some kinds of praying; for sometimes prayers are made an excuse for not acting.

It is a great comfort to know that if the heart is set on following Christ and we begin the race it will surely lead to Him in the long run (Heb. xii. 1; Phil. iii.).—*Adapted.*

When mutual intercession takes the place of mutual accusation, then will the differences and difficulties of brethren be overcome (Job xlii. 8-10).

What God ordains is wise beyond all possibility of correction; and good above all that we ask or think.

Ramoth-Gilead ;

(H. P. BARKER),

or, Appropriation.

And the king of Israel said unto his servants, Know ye that Ramoth in Gilead is ours, and we be still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria? (1 Kings xxii. 3).

HOW much spiritual wealth there is that belongs to us, but which we do not really "possess!" What a large extent of our inheritance we allow to remain unappropriated! How many a Ramoth is truly ours, as far as *title* goes, but which is by no means ours when it is a question of *enjoyment*!

Spain, in the days of old, inscribed upon her coinage the motto, "Ne plus ultra," which means "Nothing beyond." She imagined that finality had been reached, and that no more territory remained to be explored and appropriated. Then came the discovery of America, and Spain lifted up her eyes and perceived her mistake. The motto on her coinage was changed to "Plus ultra"—"More beyond."

Does any Christian reader of this paper imagine that, in being saved through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, he has reached the *ultima thule* of spiritual blessing? Is there no more territory to be possessed? Is the assurance of our eternal salvation the consummation of every hope, as far as present realization is concerned? Must we adopt Spain's ancient motto, and say "There is nothing beyond," or can we perceive, rising before us, heights of blessing yet to be possessed and enjoyed?

Ramoth-gilead belonged to the children of Israel by a twofold title.

Firstly, it was theirs *by the gift of God*. It was part of that goodly land which God had promised to their fathers, and which He bestowed upon them in the days of Joshua.

Secondly, it was theirs *by conquest of Moses*. He it was that took it out of the hand of the Amorites, and won it for the people of God's choice.

In the same way, every Christian blessing is ours by a twofold title. First, by the gift of God. He has "blessed us with *all* spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. i. 3). "His divine power hath given unto us *all* things that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Peter i. 3).

But these things are also ours by the work of Christ. He laid the broad foundation of our blessing by His atoning sufferings upon the cross. By His death He opened the flood-gates, that the deep, swift-flowing stream of eternal love might reach us. By His finished work He won for us our everlasting inheritance.

It remains, however, for us to *appropriate* the wonderful and infinite blessings that are ours by the gift of God and the victory of Christ. When I speak in this way of "appropriation," I do not merely mean that we have to *believe* that all is ours. The Israelites, in Joshua's day, *believed* that the land of Canaan was theirs; they had no doubt that it all belonged to them. But it remained for them to go in and possess it, and it was only theirs in actual possession so far as the soles of their feet trod upon its soil (Joshua i. 3).

In order that we might appropriate, and possess, and enjoy all the wealth of what is given to us by God, He has put His Holy Spirit within us. The Spirit of God alone knows the things of God, and we have received Him that we might know (in the sense of conscious knowledge and enjoyed possession) the things that are freely given to us of God (1 Cor. ii. 12).

Of course, there are some things that

we have no title to. These we cannot appropriate, any more than a visitor to the Tower of London could appropriate the Crown jewels.

For instance, we have no title to *deity*. We shall never partake in that, nor share the Godhead glory of the Lord Jesus, though it will be our ineffable delight to behold it. Nor have we any title to the *place and condition of angels*. A man may sing as loudly as he pleases—

“I’d like to be an angel
And with the angels stand,”

but it is impossible. It is not one of the things to which we have title, and which are for us to take possession of.

There is much, however, that is ours. We know it, but our knowledge does us little good, because we do not *appropriate*. An Indian spy who rendered valuable service to the United States Government during the Civil War was rewarded by a certificate which entitled him to a yearly pension.

When he received the certificate, he regarded it as a kind of charm, put a string through it, and wore it round his neck as long as he lived. But he never drew a dollar of his pension!

Do we not very often treat our spiritual blessings in this manner? We sing—

“Count your blessings, name them one by one,”

and we are able to make quite a long list of the things contained in our eternal inheritance: we know they are all ours, and yet they are of no more present *use* to us than the Indian’s pension certificate was to him.

One may object that in our case it is not a certificate, not a *promise* of blessings, but the blessings themselves that are given. Very true; but suppose that the Indian, instead of having the certificate given to him, had been presented with the actual dollars. If, instead of using the money and

getting present benefit from it, he had hidden it in a cupboard and boasted of being the possessor of so much gold, his action would have strikingly resembled that of many Christians to-day.

They read in the Scriptures that such and such a blessing belongs to the children of God. They are sure then that it is theirs. They look down, perhaps, on any of their fellow-believers who are *not* aware that so much wealth is theirs. They affirm to all and sundry that to them this great blessing belongs. *And their words are true.* It is all theirs. But this is not appropriation, or conscious enjoyment.

In the scripture before us, the king of Israel could truly say, “Ramoth is ours.” It was no doubt on the list of the cities that belonged to Israel. But the fact was, they were allowing the enemy to rob them of the present good of it. They were apathetic as to it. “Ramoth is ours” says the king, “and *we be still*, and take it not.”

“Ramoth,” be it remarked, means “Heights.” In studying the meanings of names in Scripture, we must be careful not to give rein to our fancies. Names are recorded by the pen of inspiration for other purposes than that we should exercise our ingenuity upon them by fitting them with a significance that seems suitable to us. Without attaching undue importance to the fact, we may, however, remark the meaning of “Ramoth,” for it suggests that there are heights of blessing and heights of privilege for us to consciously possess.

By “blessings” we mean those things that are ours in connection with Christ. Forgiveness of sins, deliverance from the power of Satan, justification, eternal life, membership of the body of Christ, co-heirship with Him, acceptance in Him, our place before God as sons—all these are our *blessings*.

“Privileges” are things that are ours while on earth, but which do not necessarily continue for ever. It is a great privilege to *serve* the Lord, and

to be connected with the *testimony* of the gospel; a great privilege to have access to God in *prayer*, and to be able to enjoy sweet *communion* with Him.

Are there not "heights" yet to be possessed in connection with such privileges as these? Are there not possibilities with regard to *communion with God*, that make our hearts throb with intense longing as we contemplate them?

As we think of our many ineffectual and powerless *prayers*, do not heights stand out before our soul's vision yet to be scaled? How little we know practically of the effectual, fervent prayer that avails much! How far we oftentimes are from having "power with God" in our supplications!

Then as to service and testimony, do we not often resemble the toiling disciples who had nothing to show for their long night's fishing? Young Samuel, whose every word was as a well-directed shaft, seems to have reached a "Ramoth" that lies far beyond us (1 Sam. iii. 19). *Our* words often resemble india-rubber balls flung against granite, rather than arrows guided to their mark by the Holy Ghost.

But why should these Ramoths be unappropriated and unpossessed? Why?

Our scripture suggests a reason. "We be *still*." Lack of spiritual energy is often the cause. Love of ease and fear of hardship makes us say, "Oh, it is a day of small things, we must not expect too much." And so we go on our way apathetically, and we "take not" the heights of privilege that are ours in title, and might be ours in actual possession.

Earthly pursuits and the cares of this life come in to hinder. It is a day of rush and bustle. There is difficulty in finding time to be alone with God. Like Samson, we lose our Nazariteship, and get shorn of our power.

The University of Upsala has lately built a sound-proof room. Absolute freedom from outside noises is secured by a foundation of thick lead and cement, and walls of felt, cork, and asbestos. The room is so quiet that one can hear the beating of one's heart and the creaking of one's muscles.

In a spiritual sense, we need to get into a room like that, away from the sounds that are falling upon our ears all day, away from the strife and turmoil of the world, away from the incessant babbling of tongues. With the hush of God's presence upon our souls we need to get low before Him, that we may gather spiritual energy for the taking of the Ramoths that are ours.

The Christian's Life.

(JAMES BOYD).

HEAR CHRIST, that formed by Him thou mayest be;
 THINK CHRIST, for as a man thinks, such is he;
 LIVE CHRIST, that all men Him in thee may see;
 SPEAK CHRIST, that all may hear of Him thro' thee:

So shalt thou please the heart of Him who planned,
 Before were fashioned heaven, sea, or land,
 That thou among His many sons should stand,
 Like Jesus, Chief and Firstborn of the band:

So shall ungrieved the Holy Spirit be,
 To give thee power the unseen things to see,
 And in His high and holy office free
 To work the blessed will of God in thee:

So shalt thou be a tower of strength to those
 Who in a lonely land beset by foes,
 And fainting under all their weight of woes,
 Their souls to every fiery dart expose:

So shalt thou be in this dark world a light
 To guide, thro' the dark mazes of the night,
 The painful footsteps of the pilgrim, right
 To where the ransomed walk with Christ in white.

And when the desert path has all been trod,
 And when no more is needed staff or rod;
 When from celestial heights thou look'st
 abroad,
 How sweet to thee shall be the rest of God!

The New Relationship and its Resources. (J. T. MAWSON).

IT is of the utmost importance that we should understand the relationship in which we stand to God and to our Lord Jesus Christ. Our conduct cannot be right unless we are instructed in this, for all right conduct is the outcome of a right apprehension of relationship. This is the case in every walk of life, and equally so in Christianity.

Men of faith in all ages have been governed by the relationship in which God set them with Himself, and, of course, as flowing out of that, the great destiny that that relationship involved: the two things go together, the relationship determines the destiny. Moreover, it has always been God's way to place resources at the disposal of His people equal to the relationship in which He has placed them.

Now if we turn to the New Testament we find that the great truth as to God's people in this present dispensation is that they are the church of God—God's assembly.

This truth is the completion, the crowning truth of the Word of God; all the doctrine given through Paul, who was the Apostle to the Gentiles, leads up to it, and every exhortation that he gives to the saints by the Holy Spirit flows from the truth of it.

It will not be necessary to state that every true believer on the Lord Jesus forms an integral part of the church, but it is necessary to insist upon the fact that those who are of the church of God are no longer of the world. The fact of this difference is brought before us in the mention of three distinct classes in 1 Cor. x. 32—"Jews, Gentiles, and church of God." The line of demarcation between the Jew and the Gentile was perfectly evident: the distinction between the church and these two divisions had to stand out with even greater clearness; for out of both has God baptized into one body all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The body of Christ, which is the church, has a life altogether foreign to the life of the world, for it is the life of the Head of it, who is in heaven. The Spirit in the church is not of the world, for the world cannot receive Him, for it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him (John xiv.). The joys, hopes, and destiny of the church are all outside the world; it is heavenly in its character, and is in the world as a pilgrim and a stranger.

It may be likened to a vessel which has put out to sea with a definite mission and port in view; it is not to be a derelict driven before the storm, and at the mercy of every gale, without rudder, compass, chart or captain; but to hold on its way, though buffeted by the tempest; to rise superior to the fierce waves that dash and foam about its prow, and to enter triumphantly at last the harbour of its desire. And this it will do, thank God! for the powers of hell shall not prevail against it.

Those who live by sight will not realize this, but to those who walk by faith it is a joy and stay which is unspeakable.

A Triumphant Christ.

"Jesus . . . stood in the midst" (ver. 19).

On the day of the Lord's resurrection the disciples, gathered together in an upper room, were to become, then and there, a pattern of and for the assembly of God for all time; and to them, and for us, was then and there revealed the relationship in which all stand with God who belong to the assembly, and the resources at their disposal. They were weak and fearful as they gathered; like a flock of trembling sheep they huddled away from the sight of their foes, but to them "came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you" (John xx. 19). Who can tell the change that His presence

made to them? He was the triumphant Christ; the might of the devil had been overthrown by His strong arm; the domain of death had been invaded and its power utterly shattered by the force of His assault upon it; He whom they had seen crucified and dead, but three days before, now stood before their wondering eyes, a Victor—Christ triumphant.

The death of the Lord Jesus had been a strange event to them, for though He had often told them that it lay in His pathway, they do not seem to have understood Him, and when at last it did become a fact, they were filled with bewilderment and unbelief.

In appearance Calvary was the Lord's utter defeat; His enemies evidently anticipated some display of power on His part, for, with a great multitude of officers and men, with swords and staves, they went to take Him. But He did not resist, instead, as a lamb He went to the slaughter, and as a sheep He was dumb before His shearers; and for this they despised Him, for He was *despised* as well as rejected of men. If He had fought as did Simon, they would have held Him in respect, but His weakness was their jest; "Himself He *cannot save*" was their triumphant taunt as they witnessed His last sorrow upon the gibbet. And these poor faithless disciples had also judged by their carnal senses and knew not where to turn. But now they beheld Him, their risen Lord, and upon their dull souls there dawned the great fact that He was triumphant; that, mightier than Samson of old, He had bowed Himself upon the strong pillars of death and overthrown the great citadel wherein he trusted who had "the power of death" (Heb. ii. 14); that whether they were men or demons or Satan who opposed Him, He had proved Himself greater than all, and now in the might of the eternal and living God He stood in their midst.

"Then were the disciples glad," nor feared they any foe henceforward—

people, priests, rulers, Herod, Felix, Festus, Agrippa, Cæsar—how puny and small they all appeared in the presence of these men whose faith had grasped the fact that in the midst of the church there was the triumphant Christ.

Have these nineteen centuries affected the power that dwells in Him? Is the hand that overthrew the devil's dominion weakened by the passing years? Are there any marks of decrepitude upon Him that liveth and was dead, who is alive for evermore and hath the keys of death and hell?

Impossible! He whose might has vanquished death and the grave can ne'er grow weak and old. Omnipotence is eternal.

Then why should the saints of God be discouraged and fearful to-day? Why should they grow slack in the service of their Lord, or their lips tremble to confess His name in a hostile world? The triumphant Christ is in the midst of His assembly, their great Captain in the conflict, and the Leader of their triumph-songs.

Unalterable Love.

"He shewed unto them His hands and His side."

The question may naturally arise in the mind as to whether the unfaithfulness of the church has not affected the Lord's feelings towards His assembly, even as the disciples might have questioned whether their unbelief and cowardice would not lead Him to cast them off for ever. But how gentle was His way with them, and how significant His action. "He shewed unto them His hands and His side." Those wounds were the visible evidence of a love that had carried Him into death for them, and that love is as unalterable as those wounds are indelible. It is upon that love that all depends, and if it is unchanging in its character we have nothing to fear.

In Christ omnipotence combines with love eternal; they can never fail, and their boundless resources are at the disposal of all and each who are of His assembly.

The Relation in which they stand.

“Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God” (ver. 17).

But who were these disciples, and what are they to-day, into the midst of whom so august a Person as the Son of God, triumphant over death, is pleased to come? They are His brethren, His Father is their Father, and His God is their God. Let the greatness of the position be grasped: “He is not ashamed to call them brethren” (Heb. ii. 11), and this because He has lifted them up to His platform and they are one with Him, “for He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one.”

Here is the fulfilment of His own words, which shall ever fill our souls with wondering praise: “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (John xii. 24). The grains of the harvest-time are exactly of the same kind that fell into the ground in the season of sowing, and it is this great truth, beyond all the comprehension of the natural mind, that the Lord announced to His disciples in His resurrection. This was the great and blessed secret that filled His heart, and which they could not grasp, save by the Spirit; it had become a fact now, and it is the first declaration that breaks from His triumphant lips on the resurrection day. How full of it His blessed heart must have been, and if it is so much to Him, how ought it to affect us.

Let it be clearly understood that this gives no warrant to any of us to speak of the Lord as our “elder Brother:” to do so is contrary to the truth and dishonouring to Him. There are at least two reasons why we should not thus address Him.

(1) The Lord is never so designated in Scripture, and Scripture contains all the revealed truth as to Him.

(2) It falsifies the truth, for lying behind it is the thought that He has come down to the level of men according to nature, to associate Himself with them and to improve them where they

are. John xii. 24 disproves this altogether: our association with Him is not according to nature or after the will of the flesh, but it is by the Spirit of God and with Christ in *resurrection life*. We are one with Him as the fruit of His *death*. He has lifted us up to *His* level as man, and that is our standing for ever.

Many things are involved in this, amongst them, we have His life and nature; this is eternal life and a holy nature that will find delight in God for ever. The affections of the position are also ours, and nothing is kept back, for His Father is our Father. This carries our thoughts to John xvii., where, in pouring out His heart to His Father, the Lord declares, “Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me.”

The Holy Ghost.

“Receive ye the Holy Ghost” (ver. 22).

These are great things. The eye of man has not seen them, his ear has not heard them, they have never entered into his thoughts; but they are revealed to saints by the Spirit of God, and faith rejoices in them.

That they may be realities to us, and that we may live in the power and joy of this wonderful relationship, the Holy Ghost has been given to us. If the Holy Spirit is grieved within us, we are to these things, what a bird with a broken wing is to its own element; but if we walk in the Spirit, it will be His delight to lead us into all that this new life and relationship means by making Christ, who is the pattern of it all, increasingly precious to us.

This, then, is the relationship, and these are the resources of the assembly of God; they are to be realized and enjoyed by faith, though unknown by the world; they are the family secrets to be treasured and kept, while we await the glorious destiny that such a relationship involves.

“Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.”

Bible Study.—Galatians.

(EDWARD CROSS)

Galatians i. 1-10.

1 Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead ;)

2 And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia :

3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,

4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father :

5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that

called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel :

7 Which is not another ; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

10 For do I now persuade men, or God ? or do I seek to please men ? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

THE more closely this epistle is considered, the more vitally important will it be seen to be.

The Apostle at once plunges vehemently into his subject. His opening words are couched in the most assertive style, burning with the indignation with which he resents the disparagement of his apostleship, not from any merely personal feelings, but seeing it to be, on the part of those who made it, the preliminary to a formal attack on the whole truth he taught.

It is believed by many that this epistle was written prior to that to the Romans ; a hastily-thrown-up outwork, as it were, in defence of the gospel, to be developed subsequently in the elaborate and systematic exposition which we have in this latter epistle. There he tells us that he was " separated unto the gospel of God " (Rom. i. 1), and in 1 Timothy i. 11, that ' the gospel of the glory of the blessed God was committed to his trust.' And, seeing that he was thus appointed to this special place, we can understand the tenacity with which he holds it against the attacks of those who sought to impugn his title thereto ; while the forcefulness with which he maintains it shows us, on the one hand, the intrinsic importance of the subject itself, and, on the other hand, the deadly purpose of the enemy in thus seeking, by every means in his power, to get rid of it.

No one can properly understand the many questions that call for solution in the religious outlook of to-day without an insight into the tremendous conflict sketched out for us here, in the few graphic lines indited by the Spirit in this epistle, instinct as they are with their far-reaching potentialities.

Verse 1.

Straightway, and without preamble, Paul asserts his apostleship to be independent of all human agency, whether as to its source ultimately, or its means proximately. And here at once is the death-blow to all pretensions of " succession," or human " ordination." It was not " of man," as to its source, nor " by man," as to its means. It was directly " by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from among the dead."

The " Twelve " were appointed by the Lord when He was here on earth. But Paul had not, so far as we know, seen Him during the days of His flesh, and it was therefore easy for his detractors to deny any divine authority for his apostleship ; and without divine authority for his office, his teaching would of necessity be invalidated. He therefore at once refutes such an insinuation, and declares that not only was he an apostle directly by Jesus Christ, and that in a still higher way than they were, but by God the Father

also, who raised Him from among the dead.

“Christ took human life in grace and sinless : and as alive in this life He took sin upon Him. Sin belongs, so to speak, to this life in which Christ knew no sin, but was made sin for us. But He dies—He quits this life. He is dead to sin : He has done with sin in having done with the life to which sin belonged, not in Him indeed, but in us : and alive in which He was made sin for us. Raised up again by the power of God, He lives in a new condition, into which sin cannot enter, being left behind with the life that He left. Faith brings us into it by grace.

“Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. All that the Father is came into it, engaged to give Jesus the triumph of resurrection, of victory over death, and to give resurrection the brightness of His own glory. Having entered, as the fruit of the operation of His glory, into this new position, this is the model—the character—of that life in which we live before God.”
—*J. N. Darby.*

This is what gives its character to the ministry of the Apostle Paul.

Verse 2.

To his own name he adds the weight of all the brethren, his co-labourers, as uniting with him in his encyclical letter to the churches of Galatia.

Verse 3.

He salutes them in the constitutional recognition, if we might so say, of their formal standing in the Christian faith : but there is the absence of that expression of lively affection and spiritual sympathy that characterizes his other epistles. The occasion was a serious one in his eyes, and he shows it in the manner of his address. Not even to the Corinthians, whom he has to rebuke strongly, is there the same severity of tone as here. Not that his affection to-

wards them is really lacking, as chapter iv. 19 shows ; but the expression of it gives place to indignation at their fickleness and instability in allowing themselves to be thus persuaded into giving up the truth they had before received with such exuberant enthusiasm.

Verses 4 and 5.

And here he adds a sentence peculiarly Pauline, and pregnant with much meaning, as the whole situation and all that was involved in it stands out in relief before his mind.

1. “He gave Himself for our sins.” But, that being so, no other sacrifice was needed : no other work, ceremonial or legal, could be added to render more efficacious that which was already absolutely and divinely complete. To add to it was to deny its sufficiency. Later on, in the Epistle to the Romans, he will explain fully that the whole question of the righteousness of God in regard to sins has been vindicated thereby ; and to add thereto the enactments of the law, as necessary for salvation (Acts xv. 1), was to ignore the faith of Christ, not only objectively for justification, but subjectively for the purifying of the heart (Acts xv. 9) ; than which nothing more serious could be well imagined. It was in truth to commit themselves to the high-road of an apostasy more fully described in Hebrews vi. 6, x. 26, etc. ; and to give up, first, the sufficiency of the work of Christ, and, finally, the need for it altogether.

2. But again, Christianity delivers us from this present evil world, an age, or course of things, which is under the power of Satan as its prince (Eph. ii. 2) ; while the Judaizing principle leaves its votaries under it, as may be seen in the state of Christendom to-day, in every form and department of it, whether in the Eastern or Western churches. The position of the believer is denied, as to his being justified on the principle of faith and sealed by the Spirit that dwells in him in the hope of glory : while the heavenly

calling of the church has no place at all in its teaching.

3. Again, it is plain that Judaism is not "according to the will of God." If it were so, Jerusalem would have remained its centre. But Judaism has rejected Christ, and Jerusalem is in the hands of the Turk. Meanwhile every sect in Christendom has its own Jerusalem, whether Rome, Canterbury, or elsewhere; but it is plain that none of these are "according to the will of God and our Father," or

4. "To His glory for ever and ever. Amen." The great principles of Christianity are the principles that will govern the ages to the glory of God. No principles in which that potentiality is not inherent can command the faith of the Christian. They are not of his faith, and they should be uncompromisingly rejected by him.

All this is elaborated by the Apostle, partly in this epistle, partly elsewhere; but the great principle involved and the consequences of this attack on the gospel are manifestly in his mind in the few words contained in this verse.

Verse 6.

He is amazed at their fickleness, so quickly to change, or rather, to be in the process of changing, for the turn-over was not yet complete, from Him who had called them "in the grace of Christ" to a different gospel. He does not say "from God." True it was from God. But he would recall to their minds the character of the grace in which that call had reached them. Now to turn from God is in principle apostasy; to turn from Him who had acted towards them in such *grace* was heartlessness besides. The expression is a strong one, couched though it be in touching terms; but he meant it to be so. He would by every means, however strong his language, bring home to their minds the seriousness of their course. Later on, in language equally strong and more direct, he tells them that in result "Christ would

profit them nothing" (chap. v. 2). It was no time to mince words. The whole truth of the gospel was at stake, and "the dark ages" that have since followed in the history of Christendom attest only too forcibly the correctness of his prophetic vision.

Now the Corinthians are regarded, and rightly so, as an example of an assembly that had grievously lapsed; and the Apostle has to rebuke them with much sharpness. But it is noteworthy that nowhere does he use language towards them so severe as he does to the Galatians. But then, at Corinth, the evil was mainly of an ecclesiastical kind, and proceeded as it were from amongst themselves, affecting principally the order of the house of God, and their conduct as saints in it. If one might so characterize it, their iniquity was "human," i.e. confined to their own "babyish" and carnal propensities (1 Cor. iii. 1, viii. 2 *et al.*). All very bad no doubt, and causing the Apostle "much affliction and anguish of heart . . . with many tears" (2 Cor. ii. 4); but the evil at Galatia was a premeditated and insidious *assault of the enemy* to "pervert the gospel of the Christ." It stands in an entirely different category; and the treatment of it by the Apostle is accordingly entirely different. Moreover, there was at Corinth a partial recovery at least, and a second epistle is written to them in which the Apostle can express his joy that he has "confidence in them in all things" (2 Cor. vii. 11-16). But there is no such recovery here, and no second epistle in which he can record the removal of his "doubt" in respect of them (Gal. iv. 20).

A reference to Acts xv. 1-11 sets forth the matter in all its seriousness. Certain men who came down from Judæa taught the brethren: "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." When therefore Paul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem about this question, there rose up there certain of the sect of the Pharisees, who were Christian be-

lievers too, saying, "It was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." This was plain enough and peremptory. Then Peter rose up and said, "Why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" All this shows the nature of the evil with which the Apostle had to contend, while its recrudescence at Galatia shows how inherent and ineradicable it was.

Verse 7.

He calls it a different gospel—"another gospel, which is not another; but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of the Christ." The expression is noteworthy. In Romans i. 1 he calls it the "gospel of God;" in verse 16 it is simply "the gospel" ("of Christ" is not in the original). There, the whole subject of the gospel, as setting forth the righteousness of God, is elaborated in its great and comprehensive results, as the power of God unto salvation, forming the soul by His grace in accord with the moral attributes that will shine out in the glory of His kingdom, and hence it is called "God's glad tidings." In chapter xv. 19 he speaks of the "gospel of the Christ," inasmuch as Christ is the subject-matter of it, but that rather in a textual than in a doctrinal way. But in Galatians i. 7 the expression is used in the full force and scope of what is implied in it; not the ultimate source of the gospel as in God, but in the immediate and practical results of it in "the Christ," and this more especially as contrasted with the ruin of man "in the flesh" under law.

It is matter of interest to note the extreme importance, the logical force, the pregnant meaning of every expression, carefully chosen and divinely inspired, in this, what we might call "classical" epistle, where every word

has weight, and becomes weightier the more it is dwelt upon.

Verse 8.

It is impossible to imagine language more forcible than that used by the Apostle here. Without knowing all that happened, we may infer that the Judaizers were claiming high metropolitan authority for what they were teaching. Paul takes all such pretension out of their hands at once, while he proclaims the divine authority of the gospel as he had preached it, and as the Galatians had received it at his hands. And so far was he from accepting human authority where the gospel of God was concerned, that he pronounces "Anathema" on no matter whom, be he an angel from heaven or any one else, himself included, who taught another gospel different from that which he had already taught, and which they had already received. There is no room left here either for co-ordinate tradition, or for "further light." Inspiration precludes both (2 Tim. iii. 16).

Verse 10.

Moreover, he was not seeking to conciliate men. God was simply before him. It was He whom he had to please. Were he seeking to please men he would not be Christ's servant. How easy it would have been for him to submit to the general trend that had set in, keep silence, and not force his opinion against the current of thought so powerfully backed up by Jerusalem, and by those "who seemed to be somewhat" (chap. ii. 6). But then, has he not himself written elsewhere, "submitting yourselves one to another"? and what more suitable occasion for this than the present, and thus avoid all this disturbance? But he adds there (Eph. v. 21) a saving clause, "in the fear of God," even as he himself was here acting, in opposing and exposing all this evil that was so insidiously at work.

"Faith is a helpless thing, and hastens away from itself to lose itself in Christ,"

The sin of man will in due time bring in the "man of sin."

Storms.

(ADAPTED)

STORMS, all natural philosophers tell us, clear the atmosphere; but it is only those who outlive the storm who can appreciate that as a moral truth. It would be poor consolation to a mariner in a sinking ship.

The great thing in a storm is to outlive it. If it has overcome you, it is useless to talk of the good of it afterwards. Storms often come in the church of God, from both within and without, and must be endured by those who will "live godly in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. iii. 12); and if a man is driven by them on to the rocks and stranded high and dry, he has not outlived them. The man who says all is lost and gone, and loses heart and faith, has not weathered the storm.

That man has outlived it who has put his head to the wind, and hauling in the canvas, stood boldly out to sea. He knows that there is a storm, but he refuses to be driven before it; he resists it, and holds his own. Such a man as this was Paul the Apostle, who could speak of his "patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me" (2 Tim. iii. 11). He entered the port having weathered every storm triumphantly, for he could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished

my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. iv. 7). But this was the outcome of knowing whom he had believed, and being strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

If others are overcome by the storm, and filled with fear and cowardice, the way to help them is to be superior, in the strength of Christ, to the storm oneself; to stand to your post and hold fast, undaunted by the storm. Then will come the opportunity of ministering to those who have been wrecked by it. You will not, in a superior sort of way, lecture them upon the art of navigation, but you will minister to their wants and seek to restore their shattered frames to health and vigour by ministering food convenient for them, and then afterwards they may be helped by instruction as to their bad and ignorant seamanship. It was in this way that Paul acted when, all hope of saving the ship upon which he sailed being lost, and the Euroclydon raging with unabated fury, he said, "Sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God. . . . Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you" (Acts xxvii. 25-34).

This is that which cannot be counterfeited, but it is the natural outcome of being in communion with a triumphant and unfailing Christ.

Faith.

"I feel that of all sins I could ever commit against God, one of the most heinous would be that of doubting one single syllable that comes from the Divine lips . . . nothing is so ruinous to spiritual life and power as unbelief. It strikes at the root of the great master-grace of faith, and so cuts off the channel of blessing at the spring; it is a sin against the only remedy that can meet our case."—*Spurgeon*.

There is a kind of polyp that applies a suction-valve to every pore, until its victim melts into the form of its destroyer. The world is just such a polyp to the Christian that falls beneath its power.

"Look well to your faith, that you may prosper, for as your faith is, so shall your hope be; hope is never ill when faith is well, nor strong when faith is weak."—*Bunyan*.

The Lord's Supper.

(H. D. R. JAMESON).

1 Corinthians xi. 17-34.

17 Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.

18 For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.

19 For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

20 When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper.

21 For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.

22 What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when

he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

34 And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

A Special Revelation.

THERE are two things of which Paul speaks as being specially revealed to him by the Lord Himself. He received them by no intermediary, but directly from the Lord in glory (for Paul knew Him not on earth—at any rate, not as a disciple—1 Cor. xv. 8). These two things are: first, the truth of the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ, at which we shall be caught up to meet Him in the air, and from which time we shall be “for ever with the Lord” (1 Thess. iv. 15-17); and second, the truth of the Lord's Supper, which continues through all the period of His absence “till He come” (1 Cor. xi. 23-26).

These two special revelations thus cover for us all time—the whole present “till He come,” and the vast “for ever” which lies beyond. In each of them the Lord Himself is prominent: *He* is coming again: we await not merely a glorious event, but a supremely glorious Person, who has won our hearts to Himself by measureless love. In the Supper too, it is *He Himself* who

is before our hearts: His simple word is, “This do for a remembrance of *Me*.”

Moreover, let it be remembered that by the way in which they reach us a double significance is imparted to the never-to-be-forgotten words “This do,” so that they possess on the one hand the character of a *last request* of Him who loved us even to death (for He uttered them on “the same night in which He was betrayed”), and on the other the character of a *message from the glory*, whence He gave the revelation to Paul to communicate to His own through the inspired Word.

The First Day of the Week.

This day is pre-eminently and distinctively connected in Scripture with the breaking of bread. It is the day which witnessed the triumph of infinite love, the resurrection day, and in significant accord with that fact is mentioned *eight* times in the New Testament.

The truth that Christ was *risen* exercised an immediate gathering power: two disciples returned from Emmaus

the very hour they learned it, and as with one accord, on the evening of the same day, the eleven and they that were with them "gathered together" (Luke xxiv. 33; John xx. 19). Into the midst of that gathered company came Jesus, and saying, "Peace be unto you," showed unto them His hands and His side. A week later the same event occurred on the first day of the week, and we find (1) the disciples gathered together; (2) Jesus in the midst; (3) He shows His hands and His side—those mute but eloquent witnesses of immortal love.

The twice-repeated event witnesses to us the thought of the Lord's loving heart for all the present interval until His second advent, and we are thus prepared for Acts xx. 7, whence we learn that it was the disciples' wont "upon the first day of the week" to "come together," and that for one express purpose, viz. "to break bread." We are prepared, I say, for this, for in the breaking of bread we find again, in this the period of Christ's absence, the same three things which from the outset have marked the first day of the week, viz. (1) the gathering together of saints (1 Cor. xi. 18); (2) the presence of the Lord in the midst—invisible truly to mortal eye, but present to faith, for He is "in the midst of the assembly" (Heb. ii. 12 and Matt. xviii. 20); (3) the bread and wine, presenting His body given and His blood shed, witnesses to our adoring hearts of eternal love.

The Assembly of God.

There are certain blessings which are purely individual, such as the forgiveness of sins and salvation. These blessings could be known and enjoyed by a believer even if there were no other believer on the face of the earth. But there are other blessings and privileges which are collective. The breaking of bread is amongst the latter. The cup is the cup of blessing which we bless; the bread is the bread which we break (1 Cor. x. 16): it always supposes the company.

Now the Corinthians had lost the truth of the Lord's Supper in almost every way. They looked on the breaking of bread as *their* meal, and even then they individualized themselves (see ver. 21) and did not rise to the *collective* character of the Supper as pertaining to the assembly of God. Coming together for the breaking of bread is properly coming together "in assembly" (see ver. 18).

Each one of us as saved by the grace of God has his own responsible history with the Lord: but each is also connected with the Lord Jesus Christ on a wholly new plane outside the sphere of natural relationships. When Christ was risen He said, "Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and *your* Father; and to My God, and *your* God:" thus announcing the *new* relationship in which His own were set with Himself and His Father in *resurrection*. Each believer is at all times of the assembly, but coming together "in assembly" is coming together in that special aspect as linked with Christ and each other on resurrection ground. It is a first essential to partaking of the Supper aright that we should really recognize this. We are not to despise the "assembly of God" (see ver. 22).

The assembly is God's ecclesia, His called-out-ones, as the word signifies. The Corinthians may have risen to the thought of a "believers' meeting," but the thought of the assembly is something far higher than that. When we gather "in assembly" we do not gather for a meeting of *our own*. The assembly is the assembly of *God*; hence all must be under the guidance of the Spirit of God, who properly pervades all in that circle (chap. xii.—xiv.). It is most important, if we are to partake of the Supper according to the Lord's mind, that we should enter into this thought of the assembly, and come together not as believers merely, but as *the assembly of God*.

The Lord's Supper.

But the central point in which the Corinthians failed to apprehend the truth of the Lord's Supper was in the fact that the Supper is indeed the *Lord's*. In verse twenty-one we find that they had so far lost the truth that they were regarding it almost as an ordinary meal, and in partaking each took before the other his *own* supper. We are not likely in long-enlightened Christian lands to fall into the error into which the Corinthians fell, in the gross form in which we can understand it taking place amongst those just called out of idolatry with all its corruption, but spiritually we are in danger of exactly the same thing. How many to-day look at the Lord's Supper simply as a means of grace *for themselves*. They look on it as a means of bringing home to themselves that which has been accomplished for them at Calvary, and each goes for what he can get for himself. True, the Lord would surely satisfy the longings of every heart. He delights to remind us of that which He has done for us: but to partake of the Supper simply as a means of grace for ourselves is to fall short almost altogether of the Lord's thought in instituting it. It is *His* Supper.

It is His word "This do" which calls us together, and the thought in it is that in the partaking of it *He Himself* might be brought before our souls. His word is "This do for a remembrance of *Me*"—not His work for us (though He is presented to us in the Supper in the hour in which His love accomplished the mighty work on the ground of which we are redeemed), nor yet the results of that work to us, but *Himself*. He loves us, and in the Supper His love designs our growing personal acquaintance with Himself, that He Himself should become more and more real and precious to our souls as the weeks pass by and the hour of His second advent draws nigh.

Its Character.

In the Supper our Lord Himself is presented to us, but *in death*: the bread and wine, typifying His body given and His blood shed, are brought before us separately the one from the other. The Lord has been put to death here, and is absent from the scene in which we show forth His death, hence *memory* comes in, and we do this "for a remembrance" of Him.

True, He is the living One, and is a present reality to those gathered in faith in response to His word, "This do;" but the Supper carries us back specifically to the hour of His death. He, who is now "alive for evermore," once, in love to us, "*was dead*" (Rev. i. 18).

There are various aspects of the death of Christ presented in Scripture, but one is peculiarly prominent in the Lord's Supper, and that is the peace-offering character of His death (Lev. iii.). In the burnt offering the whole offering save the skin (that which fell beneath the gaze of men) ascended as a sweet savour to God. This typifies the energy of devotion and love in which our Lord went into death for the glory of God. It is not this character which is specially presented in the Supper, nor on the other hand is it the sin-offering character in which He became a sacrifice for our sins, for not our blessing is the prominent thought, but the preciousness of the Blesser and His love to us: it is distinctly the peace-offering character. In the peace offering a part ascended to God, a part was eaten by the priests, and a part was shared *by the offerers*. It is this side that comes before us in the Lord's Supper: that in which we ourselves have part. His word is "This is My body which is given *for you*," and again "My blood which is shed *for you*." The thought that is emphasized is that of His love *for us*. That it is the peace-offering character which is presented is made very clear from reference to chapter x. 18, where the Lord's table is placed on a parallel with Israel's altar in connection with

that offering in which Israel were "partakers with the altar," *i.e.* the peace offering.

But in drawing attention to that which the Lord designs should be prominently before our souls in the Supper there is one thing I would not wish for a moment to do, and that is to restrict the scope of that marvellous word "Me." It reaches out in its limitless breadth so as to embrace all the offerings as well as all the worth and glory of His Person, yet that which the Lord specially emphasizes for us in this precious memorial feast is His own proved *love to us*, His church, His body, and His bride.

Note, too, the blessed simplicity of the ordinance—"This *do*." No rules are laid down even as to that of which our hearts must take account in that hour: it is just "*This do*."

Who may Partake?

The epistle has two "alls" in it, which we will place side by side. It is addressed in chapter i. to "the assembly of God which is at Corinth . . . with *all* that in *every place* call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's." In chapter x. the statement is made, "We being many are one loaf and one body, for we are *all* partakers of that one bread." The second "*all*" is co-extensive with the first. All who call upon the Lord's name—the whole Christian "*we*"—are viewed as normally partaking of that one loaf: if any do not do so their position is altogether anomalous, and we know not *what* to say to such. How can we understand one who owes *everything* to Christ yet neglecting to take of the memorial Supper which He has instituted for *all* who are His?

But some one may say, "I see that the Lord's Supper is the privilege of 'all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's'—but is there no exception?" I know of *none* in the inspired Word:

the man spoken of in 1 Corinthians v. would certainly be excluded, as he was "put away" from the Christian company altogether (1 Cor. v. 13), but mark this, he was put away not as *of* the Christian company but as a "wicked person." That he did eventually prove to be a real believer who had fallen into grievous sin (see 2 Cor. ii. 5-11) is not the question: the Supper was his privilege *as long*, and so long only, as he could certainly be recognized as of the assembly.

But some there are who would make the Supper *only* a privilege. It *is* a privilege, a privilege of the highest order; but, too often, remarks as to the Supper being a "privilege" are made in such a way as to convey the idea that it is open to the Christian to partake or not just at his own caprice or pleasure, that the Lord has expressed no definite mind on the subject, and it is simply a matter of choice. Such reasoners should read, and ponder carefully, the closing words of this section of the epistle, *i.e.* chapter xiv. verse 37, "The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord," and 1 John v. 3, "His commandments are *not* grievous."

A Difficulty.

But here let me note a difficulty—a conscientious difficulty which some may have, and which very easily arises. A person may say, "I am not worthy to partake of so sacred a feast of remembrance as is the Lord's Supper; and does it not say, indeed, 'He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation [or condemnation, as it should read] to himself'?" Yes, the Scripture does very solemnly so run, but notice, it does not say "he who is unworthy," but "he that eateth *unworthily*:" and there is a vast difference. In ourselves none of us is worthy, but it is not a question of worthiness but of the *way* in which we partake. The Corinthians were partaking of it unworthily: they were not having regard to the sacred and symbolical character

of the Supper. They partook of it as a common meal, whereat one was hungry and another was drunken. It is this the Apostle so searchingly condemns. The Supper is not to be partaken of lightly, and without regard to its meaning, for we are to 'discern the Lord's body' (ver. 29). It is not to be taken as a common meal, but as the *Lord's Supper*.

Again, we read, "Let a man examine himself;" and a Christian says, "Alas! when I examine myself, how unworthy do I find myself to be: and in result feel my unfitness to partake of the Supper." But note again how the Scripture runs: "Let a man examine himself and so let him *eat*"—not *stay away*, but "*eat*." We partake not of that Supper on the ground of worthiness in ourselves at all. It is a feast which commemorates the worthiness of the One who has died for us, and all who put their trust in Him are accepted in the worth of His sacrifice, and are of the assembly of God, part of Christ's body and His bride, and so divinely fitted to partake of the feast which sets forth so wonderfully the worthiness of Another. Examination of ourselves shows us how unworthy we are—but that is simply to lead us to self-judgment and a readiness to turn away from all that we are, gladly to forget ourselves and to remember *Him*. In this precious way does the Lord, by His Word, encourage our hearts.

The Spirit's Comment.

In verse 26 we have the Spirit's comment on the Supper instituted: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew forth the Lord's death till He come." This is pregnant with meaning. *The world around* forgets the Lord Jesus Christ: not that they may not recognize Him as an historical personage, but as an active and cherished memory He is absent from their thoughts: *we* gladly remember Him. *The world* despises His death, they speak lightly of it, as though it were no more than the death of a martyr and a good man: *we* make our glory and boast in that death. In it shine forth all the wonders of infinite and eternal love, and there we find the basis of sure and stedfast hope for eternity: our all is staked on the Lord's death.

Vast is the meaning contained in that expression "*the Lord's death*." It brings before us the glory of the Person who died, and it is His wondrous sacrifice which we announce in the very act of taking of His Supper week by week, in a world which forgets and despises the Person and His work. And let none imagine that this ever shall cease so long as the saints are yet here; for the Spirit's word is this, "Ye [that is, the Christian company] do shew forth the Lord's death *till He come*"—all through the long night of His absence, and until the breaking of the day which never shall close in night.

The Head and the Body.

AS Christians, we must think of the good of the whole church of God, and remember that all ministry given by Christ, the Head of the body, is for the good of all the members. We ought to be like the bee that carries all the honey it gathers back to the hive, and not like the wasp that eats it itself; the former is fellowship, for there is the recognition that we are part of one whole; the latter is isola-

tion and selfishness and not the spirit of Christianity.

You may be clear about the unity of the body, but do you know the inexhaustible resources of the Head of it?

The Head of the body is in heaven, and the body on earth; and the life and affections and intuitions of the body must be heavenly, since the Head is there.

The Generations of the Heavens and the Earth.

(S. L. JACOB).

Part I.

THE book of Genesis is the book of "the generations." The first chapter and to verse 3 of the second chapter is the index or preface to the book, and indeed to the whole of the Scriptures, God's plan being given us in miniature in these thirty-four verses.

Again, on a larger scale, the whole book of Genesis is a preface to the other scriptures, containing in germ nearly everything which is unfolded fully in the sacred writings. Another has beautifully observed :

"Genesis, . . . as the beginning of the Holy Book, presents to us all the great elementary principles which find their development in the history of the relationships of God with man which is recorded in the following books. The germ of each of these principles will be found here, unless we except the law. There was, however, a law given to Adam in his innocence ; and Hagar, we know, prefigures at least Sinai. There is scarce anything afterwards accomplished of which the expression is not found in this book in one form or another. There is found also in it, though the sad history of man's fall be there, a freshness in the relationship of men with God which is scarce met with afterwards in men accustomed to abuse it and to live in a society full of itself. But whether it be the creation, man and his fall, sin, the power of Satan, the promises, the call of God, His judgment of the world, redemption, the covenants, the separation of the people of God, their condition as strangers on the earth, the resurrection, the establishment of Israel in the land of Canaan, the blessing of the nations, the seed of promise, the exaltation of a rejected lord to the throne of the world, all are found here in fact or in figure—in figure, now we have the key, even the church itself."

—*Synopsis of the Books of the Bible*, by J. N. Darby.

The book divides itself into ten parts of unequal length, each commencing with the words "These are the generations," or "This is the book of the generations." The ten generations are mentioned in order in the following verses : (1) ii. 4 ; (2) v. 1 ; (3) vi. 9 ; (4) x. 1 ; (5) xi. 10 ; (6) xi. 27 ; (7) xxv. 12 ; (8) xxv. 19 ; (9) xxxvi. 1 ; (10) xxxvii. 2.

It is with the first of these we have to do here, viz. the generations of the heavens and of the earth. At the very outset the reader of the Holy Scripture is struck with the linking together of the *heavens and the earth* in the opening verse. Again, in the first verse of the second chapter the two are linked together, and mention is made of all the host of *them*. And now in the fourth verse we have the striking expression, "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth."

The Scriptures are the account of God's dealings with man on the earth. We might have stopped short with the earth, especially as it is written, "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's : but the earth hath He given to the children of men" (Ps. cxv. 16). But God cannot be so satisfied ; the heavens are His throne and dwelling-place, and He must stamp the character of heaven on the earth and on the inhabitants thereof, for wonderful is the destiny of the children of the dust, seeing the Creator became incarnate, "became flesh and dwelt among us."

But why the *generations* of the heavens and of the earth ? The word "generations" always refers to what comes afterward, springs from the persons or things mentioned, and never to the reverse. Thus we get here the

offspring or progeny of the heavens and of the earth, that which bears witness to a mixed origin, on the one hand most exalted, most glorious, for the image and likeness of God are there (Gen. i. 26; James iii. 9), and not only the image but the glory of God also (1 Cor. xi. 7); and on the other hand, there is the link with the beasts of the field and with every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, for man, like the animal, is out of the earth, made of dust (1 Cor. xv. 47). God formed him out of the dust of the ground (Gen. ii. 7 and *cf.* chap. ii. 19), but the Lord God *also* Himself breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, which distinguishes him from the beasts most completely.

Thus we get the key to the strange compounds which, in the abnormal state produced by sin, may be found in man—how he may grovel in the dust with all the characteristics of the beasts, and how, by the work of God, he may be uplifted to heights of heavenly blessing.

The history of man in the Holy Scriptures lies between these infinite heights and these appalling depths. What possibilities of good and evil are there in those who form the *generations of the heavens and of the earth!* yet the heights are reached by the power of God alone, the depths we reach ourselves, though there is an arch-enemy to lead.

It is not intended to convey that the beasts are evil. When God created them He pronounced them to be good, and though they have no doubt suffered by the fall of man, they fulfil the functions for which they were created, and, not being moral agents, they are not to be conceived of as in rebellion against their Creator. Nor is the thought that man, as created out of the dust, was evil. He was, as God declared him to be, "very good" in both the higher and lower parts of his being. But sin has invaded the constitution of man; he has rebelled against God's order in creation. This lawlessness is manifested in the *mind*, in his haughty attempts

to live in independence of God; it is manifested in his lower and animal nature when he sinks in his depravity beneath the level of the beasts in his vile affections.

Man being thus the offspring of the heavens and of the earth can never be satisfied with earth and earthly things alone. We, by reason of our origin, are conscious of longings for more than earth can give, and this is so, though it may be but faintly, even among the heathen and pagan nations. To this instinct the Apostle appeals when he says we are the offspring of God, and in Him we live and move and have our being, and He is not far from every one of us (see Acts xvii. 27-29).

We sometimes talk of an earthly calling, but the Scriptures do not mention an earthly calling, though they speak of the heavenly one (Heb. iii. 1). It may of course be asked, "What about Deuteronomy xxviii. 1-14 and similar passages?" Truly these speak of the earth only, but what did the faithful get even in the days when they were under law? Well, they got nothing on earth, for it is written of them, "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth" (Heb. xi. 37-39). Woe betide them if they had only earth for their portion! But blessed be God, He has more than an earthly portion for *all* the children of men, though had the children of Israel been faithful *as a nation*, they would *as a nation* have been wonderfully blest on the earth.

But it will be asked, What about the millennium? Is it not written of that day, "They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another

eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands" (Isa. lxxv. 21, 22).

It is true that in the millennium there will be wonderful earthly blessings, but it is plain that God's people will even then never be satisfied with earthly blessings, and the blessing that is then enjoyed on earth will be because God's will is done on earth as in heaven. Even the kings of the earth will bring their glory and honour to the heavenly city (Rev. xxi. 24); and finally will come the day of testing (Rev. xx. 7, 8), and then those who have had their hearts set upon earth alone will be deceived and forfeit all they had, for then the present order of things will pass away for ever.

It will be well for us to see that God never intended men to be satisfied with earth apart from the heavens. The Son of Man came from heaven and is heavenly. His people, whatever be the dispensation, must have more than earth. True it is that the Lord came down to earth, and eternal life has been manifested here, may be known and enjoyed here, will be so enjoyed here in the millennium; but this life is heavenly in its character as in its origin, and man cannot be satisfied short of it.

If this was so always, how much

more is it true to-day, when Satan is making such a bid for the hearts of men by making the things of this world so alluring to men, and when Babylon is decked with every luxury, and everything can be purchased therein, from the gold to the souls of men? (Rev. xviii. 12, 13). God grant, then, that we, His people, may be on our guard against this great snare of the day. Gross materialism is spreading over Christendom.

The saints of God belong to the Christ whom the world has rejected. We have no part or lot with the world which has cast Him out; but, alas! how often do we forget this; and God's people, who should be doubly heavenly now, recognizing their calling on high in Christ Jesus, are often found in the world's arena seeking its prizes and seeing how comfortable they can make themselves. Shame upon us for the little devotedness there is in us—how little of the heavenly, and how much of the earthly! And are those who have most light and truth the most distinguished for their devotedness, so that it is manifest that there are at least some ready to lose their lives for Christ's sake, and thus to gain them? Alas, no! Oftentimes such are put to the blush by those with far less light but far more love. God grant that we may all learn the lessons the heavens would teach us.

"To establish and to make universal the principles of pure democracy is the object, whether consciously or unconsciously, of the great thought-movements of this era; and the essence and marrow of democracy is the supreme authority of MAN. Hence the conflict with the Bible, for it comes as one having authority. It assumes, and in the most uncompromising way, to rebuke men for misconduct and to tell them what they shall do and what they shall not do. Its attitude throughout is that of demanding unqualified submission."

"In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." St. Paul is declaring that in the Son there dwells all the fulness of absolute Godhead; they were no mere rays of divine glory which gilded Him, lighting up His person for a season and with a splendour not His own; but He was, and is, absolute and perfect God, and the Apostle uses *theotēs* to express this essential and personal Godhead of the Son.—R. C. Trench.

Christians never see each other for the last time.

“What of the night?”

NOTHING could be more expressive than the figures of speech which Scripture uses to designate the character of the long period of time between Adam's fall and Christ's second coming, with the succeeding period of His glorious reign upon earth. The former is the NIGHT: the latter is the DAY.

During the night several dispensations have run their course. At the coming of Christ light at last clearly broke for believers: He was the “Day-spring” from on high (Luke i. 78); yet the night itself was not dispelled from this world; His rejection and death only deepened the gloom, and from that day until now it has been night indeed. The world walks on in darkness and does not know whither it goes (see John xii. 35).

Yet out of the NIGHT and into the DAY the faith of saints has ever looked, no matter to what dispensation they belonged. Enoch lived before the flood, and “Behold the Lord cometh” (Jude 14) was his testimony. Of Abraham the Lord Jesus said, “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day” (John viii. 56). But there is hardly need to specify individuals, for the whole of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews enforces this fact; for the promises (ver. 13), the heavenly country and city (ver. 16), Him who is invisible (ver. 27), and a better resurrection (ver. 35) were embraced in the faith of the saints of old, and these things will all be actually reached in connection with the DAY.

We each shall do well to inquire whether we are as truly awake and alive to the present condition of things as were these saints in their time. Out of the darkness of the night the cry still rings, “Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?” (Isa. xxi. 11). First it

arose out of the tents of Ishmael in Seir—a type of man after the flesh, for Ishmael was “a wild man,” *i.e.* a man lawless and free like a wild ass, “his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him” (Gen. xvi. 12).

With what tone and temper was the question asked in Isaiah's time? We cannot tell, but out of the tents of the lawless world to-day, where men are still fighting in the fiercest competition, all against each, and each against all, the cry is heard with a sharp defiant ring in it, tinged not a little with self-satisfaction and contempt for the watchman to whom it comes, for vast improvements have been made in the tents of Seir, and “Progress” has advanced with giant strides since Ishmael's day.

But let us leave Isaiah's little parable, though keeping his twice-repeated question in our minds, and let us come to a plain survey of present-day facts and prospects. We will do so by attempting an answer to three questions.

1. Where are We?

To answer this question we must needs have some idea of the predicted course of this dispensation in Scripture, and be able to survey in a sober manner the present condition of both the church and the world; or in other words, we must be able to read the signs of the times in the light of Holy Scripture.

If we first of all mentally survey the great world and its doings at the dawn of the twentieth century, what is it that above all else strikes us? Probably we should nearly all agree in replying: Firstly, its immense advance in the acquisition of knowledge of a practical and utilitarian nature, which finds expression in the most astonishing inventions; and secondly, as a direct

outcome of this, the most extraordinary development of means of transit and intercommunication. Man has indeed "sought out many inventions" in accordance with Solomon's words (*Eccles. vii. 29*), and the prophecy uttered to Daniel (*Dan. xii. 4*) has come true: "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." For our purpose, moreover, we must specially notice that this prediction stands connected with "the time of THE END."

Suppose, however, that we look a little deeper and try to discern the spirit and temper of the age, which lies beneath and inspires all this outward development and activity. What is it? A true and sober answer to this question is, we believe, that it consists in (1) a growing and already almost unbounded confidence in the powers of man, and (2) a feeling that though each considered as a unit by himself is still a poor weak mortal, subject to disease and every other limitation as much as ever, and his horizon still bounded by death, yet considered altogether as one vast entity, mankind is possessed of powers that until lately would have been deemed superhuman; that, in fact, it is doubtful whether anything will be restrained from him which he has imagined to do (see *Gen. xi. 6*). Already every species of confederation is to be found: men bound together for every conceivable purpose, whether in the political, social, commercial, intellectual, or religious sphere, and by reason of the process of absorption and amalgamation which is rapidly proceeding these confederations are rapidly expanding in power and influence.

In short, man is beginning to look upon himself as a god. The ancient lie of Eden—THE lie—is being revived, "Ye shall be as gods" (*Gen. iii. 5*), and the way is being steadily paved for the revelation of the man in whom the spirit of the age will be incarnated, and in whom therefore THE lie will be personified, who will oppose and exalt

himself "above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (*2 Thess. ii. 4*). But "that Wicked" cannot be revealed until just before the day of Christ and *after* the rapture of the saints as recorded in *1 Thessalonians iv. 15-17*. To instruct the Thessalonians in that the second epistle was written.

It serves our purpose to carefully note again that the symptoms we have been looking at are those which Scripture connects with the END.

Let us now turn our attention to the "church"—all that which professes Christ's name upon earth. The outstanding fact which *ought* to strike us is that the difference between it and the world is barely discernible. Where one begins and the other ends it is impossible to say. The spirit which animates the one most evidently animates the other. They are marching together to the same goal.

True, divisions exist, but mostly upon surface matters. One powerful section is busy elevating the church's services in ceremony and ritualistic grandeur, thereby effectually nullifying the great truths of Christianity whilst professing to maintain them, until in pomp and magnificence their performances rival anything to be seen in the way of worldly glory.

Another equally powerful section is working for the broadening of religious belief in accordance with "modern thought," and the recasting of Christian doctrine in the light of "science." Many leading divines, professors, and ministers are at work building up a new religion in keeping with the spirit of the age, in which man is himself to be god. The full-blown result seems to be, the reintroduction of the essence of the old heathen philosophies, served up to suit the twentieth-century mind, and covered in Christian nomenclature. THE lie which Scripture foretells is to be received because they did not receive the love of the truth (*2 Thess. ii.*

10, 11) is already being sounded out from pulpits called "Christian," and even propagated in the mission-field!

Read 2 Timothy iii., verses 1 to 5, place the above facts in the light of it, and see if that word "having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof" does not exactly describe the situation, and then note that all this is predicted of *the last days*.

But we must look more closely at "the church," and we shall see the one bright spot amid the gloom. Beneath all the tremendous accumulation of religious rubbish we discern the true saints of God! They are those of whom Jude speaks as "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ and called." They are, alas! sadly divided, calling themselves by a variety of denominational names, and oftentimes involved in painfully questionable associations—but there they are, thank God! They are **THE CHURCH** which God recognizes; Christ's body, united to Him by His Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 13); what can be said about them?

The most that could be said about the best of them is that, though in weakness, they are holding fast Christ's word and not denying His name (Rev. iii. 8). The divided state of things in which they exist has, however, induced a kind of paralytic state generally. Moreover, the vast majority of them are oppressed and weighed down by being yoked in religious associations with unbelievers who largely control things. They run the "church" and organize its activities in the way of socials, bazaars, concerts, and even theatricals, while the true believers, often in a great minority, just manage to keep the prayer-meeting afloat, and for the rest can only inwardly groan over the spiritual death which reigns.

Is it not true, indeed, that the characteristic feature of the hour is much complacency and self-satisfaction on the part of many, in what they term "the progress of our cause," "our advance with the spirit of the age," "our new and more enlightened conceptions

of the gospel," "the forward movement of our society," and the like, whilst beneath the surface the godly are mourning over absolute indifference to Christ? Many are saying "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," but in the eyes of the Son of God they are "wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." Thus it is rapidly becoming more and more a question of individual faithfulness, of hearing His voice and opening the door that He may come in and sup with the one who opens and he with Him (see Rev. iii. 9-22). But this is the Laodicean stage, the last stage of the history of the professing church upon earth just before the true church is translated and the false spewed out of Christ's mouth. It is the time of the **END**.

If, then, we rightly interpret the signs of the times, the answer to our question must be: We are living in the last days of the church's sojourn upon earth.

2. What are we coming to?

How often one hears this question from the lips of utterly unconverted people. Some new development of man's genius astonishes them, or some sudden outburst of man's depravity, just when all were saying "Peace and safety," scandalizes them, and for a moment wonder or gloomy foreboding forces this question from them.

We Christians may, however, well ask it seriously, and turn to Scripture to find the answer. To be forewarned is to be forearmed, and just as Moses, the servant raised up of God to inaugurate Israel's national existence and the legal dispensation, was instructed to declare its latter end (Deut. xxxi., xxxii.), so Paul, who laboured for the establishment of Christianity more abundantly than they all, is the one who plainly declares the working and heading up of evil in the last days.

The beginnings of evil within the bosom of the church he declared to the Ephesian elders (Acts xx. 29, 30). Its full development he portrays in 2 Thessalonians ii. In the light of this

chapter and the revelation entrusted to John in Patmos, particularly chapters xiii. to xviii., it appears that we are speedily coming to

I. APOSTASY.

The day of Christ shall not come "except there come a falling away [an apostasy] first" (2 Thess. ii. 3).

Apostasy is utter and public abandonment of the truth of Christianity. It does not mean that there will be no religion. Religion there will be, but entirely divorced from the revelation of God made to us primarily in the Lord Jesus, and secondly in Holy Scripture.

Since leading pulpits of the land are being increasingly filled by men who have already apostatized from Christianity to "New Theology," the "Religion of Humanity," or other systems of pagan philosophy, this prediction of a general apostasy should occasion no surprise.

II. BABYLON.

Babylon in Scripture seems to stand for the vast system of religious deceit which from the beginning has been a great weapon of Satan for blinding men and if possible enslaving the people of God.

It was founded by Nimrod, who was "a mighty one in the earth" (Gen. x. 8-10). It was the place where the confederation idea first sprang into existence (Gen. xi. 1-9). It appears to have been the original home of idolatry—demon worship—upon earth, the strategic point seized upon by Satan from which to send out his vile influences and enslave men to his system of evil.

As a fruit of the fast-hastening apostasy, Satan will once more enslave men to his system, and Babylon, in all its moral features, will reappear (Rev. xvii. and xviii.).

It is doubtless true that the spirit of Babylon at present lives in Romanism, and that this historic religious system may likely enough become the basis on which Babylon is revived. But Baby-

lon itself stands for the Satan-inspired system in which, by the enticing falsehood "Ye shall be as gods," he cajoles mankind into rendering divine honours to himself. That system it is which is responsible for "the blood of prophets and of saints and of all that were slain upon the earth" (Rev. xviii. 24).

Connected too with Babylon the religious system will be a vast imperial and commercial system marked by intolerable oppression (see Rev. xiii. 16, 17).

Towards this end, doubtless, all our vast and ever-expanding confederations are tending.

III. ANTICHRIST.

In 2 Thessalonians ii. he is plainly foretold: "that man of sin . . . the son of perdition" (ver. 3), "that Wicked" or "the lawless one" (ver. 8).

It is evident that you cannot have a system without a *man*. The genius—the satanic genius—who will direct the system, who will pose to receive divine honours, is coming. With Rev. xiii. before us it appears that Satan will raise up two men. In one the imperial side of the system, in the other the religious side will be emphasized. In them at last he will claim to have fulfilled his earliest promise. Man will be god, and THE LIE fully unveiled. The world will go after him. Having apostatized from the truth, they eagerly swallow the lie.

Does all this sound far-fetched? Not to one who knows the true state of things to-day. "New Theology" says in effect that *man*—not the individual man exactly, but the sum total of humanity in essence—is *god*. What more natural than that when some transcendent genius, devil-inspired, appears, he should be hailed as the expression of this essence and accorded divine honours? It is a significant fact, too, that most false religions are expecting some great one. Theosophists await their twelfth "mahatma," etc. With what enthusiasm too will evolutionists receive him. Will they not claim that just as long ages

ago the ape-stage was left behind, now in the upward march the leaders of humanity have already reached the divine plane !

In these three words, Apostasy, Babylon, Antichrist, we have a fairly succinct summary of what we are coming to—save that if emphasis be laid on the *we*: what are *we*—the church—coming to? The answer, blessed be God, is TRANSLATION, the personal coming of the Lord Jesus to receive us to Himself in the air. Our gathering together there unto Him must precede all that of which we have spoken (Thess. ii. 1-3).

3. What will be the End of it all?

It is a significant fact that the first recorded prophecy came straight from the divine lips and contained in it an allusion to the sufferings of Christ (see Gen. iii. 15, "thou shalt bruise His heel"). The second prophecy, that of Enoch, was concerning the glory that should follow, and the execution of judgment involved therein: "Behold, the Lord cometh . . . to execute judgment upon all" (Jude 14, 15). This will be the end of it all.

Antichrist will be "consumed with the spirit of His mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of His coming" (see 2 Thess. ii. 8). Babylon will be completely overturned (Rev. xviii.). Apostate humanity will be damned (2 Thess. ii. 12). "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day" (Isa. ii. 11).

The general impression in the world seems to be that the end of all human activities and progress is going to be the realization of an ideal or Utopian condition of things in which mankind will be perfectly happy. Unfortunately many Christians retain this idea in a modified form. They look at Christian activities and progress in a superficial way, and suppose that as a result of them the millennium is to be realized, the earth being cleansed from its grosser iniquities by the gospel, and

prepared for the advent of Christ. It would be hard to find an idea more flatly opposed to both Scripture and fact than this. It is an ancient fiction. Men loved to indulge in it long centuries ago, and were sharply rebuked by Joel. "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? *the day of the Lord is darkness and not light*" (Amos v. 18).

* * * *

Seeing, then, that we live on the brink of such events as these and that the coming of the Lord draws nigh, let us adopt the words of Peter and ask: "What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"

Jude, who in his epistle contemplates the apostasy, supplies the answer in verses 20-25:

"Keep yourselves in the love of God." Dwell *there*. Show the utmost compassion to others, but shun with all the vigour of your soul the "fire" and the "flesh." Let the trumpet give no uncertain sound! Christians, it is high time we had utterly done with the accursed system of evil which is eating its way in both world and church. Parley with it, and your power is gone! Give it an inch and it will take an ell. In God's name have done with it once and for ever. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Cor. vi. 17). Then, received by Him, you may dwell in the love of God indeed; without it—to speak plainly—you MAY NOT.

Then out of the present gloom look up. "Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21). Let us keep in His love; and wait for His coming, so that when the cry rings out, "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" we may be at once prepared to say "The morning cometh"—for the people of God, "and also the night"—for the apostate world. "If ye will inquire, inquire ye: RETURN, COME."

The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus.

(J. S. OLIPHANT).

No. 2.—As the Bridegroom.

In this series of papers (which comprises notes of addresses delivered on this theme) the Lord is presented as coming in five aspects, viz. as Lord, as Bridegroom, as King, as Son of Man, and as Judge.

Revelation xxii. 16-20.

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

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

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall

add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.

19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

THE Lord Jesus presents Himself in Rev. xxii. as the Root and Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star. The former title is connected with the promises to Israel, but the bright Morning Star with the church. It is the watcher in the night-darkness that sees the shining of the morning star, the bright harbinger of the coming day, and when the Lord Jesus presents Himself in this character, and, as the Bridegroom, announces His speedy return, there comes at once the response, for "the Spirit and the bride say, Come."

The church stands in a double relationship to Christ; it is His body, and it is also His bride. These two relationships are brought together in Ephesians v., wherein, in connection with the relationship that exists between husband and wife, we read, "No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church; for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." When we think of the body, we think of Christ's care for His church; Christ nourisheth it as of Himself. A man cares for his body because it *is* his own body. So a man's wife is said to be himself. "He that loveth his wife loveth himself," for "they two shall be one flesh.

This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

Now the more truly the relationship in which the church stands to Christ is understood, the truer will be the response from our hearts to the announcement of His coming again; for in the knowledge of that relationship lies the sense of what we are to Him.

In the parable of the pearl of great price are unfolded three qualities presented in the church to the eye of Christ—its oneness, its purity, and its preciousness. See Matt. xiii. 45, 46:—

45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

The merchantman, seeking the pearl of great price, is not the sinner seeking the Saviour, but Christ seeking His church; it is so precious to Him, and His love for it is so great, that in order to secure the pearl for Himself He sold all that He had. He was entitled to the throne of David as the Son of David and King of the Jews, but they crucified Him. He was "cut off," as the prophet Daniel says: "after three-score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off and shall have nothing" (Dan. ix. 26, margin). But He did find something, though not in Israel His earthly

people: He "loved the church, and gave Himself for it."

It will be a great help to us if, by faith, we lay hold of what the church is to Christ in its preciousness and unity and purity; and that every one of us who have believed in His name have part in it: part in that for which He gave Himself, and which to Him is the one pearl.

Yes, the church is *one*. It may not appear thus to the outward eye, for Satan has been very successful in scattering the flock, but in spite of this the unity remains, for we are all baptized into one body by the Holy Ghost; and this unity is maintained in His divine power, so that nothing shall be lost of that for which Christ gave Himself. By the Spirit the church is united to Christ in heaven, and nothing can sever believers from Christ in heaven, or

From Emmanuel's blood-bought crown
Cast one precious jewel down.

But when Christ gave Himself for the church He had an object in view. It was that He might "present it to Himself a glorious church not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish," and for this He sanctifies it, so that not only has His love to it been proved in the past, and will be demonstrated still in the future, but it is the object of His deepest solicitude now.

May our hearts be deeply affected by the thought of this unchanging love of Christ to His church. Now is the *preparation* day: He is waiting for the day of *presentation*.

The Origin of the Church.

In the making of the woman and her presentation to Adam (Gen. ii.) we have a type of the origin of the church. Adam was a figure of Christ; his deep sleep in the garden was a figure of the death of Christ, and while he slept God took a rib out of his side with which He builded the woman, and He

brought her to the man. It is out of the death of Christ that the church has sprung; it could never have had existence but for His death, for if He had not died He would have abode alone. As the corn of wheat (John xii. 24) He fell into the ground and died, and brought forth much fruit—the church—bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh—even as Adam could say of the woman, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, for she was taken out of Man."

The Destiny of the Church.

The Lord is spoken of as the Sun of Righteousness, and in this character He will arise with healing in His wings: then it will be the day when His glory will be displayed to the world; but before He comes in this character to the earth, He will come to the air for the most prized object of His heart's affection. This coming He Himself foretold when He said to His disciples, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." And the manner of this coming is plainly declared in 1 Thessalonians iv. 16-18:—

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words,

This was to be the church's brightest hope, but first love declined and the earnest watching ceased. But if the church forgot the promise of the Bridegroom, *He* did not, and so we get in the letters to the churches His coming presented afresh.

"I will give him the Morning Star" (Rev. ii. 28).

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. iii. 11).

And again three times over in the last chapter of the book :—

“Behold, I come quickly” (ver. 7),

“Behold, I come quickly” (ver. 12),
and

“Surely I come quickly” (ver. 20); and to this last declaration there comes the ready response from the hearts that love Him, “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

If we revert for a moment to the type of Christ and the church as seen in Adam, we find that God designed that in his place of supremacy over the earth he should have a helpmeet for him: no suited companion could be found amongst all the animals over which he bore rule; and the woman had to be taken out of him to be presented to him to be the object of his affection and to share his rule over the earth.

This is precisely the place that the church fills as the bride of Christ. He is still waiting for His bride, it is the day of espousals now (2 Cor. xi. 2), the marriage union is still future: it will take place at His coming for the church. And what a day of gladness it will be, for of that day it will be said, “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed

in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God” (Rev. xix. 7-9).

In the day of the Lord’s glorious reign over the earth the bride will occupy a wonderful place, which was shown to John by the angel, who said to him, “Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife”; and John saw “the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God” (Rev. xxi. 9-11).

But this is subsequent to its going *into* heaven: it is for this latter we wait, for greater by far than all the glory that awaits us will be the joy of His presence—the Bridegroom.

And so His voice is heard, “I am . . . the bright and Morning Star,” and those who watch for His return with longing hearts say in concert with the Spirit, “Come!” Who can tell how much this response is valued by His heart, who loves the church so well?

But while the church waits for Him it must bear the evangelistic character, and say to a poor thirsty world “Come” (Rev. xxii. 17). “And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

What Jacob saw in his vision is still more clearly represented to us in the gospel of Jesus Christ. By Him alone a communication is opened between God and men. The righteous Lord can now come down to us in mercy, and we can draw near to Him, through the person and work of His Son.

The test of a sermon is, after all, its effectiveness. Judged by the standard of homiletics or hermeneutics, many a discourse is very *defective*, which is

nevertheless very *effective*. The beauty of the fishing tackle is one thing—the catching of the fish is the test of the fisherman.

One great evidence of my abiding in Christ is quietness. I have my portion elsewhere, and I go on. . . . No matter what it may be, we bring quietness of spirit into all circumstances whilst dwelling in God. The soul is not only happy in God for itself, but it will bring the tone of that place out with it.

Answers to Correspondents.

(EDITORS).

Eternal Punishment.

R. H. writes :—

I am much troubled about the question of non-eternal punishment. On all sides I find real Christians refusing to believe the doctrine of eternal punishment—I have always held it and taught it myself, but if there is good scriptural evidence for doubting it, I do not wish to hold it. I earnestly desire to know the truth, and should be glad if in your next issue you would make a few remarks on the subject, and also recommend the best book or tract to read and give to others.

I am told that the word "eternal," when used in reference to God, is different, in the original, to the word used for punishment—not knowing Hebrew I can't answer these objectors. Also I am told that the Lord's words in Mark ix. 44-48 refer to the rubbish heap outside Jerusalem where rubbish was burnt—that hell is not hell in that passage, but Gehenna. All this is very puzzling, and I should be glad of Scripture light on the subject.

There certainly is not any "good scriptural evidence" for doubting the truth of eternal punishment. Those who refuse it must necessarily reject the authority of Scripture also, as indeed the more bold amongst them readily admit.

It is not true that a different word is used for *everlasting* when punishment is in question to that used when the reference is to God.

The word is *aiōnios*. A few instances of its use are :—

"Depart, ye cursed, into *everlasting* fire" (Matt. xxv. 41, 46).

"The righteous into life *eternal*" (Matt. xxv. 46).

"In danger of *eternal* damnation" (Mark iii. 29).

"Should not perish, but have *everlasting* life" (John iii. 16).

"The commandment of the *everlasting* God" (Rom. xvi. 26).

"He became the author of *eternal* salvation" (Heb. v. 9).

"And of *eternal* judgment" (Heb. vi. 2).

"Through the *eternal* Spirit offered Himself without spot to God" (Heb. ix. 14).

"This is the true God and *eternal* life" (1 John v. 20).

Now as to Mark ix. 43-48, it is true that, as you have been told, our Lord there used the word "Gehenna," which our translators have rendered "hell," as in other passages where the same word is used with the same awful meaning, viz. Matthew v. 22, 29, 30; x. 28; xviii. 9; xxiii. 15, 33; Luke xii. 5; James iii. 6.

Gehenna is the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew words signifying the "valley of Hinnom." Now to get the significance of the figure used we need to refer to the scriptures where this valley is spoken of and study its history and what is predicated of it, for Scripture is its *own* interpreter. Read Joshua xv. 8; 2 Kings xxiii. 10; 2 Chronicles xxviii. 3 and xxxiii. 6; Jeremiah vii. 31, 32; xix. 2, 6, 11-14; xxxi. 40; xxxii. 35; also Isaiah xxx. 33.

From these scriptures we learn that this place was a valley to the south of Jerusalem, which had originally belonged to the son of a person named Hinnom, and which had a strange subsequent history which caused it to become fitly emblematic of the place of future and eternal punishment. There it was that Ahaz and Manasseh led Judah astray in idolatrous worship, and, making their children pass through the fire, offered them as burnt sacrifices; and there it was that *purposed* defilement was introduced by the godly king Josiah in his effort to stamp out the practice, defilement doubtless by making it a place for all vile refuse and a place wherein were cast the bodies of criminals and outcasts. There in the midst of such corruption and putrefaction would worms continually

gender, and hence the need of the perpetual fire which it is said was kept continually burning to consume the refuse. To some such fire there is evident allusion in Isaiah xxx. 33. It is impossible to read the scriptures quoted and avoid seeing how fitting is that place which, outside the holy city, became in the judgment of God the "valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes" (Jer. xix. and xxxi. 40), as an image of that awful place where are cast as a prey to the worm that "dieth not" and the fire that never is quenched, those who are unfit for the heavenly city wherein shall "in no wise enter . . . anything that defileth" (Rev. xxi. 27 and *cf.* ver. 8).

Let none think that what our Lord taught as to Gehenna can apply, as in the case of the literal valley of Hinnom, to the *body* alone, for in Matthew x. 28 and Luke xii. 5 He expressly and emphatically distinguishes between the most extreme punishment which can be applied to the body—*i.e.* a violent death—and the immeasurably more awful judgment which comes "after" death in Gehenna, and applies to "both *soul* and body."

We hope, God willing, to publish in an early issue a paper on this subject from the pen of James Boyd.

The Scriptures after the Rapture of the Church.

J.P. The Scriptures will not lose their value after the rapture of the church, for God's work with the remnant of His people Israel will begin anew after that event: they will turn with renewed zeal, we have no doubt, to Old Testament Scripture, and also to the New. The Holy Spirit will awaken their expectations of the coming Messiah, and we can well believe that the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, which are Jewish in their character, and the Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude, as well as the Revelation, will be of the greatest comfort to them. They will no doubt find much to edify in

the other gospels and epistles (just as we find help and blessing in reading the Old Testament prophecies which have special reference to Israel), for they are full of Christ, and He will be the One for whom they will yearn, for the work of God in all ages is to make Christ everything to the soul.

Then as to the millennium—we do not think that Christ's presence will then "set aside the written Word." His presence here at His first coming did not set it aside. He Himself constantly used it, to meet the snares of Satan and the opposition of the Jews, to instruct His disciples, and even in speaking in prayer to His Father. It will be just as true for the redeemed on earth during the reign of the Lord as it was for Him when here, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. iv. 4).

The first psalm describes the Lord in His pathway here. "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night." In the millennium all the redeemed will take character from Him; it will be their delight to discover the great things in the law of God, *i.e.* in all His Word. And Psalm cxix. sets forth prophetically the devotion of Israel to the precepts and statutes of the Lord when the Word will be written in their hearts. So that the written Word will have a place during the millennium that perhaps it never had before.

The Word.

T.D. You conclude that the "Word" is not "a person, but rather that it is a case of personification," just as "Wisdom" in Proverbs viii. We must at once dissent, for four things are affirmed of the Word in the first two verses of John's Gospel, viz. :—

"In the beginning was the Word"—this defines the eternity of His being;

"And the Word was WITH God"—

this—and mark the fact—defines His distinct personality ;

“And the Word was God”—this affirms His absolute Deity ;

“The same was in the beginning with God”—this affirms the *eternal* distinction of His personality, and so guards against the error which, admitting His eternity, yet would make His distinct personality an emanation in time.

It is true, as you point out, that there is no article before “God” in the clause, “And the Word was God ;” but this certainly does not warrant your conclusion that the words might be properly translated “And the Word was *divine*.”

You quote from J. N. Darby’s book on “The Greek Article,” but on this very passage he writes, “Were it *ho Theos*, it would exclude from Deity the Father and the Spirit, and confine the unity of Deity to the Word” (p. 7).

Logos, as opposed to *rhēma*, defines that by which the inward thought is expressed, and covers also the inward thought itself (for characteristic and illuminating contrast between the two words, *cf.* Matthew xii. 36 and 37 ; in verse 36 it is *rhēma*, the simple expression used, however much or little it may be intended to convey ; in verse 37 it is the fuller word *logos*). In Christ, the Logos, has been expressed all that was hidden in God, not the counsel simply, as you put it, of eternal life, but all that God is. He was the active agent in creation (ver. 3), and in the universe which sprang into being at His bidding was expressed what up to then had been unexpressed and hidden in the mind of God ; but incarnation goes much further, for in the Word made flesh all that God Himself is has been revealed and expressed.

Receiving the Holy Spirit.

F. J. W. writes : “When does a believer receive the Holy Spirit? Do you think according to Scripture it is

possible to be without it? If so, will you kindly give proofs?”

You speak of “a believer,” and, of course, we assume that you mean “a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ.” There is a difference : and this it is which accounts for one of the exceptional cases of delay in receiving the Spirit which we find in the Acts of the Apostles (for each of which there is a reason). Thus in the nineteenth chapter we read of some whom Paul found as disciples, but who had not yet received the Spirit. On inquiry he found that these had not advanced beyond John’s baptism, and had not even heard of the coming of the Spirit. John’s testimony had taken effect with them : they had “believed” (ver. 2), and consequently had been baptized with the baptism of repentance ; but Paul carried the testimony further so as to link their faith with the Lord Jesus Christ, and when they heard this they were baptized in *His* name, and the Holy Ghost came upon them.

That the reception of the Spirit is consequent on faith in Christ is evident from Ephesians i. 13 : “In whom also, having believed, ye have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise” (N.T.). Refer also to Romans v. 5 : “The Holy Ghost which is given unto us :” the “us” of that verse is co-extensive with the “we” of the first verse of the same chapter : “*we* have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ;” and is applied to “all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called saints” (chap. i. 7). All who, being justified, have peace with God, have also received the Holy Ghost : both are consequent upon faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Looking this Way.”

J. W. Y. asks us to state what we gather from Scripture as to the correctness of the expression “looking this way,” and adds :—

“Rev. xxi. 4, although its complete fulfilment may be future, to me sets aside such expressions.

"I cannot think the departed now with the Lord can look on this earth and witness what is transpiring here.

"Surely to behold the sorrow and sin loved ones may be passing through, they have left behind, would cause tears and grief."

We presume you refer to the well-known hymn "Looking this way," but would remark at the outset that we should not gather from the wording of the hymn, that the author wished to express the thought that the saints who have departed, and are with Christ, are active witnesses of all that is going on upon the earth to-day; but rather, simply, that *memory* is present with them, and *thought for others* as yet on earth.

Both of these are predicated of those in the intermediate state, *vide* Luke xvi. 25 (as to memory) and verses 27-30 (as to thought for those left behind). True, that man was lost, but we only refer to the scripture to show the *capacities* of the disembodied state as revealed in the inspired Word. The saint in that state is "with Christ, which is far better."

The scripture quoted in Rev. xxi. of course applies to a time yet distant, *i.e.* after the thousand years of Christ's reign over the earth, and when the present heaven and earth have passed away, and have been replaced by the new heaven and new earth for eternity.

As to the future of our loved ones we may be sure of this, that we shall be in perfect unison and accord with the mind of Christ in the day when their destiny becomes evident, for we shall be "like Him." We cannot *understand* all now, but we can wait and *trust*.

1 Thess. i. 2-5.

A correspondent points out the "threefold introverted structure of 1 Thess. i. 2-5." The subject is an interesting one, and the reader may find similar structural "correspondences," elaborately worked out, in "A Key to the Psalms," by Boys; but the pursuit of it would not further the design of this periodical.—E. C.

The Flesh.

J.G. You have difficulty in accepting the statement made on page 380 that the believer "still has in him the flesh with its sinful tendencies," and you add, "I don't know of any scripture where it says the believer in Christ has the flesh in him: we have sin in us." But in a P.S. to your letter you add further, "It is in our evil nature the sin is. The Christian is charged as responsible for the allowance of sin, it may be through unwatchfulness or prayerlessness." Now what you call "our evil nature" is what Scripture terms "the flesh," so that as you are clear that the believer still possesses that which you term an "evil nature," you need have no difficulty in the statement that in his present condition he still possesses and carries about with him "the flesh with its sinful tendencies."

To be *in the flesh* is not the Christian state at all: the believer on the Lord Jesus Christ is "not in the flesh but in the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 8, 9). But whilst "in the Spirit" is the Christian state and the believer is "not *in the flesh*," yet in his present condition down here he still *has* the flesh. This is clear from very many scriptures, but note for example Galatians v. 16, 17, where those addressed are believers who have received the Holy Ghost, and who therefore are no longer "in the flesh" but are "in the Spirit." To them it is written: "Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

To the Roman saints too, after all the wonderful unfolding of truth in the early chapters, the Apostle writes in chapter xiii., as inspired by God so to do, "Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof": and the exhortation would be without meaning were the flesh not present.

The flesh *is* present within us, but we are not *in it* but in the Spirit, hence we need never be under its power, but may walk in freedom in the energy of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

J.D.—We do not see why you should have any difficulty as to the reference to the Lord's agony of blood in a paper by J. Boyd. He did but express in his own language what the Scriptures state. This is a subject for the heart's deepest adoration, rather than for discussion. But thanks for your letter.

Melody.

T.T. Thank you for very encouraging letter received. We do not know of any New Testament scripture which supports the bringing in of musical instruments into gospel work. The scriptures you quote certainly do not do so, for in both of them, Ephesians v. 19 and Colossians iii. 16, the melody to accompany the singing is "heart-melody." It is this that is acceptable to the ear of God. But these passages do not refer to gospel work but to the communion of saints together.

"Verily, verily."

J. E. B. writes pointing out that the double affirmative, "Verily, verily,"

occurs *only* in John's Gospel (though the single word "Verily" is found in many a passage in Matthew, Mark, and Luke), and inquires our judgment as to this, at the same time suggesting that the explanation may lie in the character of the gospel itself.

We think this is so. We may trace some analogy and a key in Hebrews. In that epistle God Himself is presented as speaking (chap. i. 1, 2), and in chapter vi. 13-18 we meet with His asseveration confirmed by an oath, His double affirmation made in grace for our assurance.

Now in John's Gospel the full glory of the person of Christ shines out: He is the Logos, the Word (chap. i. 1, 2), and the very words He speaks proceed from the Father (chap. xiv. 10); it is thus God Himself who is speaking, and so throughout the gospel we meet with the divine double affirmative, "Verily, verily," given in grace for the faith of men.

But in Matthew, Mark, and Luke our Lord is presented on the side of His perfect manhood, and hence, as is beautifully fitting, His statements are affirmations in their simplest form, His yea, is yea, and His nay, nay (James v. 12).

The Word of God.

(J. N. DARBY).

IN these days when the Word of God is called in question, it is blessed to think how a single verse of Scripture was sufficient for Christ for authority, and sufficient for the devil, who had not a word to say in reply.

Beware of novel interpretations of Scripture: cream lies on the surface.

God reveals not His things "to the wise and prudent," but unto "babes." It is not the strength of man's mind judging about "the things of God"

that gets the blessing from Him; it is the spirit of the babe desiring "the sincere milk of the Word." The strongest mind must come to the Word of God as the new-born babe.

Study the Bible . . . with prayer. Seek the Lord there, and not knowledge—that will come too; but the heart is well directed in seeking the Lord.

There is no craft of Satan that the Word of God is not sufficient to meet.

Lahai-roi.

(H. P. BARKER).

God Revealed.

And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, "Thou art the God who reveals himself;" for she said, "Also here have I seen, after He has revealed Himself." Wherefore the well was called, The well Lahai-roi (correct rendering of Gen. xvi, 13, 14).

And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi . . . and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and behold the camels were coming. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. For she had said unto the servant, "What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us?" And the servant had said, "It is my master" (Gen. xxiv, 62-65).

And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi (Gen. xxv, 11).

HAGAR, the Egyptian handmaid of Abraham's wife, had run away from the hard treatment meted out to her by her jealous mistress, and was on the road to her native land, from which she had been brought some ten years previously.

She had already travelled some distance into the great desert that lay between Canaan and Egypt, and was halting for rest and refreshment at a fountain on the way to Shur, when she was saluted by an angel of the Lord.

Jehovah Himself was watching over the poor, weary runaway, and He revealed Himself to her that day, as One who thought of, and cared for, even her. Her heart was touched with this condescension. It was so unlike the gods of her fathers, the Egyptian Osiris, Ptah, Ra, and a host of others who sat through the changing centuries, silent and unknown, feared, but not loved, by their devotees.

Here, on the contrary, was a God who spoke, who cared for His creatures, who intervened in their affairs, who showed concern for their welfare. Hagar was full of gratitude. "He has revealed Himself, and I have seen!" she exclaimed, and ever afterwards the place was called Lahai-roi, which means "He that liveth, and was seen."

In a far deeper and truer sense we Christians know the meaning of Lahai-roi. Poor Gentile outcasts we, most of us, were; worldlings, children of bondage, runaways. In infinite grace God has intervened for us, not only bringing to us all that meets our deep and urgent need, but fully revealing Himself in the person of His Son.

All that God is, in eternal love, has been declared by the Son. In His death the very heart of God has been made known. Counsels, too, which the Father had from all eternity have been revealed, counsels which centre around Christ, and give us a portion in association with Him, setting us in all the favour that so rightly rests upon Him. What a marvellous unfolding of divine love; what an astonishing revelation of God Himself has been brought to us in Christ! May we not truly adopt the language of Hagar, and, with a far deeper meaning in the words than she could have any idea of, say, "He has revealed Himself, and I have seen!"

Here at Lahai-roi, the place of divine revelation, dwelt Isaac. In Genesis xxii. he passes (in figure) through death and resurrection. In chapter xxiii. his mother, Sarah, dies, typifying the breaking of the tender ties of relationship which existed between the Lord and the beloved nation of Israel. In chap. xxiv. the figuratively risen man obtains his bride from the far-off land of the Gentiles.

The servant, sent by Abraham to bring a bride for his son, took three things with him to the land where she lived:—

1. A report of Isaac's greatness and glory (ver. 36).
2. Love-gifts from Isaac to his bride, jewels of silver and of gold, a golden earring and pair of bracelets (vers. 22, 53).
3. Camels, by means of which she should journey to Isaac safely and with speed (ver. 10).

Equipped with these things, the servant betook himself to Mesopotamia, where he found Rebekah. The story of how she was won for Isaac is well known.

All this sets before us, in typical form, truth of the greatest importance.

The Holy Ghost, on behalf of the Father and the Son, has come to this world, in order to conduct the bride of Christ, for whom He died, to the risen Man in glory. He has brought with Him :—

1. A report of Christ's greatness and glory. He is exalted at God's right hand, and God has appointed Him "Heir of all things."

2. Blessings, too numerous to name, all of them love-gifts from the Bridegroom. Do we sufficiently think of the blessings bestowed on us as the gifts of Him whose we are? Each one of them is intended to turn our thoughts to Him. I speak not now of our *mercies*, things like food and clothing which by-and-by we shall no longer need. I refer to those things which will be ours for eternity—spiritual blessings, love-gifts from the Bridegroom.

3. Power, by means of which we journey safely across the desert sands. This, too, we have in the Holy Spirit. Weak, ourselves, as water spilt upon the ground, *He* is our power, and He conducts us every step of the wilderness journey, and will do so until Christ, the true Isaac, comes to meet us and take us home.

The journey was nearly ended, when Rebekah, lifting up her eyes, espied some one walking in the field. He had come from Lahai-roi.

"What man is this?" she asked.

"It is my master," replied the servant. Warm was the welcome that she got. She became Isaac's wife, and "he loved her."

The Father's house, spoken of in John xiv., is *our* Lahai-roi. It is the

place to which the counsels of God, unfolded in Christianity, and all that boundless love set forth in Christ here below, properly belong. Christ is there, and there too is the place prepared for us. That home of holy love is our destined abode. There the purposes of eternal love will find accomplishment. Untold myriads, conformed to Christ's own image, shall be there, filling that home as sons, enjoying, with Him, the unclouded fulness of the Father's love.

There Christ is waiting for the moment when He will receive His bride. Thither the Spirit of God is leading us. From thence the Lord Himself will come, with a shout of triumph, into the air (1 Thess. iv. 16), to catch us up to be with Himself for ever. Past will be the desert with its sorrows and its failures. We shall be *home* at last! And what a home it will be!

"How blest a home! the Father's house!
There love divine doth rest;
What else could satisfy the hearts
Of those in Jesus blest?
His home made ours, His Father's love
Our heart's full portion given,
The portion of the First-born Son,
The full delight of heaven.

Oh, what a home! But such His love
That He must bring us there,
To fill that home, to be with Him,
And all His glory share.
The Father's house, the Father's heart,
All that the Son is given
Made ours, the objects of His love,
And He, our joy in heaven."

"And Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi." And there his bride dwelt with him, and shared the rich inheritance that was his.

Even so shall we dwell with Christ in that radiant sphere of bliss which is His own eternal home, sharing with Him all that He inherits.

How infinitely beyond the meagre thoughts of many a Christian is all this! Many spend their lives without understanding much beyond the fact that their sins are forgiven.

But our sins are forgiven *with a further object in view*, namely, that we might enter into the things prepared by God for those that love Him. No eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived these blessed things. But they are not kept secret from us; they are *revealed* to us by the Spirit of God (1 Cor. ii. 10).

Dependence.

Conscious weakness causes a saint not to dare to move without God.

The place of strength is always that of being forced to lean on God.

The very essence of the condition of a soul in a right state is conscious dependence.

Let us delight in dependence—that a Person above us should minister to us and care for us.

We must always be in dependence or fall.

“In every detail of our lives there is no blessing but in dependence on God. . . . If in speaking to you now I were to cease from depending on the Lord in doing it all blessing to my own soul would cease. ‘Without Me ye can do nothing.’ Neither can I speak, nor you hear, to profit, without dependence on the Lord.”

The point for us is to rest in the arm of the Lord, whatever may be, and not run to get help elsewhere.

We cannot make a visit rightly without His hand.

One cannot do an instant without Him; and oh, how blessed it is to trust Him! I feel all our work ought to be directly the immediate expression of God's mind, and it is a very solemn thing to work (and wait) directly from Him.

Looking unto Jesus.

Are we . . . looking stedfastly into heaven? Alas! what inconstant hearts we have; how fickle and changing! The Holy Ghost ever leads the eye to, and would keep it fixed on, Jesus. . . .

By His gracious help we are enabled to dwell even now, in spirit, in that scene of holy love where we shall actually be, by-and-by. Our thoughts and affections can find their centre even now, in the true Lahai-roi, where Christ is, and from whence He will shortly come to end our pilgrimage and bring to a glorious consummation all God's ways of grace with us.

To reveal and glorify Him is the habitual aim of the Spirit.

It is well to be done with ourselves and to be taken up with Jesus. We are entitled to forget ourselves, we are entitled to forget our sins, we are entitled to forget all but Jesus.

When we are occupied with Jesus the littleness of all that one is, or of all that one has done, remains in the shade, and Jesus Himself alone stands out in relief.

There is a danger of being too much occupied with evil; it does not refresh, does not help the soul on. “Abstain from every form of evil,” but be occupied ourselves and occupy others with Christ. The evil itself becomes not less evil, but less in comparison with the power of good where the soul dwells.

Looking to God one is above the heaving and breakers, and walking on a rough sea is the same as walking on a smooth sea.

Service.

Love for Jesus sets one to work. I know no other way.

All true service must result from the knowledge of Himself.

The grand secret of power in these days is faith in the presence of the Spirit of God.

Living to God inwardly is the only possible means of living to Him outwardly. All outward activity not moved . . . by this . . . tends to make us do without Christ, and brings in self. . . . I dread great activity without great communion.

“I was afraid.”

(EDWARD CROSS).

And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked ; and I hid myself (Gen. iii, 10).

FEAR is the first effect of sin. Man is born with a dread of God, whom conscience regards now only as a judge. Sin produces fear and distance. The heart of man is alienated from God ; and beginning with fearing Him, he ends in hating Him. The great problem of the gospel is how to win the heart of man and reconcile him to God—to restore him to right relationship with Him, from whom he has “deeply revolted,” in order to the accomplishment of God’s purposes in respect of him, and the glorious destiny for which he was created. To this end—

(1) his confidence must be won (Luke vii. 37, 38) ;

(2) his conscience must be purged (Heb. ix. 14) ;

(3) his state must be changed (Acts xv. 9) ;

(4) his soul must be saved (Titus iii. 5) ;

(5) his faculties must be renewed (Rom. xii. 2) ; and,

(6) his future must be secured (Eph. ii. 7).

Hence we have 2 c’s, 2 s’s, and 2 f’s ; a *memoria technica*, to keep before us the plan thus proposed to follow.

(1) HIS HEART MUST BE WON,

His confidence in God restored, and his sinful distrust of Him corrected. “Conscience doth make cowards of us all ;” and in that state man seeks only to hide himself from God. He only thinks of Him in the consciousness of his own sinful state ; and he judges of Him by the evil that he finds within himself alone. The slavish dread of God through sin is the inheritance of fallen man ; and, as the “lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it” (Prov. xxvi. 28), so the offended Majesty of

God becomes the object of hate to those who offend against it.

What, then, can restore the needed confidence in man, but love? Pure, perfect, divine love, exceeding all the sinfulness and aberration of the heart of man. To this end, therefore, Jesus came. He brought the knowledge of the love of God, and in His life on earth He showed the grace of God, so as to win the sinner’s heart, and undo in it all that sin had wrought before. Adam hides in fear and shame from the presence of God. The woman of Luke vii. comes openly in the Pharisee’s house, regardless of all shame, under the greater power of soul-need within, and the attraction of grace in Jesus without, and thus reverses the story of Genesis iii.

“Mother wants you home!” won a stray child’s heart, and restored her from a life of sin to a parents’ love.

(2) HIS CONSCIENCE MUST BE PURGED.

As the life of Jesus was needed to win the heart, the blood of Christ can alone cleanse from sin. “Without the shedding of blood is no remission.” Distrust of God is the ruin of *man* ; sin is an offence against *God*. Grace may meet the one ; blood alone can atone for the other. The life of Jesus is the vindication of the grace of God ; the blood of Christ is the vindication of His righteousness, so that grace might freely act (Rom. iii. 25, 26 ; v. 21).

(3) HIS STATE MUST BE CHANGED.

But while the attitude of God towards man is thus expressed in the life and death of Jesus, there must be wrought in man a corresponding change in his attitude towards God. His natural attitude is one of distrust and uncompromising hostility (Col. i. 21) ; and, in the very root and spring of it, this

must be changed. To this end Christ came incarnate, not only to express the mind of God towards man, but so to impress man's mind thereby, as to change the spring and tide of his thoughts towards God; to purify his heart by faith; and, as the magnet reverses its action in opposite poles, so the pollutions of sin that once attracted him are now repelled, and the purity of the presence of God that once repelled him becomes the delight and home of his soul (2 Cor. v. 17, 18).

(4) HIS SOUL MUST BE SAVED.

And this is immediately connected with his salvation. The grace of God brings salvation, and teaches us an entirely new order of living (Titus ii. 11, 12; iii. 5). The whole circle of relationships towards God and man is changed, and now marked by sobriety, and righteousness, and piety. The whole system of evil, in which the world is built up, is displaced by the true knowledge of God, and the soul is saved, from the domination of evil, to serve the living and true God.

(5) HIS FACULTIES MUST BE RENEWED.

But not only so, his faculties also are renewed in the power of spiritual life. It is forgotten sometimes that sin has ruined man in all his parts. Now, by the Spirit, his mind is renewed, so that he can intelligently take account of his responsibilities and the obligations incidental to the system of relationships into which grace has introduced him; and thus prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God (Rom. xii. 2). Moreover, he has "the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. ii. 16); and the new faculty which he now possesses is the capable instrument of all the expansion which his new powers demand, so that he is able, under the

leading of the Spirit, to enter into the mysteries of the "deep things of God."

But not only is the mind functionally thus renewed, but also, in the very spirit of it (Eph. iv. 23), the same renovating power is operative; and, as the man is new (*νέος*), so is he renewed (*καίνος*) in knowledge after the image of the Creator Himself, so as to enter intelligently into the apprehension of that world of universal blessedness, according to the glory of God, where "Christ is all, and in all" (Col. iii. 10, 11).

(6) HIS FUTURE MUST BE SECURED.

But what a future is thus assured to him! Present grace and future glory! Grace, that meets a man to-day where he is, in a world of sin, superabounding over it: glory by-and-by, in a world where all will be in accord with the essential nature of the Creator God, and in effect the full and unrestrained expression of His good pleasure. There, through succeeding ages, we shall be the examples of the "exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness towards us, in Christ Jesus."

Eph. i. 19: the exceeding greatness of His power.

Eph. ii. 7: the exceeding riches of His grace.

Eph. iii. 19: the exceeding knowledge of the love of Christ.

The life of Christ wins the heart.

The death of Christ annuls the power of him that has the power of death, i.e. the devil.

The blood of Christ purges the conscience.

The resurrection of Christ brings deliverance.

The ascension of Christ gives the Spirit and power; and,

The return of Christ brings in the glory of the kingdom.

Joy.

The thing that hinders our rejoicing is not trouble, but being half and half. If in the world his conscience reproaches the Christian, if he meets spiritual Christians he is unhappy there; in fact, he is not happy anywhere.

"Rejoice evermore; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks." Closer connection between these three than our souls are wont to acknowledge. Joy will ever rise in proportion to prayer and thanksgiving.

The Feasts of the Lord.

(H. NUNNERLEY).

"These are the feasts of the Lord, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons."—Lev. xxiii. 4.

Introductory Note.

LEVITICUS xxiii. groups together the solemnities, holy convocations, joyous festivals which Jehovah calls "My feasts."

The Sabbath, which is called a "holy convocation," is mentioned first. It occupies a unique place both as to its institution, frequent celebration, and typical meaning. It presents to us the rest of God into which He will bring His people, the goal to which His grace leads, as presented in these feasts; it also sets before us the place of undisturbed repose from whence He works; there can be no failure or breakdown in His plans, for they have been committed to the hands of His beloved Son, and in divine power and for God's eternal glory they will be carried out. We may defer detailed consideration of it until after our study of the other feasts, which, *seven* in number, were completed in *seven* months, and are distinguished from the

Sabbath by a fresh commencement in verse 4:

These are the feasts of the Lord, holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.

That which the first four feasts typified has already taken place, whilst the last three await their answer in a future day.

The Feasts of the Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, and Pentecost have an application to the Christian era; whilst the Feasts of Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles have a distinctly Jewish bearing.

The Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles were named "pilgrimage feasts," because every Israelite had to journey to the Temple for their celebration. They proclaim the good pleasure of God in a redeemed people, His delight in gathering them in holy nearness to Himself—they are "*feasts of the Lord.*"

The Passover.

"In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's passover."—Lev. xxiii. 5.

"Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."—1 Cor. v. 7.

The feasts of the Lord, whilst literally Jewish sacred festivals, are also emblematic of Christ's work and God's ways. The Passover ranks pre-eminent among these holy convocations and is the moral foundation of all that follows. Inaugurated in Egypt, celebrated in the wilderness, and perpetuated in Canaan, it tells us the work of the Lamb has met the claims of righteousness and laid a holy basis on which God can deliver His people from the power of the foe.

It marks a departure in the ways of

God, is a fresh beginning, the inception of a new era. Six months of the old civil year had run their course when past time was set aside, and redemption—not creation—became the start of new relations between God and man. Hitherto God had been known as a Being almighty in power, excellent in working, and claiming the homage due to a glorious Creator. *This* is the introduction of a more excellent glory, the revelation of a Saviour-God. The fall of man snapped every moral link with God. It is vain to speak of the "universal fatherhood of God" and

ignore this appalling fact. Those moral links dislocated by sin can be re-formed alone on the ground of redemption. All who are under the shelter of Christ's precious blood are privileged to know that a new and eternal year has commenced for them, finding its consummation in the rest of God. They date their history from the garden of resurrection, not the garden of Eden : from a Saviour-God, not from God as known simply in nature.

The passover lamb was separated *four* days before it was sacrificed, pre-figuring the way God patiently waited till man, fully tested, had completely broken down with law, and without law. It was not until *four* thousand years had run their course, and the "fulness of time" had come, that the true pass-over Lamb was sacrificed. Christ came in the middle—not the beginning—of this world's history. This was the "due time" purposed of God, and shows how perfectly type and anti-type agree. It is also an additional proof of the way the Old Testament Scriptures foresaw and predicted in every minute particular the ways and thoughts of God concerning His Lamb.

Then the lamb was to be "a male of the first year"—type of One who, in the energy and perfection of that which this expression denotes, ever lived actively and devotedly to God.

It was also to be spotless and unblemished. One Man has trodden this earth whose mind and life, walk and ways, words and deeds answered to the law of God. He walked not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor sat in the seat of the scornful, nor stood in the way of sinners, but His delight, day and night, was in the law of the Lord (Ps. i.). That Man was *Jesus*. These things had a complete fulfilment in Him. Untainted by the corrupt moral atmosphere of this world, He was superior to evil from beginning to end. Satan found no vulnerable point of attack in Gethsemane any more

than in the wilderness ; from start to finish He was unblemished and spotless.

But this holy life must be given up in death, this stainless Lamb must be slain, its blood sprinkled, ere it could avail as shelter from the destroyer's sword.

The holy life of Jesus, His perfect obedience, avails nothing as security from judgment. God said, "*When I see the blood,*" not when I see the lamb, "I will pass over you."

Christ's pathway was perfect, His life absolutely unselfish, His footsteps bear the impress of the one and only perfect Man this world has ever seen ; but, if we stop short, and *merely* regard Him as a pattern and example, however much we may admire and eulogize Him, it avails nothing. Imitation is not salvation. Remission follows submission. Only those who have bowed to God's dictum and put the sprinkled blood between themselves and the destroying angel are safe. The blood alone barred his entrance on that eventful night, nothing less and nothing else will avail now.

The penalty for sin is death—sin's judgment. This judgment is set forth in the fire to which the lamb was exposed ; it expresses God's abhorrence of sin, and sets forth that to which Jesus was exposed during the gloom and solitude of Calvary.

The lamb was to be roasted whole—symbol of the complete surrender of Jesus in the entirety of His being—an altogether *worthy* offering. Then no part was to be left until morning. Atonement is not doing, *it is done*. The work is finished, nothing remains to be accomplished. The morning of resurrection is the proof that sins are gone. Christ will never die again.

Again, not a bone was to be broken ; how truly this also was verified. The Roman soldiers little thought they were

fulfilling Scripture, when, coming to Jesus, and seeing that "He was dead already, *they brake not His legs*" (John xix. 33).

Thus Christ *our* passover was sacrificed for us. Yes, *for us!* He is *our* passover, for this was written to a Gentile assembly, not to a Jewish synagogue.

Let us briefly look at its threefold celebration. First, Israel kept the Passover *in Egypt*, girded and sandalled, with staff in hand, within closed doors on which the blood of the lamb had been sprinkled, on that eventful night when the destroying angel was stalking through the land.

What does this preparation for a journey mean? It tells us in unmistakable language that the death of Christ is to be our complete severance from this present world, with its bondage and its judgment, its false gods and its sensual gratifications, its leeks, garlies, and onions, its pleasures and its taskmasters. Henceforth we are to be known as pilgrims journeying to the land of promise, our faces set heavenwards.

But, secondly, the Passover's inauguration was not only associated with security from impending judgment and deliverance from the land where that judgment fell, but was also the pledge of a rest to come. They were enjoined to perpetuate this feast when "come *to the land* which the Lord will give you according as He hath promised" (Exod. xii. 25).

Are we not thus reminded that when in our heavenly home we shall never forget we are indebted to Christ, our passover, for the rest and happiness we enjoy, but, in company with all the redeemed in glory, shall celebrate the worth of the slain Lamb who has ransomed to God by His blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation?

Then, lastly, notice that even as

feasting on the slain lamb they started, so journeying through *the wilderness* they were still to keep in constant remembrance that death which was the foundation of all their blessing:—

The Lord spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year *after* they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at his appointed season (Num. ix. 1, 2).

Nor was even one ceremonially defiled to be debarred from the privilege of this feast. A special provision was made that when he was restored he should celebrate it the following month. Does not this remind us that we are to judge ourselves, and so eat of that feast which has superseded the paschal supper? Thus, in moral fitness, we are to remember our absent Lord, by partaking of His Supper, on our journey through this world, not because a death penalty is attached to its neglect, but as a priceless privilege.

In the last place we note a distinction from all previous offerings. *They* were personal and individual. *This* is expressly connected with the "household" and the congregation or "assembly" (Exod. xii. 3). It bears a family character as well as that pertaining to a collective assembly. It surely reminds us that the "assembly of God" is also the "household of God." Its various members are bound together by family as well as ecclesiastical bonds. The members of the body of Christ are also the children of the Father; the church of the living God is composed of those whom Christ calls "My brethren." All this is surely to have a place, and give character to our re-unions to show forth the Lord's death till He come. Living in spirit in Canaan, with our backs on Egypt, though traversing the desert sands, we are enjoined to keep this feast by "an ordinance for ever" (Exod. xii. 14).

(*To be continued.*)

Bible Study.—Galatians.

(EDWARD CROSS).

Galatians i. 11–24.

11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it :

14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,

16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen ; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood :

17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were

apostles before me ; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

21 Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia ;

22 And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ :

23 But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

24 And they glorified God in me.

Verse 11.

HERE begins what may be more properly termed the apologetic portion of the epistle, in which the Apostle passes to the consideration of his subject from a fresh point of view, and asserts emphatically that the gospel that was preached by him was not, either in its essence or its scope, "according to," or "after" man. This expression is used six times by Paul, viz. Romans iii. 5 ; 1 Corinthians iii. 3, ix. 8, xv. 32 ; Galatians i. 11, iii. 15, and from this fact, it has been inferred, that the formula was particularly before his mind during the period connected with the writing of these epistles.

Furthermore, he insists on the fact that he has personally received a special ministry of the gospel—so special indeed and distinct, that he calls it elsewhere "my gospel" (Rom. ii. 16, xvi. 25 ; 2 Tim. ii. 8 ; and cf. also 2 Cor. iv. 3 ; 1 Thess. i. 5 ; 2 Thess. ii. 14). That the Apostle's ministry has a character peculiar to itself lies manifestly stamped upon the surface of his writings ; and it is a matter of constant experience, as declared also by the Apostle himself, that it is through his gospel the soul is "established" (Rom. i. 11, xvi. 25) in the grace that reigns through righteousness unto eternal life (Rom. v. 21).

God, in His sovereignty, can reveal

Himself to any, and through any, as He will. But as He gave to the other apostles respectively a ministry suited to the object He had severally in view for them, so it has pleased Him to give through Paul a ministry of a peculiar character and special to him ; and it is as the soul is informed by the light of that ministry, that it is qualified to enter into the purposes of God in Christ, both as regards the liberty of grace and the hope of glory (Rom. v. 1, 2).

This gospel is not "after man" in any sense. Nay, more, it is not after Christ according to flesh, as he says elsewhere : "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh : yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him (thus) no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature," or more correctly translated, "there is a new creation" (2 Cor. v. 16, 17). Now the other apostles received their commission from Christ in the days of His flesh ; but, while the ministry of Paul is in full accord with what the other apostles received from the Lord, yet, as to his own apostleship, and the ministry of the gospel which he received, being as to its source equally divine as theirs was, he can say what they could not, that he got it from the Lord in glory,

The other apostles knew Him in the grace that brought Him into their circumstances, to fulfil their Jewish hopes and the promises made to the fathers: Paul saw Him in the glory of a light from heaven, shining above the brightness of the sun at midday (Acts xxvi. 13). This was the manner of his conversion; this was the source of his apostleship; and this fact necessarily affected all his ministry.

And, moreover, not only was he a witness of the resurrection of Christ, as they all were, but to him was there therewith also revealed the living and corporate association by the Spirit of all believers with Christ so risen and glorified; and that by the very word of his conversion, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME?" (Acts ix. 4).

Verse 12.

But, if his gospel was not according to man, neither did he receive it from man. Three prepositions are used to show how entirely it was apart from man: it was not *from* man remotely (*apo*), nor *through* man mediately (*dia*) chapter i. 1, nor *from with* man proximately (*para*), verse 12. It was absolutely and in every way independent of man.

Neither was he taught it, so as that it came to him at second hand. He did not even learn it from the Old Testament Scriptures. He got it directly, at first hand, by revelation of Jesus Christ; and the directness of his receiving it thus from the Lord Himself he proceeds to prove to them by a process of reasoning that was incontrovertible, beginning with a résumé of his former life, with which they were already acquainted, and, by a succession of steps which showed that all he had he had direct from God Himself through Christ, without any intervention whatsoever on the part of man:—

1 (vers. 13, 14). He had been a bitter persecutor of the assembly of God, being exceedingly zealous for the tradition of his fathers,

2 (vers. 15-17). When it pleased God, who separated him from his mother's womb, and called him by His grace, to reveal His Son in him, he did not go to Jerusalem for instruction from those who were apostles before him.

3 (vers. 18, 19). Then, when, after three years, he did go to Jerusalem, he only went for a short visit of fifteen days, to make the acquaintance privately of Peter, not to be ordained by him, or in any way instituted in the Christian faith.

4 (vers. 20-24). From there he went into the remote regions of Syria and Cilicia, away from the assemblies of Judæa.

5 (chap. ii., vers. 1-10). And when after fourteen years he went up to Jerusalem, he went, not as a learner, but rather as an expositor of the gospel which he had received directly by revelation of Jesus Christ.

6 (chap. ii., vers. 11-13). While as to Peter, so far from following his lead, he rebuked him publicly before them all, because he was "convicted of evil" (N.T.).

7. And finally, in chap. ii., vers. 14-21, he closes this portion of the epistle by laying down the great, essential, and vital principle on which is founded the whole superstructure of the gospel which he taught.

Coming back to these verses in detail:—

Verses 13, 14.

Here we get a sidelight thrown on the relation between Judaism and the gospel. Advanced beyond many of his contemporaries in zeal for Judaism and the traditions, probably of that special sect of the Pharisees to which he belonged, from his forefathers, he was "excessively persecuting the church of God and ravaging it." The same spirit exists to-day. Paul's gospel delivers from this present evil age. He is accordingly bitterly opposed by those who do not want that deliverance,

Verses 15-17.

Moreover, the manner of his conversion showed clearly that his whole career was markedly under the directing hand of God. It was God who in His sovereign choice separated him from the moment of his birth, like Moses of old; and it was God's free grace that called him in due time to reveal His Son in him, that he might preach Him among the nations. They might slightly say that the hand of man was not in it: that it lacked his sanction. True, for the hand of God was in it all, and accordingly, as independent of all human sanction, "immediately" he took not counsel with flesh and blood, mere weak man, nor did he go to Jerusalem, the seat of traditional authority, to those who were apostles before him; but he went away into Arabia, far from all Jewish influence; and from thence he returned again to Damascus.

Moreover, as the manner of his conversion was markedly by the direct intervention of God, so likewise, the character of it was peculiar also. That Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of the living God," was revealed to Peter (Matt. xvi. 16); but Paul can say further, "when it pleased God to reveal His Son *in me*, that I might preach Him among the nations." There was thus an increased light in the revelation given to Paul—a subjective light—with the express object of his making it known, objectively, to the world. Accordingly we find that, after his conversion, "straightway in the synagogues he preached Jesus, that He is the Son of God" (Acts ix. 20, N.T.). Peter did not so preach Him, although He was to him first so revealed. He preached Him as "made Lord and Christ" (Acts ii. 36)—the proper rendering of Acts iv. 27 is . . . "against Thy holy Servant Jesus." But Paul preached Him from the first as "the Son of God" in the fullest and divine, heavenly sense of that title, which, with the consequences flowing from it, becomes one of the leading

characteristics of all his subsequent ministry. How large and important a place this occupies in his writings may be seen by reference to the following, viz. Romans i. 4, vi. 4, viii. 14, 19, 32; Galatians i. 16, iii. 26, iv. 4; Ephesians i. 3, 5, ii. 18, iii. 14, iv. 13, amongst other passages. It is one of the most important facts in his ministry.

Verses 18, 19.

Then, after three years, he went up to Jerusalem to make the acquaintance of Peter, in a personal, not in an official way; and he was with him fifteen days only. Furthermore, this time was not spent in his getting instruction from others. Contrariwise we find him speaking boldly in the name of the Lord, and discussing with the Hellenists, to such effect that they sought to kill him; which fact no doubt accounts for the shortness of his visit there; for, when the brethren knew of the opposition which he was encountering, they brought him down to Cæsarea and sent him away to Tarsus (Acts ix. 29, 30).

During that visit he saw none of the other apostles, save James, the Lord's brother, so called to distinguish him from James the son of Zebedee (*Elli-cott*), and this proves that he was in no wise beholden to them for his place as an apostle.

The word "apostle" does not necessarily mean one of "the twelve." Its simple meaning is a "messenger" (2 Cor. viii. 23). It has, however, come to be used in a special and restricted way as applying to the twelve (cf. Luke vi. 13; Rev. xxi. 14); and from a comparison between John vi. 70 and vii. 5, some conclude that none of the Lord's brethren were amongst that number (*Alford*). Who the Lord's brethren were is a subject about which there has been much discussion and interminable; but independently of the settlement of that question Paul's argument here is plain enough, viz. that as regards his own apostleship he owed

nothing to Jerusalem nor to those who were apostles before him ; and,

Verse 20.

The solemn asseveration he makes of this fact shows the importance he sets upon affirming it.

Verses 21-24.

After this he left the entire vicinity of Jerusalem for the regions of Syria and Cilicia, and he was unknown by

face even to the assemblies of the whole province of Judæa. They only heard by report of him that their "quondam" persecutor was now preaching the faith he once ravaged. But so far were they from questioning his right to act on his own responsibility before the Lord in the exercise of the ministry he had received from Him, without seeking or getting countenance from any subordinate authority, that, as he says, "they glorified God in me."

Elijah.

(A. J. POLLOCK)

His Resignation of the Prophetic Office.

1 Kings xix, 1-16.

1 And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time.

3 And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there.

4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree : and he requested for himself that he might die ; and said, It is enough ; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers.

5 And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.

6 And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.

7 And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat ; because the journey is too great for thee.

8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

9 And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there ; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah ?

10 And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts : for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword ; and I, even I only, am left ; and they seek my life, to take it away.

11 And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord ; but the Lord was not in the wind : and after the wind an earthquake ; but the Lord was not in the earthquake :

12 And after the earthquake a fire ; but the Lord was not in the fire : and after the fire a still small voice.

13 And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah ?

14 And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts : because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left ; and they seek my life, to take it away.

15 And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus : and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria :

16 And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel : and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room

THEY were troublous times in Israel. The prophetic office was honourable, but it was hazardous. If it carried high honour with God, it had little respect from men. If the prophet's mantle were evidence of God's favour, it received the hatred of those in high places : they were indeed dark days in Israel.

And Elijah's spirit was giving way under the combined pressure of many things. He had been sustained through the long conflict which ended in the triumph over the prophets of Baal, and also in his intercession for Israel that the long-continued drought should be broken up, but now his strenuous spirit began to quail before the murder-

ous hatred of Jezebel, Ahab's wicked queen, and this last bit of pressure brought him to despair. Taking a day's journey into the wilderness—its solitude and silence answering to the despondency of his soul—he threw himself under the shade of a juniper tree, and prayed to be relieved of life itself.

How tenderly God rebuked the faintness of His servant's soul! Awakening from his sleep he found a table prepared for him in the wilderness—"he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head."

And shall we faint? The present outlook is dark. The apostasy has set in. The flood-tide of evil is sweeping apparently all before it. Politically, commercially, religiously, the seriousness of the outlook cannot be exaggerated. Are we in spirit a day's journey in the wilderness under the juniper tree? Are we faint, and dispirited, and ready to be relieved of the weariness of the way, and the strenuousness of the conflict? Are the odds overwhelmingly against us?

The incident we are considering is full of cheer for us. There is plenty of encouragement, if only we look in the right direction. The odds are *not* against us. If things were a thousand-fold worse the odds are *with* us—overwhelmingly so. *God* is for us. *God* is with us. "More than conquerors" may be our motto. The secret of that lies with the rest of the sentence, "through *Him* that loved us."

Refreshed by his double meal, taken at the command of the angel of the Lord, Elijah went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God.

So with ourselves. We may have little Christian fellowship, we may be in a veritable spiritual wilderness, our path may be very isolated, those who once walked with us may do so no longer, yet God is able to feed us and give us strength to carry us long and

far. We are not dependent on man. Our resources are unlimited.

To return to Elijah. At Mount Horeb God revives the drooping spirit of His beloved servant by giving him an example of His power. "A great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind." He could have acted thus in His public dealings with men, but it was not His way just then.

The earthquake followed. The ground reeled. The earth shook. He could have acted thus, but it was not His way just then. God was not in the earthquake. It might have suited the mood of the prophet, but it was not God's way.

The fire followed. But God was not in the devouring flame.

He might have rent Jezebel as the mighty wind rent the mountains before the Lord; He might have hurled her from the throne she disgraced as the earthquake shook the foundations of the earth; He might utterly have consumed her, as the fire consumed all that had stood in its path: we repeat He might have done all this, but it was not God's way just then. He allowed Jezebel, but only so far. "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further," is sufficient for the proud waves. "Thou couldest have no power at all against ME, except it were given thee from above," showed how really impotent Pilate was in his day. And who was Jezebel, and what was her power? God is omnipotent. We need only fear Him. It was said of the late Lord Lawrence, one time Governor-General of India, that he feared the face of man so little, because he feared the face of God so much.

And so God could stay the awful tide of apostasy, if it were His way. He could dispel the deepening darkness with a word. He could gather in one all the broken fragments of His church. But it is not His way thus publicly to intervene just now. "Thy way is in

the sea, and Thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known" (Ps. lxxvii. 19). The day will come when He shall gather His church into one: the day will come when moral winds, earthquakes, and fires shall do His bidding, and the highest opposition against Him shall be brought to naught. This is foretold in the Book of Revelation. But it is not His way just now.

After the wind, and earthquake, and fire, "*a still small voice*" was heard. And this impressed the prophet's soul far more than the terrifying convulsions of nature. He was in God's presence. In fear and reverence he wrapped his face in his mantle and stood in the entering in of the cave. God's power is not to be measured by what He does, but by what He *is*. He is beyond all His acts.

But note here how grace and government go hand in hand, for this is the great lesson we need to learn at this solemn point in Elijah's history. *Grace* would strengthen the prophet. *Government* accepted the resignation that Elijah handed in to God. *Grace* would take the prophet, who feared death at the hands of a wicked woman, to heaven in a whirlwind—chariot and horsemen of fire—*without dying at all*; and is not that an encouragement to us in days of darkness, and apostasy, and danger, to expect the Lord to come for His bride? *Government* directed Elijah to anoint Elisha in his room and stead.

And see the moral fitness of this. If we quail *to-day*, how can we be trusted *to-morrow*? *To-morrow* will be worse than *to-day*. "Evil men and seducers shall wax *worse and worse*" (2 Tim. iii. 13). "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?" (Jer. xii. 5).

Let us see to it that we do not quail before the stress and storm. Let us not hand in our resignation. God will relieve us at the right moment. What a privilege to stand for Him!

In warfare posts of danger are coveted, and there is no lack of volunteers for forlorn hopes. The story is told of the colonel of a regiment calling for volunteers for some dangerous task. Turning his back for a moment to speak to one of his staff he turned round again to view an unbroken line. He chided them that none had volunteered. The fact was that to a man they had volunteered by each going forward one step, and so the line was unbroken.

Would that the saints of God acted thus! Oh, for moral backbone, spiritual fibre, divine boldness. How many, alas! have turned aside. How many have gone weakly with the crowd, professing to be in the testimony when in reality they have lost their chance of standing for God, for truth, for principle, for righteousness, for the true help of His own. To stand alone from *conviction* is better than to choose company for *convenience*. For, we repeat, if we cannot stand *to-day*, we shall assuredly not stand *to-morrow*, for *to-morrow* will be worse than *to-day*.

We are apt to over-estimate the forces against us, because we under-estimate the forces that are with us. We must not think lightly of the enemy's power, but we want rather to grow in the sense of God's. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Pile up the list of opposing forces. Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword! They form only the background for the display of God's power. "More than conquerors" is the response to that!

And further, we are apt to overlook how much God has for Himself. Elijah wailed, "I, even I only, am left," yet there were *seven thousand* whose knees had not bowed before the hideous Baal, who had not kissed the idol, representative of demoniacal power and craft. God has His hand over everything, be it His own gracious work in souls or the opposing power of the enemy.

Let us be encouraged. God is the "God of all encouragement" still!

The Sower and the Harvest.

(J. T. MAWSON).

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him (Psalm cxxvi. 6).

The Sowing.

THE key to all Old Testament Scripture was indicated by the Lord Jesus when He ministered to His disciples "things concerning Himself," out of Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets. He is the fulfiller of all Scripture, and so of the passage before us. That this is the case here is evident, for He said, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man" (Matt. xiii. 37), and "The seed is the word of God" (Luke viii. 11).

He came into the world to cast into the soil the incorruptible seed, the word of God which endureth for ever, for in these last days God hath spoken to us in Him. He came to make God known to men, to declare the Father in whose bosom He dwelt as the only begotten Son; and in doing this He was the great Sower of the seed.

There was nothing in His blessed life inconsistent with His mission, for He was Himself everything that He said; but in the world in which He sowed everything was contrary both to His mission and Himself, and as a consequence His life was one of sorrow and stress and tears. In olden days the prophets of God wept because the people would not hearken unto their words, but in Jesus every sorrow found its centre; there was no grief like unto His.

It should be an affecting contemplation to us that He who was the Framer of the universe, the Owner of the cattle upon a thousand hills, should find His resting place, as a babe, in a manger; and that the first action of the great ones of the earth towards Him should compel Him to become a fugitive from the land that He loved. The chill winds of poverty assailed Him on His

advent into this world, and the storms of hatred beat about Him until His work was finished here.

But, undeterred by the contradiction of sinners against Himself, and unmoved by the subtle wiles and unceasing malignity of Satan, He did the will of God. To Him was given the tongue of the instructed (Isa. l. 4, N.T.); morning by morning He was awakened by Jehovah to be taught in the words which day by day He spoke—words in season were they all—the precious seed, not one grain of which shall perish, for the word of God liveth and abideth for ever.

In all His words and works He sowed the seed, but it was at the cross of Calvary that God's nature and character were disclosed in all the fullness of their glory; it was there as nowhere else that He appeared as the Sower sowing the seed, and it was there that He sounded the very depths of sorrow.

When the farmer goes forth into the fields with the seed basket, he goes forth with a purpose; he is not out for pleasure or recreation, but he sows in hope of the harvest time—for this he labours and toils when the skies are dull and the cold winds blow. So when the Son of God came into this world He had a great and high purpose in coming; He sowed the seed in view of the harvest; for the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross, despising the shame. He was in the world to undo the works of the devil, to dispel the darkness that the Edenic lie had cast as a pall over Adam's race. He was here to manifest and prove beyond question the love of God to men, to commend that love to them, and to beseech them to be reconciled to the God whose heart yearned with

an infinite yearning for the lost. He was here to cast this truth as to God, as the good seed, into the barren soil of the heart of man, that a full and glorious harvest should result for the joy of the heart of God.

He came into the world to do this, no matter what the cost to Himself, and He knew well ere ever He came what that cost would be. He knew that tears would be His meat by day and by night; that He would be despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He knew that to sow the seed involved a path of suffering uncheered by earthly smiles, a path of gall and reproach which should end in a malefactor's cross.

He also knew that it involved that mysterious cry that burst from His broken heart, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

What soul in the universe shall discover the intensity of His suffering as He passed into the darkness of the depths from whence that cry came? But in those unsounded depths, while waves of sorrow rolled upon Him, in His own person, the holy, yet forsaken Sin-bearer, there was displayed the unalloyed holiness of God's nature, the inflexible character of His righteousness and the infinite greatness of His love.

And shall this sowing be in vain? Nay, for every sorrow He shall have an answering joy, out of that suffering and death shall spring such a harvest as will satisfy His soul forever. He shall come again rejoicing, bringing His sheaves with Him.

The Harvest.

In the thrice-told parable of the Sower it is plainly stated that there are to be, in the day of harvest, three distinct results from the seed sown: one-hundred-fold, sixty-fold, and thirty-fold; and whilst this may be seen even to-day in the varying degrees of fruitfulness found amongst those who receive the good seed, yet we may also trace in

it a very distinct analogy to the three different circles in which the Lord will see of the travail of His soul.

The HUNDRED-FOLD will be realized in the Church.

In this connection it is interesting to see that in Luke's Gospel the full one-hundred-fold yield alone is contemplated (viii. 14, 15). The Gospel of Luke was written to a Gentile, and by the man who was chosen of the Holy Ghost to write the Acts; it presents the grace of God, not to the Jew only, but toward all mankind; and the truth as delivered to Paul as the Apostle to the Gentiles and minister of the church follows in beautiful moral order upon this gospel. These facts confirm the thought that the hundred-fold of the parable in Luke will be brought forth in the church, gathered out to God during this present period from Pentecost to the rapture of the church at the coming of the Lord.

The Holy Ghost dwells within believers to give full effect to the revelation of God made on earth by His beloved Son, and that which is produced and maintained by the Persons of the Godhead cannot fail, and fruit will be brought forth to perfection—one-hundred-fold.

In the church God will have glory by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end; in it will be known the manifold wisdom of God, and through it He will display the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus.

What a glorious day that will be when the church is completed! Then will the Lord "present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but . . . holy and without blemish" (Eph. v. 27). It will be a glorious day for all who have trusted Him, for then they will leave their sorrows behind and have nothing but fullness of joy before them for ever; they will see Him, whom having not seen they love; they will

rest from their labours in the joy of His presence, and find their hearts' full delight without a hindrance in His eternal and changeless love.

But what will it be to Him to receive His church—His bride? For her He gave up the earthly kingdom for the time, and accepted the rejection and despisings of men. For her He sorrowed and bled and gave Himself up to judgment and death. For her He laboured and has had long patience. It is the day of His patience now, He still waits for the glorious consummation of all His work. Oh! what will it be to Him when the day of waiting is over, and He is able to say to His church, "Arise, My love, My fair one, and come away" (Song of Sol. ii. 13)? His own love will find its own satisfaction, then, in having the object of it perfectly suitable to and with Himself, in unchanging reciprocal affection forever. Fellow-Christian, this is the grand result for Himself and us, of His time of sorrow and sowing on earth.

There will be another side also to that glory of equal blessedness. The seed which has been sown will bring forth after its own kind; and the Son of God was the "Corn of wheat," He was the Word of God, in Him every spoken word found its living exemplification, He was all that He spoke, and He fell into the ground and died. In the glorious harvest the "much fruit" will appear all like unto that precious Corn of wheat, for "we know that when He shall appear *we shall be like Him*, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John iii. 2).

But what will it be to the Son of God "to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24)? What deep satisfaction to Him to lead us into the Father's house, and to know that His Father's desire to have that house filled with sons, for ever conformed to His image who is the Son, shall be eternally satisfied; and this will be the fruit of His mighty victory over every evil power, the glad hundred-fold harvest of His sowing in tears.

The SIXTY-FOLD will be realized in the blessing of Israel.

How great and undying is the Lord's love to Israel! To this all the prophets bear witness. It was to Israel that He said "I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jer. xxxi. 3). Of them, with grief of heart He had to complain, "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? . . . for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away" (Hosea vi. 4). "When Israel was a child, then I loved him. . . . I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms, but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love. . . . *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?*" (xi. 1-8).

But what tongue shall tell the sorrows of Emmanuel, in the midst of that people, when they mocked at His tender words, and refused all His gracious entreaties? What words can describe the feelings that filled His soul when He had to cry to the rebellious city, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth her brood under her wings, *and ye would not*" (Luke xiii. 34); and can we think without stirrings of heart of that moment when He came near unto that city, and when His cheeks were tear-washed in His sorrow for it, as He exclaimed, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes!" (Luke xix. 42).

He was cut off in the midst of His days; lover and friend were put far from Him; and He, the King, was led, amid universal execration, by the people whom He loved, to the place of public execution. The people did not know that He was wounded for their transgression, and bruised for their iniquities, and that by His stripes they would be healed; nor did Caiaphas, their high priest, understand the meaning of his words:

"Ye know nothing at all. Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not," for in so saying he spake "not of himself: but . . . prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation" (John xi. 49-51).

For this sowing of sorrow the Lord shall have a great harvest, for "All Israel shall be saved" (Romans xi. 26).

He whom they rejected 'will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more' (Jer. xxxi. 34). He 'will ransom them from the power of the grave, and redeem them from death.' He will heal their backslidings and love them freely. Then shall Israel grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his renown as Lebanon. . . . And Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols?

Then shall the waste places of Jerusalem break forth into joy and sing together, for the people shall be comforted of the Lord. They shall sit under His shadow with great delight and find His fruit sweet to their taste, they shall be led into His banqueting house and His banner over them shall be love.

How great will be His joy in this day of harvest when He shall see of His soul's deep travail on behalf of Israel, and will rejoice over them with joy, and rest in His love, when He will joy over them with singing; yes, even as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall He, Jehovah-Jesus, rejoice over them.

The THIRTY-FOLD will be realized in the blessing of the nations.

When the Lord sits upon the throne of David, His dominion shall extend throughout the whole earth, for the heathen shall be given Him for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession (Ps. ii.). All the ends of the earth shall look to

Him and be saved, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. Then peace and contentment shall take the place of strife and clamour. He will

"Bid the whole creation smile,
And hush its groan."

"His name shall endure for ever: His name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed," and the whole earth shall be "filled with His glory" (Ps. lxxii.).

His life on earth was but a short one, and thirty years of it are hidden, for the greater part, from us. Three years and a half seems to have been the limit of the time in which He laboured as the Sent-One of God, sowing the seed; and that brief period ended in a shameful cross, so that it seemed as though He had spent His strength for naught and in vain. But, oh, the glory that those years will yet bring forth; how rich the sheaves that He will gather in the glad harvest home.

(1) His church near to His trusted side, all beauteous in His own glory.

(2) Israel, His earthly brethren, brought close to Him; and the chosen and promised land, in which they dwell, the joy of the whole earth.

(3) All the nations of the earth owning His supremacy and rejoicing in a God, the full revelation of whom means only blessing for them.

Such will be the glorious harvest of His sowing in tears. Such the result of the travail of His soul. Yet such will be only as it were the vestibule to the eternal day, when, in the new heavens and the new earth, God will dwell with men, and He shall be "all in all." Those endless ages that stretch beyond the millennial reign shall also be founded in unchangeable blessedness upon that wondrous visit of the great Sower to this rebellious planet; and that harvest, the first sheaves of which shall be reaped at His coming for His church, will continue for ever and for ever.

The School of God in the Book of Daniel. (M. C. GAHAN).

Introductory.

THE object of these notes is to trace the ways in which the various characters whose history is recorded in the Book of Daniel passed through the school of God. The path, principles, and exercises of the people of God are brought out, introducing where necessary the miraculous interposition of God in sustaining grace and omnipotent power towards His despised and persecuted servants; and the governmental execution of His righteous judgment against the usurpation of His prerogatives, and the defiant pride of man.

The undercurrent of exercises in Jehovah's servants, and the passions and prejudices stirred up in the hearts of imperious and autocratic monarchs

in open antagonism with Jehovah, furnish instructive object lessons to the student of the Book of Daniel.

There is little wonder that this book, of all other books of the Bible, is subjected to the assaults of the critic and the infidel, for the direct interposition of God in the affairs of men, His omnipotent power, unsparing judgment, and delivering mercy are emphasized in a measure and to an extent unequalled in any other of the divine writings. It is the standing witness to the sons of men of that which formed the primary lesson taught to Nebuchadnezzar, viz. that "the heavens do rule," and as such is a bulwark of testimony to the existence of the living God.

Chapter I.

6 Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah :

7 Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names ; for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belshezzar ; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach ; and to Mishael, of Meshach ; and to Azariah, of Abed-nego.

8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank : therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

9 Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

10 And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink : for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king.

11 Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah,

12 Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days ; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink.

13 Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the por-

tion of the king's meat : and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

14 So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days.

15 And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.

16 Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink ; and gave them pulse

17 As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom : and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

18 Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

19 And the king communed with them ; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah : therefore stood they before the king.

20 And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

21 And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.

THE history of Israel brings out into relief the ways of God with a people whom He had specially set apart for Himself, and which He had originally intended for wonderful blessings on the earth.

But further, Jehovah's relations to all the nations of the earth were

measured and controlled by Israel's geographical position ; for "He set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel," they being His "portion" and "His inheritance" (Deut. xxxii. 8, 9).

But this blessing was contingent upon obedience (Lev. xxvi. ; Deut. xxviii.),

under which condition Israel, times without number, failed, bringing down upon themselves the disciplinary hand of God in governmental chastisement; and finally those extreme threatenings of Jehovah, announced in the above scriptures, as to scattering and banishment from their own land.

The two and a half tribes, detached from the rest of the nation by their wilful resolve to possess their inheritance on the hither side of Jordan, soon fell victims to idolatrous departure from the living God, and were carried into captivity by the king of Assyria. About one hundred and fifty years after the kingdom of Israel was also swept from their possessions in the northern parts of Palestine, after having held them for about seven hundred and fifty years.

The kingdom of Judah survived that of Israel for one hundred and forty years; but, not benefiting by the warnings set before them in the fate of the ten tribes, came themselves also under the hand of God in desolating judgments and finally passed into captivity under Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon (2 Chron. xxxvi.).

With this important event the Book of Daniel opens, furnishing in the persons of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah remarkable representatives of the pious remnant of Judah. They remained true at heart to Jehovah, in the midst of the desolations that had overtaken the guilty nation; and were the instruments in Jehovah's hands of proving in high places the omnipotence of Israel's God. The position and condition of the godly remnant at this time is depicted with poetic pathos in the 137th Psalm, where overwhelming memories of Zion silenced their harps, stifled their songs, and opened up the fountain of their tears.

We may be sure that neither patronage nor promotion in the court of the conqueror could efface for a moment the oppressive circumstantial sorrows which must have burdened the spirits of Daniel and his three

companions while discharging the lofty obligations which unexpectedly opened up before them. Being of the royal seed, and distinguished for wisdom, knowledge, and science, a special position and special privileges were allotted them by the king's command, but behind the will of the monarch there was the overruling hand of God, that the testimony of the only true and living God might be brought, not only into the palace (cf. Phil. i. 12, 13), but directly beneath the notice, on more than one occasion, of the monarch who ruled the then known world.

The simple key to Daniel's most remarkable history, whether as walking before man in publicity, or before God in the secrecy of his own soul, or in the privacy of divine prophetic revelations, is to be looked for in the initial resolve that formed the controlling principle of Daniel's life, viz. unreserved and uncompromising faithfulness to God: "But Daniel *purposed in his heart* that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat." Tested to the core by the royal requirements, Daniel's first stand laid the foundation for future soul progress in divine things, for "he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much" (Luke xvi. 10; see also Ps. cxli. 4).

While thus set with purpose of heart to fulfil Jehovah's requirements, Jehovah on His part had already been moving behind the scenes on behalf of His faithful servant. "Now God *had brought* Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs." There was a danger in this, too, of a very subtle character, viz. that of yielding under the persuasions of one whose friendship and approval were worth much to Daniel in the court of the Babylonian monarch in view of his position as a captive. Would *he*, who had purposed in his heart to refuse obedience to the commands of king, yield to the pleadings of a patron? Nay, the ceremonial

law of his God indicated unmistakably his course, and that was enough to decide him at all costs to carry it out, with the remarkable result that "at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children that did eat the portion of the king's meat." The captives, through faithfulness, had made a good start, both before God and man, supported too in a marvellous way by the interposition of Jehovah on their behalf, both in disposing the heart of the king and the chief official over them, and in the matter of physical nourishment on inferior diet. Nor was it only that they excelled in physical appearance, but that "God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom," so that "in all matters of wisdom and understanding that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm."

In spite of all the hostile influences in constant movement against Daniel, the last verse of the chapter records

the remarkable fact that his position and influence at court outlasted the captivity, that is, until the reign of Cyrus the Persian, contributing in no small degree, doubtless, in the wonderful ways of God, towards bringing about the goodwill of the Babylonian monarch in favour of the children of the captivity and their return to their land at the expiration of the seventy years. Truly "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will" (Prov. xxi. 1).

Thus if the God of Israel no longer dwelt behind the veil of the temple, now desolate and destroyed, He still wrought behind the veil of circumstances in unchanging faithfulness on behalf of His people, the strength of His love finding a way for its expression even amid the national ruin; and His intervention on behalf of His faithful servants in those ancient days should encourage us to faithfulness to Him in *our* circumstances, for He abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself.

Eternal Punishment (I).

(JAMES BOYD).

As we have received many inquiries as to this most solemn and important subject, we are thankful to be able to put a series of papers upon it before our readers, and would suggest that what is stated in them should be prayerfully tested by the Scriptures, which alone can decide these questions for us.—EDS.

Introductory.

IT is with a certain amount of hesitation and timidity that I attempt to occupy the reader with the subject of eternal punishment—with hesitation, because I should very much prefer to minister, as far as in me lay, the positive blessings of Christianity: with timidity, lest in placing before the mind of the reader the certain doom of the wicked, there might creep into the texture of the argument a spirit of haughtiness, hardness, or opinionativeness, which would, as far as these things could, where nothing

but the truth was stated, falsify or obscure the grace of God to a sinful and devil-deceived world. Besides, when placing before others the woeful eternity to which all the enemies of God are fast hastening, I cannot keep out of my thoughts, nor would it be well that I should, the solemn conviction that I am only pointing out that to which I was myself subject, and to which I should eventually have come, had it not been for the fathomless grace of God and the sufferings of His only-begotten Son on Golgotha.

To the Father and to the Son in the power of the eternal Spirit be all the glory and all the praise.

Judgment is the prerogative of God ; He alone has the right to execute wrath. But though it is His work, it is His *strange* work, a work in which He has no pleasure (Isa. xxviii. 21). As the righteous Governor of the universe He is compelled to take vengeance on account of sin. Sin entered His dominions through that primal transgressor Satan, and it has spread like a loathsome disorder through much of His creation, inoculating in its pestilential pathway myriads of beings, driving them out of their right relations with their Creator, impelling them to traverse dark and crooked lanes of lawlessness, and inciting them to engage in actual hostility against the Almighty Himself. It is the fountain from whence this madness and folly of the creature spring, for to declare war against Him who is omnipotent is an act of insanity impossible to be surpassed.

Once this poison gets into the system, there does not seem to be any way in which it can be expelled. It is like a malignant ulcer seated in the very centre of the soul, and whose noxious fibres net and permeate the whole organism, a leprosy defiling and corrupting the fountain of life, a fell weed which cannot be torn up by the roots, but which must multiply, and grow, and spread, even when the garden of the soul is under the cultivation of God Himself. The devil sinned and fell, demons have fallen, angels have sinned, and are reserved in chains under darkness until the judgment of the great day (Jude 6). For none of these does there seem to be any recovery. Man has sinned, and though it has pleased God to make him the object of grace, there is no recovery back into his primordial and innocent condition : he must have a new life and nature. Once a sinner is to be a sinner for ever, unless, through the intervention of God, a new nature is

communicated, which has all its delight in Him. Whether this can be done for any other creature than man is a question which I am unable to answer ; there is no indication in Scripture that recovery is possible for any other.

The fact that man is a tri-partite being with spirit, soul, and body may be one reason why he is recoverable. I am sure of this, that He who made him had in the making of him redemption before Him : for after all, the first Adam was a figure of the Last (Rom. v. 14). And in that last Adam we who are believers were chosen before the world's foundation. Neither the fall of angels nor of men has taken the blessed God by surprise. Everything that would enter into the universe, and all that creation would come to, were well known to God before His works of old. And the evil that has come in was by Him permitted. He could have kept it out had He so pleased, but He allowed it to enter that it might serve His purpose ; and He has made it, and will continue to make it, serve to the fulfilment of His counsels of love, and then He will cause it to find its eternal home with him who brought it into being, in the lake of fire. At present He makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and that which would do anything more He restrains (Ps. lxxvi. 10). Everything God has made must serve Him : its love, its hate, its lawlessness, its obedience, must serve the end He has in view. Should the creature lift itself up against Him, it will do it to its own destruction, and it will learn in its utter defeat and humiliation that all its wicked and mischievous activities have, through the infinite wisdom of God, done nothing but help to the fulfilment of His beneficent purposes. The enemy may make a pit for another, but he is certain to fall into it himself. His mischief is sure to return upon himself, and his violent dealing descend upon his own pate. The Creator cannot be defeated by the work of His own hands.

Another thing we must keep in mind, the Creator cannot but be supreme in His own creation, and He must have the right to do as He pleases, whatever that pleasure may be. Woe to the creature that withstands Him. His authority must be supreme, and from His judgment seat there can be no appeal. Neither can the creature be wronged by his Creator; for he cannot be wronged who has no rights. The potter can make out of the clay whatever kind of vessel he may please, and when it is made he has the right to put it to whatever purpose is agreeable to his mind. He claims the right to do this, and no one is foolish enough to dispute with him about it. And certainly there is less distance between the potter and the clay than there is between God and His creation. Whatever He does is *right*.

No one ever gave God fully this place but His only-begotten Son. In Him I find every relationship in which man has been placed perfectly fulfilled. He is the TRUTH. He is not only the truth as to God, the Father having come to light in Him, so that we may know Him, but He is the truth as to man's true place as the creature of God. He was here in humiliation, as sent of the Father, and was entirely at the disposal of Him who sent Him. He was born King of the Jews. The kingdoms of the world were His. He had a perfect right to all things. But He had taken the place of a servant, and had come in the form of man, and in Him I get light as to how man should conduct himself as the creature of God. I see in that perfect light that it is not the prerogative of the creature to *will*, to *command*, to *choose out a path for himself*, to *question the right of God to trace out for him the path which he is to tread*, nor to *murmur against God* whatever the path marked out for him may lead to. Man is here to obey, here to glorify Him who sent him, here for the service and the pleasure of Him who is Lord of all. Jesus got no kingdom, the world rejected Him; He had a crown of

thorns and a gibbet instead of the throne of the world. What was behind all this rejection, humiliation, suffering, and death? The secret operations of the Father, who hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them to babes (Matt. xi.). Is there the least sign of discontent, murmuring, or fault-finding with that meek and lowly Saviour of the world? Not the least. From the cradle to the cross His whole manner of life declared that He was here for the pleasure of God, and that it was of no importance what came of Him so that the Father was glorified. With Him the Father was Lord of heaven and earth, and as to the place He had taken, if His pathway led to the Cross with all its woes, it was enough for Him to know that it was the will of the Father.

The reader may ask me if man is to be perfectly satisfied no matter how or in what circumstances his pathway may be disposed by God. I learn from Jesus that the "Lord of heaven and earth" is absolutely despotic in His own creation, and my whole soul acknowledges that the path which Jesus marked out down here is the only true path for God's creature man. Has man, then, no resource? Blessed be God, he has an unfailing resource, and this resource is also brought to light in Jesus; He gave Himself in His extremity to prayer. But it was ever "*not My will, but Thine be done.*" And if prayer is to be heard the rights of God must be acknowledged. I must not come to Him as one who has some claim upon Him. The Syrophenician woman must take the place of a dog to get the blessing, for man must learn the ground upon which the favours of God are bestowed (Mark vii.). It is impossible that the creature could have a claim upon the Creator.

I think this will help to clear the ground for the subject I have on hand. Men are so fond of asserting their own fancied rights, and disputing the rights of God, that they have almost given up the idea that there is any God but themselves. The moral foundations upon

which God placed man in relationship with Himself have been destroyed, and that which bears the name of Christ is no better than the world. Men have got their own notions as to what God should be, and what He should do, and the revelation He has made of Himself does not suit their depraved notions. His love and His wrath are both alike to them cunningly devised fables; they believe in neither. When His servants pipe to them, they do not dance, and when they mourn to them, they do not lament (Luke vii. 32). But where the wrath of God is believed, there is also present a sense of His goodness; and where His love is known His wrath is unquestioned, for both have been declared at the same moment in the sacrifice of Christ. And that evil might serve to the end that He should be known by His creature in all His attributes and in the love of His heart, God allowed it to enter His creation.

He is not the author of it: the devil is, he sins *from the beginning* (1 John iii. 8). There was no sinner before him. Set in the most exalted position in which creature was ever set, his pride rose up in rebellion against the One who had made him, and who in goodness gave him that exalted place. We have him addressed by the prophet under the figure of the king of Tyrus (Ezek. xxviii.), and he is told, "Thou wast perfect in thy ways, from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." Sin began to exist in the thought of that anointed cherub. There the inky river whose foul waters found their way into the garden of Eden, and from thence have filled the world with violence, corruption, sorrow, death, and woe, is traced to its source. How many ages have run their courses since this terrific being brought sin into God's fair creation Scripture does not say, but the earth seems to bear upon its granite ribs many a scar of past conflict, and violence seems to have been for ages rampant in the lower order of creation, as it is to-day; but whether this was due

to the influence of sin's primogenitor, or whether it was not, we cannot tell. We do know that he was the first transgressor, and that to this day he remains the same evil, lawless, God-hating being he ever was, and that all who have fallen under his baleful influence remain in their fallen condition unchanged—all except man, who has become the subject of grace, and from whose race God makes a selection, recreating the objects of His choice, that they may be vessels of His praise. The rest remain in their natural rebellious condition, the enemies of God and of His Christ and of the gospel of His grace.

Now the question that arises in the mind is this: Will God go on with this state of things for ever? Are the invisible regions which are now defiled by sin never to be cleansed? Are the evil principalities and authorities in the heavenly places, who are entrenched there, and who from that exalted position influence the leaders of this world, never to be dispossessed? Is the spiritual power of wickedness in those celestial regions to carry on their impious warfare with impunity for ever? Is the devil himself, who directs the vain conflict against the Almighty, never to find a champion among the hosts of the Lord, who in the might of God will fling him like a flaming torch from the battlements of heaven, and eventually lay him powerless and prone in that region of unutterable misery prepared for him and his angels? Is this earth where God has been dishonoured, His laws broken, His prophets persecuted, His Son murdered, His Spirit resisted, His gospel rejected, to be for ever the sphere of blasphemous sedition?

What says the Scripture? It is our only court of appeal. If it be silent as to these questions, our wisdom is to be silent also. But it is not silent. It speaks about all these matters with no uncertain voice. It says, "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein

dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter iii. 13). The present heavens and the earth are defiled by sin, but their day of purification is coming, and when that day comes their renovation will be thorough and complete; not a trace of sin will be left remaining in that scene where God shall be all in all. It is described by the prophet who, in the vision of God, says, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, . . . their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. xxi.). What a glorious prospect! What seasons of infinite felicity, boundless satisfaction, and unspeakable gladness of heart shall come to light in those regions where righteousness, and truth, and holiness, and peace, and divine love have their eternal home! What shouts of exultation, what songs of victory shall break forth from that countless host of blood-washed overcomers, who will then have reached the crown and summit of every desire, which had at any time been begotten in their souls by the Holy Spirit of God! What glory to the Lamb shall roll like thunder throughout the vast realm of the blessed God! What praise, what worship shall be there poured forth into the Father's ear from every heart overflowing with infinite and supreme delight! How one longs to mingle in that throng; to breathe the atmosphere of that goodly land; to contemplate that glorious company of

sons of God; to gaze with rapture upon Him who brought them in the might of His eternal love through all the wilderness journey safe to glory; to hear that heavenly melody which shall issue like the sound of many waters from every redeemed heart; to join in it to the praise of Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us that He might make us all His own! What a sphere of supreme blessedness—the best that the wisdom, and might, and love of God could invent! To see the creature in circumstances the best that God could provide, to contemplate him dressed in the very richest raiment that He could supply, to view him seated at the most sumptuous feast that the creation of God could furnish, and to have the ear regaled with music from the most wonderful instruments that could be conceived even by the Creator Himself, and to know that every soul shall rest there, for ever safe from the invasion of evil—hasten, O Lord, that glorious day!

But how is that day to be brought about? There can be but one answer to this question: it will be brought about by the power of God. He is competent to deal with all the evil that may be found in the universe, and to the fact that He will deal with it we have abundant testimony in the Holy Scriptures. Every fell weed whose noxious growth defiles and disfigures the garden of God will be rooted up, and cast into that God-forsaken region storm-swept with horror of eternal wrath, and from which there shall be no release. There indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, shall be meted out to the rebellious, and that without respect to Jew, Gentile, rich, or poor.

Regarding this prospect, so appalling to the impenitent, there are many and various theories and speculations, every one of them the outcome of the deeply-rooted prejudice of the human mind against the rights of God, and of man's innate propensity to justify himself, regardless of whom he condemns.

He will have any way but God's way of settling the question of sin ; and he knows better than his Creator what should be the result of the conflict between good and evil, and how everything should stand when the question between God and His rebel creature has been closed for ever. He will even profess to have a strong desire to safeguard the character of his Creator, and will tell us the notion of eternal punishment militates against the truth that God is love ; and his anxiety to keep the nature of God from being belied leads him to deny, or at least attempt to explain away, the record which God Himself has made of His judgment of those who persist in standing up against His authority—though it is very

hard to accredit those who pervert the Scriptures with zeal for the glory of their Author ! Were the eyes of such cavillers only a little more widely opened to the greatness and the glory of the One with whom we have to do, they would be at once aware of the insanity of their conceit that they are left here to preserve their Creator's character from the evil effect of the words in which the revelation He has given of Himself has been couched. God is very well able to safeguard His own glory, and the wisdom of the creature is to accept the account He gives of His own actions in His own words.

(To be continued.)

The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus.

(J. S. OLIPHANT)

No. 3.—As King.

In this series of papers (which comprises notes of addresses delivered on this theme) the Lord is presented as coming in five aspects, viz. as Lord, as Bridegroom, as King, as Son of Man, and as Judge.

Revelation xix. 11-16.

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse ; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns ; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood : and his name is called The Word of God.

14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations : and he shall rule them with a rod of iron : and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

THERE are three offices prominent in the Old Testament, each of which the Lord Jesus fills as the great Antitype, namely, Prophet, Priest, and King.

We read in Acts iii. 22 how Moses "said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me." Moses was the type of the Lord Jesus as *Prophet*, the one who communicated the mind of God to His people ; and the Lord Jesus is seen in that character in Mark's Gospel, as the *Servant-Prophet*.

There are two types of Christ as Priest in the Old Testament, one is Aaron and the other Melchisedec. The latter brought forth bread and wine and blessed the patriarch Abraham, who had the promises. Hebrews v. and vii. refer to Melchisedec as a type of Christ : "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." He is at this moment exercising His office after the similitude of Aaron, but in the coming day He will be manifested as the Priest after the order of Melchisedec : He will then be King and Priest upon His throne.

There are also two types of Christ as King, namely David and Solomon. David took his throne by power and destroyed his enemies; and Solomon's reign was one of peace and prosperity. Both these types shall have their fulfilment in Him who shall break His foes with a rod of iron, and who shall rule in righteousness over men, the effect of which shall be peace.

In the Psalms we find the King is frequently the subject, for the Psalms apply to Jerusalem, "the city of the great King," to Messiah Himself and His spirit in the Jewish remnant, to the nation as a whole, and to the millennium and the Gentile nations upon the earth.

The first Psalm presents the Messiah as the righteous Man whose "delight is in the law of the Lord;" and in the second we see the nations of the earth in rebellion against Jehovah and His anointed King. The question is asked:—

Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against Jehovah and against His anointed.

The anointed of Jehovah is the Son of God, the Messiah of Israel. Prophets, priests, and kings were anointed with oil in connection with their official position; and so of Christ the Antitype, we read in Peter's address at Cæsarea "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power."

But what is seen here is that the nations and all the peoples of the earth "take counsel together against Jehovah and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." The cross was the absolute rejection of the King of the Jews by His own people to whom He came. I do not doubt that that is what is referred to when all took counsel together, the Jews especially, to crucify Jehovah's Anointed who was their King. Pilate delivered Jesus over to the Jews, and the Jews said, "We have no king but Cæsar." Jew

and Gentile agreed together, and "crucified the Lord of Glory."

But man cannot frustrate the purposes of God, and so there follows the word:—

Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Z'ion.

I will declare the decree: Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Thou shalt bruise them with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

This is the *David* character. He *must* break down all opposition, and take His throne by power; and this the King will do when He comes. His dominion is to be world-wide, for it will extend to "the uttermost parts of the earth."

I can here only briefly touch on some of the many scriptures which present Christ in this character. The 21st Psalm is one of them: "He asked life of Thee, and thou gavest it Him, even length of days for ever and ever." This is God's answer in resurrection to the One whose life was "taken from the earth," who was cut off in the midst of His days. Upon Him is laid "honour and majesty" (ver. 5).

Now look at the 24th Psalm: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." Then the question is asked: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Jehovah? or who shall stand in His holy place?" The fourth verse answers it: "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart: who hath not lifted up his soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully." Who in the world can stand up and take this place? Who can lay claim on account of personal purity and holiness to stand in the holy place and ascend into the hill of the Lord? There is only *One* who answers to this description; only One who stands forth in perfect personal purity as thus suited to ascend the hill of the Lord and stand in His holy place. Hence, in the seventh verse He is acknowledged. He is morally suited to be the King. "Lift up your heads, O ye

gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." This perfect, blessed Man is the King of glory. He who is our Saviour and Lord is "Jehovah strong and mighty, Jehovah *mighty in battle*" (ver. 8). This again presents the King in His *David* character, Him who at Calvary gained the mighty victory over all the powers of darkness, and who will presently come forth to effectuate that victory in power in this world.

In Psalm xlv. we have another beautiful presentation of Christ as King. It opens thus: "My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the King: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer." The heart is full of the moral glories of the King, and the tongue consequently is the pen of a ready writer, for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." And so the psalm goes on: "Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into Thy lips, therefore God hath blessed Thee for ever." When He was on earth they "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth." Those who were sent to take Him confessed "Never man spake like this man." If we were more free from ourselves in restfulness and peace, less occupied with ourselves and our doings, our hearts would be more open to contemplate and take in His glories, and what a delight that would be!

Here, as it seems to me, we do not find the heavenly bride as in Ephesians v., but rather the remnant of Israel, the earthly Jerusalem which is over and over again viewed in Scripture as in the relationship of wife to Jehovah—now, an unfaithful wife, but by-and-by to be restored and to become the glorious queen of this psalm (ver. 8-16). But though *our* portion is heavenly and found in the innermost circle of divine affections, it is still our joy to contemplate Christ in the other characters in which He is presented in Scripture—here, in particular, as King. Christ is

spoken of as Lord to the Christian and not exactly as *King*, though *He is King*, and without doubt we shall rejoice when He has His throne and His rights here.

Now pass on to the 72nd Psalm. Here you have a prophetic view of the millennium and of Christ in the character of Solomon. In the other Psalms that I have referred to He is seen as the Mighty One who will wield the sword. But in the 72nd Psalm it is: "Give the King thy judgments, O God;" righteousness is seen as established, and the King as judging the poor and needy, and feared throughout all generations. And then follows a most beautiful description of all that He will secure to Israel and the nations upon earth during His thousand years' reign:—

He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth.

In his days shall the righteous flourish; and the abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.

He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. . . .

. . . . blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory.

The prophets render the same distinct testimony to the King as do the Psalms; and treat of His birth, His name, His person, His riding into Jerusalem, His resurrection, His death, and His coming again with all His saints to reign.

Refer first to a few verses in Isaiah: "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel" (vii. 14). Look also at chapter ix. 6: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom." *Here we have His birth, and His name, and His person.*

Now turn to chapter liii. "He is despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him. . . . But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him: and with His stripes we are healed. . . . It hath pleased Jehovah to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand." *Here we have His rejection, His humiliation, His sorrow, and His death.*

Next look at Zechariah (ix. 9): "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." And in chapter xiv. 3: "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst." And the 5th verse: "And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee." The 9th verse: "And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth: in that day there shall be one Lord, and His name one." *Here we have His presentation to Israel, His return to take His kingdom, and His glorious reign.*

The New Testament gives us the fulfilment of these scriptures. In Matthew i. 21, 23, we have His birth and His name. "She shall bring forth a Son and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins. . . . They shall call His name Emmanuel: which being interpreted is, God with us."

In chapter xxi. we get His entry into Jerusalem and the acclamations of the multitudes: "Blessed is He

that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest." In chapter xxvii. 29, His crucifixion: "When they had platted a crown of thorns they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand, and they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him saying, Hail, King of the Jews." And in verse 37: "They set up over His head His accusation written, This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

And lastly His coming again with all His saints is foretold in Revelation xix.: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war—and He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.*"

All the light of divine revelation shed its rays upon the One who was coming—He came, and was *rejected*. Following on His rejection is the calling out of the church, while He is seated on His Father's throne; but not one thought of God can ever fail of its proper fulfilment, and the King who was crucified by the Jews will yet sit upon His own throne (cf. Rev. iii. 21), for "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end." But He did not get His throne when He came, for His people rejected Him. He was cut off in this world, and had nothing. Yet as certainly as Jesus was, and is, King of the Jews, so surely He will come again, and take His kingdom, and reign personally over the house of Jacob according to promise and prophecy.

God has said to Him: "Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies thy foot-stool." And this time is drawing near. May we, as His saints, have a deeper appreciation of the glories of His person.

King of glory set on high,
Girt with strength and majesty,
We Thy holy name confess
Thee with adoration bless.

Answers to Correspondents.

(THE EDITORS).

Predestination.

C.C. There is no such doctrine in Scripture as "predestination to eternal punishment." Romans viii. 29, 30 says nothing about punishment, but sets before us the unchanging purpose of God, which is to have those whom He foreknew conformed to the image of His Son; nothing could exceed the glory of the grace of God here made known.

But though this passage reveals the fact that God in His purpose marked out for blessing some who otherwise would have trodden the self-willed way to destruction, it gives no warrant at all for saying that some have been predestinated for destruction; indeed, Scripture is emphatic as to God's desire towards all men: "God our Saviour . . . will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. ii. 3, 4); and "The Lord . . . is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter iii. 9).

Because God's heart is full of compassion towards all men, the gospel is sent to all, but, alas! there are some "that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. i. 8); they receive "not the love of the truth that they might be saved" (ii. 10); they "are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness" (Rom. ii. 8). Scripture leaves us in no doubt as to the doom of such, but this doom is the righteous and only consequence of their deliberate choice, and not the determinate counsel of God.

We might, while answering your question, refer to another scripture which bears upon the subject. We read "that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory" (Rom. ix. 23). Notice the statement that these vessels of mercy

are prepared afore by God; they cannot boast in their works, but owe all the blessing they receive to His mercy alone.

Now look at verse 22: Here are "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." But who fitted them for destruction? Not God; instead of fitting them for destruction, He "endured [them] with much long-suffering." They fitted *themselves* for this dread doom by their own persistent rebellion against Him; this the lost will own when the Judge of all the earth does that which is right in respect of them, while all the saved will give glory to Him as the Author and Finisher of their blessing.

Trinity in Unity.

C.C. It is "by faith we understand" the things of God, and this would apply in a special way to the truth as to the revelation which God has made of Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is so revealed in Christianity; we believe what He has revealed, and in this way we are enlightened.

The Father is the source of all blessing *for* men. The Son is the Revealer of this blessing *to* men, and the Holy Spirit is the One who makes this blessing real *in* men. If you keep the prepositions "for," "to," and "in" before your mind it will help you to understand the relative position of each Person in the Godhead in the blessing of men. How wonderful that the Triune God should be thus engaged on behalf of His creatures. You have doubtless heard the story of the way in which St. Patrick's doubts as to how "the Three in One" could be possible were removed. As he meditated on the subject, he picked a shamrock leaf growing at his feet; there before his eyes in one of the simplest things in God's creation he saw three in one, and was greatly helped thereby. This

is a very poor illustration, but what has helped one may help another.

No illustration, however, can explain the mystery of the Triune God, and it is reasonable that that should be so, for our minds are finite, and it is manifestly folly to think that that which is finite can comprehend within its own limits the being of One who is infinite. The infinite is utterly beyond us. Take even space: we can apprehend it, but no one can *comprehend* it; try to bring within the compass of your mind the thought of infinite space, and you will find it an impossibility, for however vast may be that which your finite mind is able to conceive to itself, there is always that which lies *beyond* and outside the bounds of your vastest conceptions. And if this be so even as to simple vacuity, how much more so in regard to the being of the eternal God who inhabits eternity and dwells in light no man can approach unto.

But what a rest that this is so, for it is in the sense of having to do with One who is infinitely *above* us and far surpassing the measure of our finite minds, that we find ourselves bowed before Him in adoration and worship.

May you prove the grace of Christ in the old age and infirmities of which you speak. He has said, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. xii. 9).

"Beyond the Reach of Mercy?"

E.G. You are quite wrong in supposing that you are beyond the reach of the mercy of God; there is no sinner on earth beyond the reach of His mercy. If any such could be found we should have to erase from our Bibles all the gospel "whosoever." We judge from your letter that you are heavily burdened with this fear; if this is so, there is a word especially for you in Matthew xi. 28: "Come unto Me, *all ye that labour and are heavy laden*, and I will give you rest." Do you think that the Lord Jesus would have spoken

thus to mock and deceive heavy-laden sinners like yourself? Impossible. He is as good as His word; put Him to the test. You will find that none who come to Him are cast out; that "*all that believe* are justified from *all things*" (Acts xiii. 39), and that 'the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth from *all sin*' (1 John i. 7).

The verse you quote, "Because I have called and ye refused" (Prov. i. 24), will be truly said when this day of grace closes; we have not reached the close of it yet, and the verse does not apply to you. If this answer to your letter does not help you, send your name and address, and we will write more fully to you privately.

John i. 9.

R.W. You very rightly question the statement "that every man that comes into the world receives the Holy Spirit." It is not true. John xiv. 17 should be sufficient to prove this; "the Spirit of truth whom the world *cannot* receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye [those who had believed in the Lord Jesus] know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." One other passage may help as to *who* receive the Holy Spirit, and *when*: "*after that ye believed*, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. i. 13).

Now, as to John i. 9, which you say was quoted in support of the statement on which you write: it does not say that every man is *enlightened*, on the contrary, we learn from verse 5 that "the darkness comprehended it not," and verse 10, "the world knew Him not," and verse 11, "His own [the Jews] received Him not." But if that true Light, coming into the world in the person of Christ, did not *enlighten* every man (for "*enlighten*" would imply a subjective effect, i.e. that the light was *received* by every man), it nevertheless lightened or shed its light upon every man, for it shone for every man, just as the sun shines for all, so that all are without excuse. "Light is

come into the world," but "men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil" (John iii. 19). And this is their condemnation, "for every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (ver. 20).

The light shines, but many close their eyes and hearts against it and hide away from it, and the reason is here plainly told, they love their sins rather than the knowledge of God.

Is Satan Omnipresent?

E.F.B. God alone is omnipresent; space is infinite, and so it follows that omnipresence is an attribute only of an infinite Being. Satan is not omnipresent, for he is only a creature, though a creature of an extraordinarily exalted order, and of mighty power, as clearly revealed in Scripture. But he has a "kingdom" (Matt. xii. 26), he has "angels" under him (Matt. xxv. 41), and these are countless in number, so that, controlling these demon hosts who do his bidding, the sphere of his activity embraces the whole world (1 John v. 19). A whole legion was told off to the possession of but one poor captive (Luke viii. 30), and this may convey some conception to our minds of the myriad forces of darkness that surround us on every side.

But as to temptation we also need to remember that, as fallen, there is that within us all naturally which tempts to

sin of the nature of self-indulgence: James i. 14 is clear as to this; cf. also Matthew xv. 19.

The *special* and characteristic working of Satan at this time is of an apparently high moral order. He is "transformed into an angel of light" and his ministers as "ministers of righteousness" (2 Cor. xi. 15); and the most pernicious energizing of his demon hosts is seen in the spreading by them (1 Tim. iv. 1) of various "doctrines," which, though false and destructive of Christianity, are yet attractively presented, and veiled under the "form of godliness." Under this head we would place the doctrines of Millennial Dawnism, Spiritism, Christian Science, New Theology, etc.

Christian Responsibility.

M.M. Our responsibility flows from the relationship in which grace has set us; so because God for Christ's sake has forgiven us, we are to be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another (Eph. iv. 32). Since Christ has loved us, we are to walk in love; and because we are the children of God we are to manifest the traits of the divine nature—love and righteousness.

Our destiny, as connected with this relationship of children of God, is to be like Him, and will have a purifying effect upon the soul as faith lays hold upon this (1 John iii. 2, 3).

Growth.

The great secret of growth is looking up to the Lord as gracious.

It is astonishing what progress a soul sometimes makes in a time of sorrow. It has been much more with God; for, indeed, that alone makes us make progress. There is much more confidence, quietness, absence of the moving of the will—much more . . . dependence on Him, more intimacy with Him and independence of circum-

stances—a great deal less between us and Him—and then all the blessedness that is in Him comes to act upon the soul and reflect in it; and, oh, how sweet that is! What a difference it does make in the Christian, who perhaps was blameless in his walk in general previously.

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter ii. 2).

Pi-hahiroth ;

(H. P. BARKER).

or, The Blessing Beyond.

I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and . . . will execute judgment : I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are : and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you (Exod. xii. 12, 13).

And it came to pass the selfsame day, that the Lord did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt (ver. 51).

But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pi-hahiroth. . . . [But] the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians ; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore (Exod. xiv. 9, 30).

SHELTER from the judgment of God and deliverance from the power of the enemy are two great blessings that are the birthright of every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. But in the experience of the soul, the former of these blessings is often known without there being much apprehension of the latter. Many Christians resemble, as to their experience, the Israelites when they were encamped at Pi-hahiroth. They had proved the ability of the blood of the slain lamb to screen them from the judgment that fell upon Egypt, but they had not yet proved the power of their Saviour-God to deliver them entirely from the hand of the oppressor.

Even so is it with many a believer. He knows that he is safe from the judgment that will by and by overwhelm the world. The blood of Christ has secured him from the wrath that his sins deserve, but he understands little, if at all, the great deliverance that is his by the power of God. He is still, as far as his spiritual intelligence goes, at Pi-hahiroth.

Many, it is to be feared, have not travelled even as far as this. Though they have put their trust in the Saviour, and have repudiated every other ground of confidence, yet they have no settled certainty as to their position with regard to God. They cannot think of the day of judgment without a certain amount of fear and misgiving. They have no assurance that their souls are eternally safe.

Is it possible that one such is reading these lines? Let me turn aside for a

moment from my subject, in order to help you, dear trembling fellow-believer. The great lesson that you need to learn is the value and efficacy of the precious blood of Him in whom you trust.

This lesson is taught, in typical language, by the narrative in Exodus xii. The blood of the lamb was to be sprinkled on the outside of the door-posts of the Israelites' houses. The Lord was about to visit the land of Egypt with well-deserved judgment. But no stroke of judgment would fall upon the families that were sheltered by the blood. God had pledged His word as to this. He had said, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you."

The blood, *outside the house*, spoke of death having already taken place therein, the death of a guiltless victim. *Inside the house*, they had the sure word of the living God to rest upon. Had He not said, "The plague shall not be upon you"? Then, beyond all doubt, they were absolutely safe when doom fell upon the land, for the sprinkled blood spoke on their behalf.

Can you not see in this a picture of God's way of safety for all who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ? His blood, shed for them, has been accepted by God as a sufficient atonement for their sins. They are safe for ever from judgment because of the value of that blood in the sight of God. He declares that He is fully satisfied, and has no further claim against them in respect of their guilt. Is not God's own word a sufficient guarantee of this? May we not

truly and thankfully affirm that all our sins are put away, and that we are completely sheltered by the precious blood of Christ? Is there any room for doubt when *God* has spoken so emphatically? "*He* hath said . . . so that *we* may boldly say" (Heb. xiii. 5, 6).

But this is only the beginning of good things. The assurance of forgiveness and safety lies at the very threshold of the Christian life.

The children of Israel, having kept the Passover, started on their journey from Egypt. Guided by Jehovah, they travelled by way of Succoth and Etham until they came to Pi-hahiroth, where they encamped by the Red Sea. Here they were to behold a marvellous display of the power of God.

While sojourning at Pi-hahiroth the shadow of a great fear fell upon their hearts. Pharaoh, with his armed hosts, had started in pursuit, and now the thunder-roll of his chariots was heard approaching. The helpless Israelites are seized with panic, and their complaints are loud. They are like a flock of sheep, terrified at the howling of a pack of hungry wolves.

But the words of Moses put the matter in another light. There was to be no trial of strength between the defenceless Israelites and the armies of Pharaoh. The question was not which of the two was the mightier. It was now a question between Pharaoh and *God*. Pharaoh was affirming that the people were his; God declared that they were *His*. Who could maintain the claim?

Says Moses: "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord. . . . The Lord shall fight for you and ye shall hold your peace." The Israelites were to be spectators only, the combat was between Jehovah and the power of Egypt.

Well we know the issue of the conflict. "The Lord saved Israel that day." He "overthrew the Egyptians

in the midst of the sea," and "there remained not so much as one of them."

All this is highly instructive. Pharaoh and his hosts are typical of Satan and the power of darkness. The question of our position with regard to *God* being settled by the blood of Christ, another question arises. How do we stand with regard to the oppressor? What about the power that has held us in bondage?

In the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ we find a triumphant answer to this question also. He has not only made atonement for our guilt, but He has smashed the power of the oppressor, and overthrown him completely. We need no longer dread the might of Satan; Christ has triumphed gloriously and has put him to utter rout. We are delivered from the power of darkness (Col. i. 13).

Hallelujah! We are free! We shall never again meet the enemy, *in his character of oppressor*, any more than the Israelites had to meet Pharaoh again.

Conflict, again and again, they had, it is true. They had to meet the power of Amalek, to conquer the Canaanites, to encounter the Philistines. But the Egyptians they had done with; they had left them dead upon the seashore.

The enemy will not cease to attack us, in one guise or another, through the flesh, or the world, or in some other subtle way. But as the oppressor, the one who kept our souls in bondage, his power is for ever gone.

We need not, then, linger at Pi-hahiroth in dread and misgiving. We have, as a matter of fact, been saved out of the oppressor's hand, and we may, as a matter of experience, sing the joyful song of deliverance, as the Israelites did.

Song is the expression of a delivered soul's gladness. We do not read of any singing in Egypt, nor indeed does Scripture record any song before this.

But now, delivered as they were from the house of bondage, Moses and the children of Israel could sing. And the theme of their happy song was the triumph of God, by which they were saved.

In order to be free and happy in the service of the Lord we need to get beyond Pi-hahiroth in our experience. We need to learn not only that we are safe, but that we are delivered from bondage. Did not the request of the young man to whom David showed such kindness (1 Sam. xxx. 15) imply as much? Before he could be of service to the one who had treated him so well, he must needs be assured of two things :—

- (1) His security.
- (2) His liberty.

So he says : “Swear unto me, by God, that *thou* wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of *my master*.” He must be assured as to his position

with regard to *David*, and also as to his deliverance from *his former master*, who had enslaved and oppressed him.

So with us. Two great facts are made known to us :—

- (1) God has forgiven us, and justified us from all things, through the blood of Christ.
- (2) God is Himself *for* us (Rom. viii. 31).

Who, then, can be against us? The oppressor can never again lay fingers upon us.

All this is true, as a matter of fact, of *every* believer. But it needs to be learnt experimentally before the *joy* of salvation is ours.

“Thine arm hath safely brought us
A way no more expected
Than when Thy sheep passed through the deep,
By crystal walls protected.
We own Thy great deliverance,
And triumph in Thy favour,
And for the love which now we prove,
Shall praise Thy name for ever.”

Thoughts on Service.

(A REMINISCENCE.)

The Preacher's Theme.

WHEN, as a youth, there sprang up in my heart a great desire to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, who had loved and died for me, I felt that to be permitted to speak to others of Him would be the highest privilege that could be given to any man, and so turned to Him in prayer that that privilege might be mine.

This Spirit-wrought desire was soon answered, for after a few days I was invited to address a gathering of simple country folk in a village a few miles from my home. Speedily the subject was chosen from Luke vi. 46-49, and for the days that intervened the wisdom of the man who built upon the rock and the folly of the man who built upon the sand filled my mind.

But on that Sunday evening, as I

walked towards that country village, my experience was probably that of many another would-be sermonizer—everything that I had hoped to say vanished from my memory. Filled with misgiving I reached the little room where the people were gathering and sat down to find my text; it seemed to have been blotted out from the page of my Bible. Backwards and forwards through the Gospel of Luke I looked, but all in vain. Meanwhile into my mind and heart there was pressed that one blessed sentence, “Behold the Lamb of God.” So insistently did these words repeat themselves that I at last closed my Bible with the thought: If I am to preach here to-night that must be the text. The people were now all waiting, and lifting my heart to the Lord for help I

opened the hymn-book that lay by my side, and the first hymn my eye looked upon was—

“Behold the Lamb, 'tis He who bore
My burden on the tree,
And paid in blood the dreadful score,
The ransom due for me.”

That verse gave me the assurance that the hand of the Lord was guiding ; and so it turned out, for, as those simple folk were pointed in a simple way to the sinner's only hope, an old man of four-and-seventy years found peace in believing ; he had groaned beneath the burden of his sins for years ; then and there the burden rolled away as he by faith beheld the Lamb of God.

Then, upon reflection, I understood : it was as though the Lord said to me, *‘If you are to serve Me you must speak about Me, I must be your theme, the central object in your gospel’* : and if I had been left to myself, I would have made the sad mistake of talking of men and their doings instead of the Lamb of God

and what He has wrought. Yes, He is the preacher's theme—Himself ! *Himself ! HIMSELF !* Other matters must be spoken of : the happy results of trusting in and building on Him, and the terrible consequences of turning from Him and building upon self ; but these things are secondary and by the way. Christ is the Alpha and Omega of the gospel, the one and only Saviour for guilty men, the one and only worthy object for the hearts and lives of His people ; and the preacher who puts Christ Jesus into the background and entertains his hearers on other themes is a curse and not a blessing to them, nor does he understand the gospel of God, for it is “concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. i. 3). It is the gospel of *Christ* that is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, and of it may we not be ashamed (Rom. i. 16). Yes, He is the preacher's theme, and God forbid that we should waste our time on any other.

The Limitations of Science.

“Astronomy may indeed reveal something of the grandeur and magnificence of God's creation ; but it can tell us nothing of His love and compassion for sinners. It may trace the course of the Milky Way ; but it cannot show to perishing souls the way of eternal life. It may tell men how far the earth is from the sun ; but it cannot tell the believing sinner how far God has put his transgressions from him. It may calculate the orbits of comets, and the magnitudes of the heavenly bodies ; but it cannot explore or reveal the unsearchable riches of Christ, or tell us aught of the rising of the Bright and Morning Star.”

“Modern chemistry may have given us better emollients ; but it has discovered no means of cleansing the heart from sin. It may have supplied many new dyes for our textile fabrics ; but it can furnish no oil of joy for mourning, and no garment of praise

for the spirit of heaviness. It may produce illuminating devices for dispelling the darkness of nature, and high explosives for destroying life and removing mountains ; but it cannot give light to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, or blow up the barrier that sin has placed between man and a thrice-holy God. It may even fill men's bodies with drugs and medicines ; but it cannot fill their hearts with joy and peace.”

“It was recently asserted that Evolution is the hope of mankind. How different this from the revelation which the Bible gives of ‘the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel’ ! The Bible tells also of ‘the Lord Jesus Christ who is our hope ;’ but the aim of those who have left the old foundations is ever to put something in the place of Christ.”

Never Alone.

(H. D. R. JAMESON).

From Loneliness to Eternal Companionship.

HAVE you ever contemplated the mystery of your own being? I doubt not that in greater or lesser measure all who read these lines, and who have come to put their faith in Christ, have at one time or another faced this question, and asking, Who am I? What am I? have been startled at what has been brought home to them in the consideration of it.

I remember how this came home to me, how there was borne in upon me in something of its stupendous meaning the truth with which we each are familiar in terms, i.e. that I was myself absolutely a distinct personality, that I was in fact *myself* and none other, and that there did not exist one solitary link which would abide between myself and any other being in the whole vast universe. Friends of course I had, as we nearly all have, home and earthly ties, but for all that no single link that would abide, no real link even in life, that was perfect, between my own personality and that of any other beside—in fact, that I was *ALONE in the universe of God!*

I did not then realize that *sin* had brought this about, but the fact itself was appalling. No desolation can be more sweeping, more utterly overwhelming, than that which comes over the soul in the hour when this is realized. It is not thus with me to-day, it is not thus with you, Christian reader; but *what* momentous change has come about so that that sense of unutterable desolation has for ever passed away, so that instead of being in the most absolute sense 'alone in the universe,' we now can say, "NEVER ALONE!"?

It is to trace just in outline how and what God has wrought to bring this to pass that is the object of this paper;

for it is in the clear spiritual apprehension of truth that we come experimentally into its unclouded joy.

The Constitution of Man.

At the outset let us briefly consider the constitution of man, what man really is, for this is necessary to the understanding of what is before us; and a little patience just here will be well repaid.

"God is one," and yet there is a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Triune God. Man created in the image and likeness of God is, as clearly shown in the Word of God, tripartite in his being—"spirit, and soul, and body" (1 Thess. v. 23). Now this number "*three*" is stamped on the works of God in creation and on the page of Holy Scripture in certain uniform connections of deepest interest.

One is indivisible. If we take the *second* power of any number we get a square, that which is equal measure each way when viewed superficially; but to get solidity we must take the *third* power of any number, which gives us a cube—that which is equal measure every way, in breadth, in length, and in depth, that which manifests solidity and substance perfectly to the mind. Three is thus the number of *manifestation*.

There are many illustrations of this in Scripture: thus, when, in the fullness of time, God was fully revealed, it was as the Triune God, *Trinity* in Unity; again, the might of God's victory over all the powers of evil was manifested in the resurrection of Christ on the *third* day; again, the truth as to eternal life is evidenced to us by *three* witnesses, the Spirit, the water, and the blood (1 John v. 8). The

number three comes into prominence also in the manifestation of evil, for the world is governed by its *three* principles, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John ii. 16).

In the created universe we find the primary colours to be *three* in number : red, blue, and yellow, which blended form pure white ; again, the great kingdoms of nature are *three* : animal, mineral, and vegetable ; and again, all life manifests itself to us in *three* spheres : earth, air, and water. Thus in the natural world, which in its measure reveals to us the Creator, do we find the same number stamped as obtains throughout the inspired Word as connected with manifestation ; and the significance of the number in connection with the tripartite being of man lies in the fact that he was created in the *image and likeness* of God, for it was ever God's thought that He Himself should be manifested in man.

Now if we look first at the outer part of man's being, the *body* is that which places us in relation with all around. If we could conceive of a man existing with absolute absence of each of the five senses—seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling—we should have one who was out of touch with all around, and standing in relation with nothing external to himself. Here man holds in common with animals, who also have bodies placing them in relation to all around ; and even with plant life, the humblest species of which are endowed with cellular powers which enable them to appropriate sustenance from what is external to themselves.

The *soul*, as another has well put it, is that part of man with which is identified self-consciousness, i.e. conscious life. Here man holds in common with animal, but not with plant life ; for animals have conscious existence, plants have not. This being so, we can understand how in Scripture "soul" is spoken of even in relation to animal life in such passages as "Let

the waters swarm with swarms of living souls" (Gen. i. 20, N.T.), whilst plant life is emphatically distinguished as in Gen. i. 30, where for "life" read the literal expression "a living soul," as shown in the margin.

But it is when we reach the third and highest part of man's being that we find him absolutely differentiated from all other life. The soul of man possesses within it that which no animal possesses, that which was received directly by the in-breathing of God (Gen. ii. 7)—the *spirit* ; and this it is which places him in moral relationship with God, which enables him to apprehend and have to do with God, who is a Spirit.

Thus was man in the day when God created him—spirit, soul, and body. The spirit in direct relationship with God and capable of communion with Him ; the soul pure and undefiled in its affections ; and the body the perfect expression of the spiritual part of his constitution — all three forming one beautifully harmonious whole.

But a terrible catastrophe occurred, as narrated in Genesis iii. ; the enemy struck a blow at man in that innermost part of his being in which he stood in relation with God ; SIN entered, and all was wrecked and ruined. In that hour of disobedience contact between the spirit and God was absolutely broken, for sin is abhorrent to God ; and in that instant man became an isolated being in God's universe—out of touch with God Himself, without any link that would abide with any other being, and himself in the most absolute sense of the word ALONE.

The Tabernacle and the Temple.

Thus far we have looked briefly at the actual facts as to the constitution of man and as to the Fall ; now let us trace the truth up to this point, and beyond it, in one of the clear and beautiful types of Scripture ; for in the wisdom of God much space is given in the Old Testament to the detailed

illustration of truths which are stated in the Epistles in but few words, the profound meaning of which we are thus enabled much more clearly to apprehend.

The thought of God for man, for Israel, and in a wider sense for the universe itself, was shadowed in the tabernacle and also in the temple. Each of these was tripartite. Notice the divisions :—

There was first the outer court, to which any Israelite had access : there they might freely come and go. This answers to the *body* by which we are put in relation with all that is around.

There was, next, the holy place, and there none might enter save the priests, to whom pertained the service within the sanctuary. What went on there was hidden from the eye of all other beside. This answers to the *soul* ; what passes there is known to none without.

Innermost of all was the holy of holies, the inner shrine of the presence of God. This was a perfect cube, and answers directly to the innermost and highest part of man's being, viz. the *spirit*, that wherein he is intended to be set in direct relation with God. In that innermost shrine was the ark of the covenant of shittim wood and gold, and from between the overshadowing wings of the cherubim on the mercy seat there shone the glory of the very presence of God Himself.

Now to follow out the truth in connection with Israel : it was God's thought that through them His glory should fill the earth. His dwelling place was in the Shekinah glory of the innermost shrine ; in the holy place the priests were to minister to Him ; and in the outer courts all Israel were to be brought into relation with the God who dwelt within. The arrangement of the tribes, and the pitching of their tents, was in relation to the tabernacle ; they were to be affected down to the smallest detail of their lives by the God who dwelt within the veil ; and through them His glory was to

shine, and His knowledge was to reach to the uttermost parts of the earth.

But Israel has failed. The Shekinah glory has departed, the sanctuary is desolate. God's thought was not achieved in them. But it *will* yet be fully reached ; and if we trace now in the historic and prophetic Scriptures the ways of God for the carrying out of His purpose in regard to Israel, we shall see pictured His way with each one of us individually, and indeed with the assembly as a whole.

God's Way.

In chapter x. of the visions of Ezekiel we find the glory of God filling the house in Jerusalem : "The house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory." In verse 18 that glory moves away : "The glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house," and the direction taken was eastward (ver. 19). In chapter xi. 23 it leaves the city, now given over to judgment, and is seen outside of it *on a mountain on the east side of Jerusalem* : "The glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city." That was a foreshadowing of what has actually come to pass.

The glory departed from Israel, the inner shrine (within which shone no light at all unless it were lightened by the presence of the divine glory) was left in darkness. There came One to that nation who was Himself the brightness of God's glory, but they rejected and crucified Him, the nation was given over to judgment, and then from the Mount of Olives on the east side of Jerusalem there ascended to the glory above the One whom Israel had refused (Acts i. 9-12).

Pass on now to the forty-third chapter of Ezekiel. At this part of the prophecy the temple is seen as once more rebuilt, the millennial temple which is yet to be filled with the glory

of God. There is a detailed description of that yet future house in chapters xl., xli. and xlii., and then in xliii. 5 we read, "Behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house:" but in the verses that precede we are specifically, and twice over, told *how* the glory came. Mark the words, for they are of the most striking significance: "Behold, the glory of the God of Israel came *from the way of the east*" (ver. 2 and cf. ver. 4).

Now the last we have seen of the glory was in chapter xi. 23, "on a mountain on the east side of the city," and we need be in no doubt as to what mountain this is, for Zechariah xiv. makes it clear to us: our Lord is to return again, "and His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem *on the east.*" From thence did the glory depart (Acts i. 11 and Heb. i. 3), but He who once ascended from that mount is in like manner to come again. He will come to that very mountain on the east side of Jerusalem whence He departed nineteen hundred years ago: and in *that way* will the glory return to the now desolated sanctuary of Israel.

Here we have the key to all God's ways with men. The solution is in CHRIST. He it is through whom the glory will return to the inner shrine of the millennial temple, and He it is through whom man is again put in right relation with God, the spirit put in touch with Him, and the innermost recesses of the reconciled being illuminated with the light of God's glory. The former is still future, the latter in wonderful grace is taking place to-day, and we ourselves are glad witnesses of that fact, for through Him whom we have embraced as Saviour and Lord we have come into right relation with God. He it is who is the ark of the covenant of shittim wood and gold, the true mercy seat, and through Him has shone into our hearts the light of the glory of God in His face: and that for the express purpose that through

us should irradiate the same glory which first of all shines within, a radiance in life, and lip, and whole demeanour, a setting forth, in fact, of God in this world (2 Cor. iv. 6, N.T.). Thus it is that God's purpose is to be fulfilled as to the manifestation of Himself in man created in His image and likeness.

Moreover, every department in man's being is thereby to be affected: the *spirit* in touch with God in the closest relationship (Rom. viii. 16); the *soul* purified in its affections (1 Peter i. 22); and the *body*, in a figurative sense, luminous, "full of light" (Luke xi. 36), the yielded vehicle for the expression of the will of God (Rom. xii. 1, 2; and cf. as to all three parts of man's being Titus ii. 12).

"Joined unto the Lord."

But inseparably connected with this truth as to the inshining of the glory dispelling the deep darkness which hitherto had reigned, there comes in the truth of the new and precious link which has been formed for eternity, and in consequence of which desolation is replaced by the highest and most wonderful companionship. The words in which this truth is stated in Scripture are pregnant with deepest meaning: "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" (1 Cor. vi. 17). Immediately following on our faith in Christ we were sealed with the Holy Ghost, and by that same Spirit, who dwells within us as the Spirit of Christ (Rom. viii. 9), we became that instant linked with the Lord Himself in a bond which is eternal—"One spirit." How marvellous is this word, a word we may ponder over and delight in: no longer ALONE, but linked now with the Lord for an endless eternity.

It is a union in which personalities remain distinct. I am myself, and He is Lord, but nevertheless no distance can ever separate us, for there abides this precious union, spiritual, eternal, and more marvellously intimate than

any language could possibly convey save the inspired words—"one spirit." Gone is the sense of desolation, banished is the darkness which once reigned, for ever broken is the solitude my soul once knew, never again shall that hunger and that thirst be known, for "he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." Wondrous truth!

We begin with the great and precious *fact* of union, and then pass on to seek the increasing daily realization of it in known companionship with Him with whom each of us is "one spirit,"—companionship such as is contemplated in 2 Timothy iv. 22: "The Lord Jesus Christ be *with thy spirit.*"

Christ dwells now within our hearts, we *are* now one spirit with Him, and He is our life. But the truth as thus presented is not intended to engage us with anything within ourselves, for the Spirit of God always presents Christ *Himself* as the object for our faith, even as Stephen, "full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly *into heaven* and saw the glory of God and *Jesus*" (Acts vii. 55): and our glad acceptance of the fact that we are now one with Him will but make us press on with growing longing to the place where He is, where union shall be known in its fullest extent and in its widest reach as comprehending the whole bride of Christ—that heavenly company which, to revert for a moment to what is presented in the tabernacle and the temple, is prophetically viewed in Revelation xxi. as the holy city coming down from God out of heaven, a perfect cube whose three dimensions are given, and

whence irradiates the light of the very glory of God (enshrined within it in the Lamb), a light which shines out to Israel, to the nations, and to the uttermost bounds of the universe (*cf.* Eph. iii. 10, 20, 21).

But what a rest there is in the knowledge of this blessed and eternal link which is ours with the Lord. Look, in conclusion, at Hebrews xiii. 5: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." These words fell on the ears of Jacob in the hour of his most utter desolation, when he found himself an outcast and a wanderer through his own sin (Gen. xxviii. 10-15). It was in that hour when, alone in the desert, he lay down with stones for his pillow, that there was revealed to him in a vision the ladder linking earth with heaven, which in John's Gospel is connected with Christ, and which figuratively presents the way by which the wanderer is brought back to God, and God is brought near to the wanderer in *Christ*. It was then that that promise was made to him which applies in deeper, fuller, and eternal meaning to us: "I will *never* leave thee nor forsake thee;" so that now we can say as we look up to Him to whom we are united for eternity, "NEVER ALONE!"

"Never alone" in time, and "never alone" in all the eternity that is yet to come; for soon will be heard the threefold assembling call—the "shout," the "voice," and the "trump"—which to us will usher in unending day, and then the presence of the Lord *with us* here shall be replaced by our presence *with Him* in the glory, and we shall be, spirit, soul, and body, "for ever WITH THE LORD" (1 Thess. iv.).

I cannot make Christ the centre of my efforts if He is not the centre of my thoughts.

Be assured that God does more *in* us than we do *for* Him, and that that we do for Him is only in proportion as it is Himself who works it in us.

Whatever produces a care in us produces God's care for us.

Faith does not reason: it acts and leaves the result to God.

Faith produces humility, because it exalts the object of faith.

The Feasts of the Lord.—No. 2.

(H. NUNNERLEY).

Unleavened Bread.

And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord :
seven days ye must eat unleavened bread (Lev. xxiii. 6).

IN order to grasp the true import of this feast it is needful to bear in mind that leaven is, in Scripture, typical of moral corruption. It was strictly forbidden in the meat offering (Lev. ii. 11).

Hypocrisy permeated the Pharisees, rationalism the Sadducees ; the Lord bade His disciples beware of the *leaven* of both (Matt. xvi. 6). The Christians at Corinth were told to "keep the feast, not with *old leaven*, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness ; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. v. 8). Paul warns the Galatians that the admixture of Judaism with Christianity would operate like leaven, even a *little* would corrupt the whole lump (Gal. v. 9). "Leaven itself is born from corruption, and corrupts the mass with which it is mixed" (Plutarch's *Quæst. Rom.*, 109).

It indicates the secret spread of some evil moral influence (having penetrative and diffusive power). The original word is synonymous with that which ferments and corrupts.

A misconception has arisen in some minds through a misunderstanding of Matthew xiii. 33 : "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." This has been construed to mean that the gospel would permeate the mass of men and bring about God's kingdom. Alas ! the opposite is the truth. Evil doctrine will work insidiously until every section of Christianity is leavened, and the professing church will be spued out of Christ's mouth. The three measures of meal, setting forth that which is professedly subject to Christ on earth,

are being rapidly impregnated with corruption. One professed Christian teacher will impugn Christ's Godhead, another detract from His spotless humanity. Evil men and seducers are waxing worse and worse, dragging the world into the church, and enticing the chaste virgin espoused to Christ to unholy alliance with the world.

No, leaven is evil, always and only evil. This must be evident to any unbiassed mind, for how could that which was *so bad* that it had to be purged out of the church at Corinth at the same time be *so good* that it would bring about God's kingdom in the world ?

A death penalty attached to all who ate leavened bread during this feast. It was not to be tolerated in their persons, houses, or land. "There shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters" (Exod. xiii. 7). "Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses" (Exod. xii. 19).

This feast is the fitting moral sequence of the Passover. "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, *therefore* let us keep the feast." It reminds us that sanctification is to follow justification ; the sheltered are to be separated ; the delivered and redeemed are to live holily and righteously.

"Seven days" represent the complete period of our life. During our journey through this world we are to be sedulously careful to judge all that is evil in morals and doctrine, walk and ways, whether in ourselves, our homes, or our associations.

The Passover which precedes this feast speaks of Christ's work, this, of the Holy Spirit's. Emancipation and

justification are bound up with one, sanctification and practical holiness with the other. Justification is based on the blood, and appropriated by faith; secured by Christ's death, and assured in His resurrection. It flows from free sovereign grace apart from works. Its subjects are ungodly sinners without strength; and glory is in view, for whom God has justified them He also glorified. It is a work which cannot be added to or taken from. It is God's act, therefore perfect and complete, a work wrought *for us*.

Sanctification, in the aspect in which we are here considering it, is, on the contrary, a work wrought *in us*; it is progressive and continuous. Christ in glory is its full measure. Until we are with Him and like Him *there* we shall never be fully sanctified.

The Holy Spirit is the power, and the Word of God the instrument, by which we are cleansed and sanctified. That word divides between false and true, between holy and unholy. It declares, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves" (1 John i. 8). Who, in the face of this statement, will claim to have reached a state of sinless perfection? It also says "These things write I unto you, that ye sin not" (1 John ii. 1). Who, then, will not seek to cultivate a holy walk?

The true force of the word sanctification is "set apart;" the Christian is set apart from the world to be wholly for God's will; hence he must be separate from all not according to that will.

It is the custom among certain Jews to light a lamp, take a broom, and sweep the corners of the house daily during this feast. Let us take the light of God's Word, and the broom of self-judgment, and deal with such leaven as is hidden with *us*.

But separation from evil is not the same thing as occupation with good. Not only had the house to be cleansed from leaven, but Israel were enjoined

to feed on "unleavened bread," i.e. bread of purity and sweetness.

Where do we find the answer to this? Where is this bread to be found for us Christians? It is in Jesus! He is the true food of our souls. "Unleavened bread" describes His spotless humanity here below. What holy food there is as we dwell upon that pathway so fragrant with moral excellences, and know it is the same Jesus who walked here with whom we shall spend a blissful eternity.

We may trace His holy footsteps as He weeps at the grave of Lazarus, as He takes little children in His arms, as He turns from His own sorrow to commit His mother to John's care, or as He sits beside Sychar's well. His meat was to do the will of Him that sent Him; *ours*, to feed upon Him doing that will.

What can equal in purity and sweetness the person of Jesus as expressed in His words and ways? He was what He said and did; words and works were the expression of His true self.

This feast also reminds us that His life was a pathway to death, but the death of a Man who ever afforded delight to God; for, during its continuance (see Num. xxviii. 17-25), sacrifices of a sweet savour were offered daily. Two young bullocks in all the glory of their strength—typifying the energy of the entire being of Christ, offering Himself to God. The ram of consecration, which means hands filled—reminding us of Him whose hands were hands filled with that in which God could find delight. The lambs—seven in number—perfect expression of the lowly grace of that Blessed One who was led spotless and unblemished to the slaughter. With these were presented wine, oil, and fine flour—Christ in the perfection of His humanity; the vessel of the Spirit; gladdening, like wine, the heart of God and man.

These *ten* sacrifices express the perfect way in which Christ fulfilled every

responsibility connected with "Lo! I come to do Thy will, O God," and gratified the Father's heart by the way He carried out that will.

One goat for a sin offering was also slain, an incidental reminder of the love which led Him to take the guilty sinner's place and suffer in his stead. But this is not the prominent thought in this feast: we are to take *ten* looks at Christ in the excellencies and perfections of His person, then *one* at Him as the sin-bearer, for apart from His atoning work we cannot truly feed on Him.

Ecce Homo!—Behold the Man!—pure and spotless, holy and devoted, giving up His life and drawing out the Father's love in doing so. "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again" (*John x. 17*).

We are to feed upon Him thus: He is the pure and unleavened bread, the

one true answer to that which this feast symbolizes, for in His person is perfection; in Him, without any admixture of evil, we find holiness and truth, purity and sincerity, and every moral excellence.

The prohibition as to servile work may serve to remind us that it is not by effort or labour on our part that we can become sanctified and separated. Feeding on Jesus will produce its own effect. We are to eat as privileged guests invited to a banqueting house; and what holy fare is provided! God's gracious provision for His own is JESUS—the "Bread of God," "Bread of Life," "Bread from heaven." In life, in death, the holy perfect Man who *always* did those things which pleased His Father!

Oh, to be more in company with Jesus!

(*To be continued.*)

Elisha's Call and its Lessons.

(A. J. POLLOCK.)

General Principle of God's Call.

1 Kings xix. 19-21.

19 So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.

20 And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and

then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee?

21 And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

GOD'S chosen servants are ever trained in secret before they are called to public service. The barrack square before the open field—the discipline of training before the din of battle—is ever the order. The future teacher must be taught. The future leader must learn to follow. The future commander must know first how to obey.

Joseph, in prison, learned to rule in obscurity before he governed in public, next to the mighty Pharaoh. Moses was forty years at the backside of the desert before he led God's

people for a like period of years across its howling stretches. David smote the lion and the bear in secret before he slew the giant in public. He cared for his father's sheep in the wilderness before he was called upon to care for God's people. From the sheep-cote to the throne is the moral order of exaltation.

Elisha's Call.

Though nothing is predicated of a direct nature of this kind in connection with Elisha's call, one can read between the lines that he, too, had been

secretly prepared for the call of God. For instance, he showed no surprise when the prophetic mantle was cast upon him.

They were troublous times. The prophetic office was no bed of roses. It was no sinecure. If it earned God's approbation, it received men's hate. It involved carrying one's life in one's hand. If the strenuous and bold spirit of Elijah had failed under the strain of it, it was no light task for his successor.

Yet Elisha promptly expressed his readiness to follow Elijah. Filial duty and affection, exalted, and rightly so, to a religious regard, led him to ask permission to kiss his father and mother before plunging into his new career. At a word from Elijah he said farewell to the home, for God's claims are paramount. Discipline is a narrow gate, but it leads into a blessed path. "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Elisha by his actions proved himself. He took the oxen, wherewith he was ploughing, slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people. His oxen and plough were indispensable to his former life. He dispensed with them, saying unmistakably in the act, that he answered to the call of God, wholly and absolutely. Henceforth there was no turning back for him.

The Call of the Christian To-day.

What a lesson for us! For every Christian is called—called to an extraordinary path, a path of faith, a path needing courage, a path from which there should be no turning back.

None of us is called to be a prophet, nevertheless the call to be a Christian is a wonderful one. How few rise to the heights of it! How few put

Christ's interests first and their own interests second. Indeed, if a Christian puts Christ's interests first, then *his* interests are the Lord's special care. Never was there a time when devotedness was more called for. Never was a night so dark as now, and so much need, therefore, for our light to be burning. "Men of God" is the crying need of the moment.

It takes no character to go with the crowd. No spiritual strength is needed to float with the stream. But to stand alone, to swim against the stream, to stem the evil influence of the hour, needs spiritual grit and fibre. We shall see the secret of Elisha's power and constancy. May we learn that secret each one of us for ourselves.

Elisha's Constancy in the Path.

We hear no more of Elisha till we read of the last journey master and disciple took together. Each stage of that journey—from Gilgal to Bethel, from Bethel to Jericho, from Jericho to Jordan—tested Elisha, as three times over Elijah said to him, "Tarry here, I pray thee." He clung to his master, refusing to be separated, till separation was inevitable (2 Kings ii.).

What thoughts must have filled their hearts as they walked that last journey, each step deepening in solemnity. If Elijah had prevision as to his translation, how he must have contrasted his dread of dying a violent death at the hands of Jezebel's servants with the tender gracious rebuke of the Lord sending heaven's horsemen and chariot to take him *without dying at all*. We, too, may faint beneath the pressure and quail before the storm, and wonder how we are to get on at all. We see already very plainly the characteristics of the day when no man shall be allowed to buy or sell unless he has the mark of the beast upon his forehead or in his hand. But before that awful day comes—impossible for the Christian—believers shall be taken out of the world, caught up to heaven

without dying at all (cf. 1 Thess. iv.). What a blessed prospect!

And what was filling the heart of Elisha? Elijah's request reveals the secret of his soul. He said, "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee."

The solemnity of the moment, the relationship the two men bore to each other, the needs of Elisha's path when left to tread it alone—all calculated to make his answer the unveiling of himself, the revealing of his heart of hearts.

Elijah a Figure of Christ.

And just at this point I must crave the indulgence of the reader. Elijah, wonderful prophet as he was, was only a man, and as such was "subject to like passions as we are." But at this stage in our meditations I would ask the reader to look at him as a figure of Christ in whom was no failure at all. His translation is a type of our Lord's ascension to glory, and Elisha left behind, a type of the church, and, as the church is made up of individuals, of the individual believer.

Elisha reveals the Secret of his Heart.

In response to Elijah's invitation to ask what he would, Elisha answered, "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." Here, then, Elisha reveals himself, discloses all his soul's history, expresses the secret of his heart.

"A *double* portion!" What can that mean? Deuteronomy xxi. 15-17 explains the expression. Suppose a man had three sons. He would divide his possessions into four portions, giving single portions to the younger sons, and a *double* portion to the eldest, as "the right of the firstborn."

Why should this be? It is because the eldest son was to become *representative* of his father. This principle obtains to a large extent in this country to-day. The eldest son of a

peer succeeds, on the death of his father, to the family title, estates, seats, etc., because he is called upon to be head of the family and represent his father, whilst the younger sons have younger sons' portions.

And Scripture confirms this. For instance, 1 Chronicles v. 2 tells us, concerning Israel, "the birthright was Joseph's," and verse 1 tells us Reuben's (the eldest son) birthright "was given unto the *sons* of Joseph the son of Israel." We can see why Joseph had *two* sons and only two, viz. that he might have the *double* portion of the firstborn. So that in the apportioning of territory, whilst each of Israel's sons (Levi excluded for obvious reasons) had *single* portions, that is one tribe each, Joseph had the *double* portion, *two* tribes, viz. Ephraim and Manasseh.

Thus we learn that the one consuming desire of Elisha's heart was to stand in the place in which Elijah had stood. This showed how his heart was won. The interests of the God whom Elijah had represented were paramount. To represent him the one thing above all else he desired.

What is your Dearest Wish?

If you had but *one* wish offered you, by one who was powerful enough to gratify any wish you formed, what would be your dearest wish? Sit down and think thoughtfully. For you will think what is uppermost and undermost. You will think yourself. If you are called to be a Christian your dearest wish should be to represent Christ, the Rejected of earth, your Lord and Master. All else will perish. Anything short of this can only disappoint. This only can carry us on in the path of God's appointing. Every other wish in its consummation will be only like the teeth breaking into an apple of the Dead Sea, and the mouth filled with dust.

And here let me make a remark that may surprise the reader. The Christian *alone* is called upon to represent an

absent Lord. A moment's reflection will convince. The Old Testament saint could not represent Christ, for Christ was not then revealed. True, individuals were types of Christ, but this was unconsciously to themselves, so far as Scripture testifies. Doubtless the spirit of Christ manifested itself often in the stirrings of divine life in the Old Testament believer, but he was not called upon, nor could he be, to represent an absent Christ. Nor will the Jew in the day to come be called upon to represent an absent Lord. On the contrary Christ will be present to take up His rights as Messiah.

No, it is only the Christian in this dispensation who is called upon to represent Christ. This is borne out by Hebrews xii. 22, 23: "Ye are come . . . to the general assembly and church of the firstborn" (*firstborn ones*, N.T.). Israel of old, and Israel and the nations in the day to come, occupy the place of younger sons. The church, that of the firstborn, is thus called upon to *represent* an absent Lord. [We use the word "sons" here as illustrative of position and not as denoting the peculiar and unique place sonship has in Christianity. Similarly Ephesians iii. 15 speaks of "Every family in [the] heavens and on earth" (N.T.).] What an honour! What a privilege! Who would miss it, if once they knew their portion and privilege?

The Condition Necessary.

Elijah in answering Elisha's request used words pregnant with meaning, not in their actual historical fulfilment, but in their interpretation for our times. "Thou hast asked a hard thing; nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so."

The two men continued their walk and talk, when suddenly "there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into

heaven." And Elisha, in seeing the wondrous sight, knew that his request was granted, the desire of his heart given; and he cried out, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof."

Now there was power to have rapt both up into glory, but Elisha was left behind to maintain those interests for which Elijah had stood. True, as far as their actual ministry was concerned, one was the prophet of *judgment*, the other of *grace*; but we are now viewing the one as a type of Christ ascending, the other of the Christian left behind to carry on His interests.

The condition necessary, then, was the beholding the translation. And what is the condition necessary for our representing an absent Lord? Surely His taking His present place on high. This altogether determines our place, as belonging to the spot where He is glorified, and our place in this world, rejected because He has been rejected.

In John xvii. the Lord is in spirit in ascension glory, and He puts His saints in His own place before the Father, and then in His own place, as rejected by the world. What a privilege to have both the one and the other! And it is the entering into the one that fits us for the other. Approach and reproach work one with the other as the blades of a pair of scissors. The more the believer knows of approach the more he will gladly suffer reproach. So the Lord could say of His own, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."

Of course all believers receive the historical truth of the ascension of the Lord Jesus to God's right hand. It is one thing to receive the truth historically, it is another to understand its moral import, *and this can only be through the affections*. And this, I believe, is the spiritual import for us of

Elijah's condition as to granting Elisha's wish.

Beloved, have we grasped the truth of the Lord's position, how it settles every question as to His place on high for us, associating us with Himself, how it determines our place of rejection because He is rejected, how it answers in the emphatic negative the question as to whether this world's politics and honours are for the Christian, how it evidences unmistakably that every attempt at friendship with the world is enmity to God? Have we grasped this? If not, we cannot be to any degree truly representative.

The Power Necessary.

As Elijah was being translated he dropped his mantle. Elisha's action was thorough and reminiscent of the first occasion he met Elijah. "He took hold of his own clothes and rent them in two pieces." Then he took up Elijah's mantle.

I believe Elijah's casting his mantle to earth was typical of the Lord sending down the Holy Ghost upon the believers at Pentecost.

In this twofold action of Elisha we have typified the secret of power for the representative of an absent Master.

In tearing his own garments he typifies the believer judging himself, his own powers in themselves, his natural character, as worthless for

God. In picking up Elijah's mantle he typifies the believer who sees in the gift of the Spirit the only power for representation and service.

Elisha had the choice between two mantles—Elijah's and his own. Wisely he chose his master's, and was done with his own. So if the Lord gives His Spirit we must choose between Himself and ourselves, His and our own power. Can there be any choice? It needs but to be presented to instantly settle the matter once and for ever.

"Higher than the highest heaven,
Deeper than the deepest sea,
Lord, thy love at last has conquered:
'None of self, and all of Thee.'"

If this be the case then the eye will be fixed on Christ in glory, and the heart, freed from self and selfish interests, will be ready to respond to the Lord.

It is worthy of note that the *last* thing Elijah did with his mantle before he was translated—viz. part the waters of Jordan, type of access into heavenly blessings through death (in the Lord's case not for Himself surely, but for us as Man)—is the *first* thing Elisha did with the same mantle.

And so it shall be that we shall be enabled to reproduce in our little measure the life of Christ upon this earth, to represent Him the little while until He comes. He comes quickly. May we not miss the wonderful opportunity that is ours, an opportunity eternity itself will not afford.

Sermons that Save.

"Sermons that save must sound an alarm. 'Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.' No glittering generalities, no rhetorical niceties! The message must ring out like a fine bell: it must echo like the shrill blast of the watchman's trumpet when danger is near; it must declare the whole counsel of God.

"That includes denunciation of sin, the necessity of repentance, the certainty of a judgment throne, an eternal hell for the finally impenitent, salvation by faith, and cleansing through the blood of the Redeemer. God grant that we may hear a good many such sermons."

From a Contemporary Magazine.

Bible Study.—Galatians.

(EDWARD CROSS).

Galatians ii. 1-14.

1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.

2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles; but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.

5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person;) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:

7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;

8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the

apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

10 Only they would that we should remember the poor, the same which I also was forward to do.

11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

THIS chapter falls naturally into three sections, viz. :—

Verses 1-10, what happened at Jerusalem;

Verses 11-16, Peter's rebuke at Antioch;

Verses 17-21 concluding with an argument in support of the vital principle at stake in the gospel, which he was defending against the attacks of those who were seeking to corrupt it.

Verse 1.

Difficulties arise as to the date from which to reckon the fourteen years mentioned here, and also in identifying the journey referred to with the historical account given to us in the Acts; but it seems most generally accepted that the Apostle still counts from the time of his conversion, as in the three years of the former chapter (i. 13), and that his visit to Jerusalem is that recorded in Acts xv. But however this may be, the argument of the Apostle remains the same. He maintains that his service to the Lord among the Gentiles for so many years was independent of any ordination or in-

duction by the apostles at Jerusalem; and that when he visited that city, he did so either from what we might call "private reasons," as in chapter i. 18, or, if he went there otherwise, as in Acts xv., it was with the authority of his own apostleship, extraneous to those who were at Jerusalem—an authority which the leaders of those there too recognised as altogether independent of their own. Moreover, he took Barnabas with him, who was witness of all that passed there then. There was therefore the less excuse for his allowing himself afterwards to be "carried away with their dissimulation" (ver. 13). He took Titus also with him; and this was an incontrovertible testimony that the position which he was now defending was impregnable. If it was surrendered, it would be by weakness or treachery from within; by the fickleness, the untrustworthiness of those who, being in possession of the truth, were unable to maintain it.

Verse 2.

And he went up, too, by revelation. This he makes known to them here,

We are not told it in the historical narrative of the Acts. But it forcibly confirms the fact that he held his apostleship and got his guidance in the prosecution of his service altogether independently of man.

Arrived at Jerusalem, he is there, not in any inferior position to the others, but contrariwise, to communicate rather than to receive; and that, not to the brethren of lesser note, among whom he might have assumed a position of authority, or of interest, as a labourer from "foreign parts," but "to those of reputation," whose appreciation of his work it was important for him to secure, so that the liberty of the gospel should not be imperilled through their opposition, and that there should be no risk of a schism, "lest by any means," as he says, "I should be running, or had run, in vain." Compare, for a similar situation, 2 Corinthians ii. 11. From the others, and in general debate, as we learn from Acts xv., he kept his own counsel. His concern in this matter was not with "the many," but with the leaders. His object was to gain them; and in that we see his wisdom, and happily, too, his success, for otherwise his journey would have been in vain.

The expression "run in vain" is found again in Philippians ii. 16. It is a metaphor taken from the race-course, and of frequent use by the Apostle (*cf.* Acts xx. 24; 1 Cor. ix. 24; Gal. v. 7).

Verse 3.

But the case of Titus was decisive. He was a Greek pure and proper; and in him the principle was established, and that at Jerusalem itself, that circumcision was no part of Christianity.

From the word "compelled" we might fairly gather (*cf.* ver. 5) that pressure was brought to bear on Paul that Titus should be circumcised; but to this pressure he absolutely refused to yield. Had he for a moment succumbed, or compromised, the whole truth of Chris-

tianity would have been surrendered to the foe. True, the case of Titus was but a single instance, and it would prevent ferment and keep the peace! But the truth of the gospel would have been given up, not now by the failure of individuals to maintain it, but by the Apostle himself, who was set to defend it. Had he yielded in this case he could not afterwards have written as he did: "I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also [as well as myself] may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory" (2 Tim. ii. 10); nor would we have had the gospel to-day, as it has been preserved to us, in the mercy of God, through him.

The case of Timothy (Acts xvi. 1-3) is quite different. Timothy was a half-Jew, and now that the principle is established beyond controversy in the preceding chapter (Acts xv.), the Apostle is free to relax to any extent, so as to meet the prejudices of a narrow-minded, bigoted, and ignorant people. He is now as willing that Timothy should be circumcised as he was before determined that Titus should not be.

And is there not in this a lesson for us to learn of vast importance? a broad-minded wisdom, which is truly of God? refusing to be governed by merely abstract principles, or human rules, which can be easily codified and handed down with traditional rigidity—a wisdom which, while maintaining the truth without compromise and at all cost, would adapt itself to circumstances as the minister of righteousness and not of destruction. "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," hitherto irreconcilable in human affairs; and the cross is the harmonizing, the consolidating of both into one system, to the glory of God and to our salvation. Thus the Apostle would be 'all things to all men, that he might by all means save some' (1 Cor. ix. 19-23), and this he says, as he is about to insist on it rigidly to them, in the following chapter, that they can have no fellowship with the altars of idols (1 Cor. x.). There

is nothing so broad as the spirit of Christ, nothing so adaptable: while there is nothing so inflexible, so autocratic. It is at once "the spirit of grace" and "the spirit of truth."

Verse 4.

The forceful language of this verse cannot be reproduced in an English translation. The feelings of indignation that moved the soul of the Apostle leap to the eye as you consider the terseness and tensity of the expressions which he makes use of here. Adverbs and other qualifying words must be piled on to express whole volumes of thought that are conveyed in single words with concentrated force. It shows plainly how important is the subject matter in hand, and what tremendous issues to the prophetic eye of the Apostle—as indeed has been verified by the dark history of the church during the centuries ever since—were involved in this early and insidious attempt, only too successful, to "pervert the gospel of the Christ."

"To pervert the gospel of the Christ!" Think of it. Think what it involves. Think of the daring attack of the enemy on the stronghold of divine grace, the citadel of the glory of God; the destruction of the one and only way to unite righteousness and peace, to conciliate mercy and truth, and to form a vital basis, in the harmony of all relationships, divine and human, whereby the blessing of man could be secured, to the glory of God. Think, too, of the perverseness and shortsightedness of man himself, who, either by violence or deceit, counterplots against his own interests; or, knowing better, weakly becomes the tool of his self-importance, in the judgment of others as vain and worthless as himself, to aid and abet in what his better judgment repudiates. Poor vain man would be wise, though he be born like a wild ass's colt! (Job xi. 12). Think, too, of the persistency of sovereign grace, in maintaining at his disposal the way of escape, the gospel of

salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, through these long centuries. How little has he appreciated the grace that has thus waited on him.

"False brethren, foisted in amongst us, crept in insidiously, as traitors in a camp, to spy out the liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into utter bondage!" No wonder the soul of the Apostle is stirred within him to its depths. The gospel proposes the liberty that is in Christ Jesus for all believers. What kind of mystery is it that sets man at work against his own best interests, and makes him choose instead to be "utterly enslaved"?

Verse 5.

It is a matter of profound and unceasing thankfulness that God provided a man for the occasion, and that the Apostle was able to write, "To whom, not even for an hour, did we [i.e. Paul and those who were with him, Barnabas and Titus] yield the subjection that was urged upon us, in order that the truth of the gospel should remain continuously with you."

Verse 6.

He now affirms particularly that those who seemed to have a reputation for pre-eminence, whatever they might have done for others, to him they added nothing in conference. He does not detract from their importance in their own place; but God accepts no man's person. And it is with God Paul has to do. He is not of those "who have men's persons in admiration because of advantage" (Jude 16): and he would teach these Galatian saints that, as it is with God he has to do, so it is with God they must have to do likewise. Alas! how little has this lesson been learned. He would teach the same lesson to the Corinthians, who, as the early church, and so far, one might say, the precursor of the church ever since, were saying, "I of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ"—boasting in

men, and reducing Christ to the same level. "Do ye not know," he says, "that ye are [the] temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" It is with God we must have to do. It is with God *faith* has to do : and "God accepts no man's person."

Verses 7, 8.

But so far from adding anything in conference to Paul, on the contrary they saw that Paul was entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter was with that of the circumcision. This was proved by the work that God had wrought through them each. It was no question of pretension, or the mere assumption of human authority in either case, but of the manifest power of God in practical result. This was the evidence he adduced : this the proof of his position : this the nature of his ordination, its source and the power that accompanied it, even as it was also the living and practical proof of Peter's apostleship among the circumcision.

Verse 9.

And accordingly those who were reputedly pillars, and not merely of the rank and file—James, Cephas, and John—gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that each should go to his own appointed work.

Verse 10.

One desire only they expressed, which was of the nature of a moral sentiment, not an authoritative enactment, viz. that, while labouring in the distant parts of the earth, "we should still remember the poor," which very thing indeed he was ever forward to do (compare Rom. xv. 26, 27 ; 1 Cor. xvi. 3).

Verses 11-16.

The rebuke of Peter at Antioch.

But not only did Peter not contribute in conference anything to Paul, but contrariwise, when Peter came to Antioch Paul withstood him to the face, and that publicly (ver. 14), because he was "convicted of evil" (N.T.). The

occasion of this is thought by some to be that referred to in Acts xv. 30, 35. The event itself is one of the gravest moment, connected as it is with the subsequent faith and conduct of the church for all time. It marks, too, the beginning of a conflict, which, though resulting in a victory for Paul in the open court of undeniable truth, has been prolonged ever since by the persistent power of prejudice, and the inherent vice of fallen humanity, that prefers bondage to freedom, and the yoke of the law to the liberty of the gospel.

Naturally, those who claim to be the successors of Peter, and who are concerned in maintaining his supremacy, labour their utmost to avoid the inconsistency of his position here, and their own in consequence. Some of them say that the Peter here referred to is not the Apostle, but another of the same name. Others, that it was a histrionic scene pre-arranged by the apostles to impose on the church at large. "It seems strange that this immoral view, first brought forward by Origen, found strong advocates in Chrysostom and Jerome" (*Howson*). But "there is nothing new under the sun," and we are the less surprised as we see similar things enacted by the same spirit in our own day (ver. 12, 13). The mention of James's name does not implicate him in this "dissimulation," but only as being one of the leaders at Jerusalem. The word "certain" used here by Paul, as also in the letter of the council (Acts xv. 24), is one of indignation and throws the blame on them, not on James. It was they who influenced Peter—"certain" insignificant brethren, noisy, narrow-minded mischief-makers, before whom the conscience of Peter, "blessed" man as he was (Matt. xvi. 17), gave way through fear, but not "the fear of God," and led the way in a dissimulation that caught others also in such a torrent of deceit that even Barnabas, hitherto the ally of Paul, was carried away with them by it. Dissimulation : hypocrisy?

Yes, that's the word. Call it what you like to cover up the truth under the spurious pretence of maintaining it. What Scripture calls it is the right word—hypocrisy!

Verse 14.

The word for "walking uprightly" is one of those expressions peculiar to Paul, and which reveals the burning of his indignation as he contemplates the secret, serpentine, unhallowed plot to "pervert the truth of the gospel."

It is a word apparently coined by the Apostle. It is not used elsewhere in the New Testament nor in classical Greek, though it is found in a few later writers (*Ellicott*). From it comes our word "orthopædic," i.e. connected with the cure of deformities, principally in the feet. These people were, as it were, deformed in the feet; they did not walk in the *truth* of the gospel. Professing to believe it, in practice they denied it. They did not carry into effect what they professed to hold.

The Outlook.—No. 3.

(J. WILSON SMITH).

"Be of Good Cheer."

THERE is little doubt that if Paul were with us to-day he would bid us "be of good cheer." His ministry would be one of great encouragement.

Such were his words when the ship in which he was sailing to Rome had been caught in a storm, and when all hope of safety had been taken from the bosoms of his fellow-travellers. He bade them "be of good cheer."

He might have appeared a mere mocker to many of them at such a time, but the fact was that an angel of God had informed him that God had given to him all them who sailed with him. So long therefore as they were with Paul they were safe and in their right and proper place.

Personally 'he believed God that it should be even as it was told him.' He was calm regarding the issue; and, in the power of this assurance, he sought to tranquillize the fears of others. Faith in the word of God to him was of supreme moment then, as it is now, and ever. To bring God into a difficulty is practically to remove it; nor shall any of us be the least help to our fellow-pilgrims unless we are in the power of confidence in God.

Now Paul had to do with "the God of all encouragement;" he could there-

fore encourage the cast-down and despairing; and thus his ministry to such was full of good cheer and comfort.

True, he saw fit to administer the rebuke, "Ye should have hearkened unto me," for they had not followed his wise counsel and had accordingly suffered loss. They had themselves to blame for their inattention, and had their own burden to bear in consequence.

None the less he exhorted them to "be of good cheer." The end would be reached, even though the way to it must be bitterly trying, and, in fact, they all got to land, though in a manner deeply humbling to themselves. Now it is very clear that Paul's counsel was their duty and the rejection of it was their disaster. So to-day; assuming Paul to be, *par excellence*, the minister of the church, to attend to his God-given instructions, as given in his Epistles, were the church's wisdom at all times; but it must be said to our shame, that they have been disregarded, with the patent result of division and disaster among the ranks of Christ's beloved people on all hands.

We have chosen our own ways in preference to God's, and are, alas! so far as what is outward is concerned, a

spectacle of disunion and worldliness and self-will.

Oh! how we may humble ourselves before the Lord on this account! But is there no remedy? Surely, if only we will take it.

Let us hearken unto Paul—unto God and the word of His grace (Acts xx. 32). If only we did that, then, of necessity, we should be of the same mind in the Lord. If only each of us—you, my reader, and myself—sought grace to obey the God-inspired words of the Apostle, we should certainly draw more closely together, and thus undo, so far, the disasters of the day. As we draw to the Centre—Christ Himself—we shall converge to one another. Our own will and position will become less,

and Christ shall be the chief attraction; and if our hearts are saturated by the ministry of the great church-apostle, specially that of his closing Epistles, we shall not fail to become its resultants. We shall be in the place and condition of those who cordially seek the will and glory of Christ. "The only thing for the Christian is the word of God and the coming of the Lord," was the answer of an aged servant of Christ to the question "What is the future of the church here?" Thirty years have since elapsed. The chaos and darkness has deepened, but the truth of that answer remains. Withal, though we have to reap now a bitter harvest, we may be "of good cheer," for He who loves us will come for us, and thus crown all His grace toward us.

Eternal Punishment (II).

(JAMES BOYD).

God is Love.

GOD is perfectly competent to take care of His own reputation; and though it may appear to suffer at the hands of His implacable enemy, and though He may be belied, blasphemed, maligned, and dishonoured, even in His own world, it can only be for a very limited period; He is bound in the end to be triumphant, and to emerge from the conflict covered with glory—His character vindicated, His words proven to be faithful, and His judgments seen to be just; and every intelligent being shall most surely have learned that the report which He gave of Himself was true to the letter.

He has never, directly or indirectly, by plain statement, or by parabolic representation, said one single word calculated to give His creature a false impression. His word may be depended upon with the utmost confidence. Heaven and earth shall be shaken, and the present order of things shall all pass away, but the word of God shall stand for ever. It is established in heaven (Ps. cxix. 89), the

worlds were framed by it (Heb. xi. 3), and are by it upheld (Heb. i. 3): it gives life to sinners dead in sins (John v. 24); and there is an hour coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear it and come forth (ver. 28); and God would have us know "that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord" (Deut. viii. 3). It is a deep, pure, crystal well-spring of everlasting life and blessing, its matchless melody declares its heavenly origin, and its living fullness makes manifest that the heart of God is where it takes its rise. When one would expatiate on the blessedness of her who gave birth to the Son of God, He says, "Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it" (Luke xi. 28).

Men may carp at its truths, twist its plainest communications out of all proper shape, wrest away passages from their true connection, run off with isolated statements, whose obvious meaning they have wilfully perverted, analyse, dissect, and examine with

feverish anxiety and sweat of brain, hoping to find something that is not there; but to their own destruction they do this, as well as to the destruction of those who follow them. After all their unholy labour the Scriptures remain, in all their solitary grandeur, a beacon in this dark world, to guide the weary feet of the pilgrim people of God in the way of life, to that glorious haven of eternal rest where Jesus is. Let it speak of mercy or of judgment, of love or wrath, it must be taken as it stands, neither added to nor subtracted from. It means what it says, and it says what it means; and God has magnified it *above all His name* (Ps. cxxxviii. 2).

The child of God requires no aid from the *higher critic*, or the university professor. The world can furnish nothing towards the help of the assembly of the living God. The gospel was first of all preached by poor and illiterate men, and for the salvation of the poor and illiterate it was intended, and therefore it is announced in words simple and easy to be understood, for God cares for the souls of those to whom He sends the testimony of His grace. He has not *called* the wise, the prudent, or the noble, as a class; though certain individuals amongst such have been made to bow at the feet of Jesus; the greater number of those who shall inherit eternal life are taken from the poor, the base, and the despised; for God ever pours contempt upon the pride of man. Neither is the gospel preached in words taught by human wisdom, nor does it appeal to intellects moulded in the great universities of learning. To such it is rather a savour of death, a relic of barbaric ages, and unworthy of the God whom they have imprinted upon their imaginations. There are no glad tidings in it for their ears. The God it presents is not such as their cultivated minds would approve of. There is nothing in the gospel of Christ to minister to their passions or to their pride. Its terms make nothing of their intellectual attainments. To participate in its bless-

ings they must take the ground of being poor, worthless, helpless sinners, and it lets them know that they must be altogether dependent upon the grace and mercy of God. It gives them to understand that they have no claim upon the goodness of His heart, no right to expect His intervention on their behalf, and that they can do nothing toward the salvation of their souls, nor make any return to God for His boundless compassion. Their parentage, natural endowments, education, cleverness, and their philosophical vapourings are altogether discounted. Thus their co-operation in the work of their redemption is repulsed, their vanity wounded; they are struck upon the brazen forehead of their vain conceit by the compassions of a Saviour God, the crown of their self-confidence is crushed by the almighty blow of infinite grace, and that which the sin-distressed find balm and healing for their sorrowing souls is torture and death to these pretentious sons of pride.

In the presence of divine love there is no room for the pride of the human heart. Indeed, in the presence of love, be it human or divine, pride is out of place. In the presence of love—that is, love which is appreciated—one feels small indeed, but intensely happy. The one who loves becomes great in the eyes of the beloved object, and the *lover fills the heart, mind, and vision of the beloved*. While love ever thinks of its object, the object itself is swallowed up and lost in the supreme blessedness of the love which is lavished upon it. And if this be true of all human affection, what must it be to be the object of the love of God? To be little enough, simple enough, childlike enough, to sit in the sunshine of that great love of God, and to feel that, under the beams of that love, in all the warmth and comfort of it, is the eternal place of the soul; this is to begin heaven upon earth.

And this love of God is the great subject of the gospel, nor is eternal

punishment in the least inconsistent with it. Indeed, it is just in the execution of the judgment which lay upon us that the love of God has come to light. Jesus told Nicodemus that the Son of Man must be lifted up, for God so loved the world (John iii.). We are told (Ps. ix. 16) that the Lord is known by the judgment which He executes. And it is in the judgment of the cross He has come to light, not only in every one of His attributes, but in His nature; it is there we learn that *God is love*: "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8). Had we remained in a state of innocence we would have had nothing to say to the judgment of God, nor would there have been any necessity for the sacrifice of His Son on our behalf. But God has taken occasion by our helpless and lost condition to make Himself known to us in a way in which we never otherwise could have known Him. But if little is made of the judgment, little also must be made of the love; for the love declared must be in proportion to the judgment borne. If we have feeble thoughts of the judgment, we must also have feeble thoughts of the love. Our Lord has said, "To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little" (Luke vii. 47). The question to be answered is, What about those sins of ours? What was the inevitable consequence of them to me? What was the judgment due to them? What should I have suffered had the forgiveness of them been an impossibility? Were they much or little? The greater the judgment, the greater the love of God in giving His Son to bear it; the less the judgment, the less the love comes to light; for to know the love we must have a witness, and if we underestimate the witness we necessarily underestimate the love.

I do not suppose any one will question the fact that it is only in the gospel that God is presented as a God of love. No other system of religion that I am aware of does so; and certainly we

cannot learn it from the condition in which man is found in this world. Wherever I turn scenes of heartless violence and abominable corruption assail my vision. The strong ride rough-shod over the weak, and even in the dust and throes of death the weak strike back at their oppressors with all the venom of the serpent. Had they the power they would deal as they are dealt by. In the slums of the city the savage stalks about in all his hideous moral nakedness, and though in the West End he may be more careful of his fig-leaf covering, the rottenness that is there cannot always be hidden from the vulgar gaze. The howl of the human wolf, the cry of his victim, the wail of woe, the sob of sorrow, the dirge of despair, fill unceasingly the ear of heaven, and no attention seems to be paid to all this appeal for mercy on the part of man.

Where, then, are we to learn that God is love? It is all very well to fill the mind with beautiful ideas, but if there is no evidence of that which we would desire to be true, we had better face the worst, and leave the dreamer and his dreams severely alone. But if we have got our knowledge from the gospel of the grace of God, and if the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom. v. 5), we shall have no doubt about the love, neither shall we have any doubt about the severity of the judgment in which that love has been expressed. The great witness of that love is the cross. In the three hours of thick darkness there took place between God and Christ that which no creature shall ever be able to fathom. Infinite Persons were engaged in that stupendous work; infinite questions were gone into, and infinite judgment inflicted and borne. It was not the violence of man, though it was there exhibited; it was not the warlike muster of infernal legions, though they were there gathered together; it was not a painful crucifixion, though the Holy Sufferer felt it all; not all those things put

together were the bitterness of that cup, the drinking of which wrung from the lips of Jesus that dreadful cry, "Eli, Eli, lama, sabachthani."

It was the judgment of our sins. Nothing more than that which we deserved was inflicted by the hand of God. And yet in the lonely garden at eventide, a look into that hour of woe, in which the Just was to suffer for the unjust, produced unspeakable torture in spirit, soul, and body. Men talk as though they knew to a grain the weight of that judgment which sin deserved. No human being has the faintest conception of what it must be to be under the wrath of a sin-hating God. Who could tell what the forsaking of God means? In that cross sin received its judgment, and not an eternal lake of fire, in which the impenitent must suffer for his own offences, shall be such a witness of divine hatred of sin as is that cross of woe.

But there the infinite, unfathomable, unspeakable love of God has been declared. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not

perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son" (John iii. 14-16). In nothing else are we to learn the love of God. It is only in the cross it has come to light in all its power. That love is the spring of all His activities toward us is true, for it is His nature; but it has had its one great, grand, perfect expression, and to that one unique, doubt-dispelling manifestation of divine love the Spirit of God draws our attention, and would concentrate it wholly there: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 10).

Therefore I affirm that if you make little of the doom of the wicked, you make little of the sacrifice of the Son of God; and if you make little of that sacrifice, you make little of the love of a Saviour God, who gave that only begotten Son of His to bear our judgment. On the other hand, the more truly we apprehend the nature of the judgment which lay upon us, the more exalted thoughts will we have of the greatness of the sacrifice of Christ and the more brightly will the love of God shine before our souls.

Correspondence.

To the Editors of *Scripture Truth*.

AN interchange of thought as to the best means of reaching souls in the gospel, in the columns of your magazine, would be both interesting and useful.

That the work of an evangelist in dealing with souls in the gospel is of the very highest importance, requiring a state of prayerful communion with the Lord, demanding guidance, tact, and courage, none will deny.

The deep love for souls that characterizes the true evangelist is at once his power and danger. *His power*, for without it his preaching would lack warmth, courage, and unction. *His danger*, for the very intensity of his desires carries with it the tendency to press souls beyond their faith, and do

them incalculable harm. That there might be a deeper love for souls as the days grow darker and indifference becomes deadlier is the desire of every true heart. On the other hand, if there is a deep intelligent appreciation on the part of the evangelist of the seriousness and blessedness of work in souls, I believe it would prove a safeguard, and the only safeguard, against the danger I have alluded to.

Might not some, who are taught in the Word, help us from Scripture? whilst those who are called to preach the gospel could help by interchange of thought and the way experience has shown them this danger and the best way of avoiding it. A. J. POLLOCK.

The School of God in the Book of Daniel. (M. C. GAHAN).

Daniel ii. 1, 16-23.

1 And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him . . .

16 Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would shew the king the interpretation.

17 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions :

18 That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret ; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

19 Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

20 Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever : for wisdom and might are his :

21 And he changeth the times and the seasons . he removeth kings, and setteth up kings . he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding :

22 He revealeth the deep and secret things : he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

23 I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter.

IN the ways of God a transitional moment had arrived in the history of Israel which affected deeply that of the world at large.

Amongst the blessings of Jehovah assured to an obedient people was this, "Thou shalt be the head and not the tail" : but for disobedience the reverse was to be the case, "He shall be the head and thou shalt be the tail" (Deut. xxviii. 13, 44). Their conquest and captivity by a foreign nation, on account of their sins and rebellion against God, was not the result of the drift of ordinary circumstances, transferring power, by what might be called the fortunes of war, from one nation to another, but was by a direct decree issuing from, and communicated by, Jehovah Himself to the monarch who, *according to His purpose*, should succeed to the throne of the world, which throne had been forfeited by the royal dynasty of Israel, in the line of the tribe of Judah, by individual and national apostasy.

For the making known of God's purpose in this respect the Babylonian monarch's slumber was invaded by "dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him." This was no passing phantasm, to be lightly dismissed, in waking hours, by state business or court revelry, but a burdensome vision haunting the mind of King Nebuchadnezzar, though the details had passed from his memory

until recalled and interpreted by God Himself through the medium of His chosen channel, for the dream and its interpretation, being *of God*, lay outside of and beyond the capacity of human wisdom to reproduce or interpret. Neither the promise of gifts, nor the threatenings of impotent rage, were competent to stimulate the mind of man to the required standard of supernatural wisdom. So "the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain. And they sought Daniel and his fellows that they should be slain."

But the baffling of all human wisdom, and the proclaimed impotence of monarch and magician, only made room for the resources of the living God to be more emphatically brought to light.

Nothing daunted, though doubtless deeply exercised, Daniel, availing himself of the privilege of his position as one of the king's favourites, enters the royal presence, makes request for further time, and announces confidently to his imperial patron that the interpretation of the dream should be forthcoming, while pleading for delay in the execution of the king's command.

Here indeed was a marvellous exhibition of faith and confidence in the God of Israel, exercised, be it remembered, without the shadow of a clue as to the nature of the dream, which the

monarch required to be reproduced and interpreted.

Daniel's purpose of heart is already bearing fruit in unwavering confidence in God at the moment of extremest peril. Released from the presence of the king, he seeks his three companions to pour out their hearts in the fellowship of prayer before Jehovah. The dream and its interpretation are immediately revealed.

In the perilous position of Daniel and his three companions, as permitted of God, may be seen the fact that disciplinary exercises often mark the pathway of soul progress, issuing in a deeper acquaintance with the ways of God, and a deeper knowledge of God Himself.

The captive of Judah, belonging to a conquered and despised nation, now became the mouthpiece of God to the monarch of the world, carrying home to his conscience the conviction, for the first time in his life, despite all the wisdom of astrologers and magicians of then known heathen mythology, that the living God had appeared upon the scene; and that he, Nebuchadnezzar, held his imperial power under and from Him by the direct purpose and sanction of His will.

But who would not infinitely prefer the relations of the obscure captive to Jehovah, rather than "this head of gold," to whom was now transferred as "king of kings" by the God of heaven, "a kingdom, power and strength and glory"? For Daniel occupied the place of intimacy with Jehovah, and with the mind of Jehovah; and, standing as he did at the centre of the circle of divine counsels, viewed from that standpoint, the vista of vast empires—Chaldean, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and

Roman, each rising upon the ruins of the preceding one, according to Jehovah's will. Nebuchadnezzar occupied a privileged place it is true, but at the circumference, self-centred and self-satisfied, because of the dignity and glory that devolved upon him as the head of gold. But to access and intimacy, such as Daniel enjoyed with the God of Israel, he was a perfect stranger.

It remained to express the royal approval in some tangible form such as it would be possible for Daniel to accept, viz. exaltation to one of the highest appointments in the government of the kingdom.

So Daniel was made "ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief of the wise men of Babylon." But Daniel was not lifted with pride because of God's revelation to him, or by the exaltation in which the king set him, for he had not only learnt to confide in God, but also to clothe himself with humility as with a garment.

How admirable was his conduct when, while himself the sole possessor of the secrets of God, he deprecates all claim to human wisdom, and confronts the then ruler of the world with the supreme God, who was now conferring on him dominion and authority at His will. But the more ample the revelations, and the greater the intelligence in the things of God, the true servant possesses, the greater the humility begotten in the heart by the greatness of that grace that finds its pleasure in communicating divine things to the receptive heart, for the more the thoughts of God are known the deeper will be the consciousness of unworthiness both personally and in the service to which grace has called.

It is essential for a soul to be brought into perfect confidence in God Himself in order to walk with God.

There is nothing in this world like the dignity of a man always walking with God.

The standard of walk is what is "worthy of the Lord," not of man.

The way is upward still—
Where life and glory are;
My rest's above, in perfect love
The glory I shall share.

Answers to Correspondents.

(THE EDITORS).

“Subject to Vanity.”

W.R. In this passage (Rom. viii. 19-22) creation is viewed as being involved in man's fall : it had no will in the matter of course, but, being the domain over which man was set by God, it shared his ruin. This we can understand, for it could not be imagined that man could fall under the displeasure of God, and yet be allowed to continue in a creation made for and suited to a loyal and unfallen creature. It was an act of perfect justice, in which much mercy towards men was mixed, when God cursed the ground for Adam's sake (Gen. iii. 17-19) ; and from thence until now the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain.

Believers, though set free as to their souls, still have their part, as to their bodies, in this groaning creation ; but the day is coming when they shall be manifested, as they truly are, as the sons of God : their bodies will come under the redemptive power of God, and in that day all creation will also be delivered from the bondage of corruption : being linked up with man in the Fall, it will also be linked up with man as set in the place which God has purposed for him, and so be a suited sphere in which the glorious liberty of the sons of God shall be manifested.

The “New Translation” of the Scriptures by J. N. Darby, as to which you enquire, can be obtained at the Publishing Office of this Magazine.

The Entrance of Sin.

J.C. You find it difficult to understand the statement that “by one *man* sin entered into the world” (Rom. v. 12), having regard to the fact that the devil sinned before Adam ; but notice that here it is not a question of the first inception of sin, but of its being brought “into *the world.*” Again, as to the active agent in that sad

event, it is true that it was by the temptation of Satan that our fore-parents fell ; but it was not because Satan tempted, but because Adam yielded, that sin entered the world. Satan was an enemy seeking to gain a foothold in the world, and Adam as the head of it should have resisted him and held it for God. Instead of doing this he deliberately, and with his eyes open—for he was not deceived as was the woman (1 Tim. ii. 14)—handed the key of the citadel to the enemy in the hope of becoming himself as God. Thus sin entered the world, and death by sin, for death passed upon all men for that all have sinned ; for as the head of the race, so is every member of it.

Falling Away.

J.D. Yes, it is possible for one to accept the doctrines and position of Christianity and yet not be a Christian in the true and vital sense of the word. Every baptized person has taken up Christian *profession* (Gal. iii. 27), but only those who have by faith accepted the Lord Jesus as their personal Saviour are in *possession* of the life, joy, and power of it ; *these* are sealed by the Holy Ghost.

But the passages you enquire about (Heb. vi. 4-9 ; x. 26-29) have special reference to those who, having for some cause or other professed Christianity, yet deliberately returned to Judaism, and by so doing avowed that the crucifixion of Christ as a blasphemer was just, and that His blood was worthless. They had come for a time under the benign influence of the Word of God and the presence of the Holy Ghost (see Acts ii. 41-47), and yet were unchanged in heart ; and, like the ground that, in spite of much tilling, yields only thorns and briers, they were rejected. This was not the backsliding of true Christians, for whom there is restoration, but the actual

giving up of Christianity as an imposture. There is no hope for such, and there could be none, for outside of Christ there is no salvation.

The Cleansing of the Temple.

H.H.H. There is nothing inconsistent with the grace that was in the Lord Jesus in the solemn scene brought before us in John ii. 13-17, for grace does not tolerate iniquity. In righteous anger He dealt with those who had defiled His Father's house by turning it into a house of merchandise and a den of thieves. We have no reason to suppose that He did not use the scourge that He made, or to question that He overturned the tables of the money-changers with His own hands. The whole act was a foreshadowing of how in unsparing judgment He will purge out of His kingdom, when He comes, all that offends.

"The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth Violence" (Matt. xi. 12).

H.H.H. To understand this passage you must consider the context: the words were uttered when it was evident that Israel would not have the Lord Jesus as her Messiah. In the previous chapter the leaders of the nation had blasphemously called Him Beelzebub, and in this chapter He had to upbraid and condemn the cities of Galilee, because they repented not, though they had witnessed His mighty works.

The kingdom of heaven was not acceptable to the nation, and those who would belong to it must of necessity run counter to the current of popular thought.

It was probable that the religious leaders would seek to kill them, for they are warned to "fear not them which kill the body" (x. 28). Not only so, but they would meet opposition in the nearest circle, the domestic, for "a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (ver. 36); and it would be necessary to set aside father, mother, son, and daughter for Christ's sake.

Then last and most difficult of all, the disciple must take up his cross, follow after Christ, and lose his life for His sake; and this means the denial of self (vers. 38, 39).

So that to follow the rejected King, and so belong to the kingdom of heaven, meant to resist the influences of popular religion, and the family, and all the inclinations of a fallen nature within. It is evident that for such a conflict as this involves the determined courage of *faith* is indispensable, and the man who would go in for it must not be easily daunted; hence the statement that "from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

The world is unchanged in character, and every influence within it is opposed to those who would be subject to Christ, so that it is still true that the Christian life is not one of ease but of constant conflict.

Will All Believers be caught up to meet the Lord at His Coming Again?

J.M. In reply to this enquiry we would refer first to 1 Corinthians xv. 22, 23, which states that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward *they that are Christ's* at His coming."

"They that are Christ's" takes in *all* that are His amongst sleeping saints: it is not here any question of their having been faithful or watchful, but just that they belong to Him; He bought them by His own blood, and in that day He will by His redemptive power lift them, because they are His, completely out of and beyond the power and sphere of death: they, with living saints, "shall *all* be changed" (ver. 51). Again, from 1 Thessalonians iv. 15-18 it is also clear that *all* believers will be raptured at that glorious day, for only *two* classes are there con-

templated, "the dead in Christ," and "we which are alive and remain."

But further, it is an absolute necessity that not one believer should be left behind, because if one were left out the church would not be complete; and if incomplete, Christ, who loved the church and gave Himself for it, would not be able to "present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing"; and in that case the marriage of the Lamb, which precedes His coming to reign over the earth (Rev. xix.), could not take place.

"Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. ix. 28) seems to be a difficulty to some on this question; but really there is no need that it should be, for what is normal to Christians is here contemplated, though the truth is so put as to stir us up and produce exercise within us as to whether "looking for Him" is indeed our present attitude.

The New Heavens and New Earth.

C.N. Very little is revealed to us in Scripture as to the *material* character of the new heavens and earth of which we read in 2 Peter iii. 13. Sufficient for us it is to know that the present order of things is to pass entirely away; this much is clearly revealed to us, no doubt with the intention that we should not found our hopes in or upon it, but in God who is unchanging and eternal.

We believe, however, that matter will not be annihilated; and from Hebrews i. 12 we gather that this material creation will be "changed" to suit that condition of things which will change no more, where righteousness shall *dwell*; and where God will be all in all (1 Cor. xv. 28). Thus though the metamorphosis will be complete, all that is visible being first "dissolved" by fire (2 Peter iii. 10-13), yet there will abide a link of identity between the old and the new, so that they can

be spoken of simply as "changed"; even as a link of identity abides between the natural body which we now possess and the spiritual body which we shall have when we all (living or dead) shall be "changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51). This is very clearly brought out in the words written of the body of a sleeping saint: "It is sown in corruption; *it* is raised in incorruption . . . it is sown a natural body; *it* is raised a spiritual body" (vers. 42-44).

The blessed character of the new heavens and the new earth is described in Revelation xxi., where we read, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. xxi. 3, 4).

2 Thessalonians ii. 7.

J.C. The reference here is to the Holy Spirit, who is the great restraining power to the full development of the mystery of iniquity. At the rapture of the church, the Holy Spirit, who dwells in it, will leave the earth; then there will be no further hindrance to the revelation of the man of sin.

"Mammon of Unrighteousness."

This expression (Luke xvi. 9) refers to earthly possessions, whether great or small. They are so termed because unrighteousness characterizes man to whom these things were originally committed as God's steward. On account of this unrighteousness man is under sentence of dismissal; in other words, because of sin he must die and so vacate his stewardship. The lesson in the parable is as to how the *interval* is to be used between sentence of dismissal and the actual carrying out of that sentence; and the moral for the disciples (and note that the parable

is given as instruction to *them*, see ver. 1) is that present possessions are to be used with a view to the *future*: that not *things* but GOD was to be the controlling power in their lives (ver. 13). The contrast appears in the parable of the rich man (see vers. 19 to 31).

You may ask the question: "Can a man, then, gain salvation by giving?" Certainly not, for "though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor . . . and have not charity [or "love" N.T.; i.e. the divine nature which only those born of God possess] it profiteth me nothing" (1 Cor. xiii. 3).

There is a moral link between Luke xv. and xvi.; in the former (in which Scribes, Pharisees, publicans, and sinners are addressed) the grace of God is manifested in the threefold parable of the Shepherd, the Woman, and the Father, in which is portrayed for us the activities of the love of God in the reclamation of the lost. But when grace saves a man, it does not leave him to follow the old ways and motives, to make *himself* the centre of his thoughts, and to live for himself alone; but teaches him to "live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world" (Titus ii. 12), fulfilling his obligations with the future always in view. Thus the proper use of possessions is given as the fruit of the grace of God in the heart (see 2 Cor. viii.; 1 John iii. 17).

A paper on this subject appeared in the February (1909) issue of *Scripture Truth*.

What are your special difficulties as to verbal inspiration? There is a very good book on this subject, *The Scripture of Truth*, by Sidney Collett, published at 2s. 6d., which can be obtained at the Office of this Magazine.

"Spiritual" (1 Cor. ii. 15, iii. 1).

G.P. It is evident that not all who have the Spirit are *spiritual*, for the Corinthian believers, as all others, were

indwelt by the Spirit of God (vi. 19); yet the Apostle had to tell them that they were not spiritual, but carnal.

We judge that a spiritual man is one who is formed in his thoughts and ways by the Spirit; he is capable of discerning what is true and false, good and evil, not by his natural powers—for the natural man cannot receive or discern the things of God—but by the intelligence given by the Spirit. The Corinthian believers were *but babes*, they were in a dwarfed and abnormal condition, having been affected by carnal considerations, and their judgment having been warped and their view limited by the motives that govern men in the world. The envyings, divisions, strifes, and sectarianism amongst them was evidence of this: the spiritual man would walk above these fleshly motives and ways. The *normal* state of the Christian is to be led by the Spirit of God, and so to be spiritual.

In Romans xv. 27 the "spiritual things" are the blessings of Christianity, and are put there in contrast to carnal or material things—money. The blessings of Christianity are not such as the Jew in the past dispensation enjoyed—material prosperity on earth—but spiritual blessings to be enjoyed by the Holy Ghost in faith. These blessings first came to the Gentiles by the outgoing of the gospel from saints at Jerusalem, and in this way the Gentiles were made partakers of "their spiritual things."

1 Corinthians xv. 46. The contrast here is between the first man Adam, a living soul, and the last Adam, a quickening Spirit, who supersedes the first and brings into being a spiritual race.

Romans viii. 13. We do not think that this passage speaks of the governmental dealings of the Lord with His own people as in 1 Corinthians xi. 30-32. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die" is rather the solemn statement of a truth which is universal in its bearing; there

is nothing but death for that kind of living. It is more on the line of Galatians vi. 8: "He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption."

On the other hand, the Spirit dwells within the believer, and is the power by which the deeds of the body are to be mortified, so that the flesh may have no place, and so we live. The verse gives the *effect* of the two modes of living.

As to Galatians vi. 1, it is not difficult to understand that a spiritual man is needed to restore one who has fallen, for wisdom, strength, and grace are needed for this.

"Millennial Dawnism"

E.J.D. Yes, we class this evil theology amongst the doctrines of demons: moreover, we believe it to be one of the most subtle and pernicious of them, because it makes a great show of reverence for the Scrip-

tures, and thus deceives the simple. It is entirely unscriptural: it denies the truth of the Divine Trinity; it denies the eternal Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ; it denies that He was anything more than man when here upon earth; it robs His atoning sacrifice of its true value; it denies His bodily resurrection; and robs the Christian of the High Priest who is touched with the feeling of his infirmities now; it denies the personality of the Holy Ghost; it denies the eternal punishment of the wicked; and what is there left of Christianity when these things are gone? You think that it cannot be of Satan because the overthrow of Satan is predicted in its teaching; be not deceived by this, which is but an evidence of the depths of Satan which has been successful in throwing at least one person off his guard. The test of any teaching is not what think ye of Satan, but "What think ye of Christ?"

"Him that is Able."

(J. T. MAWSON).

MORE often than not Christians discover their own weakness, and learn to rely upon the power of the Lord through bitter experience. The thought of the young Christian is, that his life will be triumphant henceforward; and though others may be weak and fail, he is confident, as was Simon of old, that he is able to stand for the Lord, no matter how great the opposition. Then comes the galling failure and the great disappointment, until finally the lesson is learnt that no good or strength dwells in us, and all power and grace is in the Lord.

To illustrate: A little boy is put for the first time into a boy's suit of clothes. How proud he is of his new possession. His babyhood is passed, and he is a man in his own regard. His father proposes a walk and he is delighted.

It is the winter time and the footpath is very slippery, so father says, "You

had better take my hand, my boy." But the boy is not prepared for this, he might have done so yesterday, for he was only a baby then, but not to-day, for he is a man now and can walk alone.

So on he strides with head erect, until he comes to a part of the road more treacherous than the rest, and down he goes, ere ever he is aware of danger. His pride is humbled, but he needs another fall, and perhaps still another, before he ceases to trust his own ability, and puts his hand into his father's to walk the rest of the way in safety.

How blessed to know that in spite of our self-sufficiency there walks by our side One who will never forsake us, and that He patiently waits until we are prepared to put our hand, in entire dependence, into His, and so henceforward prove the blessed fact that He is able to keep us from falling (Jude 24).

On Both Sides of the Sea.

(J. T. MAWSON).

And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives (Matt. xxvi. 30).
In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee (Heb. ii. 12).

WE Christians are called to be a triumphant people. Through the riches of the grace of God we can sing our songs of praise unto Him, but in this we are like the Israelites when they saw their enemies dead upon the seashore; then in the gladness of their freedom from the cruel oppressor they could sound the loud timbrel and sing the high praise of Jehovah, for He had manifested the greatness of His excellency in their deliverance (Exod. xv.). But they did not sing on the other side, when the waters rolled darkly before them, the fierce foe pressed hard behind, and the mountains reared their rugged heads on either side. *But Jesus sang on both sides of the sea.*

He "divided the sea, whose waves roared," and "made the depths of it a way for the ransomed to pass over." He divided it by passing through it, while all its fury was spent upon Him, and now in resurrection He can celebrate His great triumph, surrounded by those whom He has set free; and so is fulfilled the word, "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee." But He also sang on the other side. When deep called unto deep, when the waters were gathered to compass Him about, when the waves and billows of judgment uprose to pass over Him: as the darkness of Gethsemane and the deeper darkness of Calvary, with all its shame and woe and ignominy and unspeakable sorrow, confronted Him, then He lifted up His voice and sang unto God.

The disciples may have known the words and the tune, but we cannot suppose that they entered into the spirit and meaning of that praise-psalm; He was the singer in deed and in truth.

It is written, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me," and herein was that passage fulfilled and God greatly glorified, even though no other heart appreciated or understood what Jesus then did.

When the last "Praise ye the Lord" of that song was reached, He spoke of Himself as the Shepherd—the Shepherd, who, for the sake of the flock, was to bear the smiting of Jehovah's rod, and in view of this smiting He had to say, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." But in the presence of that unspeakable sorrow He fully approved God's will concerning Him, and to its last drop He would drink the cup that His Father gave Him. In this holy determination, conscious of God's approval of His faithfulness, He sang forth His praise as He entered the conflict. Be assured the music of that singing will never pass away; it will sound for ever in the Father's ear as the melody of a trust that never faltered and a love that was stronger than death.

So He sang *then* and so He sings *now*. But now He has companions who can join in the singing that He leadeth: His brethren, who owe their every joy to His sorrow, who are placed, through His death, beyond the reach of judgment's wrathful sea; who are one with Him in nature and life, and to whom He has revealed His Father's name. These can share His joy, and so can sing in concert with Him, for they stand with Him in the unclouded light of His Father's love, and this is their place for ever. But how our hearts are moved in the midst of our joy, and for ever will be, as we remember that *He sang on the other side of the sea.*

Thoughts of Him.

(M. J. DECK).

I JOURNEY through a desert drear and wild,
Yet is my heart by such sweet thoughts beguiled,
Of Him on whom I lean, my strength, my stay,
I can forget the sorrows of the way.

Thoughts of His love—the root of every grace
Which finds in this poor heart a dwelling-place,
The sunshine of my soul, than day more bright,
And my calm pillow of repose by night.

Thoughts of His sojourn in this vale of tears—
The tale of love unfolded in those years
Of sinless suffering and patient grace,
I love again, and yet again, to trace.

Thoughts of His glory—on the cross I gaze,
And there behold its sad, yet healing rays,
Beacon of hope, which lifted up on high,
Illumes with heavenly light the tear-dimmed eye.

Thoughts of His coming—for that joyful day
In patient hope I watch, and wait, and pray ;
The day draws nigh, the midnight shadows flee.
Oh ! what a sunrise will that advent be !

Thus while I journey on my Lord to meet,
My thoughts and meditations are so sweet,
Of Him on whom I lean, my strength, my stay,
I can forget the sorrows of the way.

Immortality.

(J. McCULLOCH).

Proved from the Person of Christ and the Scriptures.

MAN is the only one of God's creatures that was created in the image and likeness of God, for "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and he became a living soul." He was, therefore, made in the divine image and had the divine inbreathing of God (Gen. ii. 7).

All heresies are either *direct* or *indirect* attacks upon the Person of Christ. And if so, annihilation, conditional immortality and kindred heretical doctrines with regard to the constitution and destiny of man, which are being so sedulously propagated, are attacks upon the truth as to Himself. He was man as well as God. As to His manhood, He had a body, soul, and spirit,

even as we have, but of Him it is said "in Him is no sin" 1 John iii. 5, He "knew no sin" 2 Cor. v. 21, He "did no sin" 1 Peter ii. 22, He was "without sin" Heb. iv. 15, "Holy One and Just" Acts iii. 14, He was "that holy thing" Luke i. 35, and He was "God manifest in the flesh" 1 Tim. iii. 16; Rom. ix. 5; John i. 14.

He had a body in which He bare our sins on the tree (1 Peter ii. 24). That body was prepared (Heb. x. 5); it was offered once for all upon the cross (Heb. x. 10); it was laid in the grave (John xix. 40); it is called the body of His flesh (Col. i. 22). He was raised from the dead, having that same body, by the glory of the Father (Luke xxiv. 3, 23, 39). He was mani-

fested, seen, looked upon, and handled by His disciples both before and after His resurrection (1 John i. 1-3). Having that same body He ascended to the glory of God (Acts i. 9, 10), was seen in that glory by the martyr Stephen (Acts vii. 56), and took His seat upon the throne of God (Heb. viii. 1; 1 Peter iii. 22). To that body of glory His saints shall be conformed when He comes the second time (Phil. iii. 21).

As to His soul, it was troubled—was exceeding sorrowful unto death (Matt. xxvi. 38; Mark xiv. 34)—was made an offering for sin (Isa. liii. 10); —was poured out unto death (Isa. liii. 12). It was not left in Hades (Acts ii. 31; Ps. xvi. 10), He shall see the travail of it in the redemption of His people (Isa. liii. 11).

In regard to His spirit, He perceived and sighed in His spirit (Mark ii. 8, viii. 12). He rejoiced in it (Luke x. 21), it was troubled (John xiii. 21), He gave it up (Matt. xxvii. 50; John xix. 30), and commended it to His Father when He died upon the cross (Luke xxiii. 46). From these facts stated in Scripture we learn from God Himself that our Lord was a true Man, having body, soul, and spirit. Adam, as created by God, was a *sinless* but *not a divine man*. (Sin is an intrusion into human nature.) Jesus, born into this world, was *holy* and *divine*; yet, withal, *truly man*. In Him we see the great mystery of the Incarnation: very God and very man, yet one person for ever.

We are told that life and incorruptibility are brought to light through the gospel (2 Tim. i. 10). They must have existed before they were brought to light. They are brought to light by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who has abolished death by His resurrection from it.

As to the direct proofs of the human soul's and spirit's never-dyingness, the Lord said to the thief, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43), and into Paradise the Lord and the thief passed that self-same day.

The thief, perhaps one of the worst of earth, entered into the *best* place in the universe of God with the greatest Person that existed in that universe, through the atoning merit of the blood of the One who took him there. To the passing into bliss of the thief, the case of Judas stands in awful contrast. He sold his Lord, and in mad despair hung himself, and went "to his own place" (Acts i. 25), and is designated in the Psalms "that wicked man" (Ps. cix. 2).

Contrast, again, Stephen the martyr and Herod the king. The one dies like his Master, praying for his enemies and committing his spirit to the blessed Lord who filled his eye in the glory of God (Acts vii. 54, 60). The wicked king dies with the praises of the wicked in his ears, and yields up the ghost, or spirit, showing that, when his body was eaten up of worms, his spirit returned to God who gave it (Acts xii. 20, 23; Ecc. xii. 7).

Passing to Hebrews xii. 23, the writer of the epistle tells the Hebrew saints they are come to the "spirits of just men made perfect," proving decisively that these spirits *existed in the disembodied state when the epistle was written*. Peter tells of a separate class of spirits, existing *when he wrote his epistle*, who had died some 2400 years. They were those to whom the Spirit of Christ had preached when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah; but they had repented not in the day of mercy and had passed out of time into eternity, and *when the Apostle wrote his epistle he called them "the spirits in prison,"* proving the perpetuity of their being.

Turn, again, to another scene in Revelation vi., when the fifth seal is opened, the seer beheld the "souls" (mark souls) of them that were slain for the Word of God. They are living souls; they cry, but they have to wait until their martyr-brethren have been slain, when they shall receive a glorious vindication (Rev. vi. 9-11). Note well. They are said to be *slain*, but their souls

live, they cry and wait. If blotted out of being, how could this be true of them?

Observe another vivid picture in Revelation xi. The two witnesses prophesy, they are real men and they are slain, their bodies or corpses lie for three days in the street of the great city, and after three days and a half the spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood upon their feet—they are called up to heaven, they ascend in the cloud, and their enemies behold their glorious ascension. It was their bodies that got life from God, not their souls (Rev. xi. 3-12). "The body without the spirit is dead" (James ii. 26).

Then in chapter xiii. we behold the beast and the false prophet. They, too, have all the marks of personality. They are not systems, but living men; the one is the head of the political world, and the other the head of the religious world, but both warring against God and Christ. In the nineteenth chapter Jesus the Son of man comes out as the warrior Judge, with His saints and angels in retinue. The beast and the false prophet head up the world's revolt against God—these are "cast *alive* into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." And in chapter xx. 10: "The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are, and they (R.V.) shall be tormented day and night *for ever and ever.*" This is one of the strongest expressions for eternity found in Holy Scripture (see Concordance for proof). It is quite clear that in neither the two witnesses, nor the beast and the false prophet, is there any *extinction of being* in their exit from *time* into eternity, for they pass to the scene of bliss above or to that of pain below, and we read of no change in their eternal destiny.

In chapter xx. the prophet saw thrones and sitters upon them. Judgment was given unto them. He calls them "the souls that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the Word of God;" "they live and reign

with Christ a thousand years;" and "they are kings and priests unto God and Christ." The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished; but when that period terminates he beholds the great white throne, and "the dead, small and great, stand before the throne" (R.V.). The books are opened, the book of works and the book of life. Their works, which had been only evil, are recorded in the book of works, and their human history, which had been a history of death towards God and living energy in evil, is not registered in the book of life—their names are not there. They are cast into the lake of fire, which is solemnly said to be the second death, *even the lake of fire* (Rev. xx. 14. (R.V.), xi. 15).

And, finally, consider the contrasted states as shown in the solemn vision that the prophet gives us of the *eternal state* when the kingdom has been given up to God the Father, when God is all in all (1 Cor. xv. 24-28), when there is a new heaven and a new earth, when God shall say "It is done"—we find presented in the twenty-first of Revelation the most vivid contrast between those who are in a state of eternal *bliss and pleasure*, and those who are in a state of everlasting *woe and pain*.

As to the saints or blessed ones, the prophet shows us a new heaven and a new earth, a holy city—New Jerusalem—coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. The tabernacle or dwelling of God is with men, they are His people. God Himself is with them—their God. He wipes all tears away, death is no more, neither sorrowing nor crying; there is no pain, the former things have passed away. And the overcomer shall inherit these things (R.V.) and God says, I will be his God and he shall be My son (Rev. xxi. 1-7).

The little word *but* brings out the vivid contrast when we are told "*But* the fearful [or cowardly], and unbelieving,

and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. xxi. 8). Note, their lives were characterized by these awful sins.

These solemn statements, compared with chapter xxii. 11-15, show that *character* in time is stamped with the everlasting brand of God's eternity, and by no possible means can the wicked enter the gates of the city of bliss, or leave the domain of woe in which they are seen, as revealed in the last recorded

revelation of God. It has been wisely said, "Sow an act, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny." If this is the final revelation of God about saints and sinners, how foolish for poor mortals to dispute and reason thereon!

The above proofs are a few of the most direct evidences of the *soul's* or *spirit's undyingness* and immortality, and that though death seize the body, the soul or spirit continues to exist untouched and unimpaired in all that pertains to being, feeling, and sensibility.

(To be continued.)

The Cloud of Witnesses.

(H. P. BARKER).

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us (Heb. xii. 1).

THE Apostle's exhortation to lay aside every weight, and the sin that so easily besets us, is based upon the fact that we are "compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses."

Various opinions have been mooted as to who these "witnesses" are. Are they the angels, contemplating us from above? Or are they our departed friends looking down over "the battlements of heaven" to watch our progress upon earth? Or does the passage refer to the great multitude of the unconverted in the world around us, whose critical eyes are upon us, and who are indeed "witnesses" of our doings? But no close student of the scripture before us could possibly imagine that the "witnesses" are anything of the sort. They are neither the angels, nor our deceased friends in heaven, nor onlookers upon earth. The "cloud of witnesses" consists of the men and women whose names and whose deeds of faith are mentioned in the previous chapter, the eleventh of Hebrews.

Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sara, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses and his parents, Rahab, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthæ, David, Samuel, the

prophets; these constitute the glorious galaxy of witnesses, to whose testimony we are expected to give heed. They are "witnesses," not in the sense of "onlookers," but in the sense of "bearers of testimony."

And to what great fact, or truth, do these saints of bygone times bear witness? What is the theme of their combined testimony? This: THAT THE LIFE OF FAITH IS NOT AN AIRY, UP-IN-THE-CLOUDS, IMPRACTICABLE KIND OF THING, BUT THAT IT IS A LIFE TO WHICH THE PEOPLE OF GOD ARE ALL CALLED, AND WHICH IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO LIVE.

Perhaps some of my readers may be somewhat startled by this statement. "The life of faith!" they may exclaim; "how can *all* Christians be called to it? We thought it was only those in difficult circumstances, those who are temporarily without employment, or those who have relinquished their positions in order to preach the gospel, who are called upon to live by faith."

But this is by no means the case. The Christian who has an income of

ten thousand pounds a year is just as truly called to the life of faith as the Christian who has hardly a shilling that he can call his own.

What is this "living by faith," then? It is living *a life which is coloured and controlled by unseen things, rather than by the things which govern the majority of lives.*

It is this that marked the old-time saints referred to in Hebrews xi. The governing influences of their lives were the invisible things of another world. These things, unseen though they were, were more real and substantial to those men of faith than the things around them which their eyes could see.

In a materialistic age like the present such a life will be considered more than ever unfeasible. Those who go in for it will be deemed mystics. But those great, unseen realities of God's world remain. When everything visible has perished they will abide in all their greatness. Faith makes them substantial to us, and they thus get a greater hold upon us than the things of time,

and they become the ruling influences of our lives.

For the Christian, these great and wonderful things find their expression in *Christ*. They are spoken of in Colossians iii. 1 as "those things which are above." 1 Corinthians ii. 12 calls them "the things that are freely given to us of God." 2 Corinthians iv. 18 speaks of them as "the things which are not seen," and says they are "eternal."

Reader and writer need to question themselves with regard to these things: Are they more real to us than the visible things around? Which things *govern* us, the seen or the unseen? *Faith* is the substantiating of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Heb. xi. 1). To live by *faith* is to live in the power of these great realities. To live by *sight* is to be governed by the things that weigh most with men of the world.

May God grant us such eyesight that, like Moses, we may see Him who is invisible, and may discern the things that are of Him.

"Shew me Thy Glory."

(J. ALFRED TRENCH).

There is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (Rom. iii. 23, 23).

We rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Rom. v. 2).

Moses said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. . . . And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live (Exod. xxxiii. 18, 20).

We all, looking upon the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, are transformed according to the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit (2 Cor. iii. 18, N.T.).

IT is an immense thing for the soul when it is seen from the first that His own glory is the standard to which God will conform all those whom He is pleased to take into relationship with Himself. Nothing short of this will do for Him, nothing but what perfectly answers to that standard can ever enter into the glory of God. Now the gospel is the full revelation of that glory.

Only in the consciousness of being fit for His presence could any creature be at home with God: and such is His love that He will have us there in no

other way. Nor is this true of the future only. God has wrought in blessed grace to bring us to Himself now, that we may be before Him without fear, every barrier broken down, no unsettled question between our souls and Him. *The ground* of such a place is found in that "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." *The effect* is known in the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given us. The Holy Ghost is also within us as the Spirit of sonship whereby we cry Abba, Father, in

the childlike confidence and holy intimacy of such nearness to God, while God Himself has become our exceeding joy. Not a step is taken in the Christian path here before we can "give thanks to the Father who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. i. 12).

Who can bridge the distance between the first two verses that head our paper? It is "the gospel of the glory of Christ" alone that enables us to put them together: the whole revelation that God has given us of Himself in that gospel lies between these two points. But who could have conceived that the glory of God, the light of which convicts us as sinners in chapter iii., should become the hope of the believer in chapter v. 2? Well may it be said of us, even more than of Jacob and Israel of old, "What has God wrought?" (Num. xxiii. 23).

To "come short" in no sense refers to the innumerable shortcomings of conduct with which all who know themselves must charge themselves before God. But, that as in the public service there is a standard of height for the army and the like, and no one who does not come up to it can be taken into the ranks, so God has a standard for those He receives. *It is His glory*, long hidden behind the veil, but now brought to light in the gospel. Every creature must submit himself to it. Nor is it any question of the degrees in which we are short of it. "There is no difference:" we all fall short of the only standard of the sanctuary.

How fatal is the fallacy of measuring ourselves by any other; and we have all done this. "God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men: extortioners, unjust, adulterers, nor even as this publican," expresses not only the utter blindness of the religious Pharisee in the parable, but is the fruitful cause of blindness everywhere. Who does not know somebody to compare himself with advantageously or the reverse?

It is all false ground to take, and the surest way to be deceived by the enemy of God and of our souls.

Romans iii. 9-19 presents the glass into which we must look if we would know the truth of our condition. "All are under sin:" there is no exception. By every avenue by which what is in man could come out—the throat, the tongue, the lips, the mouth, the feet, the ways, the eyes—in awful sevenfold completeness nothing but sin is expressed: and this not the state of the heathen merely. It is the testimony of the law as to those who are under it, "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world be under judgment to God" (ver. 19, N.T.). All nice distinctions between sinner and sinner, that men think to make in their own favour, utterly disappear before God. Measured by His standard, "there is no difference; for all have sinned, and fall short [R.V.] of the glory of God."

Yet if God had left us to apply the standard to ourselves, who would not have preferred his own estimate of himself? But it is just here that the goodness of God intervenes to lead the sinner to repentance (chap. ii. ver. 4). He it is who in sovereign grace takes His own way to bring home the light of the revelation to our souls. Nothing is calculated to affect the heart more deeply than these ways of His grace, pursuing the soul individually, that would have never sought Him, to bring sins upon the conscience, without which there is no reality in the soul with God.

Isaiah gives us a beautiful case in point of this work of God. The prophet tells us of his conversion. He saw "the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up:" every circumstance of majesty was there. The Seraphim cried, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory." John xii. 41 clearly states that it was the glory of the Lord Jesus that Isaiah saw. What was the immediate

effect of His glory upon him? "Then said I, Woe is me!" It was a wonderful interlude of grace to the prophet: he had been pronouncing woe upon every phase of iniquity in Israel (chap. v. vers. 8, 11, 18, 20-22), and had yet to complete the solemn sevenfold denunciation of it in chap. x. ver. 1 (chaps. vi. to xi. ver. 7 coming in as a parenthesis of God's purposes centred in the Virgin's Son, Immanuel). Now he has to pronounce it upon himself: "Woe is me! for I am undone because I am a man of unclean lips . . . for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Unclean lips would not do for the glory of the Lord.

But what made his lips unclean? "Not that which goeth into the mouth" —as the Lord says in Matthew xv. 11, 18—"defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. . . . Those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and they defile the man." Here we are all in the same case, whatever the apparent differences as to outward life. "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually" is found to be not only an antediluvian state of things, but the truth of the heart of man everywhere and at all times: it is the defiled spring of everything that defiles. The moment Isaiah was brought to his true bearings before God, the answer of grace in the removal of his guilt, in as far as it could be known then, was not delayed a moment.

But the truth as to man's condition under the light of the glory of God goes deeper still. Let us turn to Exodus xxxiii. Here the whole circumstances are such as to profoundly impress the soul. Moses had been admitted to an unprecedented privilege of intercourse with God. "The Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (ver. 11). Emboldened by the favour shown him he proffers his request and is answered graciously. But there was a reserve of which he was conscious, and at last it takes

shape: "he said, I beseech Thee, shew me now thy glory" (ver. 18). We may not all have been led to such a defined sense of need as to be able to express it in this way. Yet it may be confidently affirmed that no soul is at settled rest in the presence of God that has not found the answer to what Moses thus sought but that could not be granted to him.

"And He said, I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And He said, Thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see Me, and live" (vers. 19, 20). There were sovereign resources of goodness and grace and mercy in the Name thus proclaimed, upon which faith could count for the new relations of the Lord with the people, for whom otherwise all was lost in their total failure in the responsibility they had assumed. But the whole ground upon which men under law stood, and that was Moses' personal position (his typical place as representative of Christ as Mediator is not in question), was untenable, in the light of the glory of God.

For the law came to man, already a sinner, to demand that he should not be one; nor does it open to him any way of deliverance from that condition: it neither gave life, nor strength, nor object; and in result can only bring him under the curse. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (see Gal. iii. 10 and 21). When this was the revealed ground upon which Moses stood it was no wonder that there could be no manifestation of the glory of the Lord. It would have been his destruction.

We are brought to this, then, that it is not only that a guilty conscience

cannot stand before Him who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil," nor that the state of the heart unfits for His presence, but that man at his best will not do for God. Yet because nothing is so strange or contrary to the thoughts of men God had to allow the truth to come out in the long patient trial of the ages up to the cross of Christ. The history of the chosen nation which forms so large a part of the Old Testament, was just that of man proved under the most favourable circumstances.

The parable of the Lord in Mark xii. leads us to the result. God had sent servant after servant to His vineyard to receive the fruits of His culture, but they had been shamefully handled, sent away empty, or killed: "Having yet therefore one Son, His well-beloved, He sent Him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence My Son." But when they recognized Him, "they took Him, and killed Him, and cast Him out of the vineyard." It was the last answer of man's heart to the last test God had to apply to it—"Away with Him, crucify Him."

Stephen, at the close of his remarkable address in Acts vii., sums up the whole history. The promises were despised (for they turned back in heart into Egypt), the law transgressed, the prophets persecuted and slain, the Just One betrayed and murdered, and the Holy Ghost always resisted. What a history of man under probation! What a disclosure of the state of his whole race! Not a sound spot to be found in it: not a man that answered to the standard of God. How far has the solemn lesson been learned in our souls to this day, that having given up all hope of ourselves, we might submit ourselves without reserve to the absolute necessity of God's way of dealing with the race, as announced in His early sentence, "The end of all flesh is come before Me"? (Gen. vi. 13).

But if it should appear as if we were no nearer the discovery of how any of us could ever rejoice in hope of the glory of God, when the only effect

hitherto of any rays of the light of it has been to reveal men, and all men alike, to be fit for nothing but the judgment of God; the truth is—and it is very blessed to be brought to know it—that all God's dealings with the race have had for their object to shut up the soul to the second Man, whom God has found for Himself, and of whom the first was but a figure (Rom. v. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 45-49).

As the second Man the Lord Jesus Christ is contrasted with the first, for the question was of bringing in another man, instead of any further dealings with the first, to modify or improve his condition. He is the last Adam, as foreclosing the history of the first, the One and the only One in whom there was any hope for men from the beginning. To Him the eye of faith turns to find the perfection in which God delights. He it is who is made of God to the believer all that fits us for the unclouded light of His glory (1 Cor. i. 31), and to whose image we shall yet be conformed according to the eternal counsel of His love (Rom. viii. 29).

For there was another aspect of Christ's presence in the world than that of bringing out by His rejection the state of all hearts before God. An intimation of it is found at the moment of His entrance into it, in the outburst of heavenly praise over the newborn Babe in Bethlehem: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good pleasure in men" (Luke ii. 14, N.T.). For that was the order of heaven's mind, if little thought of on earth. There must be glory to God before there could be peace on earth, or God's good pleasure in men. Can we in any little measure seek to follow out by the Spirit's teaching how that glory was accomplished? It must be as our eyes, closed upon all that is of the man under condemnation, are open upon the One in whom God finds His perfect delight. In Him we trace the path of man's perfection before God as had never been found on earth before. Man governed only by the

will of Him who had sent Him. By every form of testing He was proved to be perfect in dependence, in obedience, in the devotedness of love to the Father, and the absolute refusal of the world's glory. His path was one solitary track of light across the darkness of man's world.

The Father's estimate of that tested and perfect path, even if there was no other to enter into it, was declared on the Mount of Transfiguration, as we learn from the chosen witnesses of His majesty. "He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (2 Peter i. 16, 17). At last there was a Man upon earth that the excellent glory could claim as perfectly suited to it, and in the moral contrast between Him and all other men there is the final demonstration that they are short of the only standard God can recognize.

But did the heavens then receive Him from the holy mount whose title none could dispute to enter into them, and did He leave the world to the judgment of God? No; blessed be God! He came down from that mountain to begin His last journey to Jerusalem to die. From His own words we learn the meaning of the descent. When Judas was gone out into the night to consummate his treachery, and prove what the heart of man was capable of, "Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him." Let us pause to note how in His perfection He counts it His glory to be able to glorify God, though it had to be in all the shame and humiliation of the cross. But He continues: "If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him" (John xiii. 31, 32). God had indeed been glorified in His walk before Him in man's perfection. He had been glorified, too, in the perfect revelation of all divine goodness in man before

men, as it never had come out before. But the *full* outflow of that goodness was still hindered, and Jesus had to say, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished" (Luke xii. 50).

The whole question of sin—for man's state was proved to be nothing but sin—had to be gone into, and God glorified as to sin. The blessed Lord was on His way to the cross to meet, in the baptism of divine judgment due to sin, the worst work of the enemy and turn it into the occasion of bringing the brightest glory to God, in the revelation of all that He is. The mighty works of creation had displayed His eternal power and Godhead, but told nothing of His nature, save as the general impression of beneficence might be gathered from the character of His works. But in the work of the cross every moral attribute of His Being has been revealed and glorified, and that when nothing but sin was in question. There what God is *against sin* has come out as fully as all that He is *for the sinner*. Divine holiness was manifested when Jesus was left in the anguish of His soul to cry, "My God, My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Divine righteousness against sin was there declared in sin's righteous judgment infinitely endured—not one drop of the dreaded cup remitted to Him who could alone exhaust it. The majesty of the throne was vindicated. The truth of God was maintained, light and love, what God is in Himself, were in full manifestation. GOD had been revealed and glorified.

And now the claim of the Lord Jesus was that if it were so indeed, that God was glorified in His accomplished work, He would glorify Him in Himself, and not wait for the kingdom to do it, but "straightway" glorify Him. Again, in chapter xvii. 1, He can say "The hour is come" (He takes His place as having gone through it), and claims glory by His divine title as the Son; while in verses 4, 5 He claims to take His place as man in the glory He had

with the Father before the world was, on the ground that "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." Could the answer to such a claim be withheld? Impossible, in very righteousness, to say nothing of what we can conceive so little of, the satisfaction of the Father's heart in it. Before the devoted women that loved Him could be at the sepulchre that resurrection morning, the glory of the Father had been there: He "was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father" (Rom. vi. 4). "God raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory" (1 Peter i. 21). The Spirit witnesses of

the full positive revelation of the righteousness of God in the place He has set Him in (John xvi. 10).

"All the depths of Thy heart's sorrow
Told in answering glory now."

Well may we rejoice in the place He has taken. It is the seal of God put upon the perfection of the work of the cross that has so infinitely glorified Him, when the Son of God had given Himself to bear our sins and be made sin for us. Well may we rest where God rests. We are saved by nothing short of the work that is the everlasting glory of God.

(To be continued.)

Things turned upside down.

WHEN it was charged against the disciples that they had turned the world upside down (Acts xvii. 6) there was certainly some ground for the charge, for the truth of the gospel overturns all the thoughts and schemes of the heart. The things that were first become last. It has been pointed out that in our grammar lessons at school we learnt that *I* was the first person, *thou* the second, and *he* the third. This also is turned upside down by the incoming of the light of the gospel. HE, the great *He* of the universe, the Son of God, must be the first Person in the speech of the new life, for in all things

He must have the pre-eminence. Then, when our souls have come into right relations with Him, we are able to rightly address ourselves to others, and the *thou*, the world of men around, is seen in its true value, and our conduct towards them can be ordered according to the truth of God. Lastly comes the *I*, and we only live aright as we can take our stand with the Apostle who said, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20).

I've seen Thee, Lord, in death for me,
And in Thy life have liberty;
But who shall tell the cost to Thee?

In heaven Thy love's unwearied still.
For me it works with love's sweet skill,
That love itself my heart doth fill.

"Ask, and ye shall receive."

THERE is no uncertainty about the "shalls" of God's Word; they follow a fixed law. I hold a book in my hand, and then leave go of it. What happens? Well, it follows fixed law, the law of gravitation, and falls to the ground. "I ask," according to this verse, "in His name," and what follows? I

receive! There is no question at all about it, it is the absolutely inevitable sequence. I am not here expounding the bearing of the expression "in His name," but *I am* insisting on the fixity of God's laws in the realm of what is spiritual—on the unquestionable certainty of one of the "shalls" of God's Word.

Bible Study.—Galatians.

(EDWARD CROSS.)

Galatians ii. 14-21.

14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

17 But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we

ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.

18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.

19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Verse 14.

THEN Paul said to Peter before all, "If thou, being a Jew, livest as do the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, how dost thou compel the Gentiles to judaize?" Peter had previously eaten with Gentiles. Taught by the vision of Acts x., he had had his eyes opened to see things from a divine point of view, and not with the narrowness of Jewish prejudice. This light he had gotten from God. "What God hath cleansed, call not thou common." And he had walked in it accordingly. Well were it for him had he continued to do so. But "the fear of man bringeth a snare;" and, seeking to maintain a position amongst his fellows, rather than the testimony of God, "he separated himself, fearing those of the circumcision." Little did he appreciate the consequences of his act. Considering for himself, he could no longer consider for the interests of Christ, and he thereby really surrendered the truth of the gospel, and gave a handle to the enemy that he was not slow to use. And what makes it the more solemn is that all this happened after he had given such unequivocal testimony at Jerusalem to the fact that God had specially chosen him that by his mouth the Gentiles "should hear the word of the gospel, and believe;" and, in the most emphatic manner, he added, "Now, therefore, why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were

able to bear?" How inconsistent, therefore, was his conduct now. By it he was, so far as the authority of his example went, compelling the Gentiles to judaize, and reversing the whole truth of the gospel that once he preached. It was necessary, therefore, that Paul, who fully realized the gravity of the situation, should resist him publicly to the face, without compromise, whatever pain there might be involved to him in so doing; and, seeing that this passage is of great importance, containing, as it does, the leading principle of the whole epistle, it may be well to give a more correct translation of it than is found in the A.V.

Galatians ii. 14-21. "I said to Peter before all, 'If thou, being a Jew, livest as the nations, and not as the Jews, how dost thou compel the nations to judaize?' We, Jews by nature, and not sinners of [the] nations, but knowing that a man is not justified on the principle of works of law [nor] but by the faith of Jesus Christ, *we* also have believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified on the principle of [the] faith of Christ; and not of works of law; because on the principle of works of law no flesh shall be justified [*cf.* Ps. cxliii. 2]. Now, if in seeking to be justified in Christ we also have been found sinners, then [is] Christ minister of sin. Far be the thought. For if the things I have thrown down, these I build again, I constitute myself a transgressor. For *I*, through law, have died to law, that I may live to God. I

am crucified with Christ, and no longer live, I, but Christ lives in me : but [in] that I now live in flesh, I live by faith, the [faith] of the Son of God, who has loved me and given Himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God ; for if righteousness [is] by law, then Christ has died for nothing" (*J. N. Darby*).

This passage may be divided in a general way as follows :—

1st. Peter's rebuke.

2nd. Paul's relation to the law. He was dead to it—it had killed him.

3rd. His deliverance from it, that he may live to God.

4th. The source of the life he now lived—Christ.

5th. Its character—faith.

6th. Its object—the Son of God.

7th. On this principle he upholds the grace of God, and justifies the death of Christ.

Peter's rebuke was sharp, but he deserved it. Secretly convinced in his own soul of what was right, what he had received directly from God Himself, and what he had publicly preached, he allows the fear of man, i.e. the pride of his own position before those amongst whom he walked, not in the fear of God, so to influence him as to falsify the gospel and to bring unthought-of dishonour on Christ Himself. Alas ! what is man ? He who knows his own heart can best appreciate the question. " Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity" (Ps. xxxix. 5). In John v. 44, we read of those who " receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only." From *God only*. How simple ! how decisive ! how it settles all such questions ! From *God only*. But how little understood, how little accepted is this simple dictum, as the ruling principle of life and action. Peter, through the fear of man, led the way in this dissimulation, and carried the rest with him. But Paul was faithful—he alone apparently so—and

he exposed to him in pitiless and unflinching truth the inconsistency of his conduct, both as touching himself and as touching the name of Christ and the gospel, and the evil consequences resulting therefrom.

Peter, being a Jew, had renounced that position, and was living as a Gentile. Now, by the weight of his example, in going back to Judaism, he was compelling the Gentiles to judaize. Paul, placing himself in the position of a Jew, speaks of the Gentiles as sinners, as so esteemed in their hopeless condition, by the Jews : but both he and Peter had left Judaism in order to be justified by the principle of faith in Christ, and not of works of law ; because, on the principle of works of law, no flesh shall be justified. This is the distinct statement of Psalm cxliii. 2, and is quoted again by the Apostle in Romans iii. 20, clenching with it, as he does here, his argument in the preceding verses. It did not, therefore, need the Apostle Paul to make good this fact. It lies embedded incontrovertibly in the heart of the Old Testament ; and on that ground alone Peter was without excuse.

Verses 17, 18.

But further, if, in seeking to be justified in Christ, i.e. in that element, or sphere, in contrast to the flesh under law, we ourselves, Jews, not to mind other people, have been found sinners, and such is the necessary condition, consciously—mark it well !—of all who are under the law, i.e. that they are sinners, not as to their natural state—all are sinners in that sense—but sinners as to the *conscious sense* of being such before God—then is Christ, in whom we have professed to believe, and who has left us in that state, " Minister of sin." Horrible thought ! God forbid ! No ; but it is I, myself, who, building again the very same things which I have thrown down, constitute myself, not a sinner merely, as by the accident of my nature, but, a transgressor, by the immorality of my act.

Verse 19.

Now, first, as to the law, *I*, the ego in me, complete and entire, through law, which has been my death, to law have consequently died; I exist no longer, as subject to its claim, that I may live to God.

Verse 20.

And, secondly, with Christ I am crucified. In his spirit he realized the full force of this principle—the power of death which spent itself in Christ: and such a death, the cursed death of the cross. He was then no longer under the power of the law; he was released from its authority, not by denying it, but by owning in his soul the vindication of it in the cross of Christ, and he was thus set free from it, that he might live to God. Associated with Christ in His death according to the counsels of God, and now realizing this in the power of the Spirit through faith, Christ, risen again in the power of that holy and imperishable life which death could not hold, became truly and practically his life before God. The expression in the original is peculiarly Pauline; “but I live, no longer I, but He lives in me, Christ; and the ‘now-I-live-in-flesh,’ in faith I live it, the faith of the Son of God, who has loved me and given Himself for me.”

The whole principle of law is elaborately dealt with in Romans vii. We have there:—

Verses 1-4.

The general *principle* of law as such, maintaining its authority during the whole period of the life of those subject to it.

Verses 5, 6.

Its *application* to those in the flesh—“bringing forth fruit unto death.”

Verses 7-12.

Its *operation* on those under it. It creates the knowledge of sin and awakens lust; so that “sin, getting a point of attack by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.”

Verses 13-24.

The *experiences* under it of a man renewed in his mind, now that he can interpret those experiences in the light of Christian knowledge, and as delivered from his former state under law. First, he finds that, “I am carnal, sold under sin”—i.e. that he was a captive to it; not that he wished to practise it, but he could not help it. Then he finds out, that, “if, what I do not will, this I practise, it is no longer *I* that do it, but the sin that dwells in me.” This, so far, is a great relief. But then, again, he finds out that the sin is too strong for him; he cannot do the good he would; “for I delight in the law of God according to the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring in opposition to the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which exists in my members. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of this body of death?”

It is not here a question of the forgiveness of sins that was settled beyond recall for him by the finished work of Christ, but of the wretched state in which he finds himself as a man—for *man* here is emphatic—and his cry for deliverance from that state. Then, at length,

Verse 26,

He finds the Deliverer; and,

Chapter viii. 1-11,

The deliverance, which, made good now in us by the Spirit, is carried on to its completion at the resurrection of the body.

Verse 20.

“I am crucified with Christ.” The perfect tense in Greek is a past thing continuing, i.e. it is done in the past, but it continues to be, and so is a present (*J.N.D.*). It is the subsistence of what has been done. “I was, and am, crucified.”

The aorist tense is timeless: expresses the undefined fact of existence, as viewed in the mind’s eye; and may

be past, present, or future to the narrator ; only the fact is stated ; and the mind takes it in as such (*J.N.D.*).

God, in His eternal counsels, having purposed blessing for us in Christ, has saved us, and has called us with a holy calling, according to His own proper purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the ages of time ; but this has been made manifest now by the appearing of Jesus Christ, who has annulled death and brought to light life and incorruptibility by the glad tidings (2 Tim. i. 8-11). This is in the aorist tense : a great and stupendous fact, regardless of time, but made known now in the gospel, whereof Paul was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher of the Gentiles. Whatever effect the preaching may produce in souls, the subject matter of the preaching remains the same.

But, says Paul, "I am crucified with Christ." I am associated, by the grace of God, according to those eternal counsels, with this great and mighty work in all its value, wherein all that which in me had been a hindrance to the accomplishment of those counsels has been set aside by the fact that Christ, holy and spotless, who knew no sin, was made sin—identified on the cross with the full judgment due to it according to the holy nature of God Himself ; and with Him I was, and am, crucified—perfectly so ; there, then, now, and for ever. Let my soul perfectly understand it, bow to it, and rejoice in the fact of this mighty deliverance through it, clean-cut, defi-

nite, and distinct. Nothing could be more so. This is the perfect tense.

You may ask, When did all this happen ? You must answer for yourself. It rests with you to say whether it is a preaching to you only in a timeless tense, according to the purpose of God ; or whether you have realized that it is perfectly true of you. When you do so realize it, it is your liberty to live to God.

Notice, too, that the Apostle is not speaking in this passage of "the law," or any law in particular, but of "law" as a principle.

But I need an object in life : a living object, a Person for whom to live—an object worthy of this life within. Who other could this be, than He, who has so loved me, and has given Himself for me ? I may give Him a little portion of my poor worthless heart. He has given *Himself* for me.

"Lord, who can pay the mighty debt,
Of love so rich as Thine ?
Love, which surpasseth finding out,
Unspeakable, divine !
O rather give me daily, more—
More every hour—to see
That such a bounteous giver Thou,
I must Thy debtor be."

Verse 21.

This is the vindication of the grace of God—not of my works under law, seeking thereby to make out a righteousness of my own. Were it so attainable, then the death of Christ had no object in it ; it was in that case superfluous.

The Sphere of the Spirit.

If we "walk in the Spirit" our souls will move in the sphere of the Spirit's operations; and what is that sphere ? In regard to saints it is "all saints" (Eph. vi. 18), and in regard to the world it is "all men" (1 Tim. ii. 4). What a breadth of outlook ! If in any way we serve our fellow-believers, towards whom is our service to be directed ?

Some little section of the church of God ? or some little handful with whom we are immediately in touch ? Nay, if we walk in the Spirit our souls will move in the sphere in which the Spirit is working, and we shall have regard to all the flock of God (Acts xx.), and in the gospel of God's grace our service will reach out to all the world.—*T. Oliver.*

Correspondence :—How to Win Souls.

Further correspondence is invited upon this most important topic.

To the Editors of *Scripture Truth*.

YOUR correspondent raises a most interesting question, viz. "What are the best means for reaching souls in the gospel?" The word "reach" may be equivocal in this connection, but his idea is, of course, to gain or win. Paul writes of having a "measure to reach even unto you" (see 2 Cor. x. 13-15), but that is clearly figurative. He uses the word "gain" much more directly, e.g. "What is my reward then? . . . that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel. For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Cor. ix. 18-22). Here "gaining" and "saving" are equivalent—to gain is to save; and, no doubt, the best means of saving souls is in the mind of your correspondent. May I ask whether the verses I have quoted suffice for an answer? As I copied them out I felt how searching is the truth they contain. The first to be "reached" is the preacher himself! So Paul felt and so he acted. It is not enough, therefore, to gather an audience, and to proclaim the precious gospel never so earnestly to it, though that is undoubtedly one way of reaching souls, and, indeed, the usual way in which the seed is sown, but there must be, on the part of the servant of Christ, a hearty repudiation of himself and his natural predilections, together with a kind of moral affinity—that of compassion and not surrender of truth—with those whose salvation he seeks. Here is the test for him.

He must not stand on a pinnacle of pharisaic superiority, nor say, "Stand by, for I am holier than thou." He must make himself servant unto all, that he may gain the more. His holiness will not suffer in so doing. To "gain" he must "go;" to reach others he must refuse self. To him one soul must be worth everything. We all began by seeking to gain one soul, perhaps a brother as did Andrew in John i. 41, or a sister, or a companion; we prayed first for such, and, thank God, we gained them—*how* can hardly be detailed, but it was done; then another and another, while our hearts flowed over with gratitude to God. Christ was so precious to us that we longed for others to share our blessing. Ah! this was no outburst

of nature—never, never! It was the lovely fruit of divine compassion; it was the spirit of Christ. Listen! "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not . . . go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost."

Best of soul-winners! How He sought, at all cost to Himself, and found, and carried home the poor lost sheep—and in such a way! What a pattern to us! We may meditate on the yearnings of this Good Shepherd, and then on the whole-hearted devotion of His servant Paul, and bury our heads in shame and self-abasement.

J. WILSON SMITH.

To the Editors of *Scripture Truth*.

The two New Testament similitudes (that of reaper, John iv. 38, and that of fisher, Mark i. 17) give us ample warrant for expecting, every time the gospel is preached, present and definite results. By "results" I do not mean *conversions* necessarily, nor results that can be noted by the eye of man. If a soul is awakened to a consciousness of need, that is a present, positive result. If the heart of some listener is led to appreciate Christ in fuller measure, that again is a very definite result.

But I believe it is of supreme importance that we should get souls to have to do with the Lord at the very outset of their exercise. Incalculable has been the harm done by adopting a kind of mathematical method in dealing with the anxious. A question is asked:—

"You believe that the Saviour died for you, do you not?"

"Oh, yes."

"Then you are saved, because all that believe are justified from all things!"

And in this way a soul is persuaded that all is well *without personal contact with Christ*.

For my own part, while I love to kneel beside a contrite sinner and hear him pour out his confession and express his confidence in the Saviour, I always exhort such a one to *get alone with the Lord* at the earliest opportunity, to have the whole matter out with Him. We need not fear "pressing souls" in this direction.

Instruction as to the results of "believing" will surely be necessary. The way of salvation must, of course, be clearly explained. But the *prime* thing, I repeat, is to encourage souls to have personal dealings with the Saviour. A quarter of an hour spent at His feet will do more for them than all our exhortations and explanations.

Your fellow-servant, H. P. BARKER.

Eternal Punishment (III).

(JAMES BOVD).

The Nature of the Judgment which lies upon Man.

IT is an unspeakable comfort, as well as a most blessed encouragement, to feel that the believer in the Lord Jesus may approach the Scriptures with the most perfect confidence, knowing that, if truly dependent upon the grace of Him who gave them to us, he need have no fear of being deceived by what he reads, but may count on getting thoroughly acquainted with the mind of God. But he must approach those divine and heavenly communications with holy reverence, and as a little child, counting not upon the knowledge he may have acquired in the schools of this world, his own natural cleverness, or even the work of grace in himself, but in God, who is ever willing to instruct His people, and who is able to enlarge the understanding so that His deep thoughts may be taken in. He has also given to us His Holy Spirit, that we may be in the light and power of the revelation He has made to us.

God cannot deceive us. It is impossible that He should lie. He also loves us too well to give us wrong impressions regarding Himself. I have said He has never, directly or indirectly, by plain statement or by parabolic representation, said one single word calculated to give His creature a false impression. If He has said, "These [the wicked] shall go away into everlasting punishment," He meant exactly what He said, and I have no hesitation in saying that the individual, be he man or angel, that makes an attempt to so distort the plain meaning of such a clear, unambiguous, unequivocal statement, that that judgment is made to have a time limit, and that restoration to divine favour, or annihilation, will result to the unhappy soul who suffers this doom, is doing the work of the enemy of God and man, and is a soul-destroyer.

The nature of the punishment inflicted upon the evildoer is couched in those terrible words, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. xxv.). But, we are told, fire makes an end of those cast into it, and, therefore, though it is eternal *punishment*, it is not eternal *torment*. But what would we think of a judge, who, when sentencing a criminal to the extreme penalty of the law, said he was to go away into everlasting punishment? Would we not think that that judge had lost his reason? Saul of Tarsus punished the saints of God in every city, and voted the death sentence against many of them, but in doing so he does not seem to have ever dreamed that he was subjecting any of them to *everlasting* punishment. So, to say that people are undergoing punishment when they are no longer in existence is more than a little deceiving.

But this fire is said to be everlasting. What does it exist for when its work is done? It was prepared for the devil and his angels, but these men tell us that it burns all who are cast into it out of existence. If so, why should it be *everlasting*? Again, it is said to be *unquenchable* (Matt. iii. 12), "fire that never shall be quenched" (Mark ix. 43). Who ever previously heard of fire like that? Again, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." But this last scripture, we are told, has for its basis the literal valley of the son of Hinnom. This I do not question, but the reference is to Isaiah lxvi. 24: "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against Me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." During the whole millennium there shall be this

witness of the judgment of God upon the men who have transgressed against Him ; it shall be always under the eye of those who go up to worship before the Lord.

Now when we come to the words of our Lord in the Gospels, it is not carcasses which He has before Him, but living men who are cast into this Gehenna of fire. In some way, by the power of God, the carcasses which have been consigned to this place spoken of in Isaiah are there for the fire and worm for a thousand years ; their worm does not die, neither is their fire quenched. And this is used as a figure of that judgment which rests, not upon the carcasses of men, but upon body, soul, and spirit. And the Lord tells us that their worm does not die, neither is their fire quenched. If the carcasses of the transgressors are in that valley of Gehenna for a thousand years, their worm dying not, nor their fire being quenched, should we be surprised to find that the wicked (who are cast into that fire which is said to be prepared, not for the carcasses of men, but for the devil and his angels, and of which it is said, not only that it shall not be quenched, but that it is *unquenchable*) are there forever ?

The fact is, God has had in every age some great monument of His judgment of the rebellious. During the antediluvian age there was the tree of life, guarded against man's approach by the cherubim and the flaming sword. In the patriarchal age there were the flood and the judgment upon the cities of the plain. For Israel there were the destruction of the power of Pharaoh and the judgment upon those who believed not, and whose carcasses fell in the wilderness. At the present time there are before our eyes the desolation of the Holy Land, the temple burned with fire, and God's earthly people, the Jews, scattered throughout the world, being murdered, robbed, and plundered by the nations. In the world to come, what we call the millennium, there will be the carcasses

of those who have transgressed, fed upon by the undying worm, and consumed by a fire which shall not be quenched. In and throughout eternity there will be the lake of fire, in which all the enemies of God shall have their part.

But we are told that this punishment is *destruction*, and that when a thing is destroyed it ceases to exist. If this were so it certainly would go far to settle the question in favour of the annihilationists. But is it so that the word used for destruction in Scripture carries with it the thought of *extinction* ? A very few scriptures will settle the whole question. I will quote a few passages where the verb *apollumi* is used, that we may see what meaning the Spirit of God attaches to the word : "Fear Him which is able to *destroy* both soul and body in hell" (Matt. x. 28). "This my son was dead, and is alive again ; he was *lost*, and is found" (Luke xv. 24). "That whosoever believeth in Him should not *perish*, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are *perished*" (1 Cor. xv. 18). "Not willing that any should *perish*" (2 Peter iii. 9). "I am not sent but unto the *lost* sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. xv. 24). "For the Son of man is come to save that which was *lost*" (Matt. xviii. 11). "I have found my sheep which was *lost*" (Luke xv. 6). These passages will suffice to show that the word used by the Spirit of God to describe the judgment of the wicked in Gehenna is the same word used to describe the condition of sinners whom Jesus came to save, and of the prodigal when he was in the far country, and which cannot possibly mean extinction. The Son of Man did not come to save those who were annihilated.

But we are informed by those who contend against eternal torment, that the word used in Matthew xxv., and which is translated punishment (*kolasin*), means nothing more than "to cut off," "restrain," or "chastise." Granted.

I do not propose to wrangle over the meaning of the word. How does the Scripture describe this punishment? "Depart from Me, ye cursed." Could anything be more terrible in the way of *cutting off* from all life and blessing? What creature can have the faintest conception of what severance from the only source of love, goodness, happiness, hope, and joy means? Even *now* He withholds not gladness from the most depraved; He is kind to the unthankful and the unholy. But *then*, to be consigned to outer darkness, afar from His presence, a darkness into which no ray of hope shall ever penetrate! Nothing that could be inflicted could be greater than that. And as to *restraint*, "Bind him hand and foot" (Matt. xxii. 13). Will this not be restraint enough? Those who always did their own will here, and never the will of God, will then be for ever prevented from carrying out the lawless dictates of their godless hearts. And as to *chastisement*, the many and few stripes, according to privileges enjoyed (Luke xii. 47, 48), tell in a figurative way a tale of suffering to be meted out to those who have pleasure in unrighteousness. Not by any subtle process of word-twisting shall the annihilationist escape the consequences of his perversion of the truth of God. The Scriptures are not given to us to darken our understanding, nor to give us an underestimate of sin, nor to make little of the judgment of God; but they are given to us to guide us into the knowledge of God, and to give us a great and deep sense of His love and mercy, as also of the terrible nature of the judgment to which sin has made us all liable.

Yet another wile of the enemy comes couched in a quibble about death. It is spoken of by those who contend for the annihilation of the wicked as "*extinction of being*," and as the first death is that, so is the second. But the first death does not bring man to an end, neither does the second. The first death brings to an end the life of

man upon earth. It brings to an end the life in which he is here, in responsibility to God and in relationship with men: but "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself," is the word of the Lord on this all-important question; adding, "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord: and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Rom. xiv.). Is He the Lord of people who have no longer an existence? Looked at only in connection with their bodies they are dead, both from the standpoint of man and God; and if this were all, God never could have proclaimed Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for He is "not the God of the dead, but of the living;" but as "all live to Him," whether they be, from our standpoint, dead or alive, He can proclaim Himself the God of those who are dead to us (Matt. xxii. 32; Luke xx. 38). As far as this world is concerned the dead are as though they had no existence, but as to God: "If I make my bed in hell [sheol], behold, Thou art there" (Ps. cxxxix. 8). By death a man ceases to have to do with his fellow-men, for it is by his body he is in relationship and contact with them, but in his spirit he has still to do with the living God. Therefore, Paul is able to speak of being "absent from the body," and this, he says, would be, for him, "present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 8).

Could anything be more clear and explicit? In the thought of the annihilationists there can be no absence from the body, for the body is all that is. But Paul could speak of being absent from the body, and when absent from the body present with the Lord. And when caught up to the third heaven he was not conscious whether he was in the body or out of it (2 Cor. xii.). But some of those wise men, who know Greek and all the rest of it, could have enlightened him. They could have told him that he could not be anywhere else than in the body,

for the body was all he was. Peter also speaks of being "in this tabernacle," and adds, "knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle" (2 Peter i. 13, 14). But, then, these men know a great deal better than the apostles of our Lord—that is, if we are to pay any attention to their vapourings—though they seem to be very anxious to make it appear as though the apostles were on their side.

Our Lord tells us what death would mean to an Old Testament saint or sinner. To the former it meant transference to the bosom of Abraham, to the latter, the flame of torment (Luke xvi.). I am told this is a parable. Very likely; but it is not a *fable*. Every parable told by our Lord is possible as an actual fact, apart from that which it was used to illustrate. I am unable at the present moment to call to mind any parable of His which could not be literally true. If, when a person is dead and buried, he cannot be viewed as a conscious being in Hades, then the parable of the rich man and Lazarus is different from all others, and is a fable. But I do not build the doctrine of a separate conscious state upon any parable; the passages which I have quoted from Romans, Matthew, and Luke are quite sufficient to satisfy any mind subject to the Word of God, that the spirit of a man survives the dissolution of the earthly tabernacle, and has to do with God in its separate condition. It is what the Spirit of God has taught us in His Word, it is what the holy apostles of our Lord thought and wrote at His dictation, it is what Stephen thought in the hour of his martyrdom, and it is what every soul of man on earth to-day thinks, whose mind is under the influence of the revelation which God has graciously given to His people.

That God only has immortality is the statement of Scripture, but that does not preclude the possibility of His being able to place a being beyond the power of death. The angels cannot die, neither will death be ever able

again to touch those who have part in the first resurrection (Luke xx. 36); but they have not this immunity from death in themselves, but in the counsel and might of God, who maintains everything in life by His word. Death is the separation of the spirit from the body, and it is really the body that dies (James ii. 26); it goes to corruption, the spirit to God who gave it. So Stephen says, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts vii. 59). But this being the consequence of sin it lies upon the sinner as the judgment of God, and is therefore a terror to him. It has lost its sting for the believer, who departs and is with Christ, which is very far better (Phil. i. 23) than the most favourable circumstances upon earth.

Neither is the second death any more annihilation than is the first. I know it has been said that the lake of fire brings to a complete and final end every individual cast therein. But this is altogether a gratuitous assumption and in the teeth of the plainest statements of the Word of God. This judgment is called the second death, to be sure, but I have shown clearly from Scripture that death does not mean extinction of being, at least the first death does not, and as their whole superstructure of annihilation is built up on the meaning which they attach to death, which is not the scriptural meaning, and also upon their notions about the power of fire, that it reduces everything to its elements that may be cast therein, and this fire an element of which they have no conception, for it is *unquenchable* and was originally prepared for spiritual beings—their castle of error tumbles to the ground.

When the term "*the lake of fire*" is used, they tell us the language is symbolic. Possibly. But how does this help us? Oh that men could only see that, when discussing such terrible realities they know no more than the Spirit of God has been pleased to reveal. We cannot reason from what *material* and *quenchable* fire will do to that which is

committed to it, to what *unquenchable* fire which is designed for spiritual beings will do to that which may be cast into it. That no man can ever become extinct is clear enough from Scripture.

At the close of the present age, and at the appearing of Christ, we see two men taken and cast alive into the lake of fire; they are the beast and the false prophet, the antichrist and the head of the revived Roman Empire; and at the close of the thousand years the devil is taken and cast into the same place, and we are told that it is "where the beast and the false prophet are" (Rev. xx. 10), not where these two men *were*, but where they *are*. But according to the annihilationists they were not there at all, unless it takes more than a thousand years to resolve them into their elements. Rather a tedious process I should imagine. And even then we have not a hint as to any progress having been made in the process of resolution. At the close of the reign of Christ the great white throne is set up, the resurrection of judgment takes place, and the dead are judged according to their works, and whosoever is not found written in the book of life is cast into the lake of fire. Then in the twenty-first chapter we have a description of that which subsists when the former things have passed away and eternity has begun, and *then* the wicked are said to *have their part* in the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death. If the lake of fire had made an end of them they could not be said to have *their part* anywhere.

But we are reminded by these teachers that the wages of sin is death, and nothing more, and to import eternal torment into it is to corrupt with heathen superstitions the gospel of God. If so, I should think that when a man dies he has received his wages in full, and I should consider the second death a horrible excess of punishment to which he was not liable. To get out of this difficulty they divide sin into three classes: (1) Sins resulting from

ignorance and weakness of the flesh; (2) sins against light and knowledge; (3) partly wilful. In answer to this I will quote the words of the Lord Himself on this all-important subject: "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: because they said, He hath an unclean spirit" (Mark iii.). Attributing the manifest intervention and power of God, exercised against Satan *on behalf of man, to the action of a demon* is the one solitary sin of which there is no forgiveness. The sin unto death in 1 John v. 16 is a sin which in the government of God results in the death of the body. It is a brother who commits it, and the brother in John's epistle is one born of God.

Now if the death of the body is the whole judgment to which sin has made us liable, and a man pays his own debt by dying, why speak at all of the forgiveness of God? Those who pay their own debt cannot be rightly viewed as needing forgiveness. And this is most surely the mind of the Spirit through David. He says (I quote from Romans iv.), "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Now here is a man who is forgiven his iniquities, his sins are covered, and he is a man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin. What, then, does God reckon to him? Paul, by the same Holy Spirit who inspired David to write the psalm, tells us that it is a description of "the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." If death is the payment of the debt this man did not pay his own debt, nor indeed any instalment of it, for he was still alive in this world when this was true of him; neither had he a single work that would do anything else than condemn him, yet was he held by God to be

righteous. The principle upon which God does this is the man's faith (v. 5), and the righteous ground upon which He can do it is the blood of Jesus (v. 9). In himself the man is a sinner, but God holds him to be righteous, and the blood of Jesus is the witness of the justice of God in doing so. This is sufficient evidence to us that one who pays his own debt cannot be contemplated as requiring the forgiveness of God.

But wherefore the second death, if the death of the body is all that our sins have made us liable to? As far as I can gather from the writings of those given over to this error, the second death is for what they call *wilful* sins. But I must confess I fail to see either the wisdom or justice of such a judgment. Of course, if it were in Scripture I should believe it, whether I saw the wisdom of it or not. But it is not in Scripture, nor did it ever originate in the mind of any rational being. It comes only from the blinding influence of the father of lies. They tell us that death is all that to which our sins have made us liable, and they are very careful to give us to understand that what is meant by death is the death of the body, and this they understand to be extinction of being. They tell us there is no forgiveness for wilful sins; these bring the second death upon the sinner. But what I want to know is this: Is there forgiveness for all other sins? and they speak of sins which are not wilful. If there is forgiveness, and some people are forgiven, why do they die? If their *wages* are cancelled, why have they still to receive them? Is there anybody on earth forgiven? If there is, and this doctrine be the truth, such must be immune from death. It seems to be stated that we die for Adam's sin. But Adam died for his own, and so discharged the debt; that

is, if the death of the body be sin's full penalty.

I have already referred to the only sin which Scripture speaks of as unforgivable, that is, the sin against the Holy Ghost. There is no question as to the wilfulness of this sin. But the truth of the matter is, if there was no forgiveness for wilful sins, there would be no forgiveness at all, for every sin is wilful. Every action of the creature proceeds either from his own will or from the will of God. In fact, sin is just the creature doing his own will: "sin is lawlessness" (R.V.), not "transgression of the law," but the creature acting without any restraint whatever. I may be referred to Hebrews x. 26, but there it does not say if we sin wilfully there is no forgiveness, but "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin." The wilful sin there is apostasy back to Judaism of a professed Christian. This is proven by what he is said to be guilty of; he treads underfoot the Son of God, counts the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and insults the Spirit of grace. That men may not have light is perfectly true, and those who have light from God are all the more responsible, and their judgment will be the heavier, but every sin a man commits springs from his own corrupt will, and for this he must give account in the day of judgment.

If death is the whole judgment of sin, then there is no forgiveness in the present life, except possibly that which was extended to Enoch and Elijah: even the sin against the Holy Ghost is atoned for by the death of the man who commits it, but as the Lord has said "all that believe are justified from all things," I must put these men down as preachers of another gospel, which is not another. The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanses us from ALL sin.

(To be continued.)

No one can help another beyond the measure in which he has been helped himself.

"He reads the Scripture well who brings back a meaning from it instead of carrying one to it."

The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus.

(J. S. OLLIPHANT).

No. 4.—As “Son of Man.”

In this series of papers (which comprises notes of addresses delivered on this theme) the Lord is presented as coming in five aspects, viz. as Lord, as Bridegroom, as King, as Son of Man, and as Judge.

Matthew xxvi. 63, 64.

But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

Matthew xxiv. 37-39.

But as the days of Noë were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating

and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noë entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Matthew xxv. 31, 32.

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divide his sheep from the goats.

The Significance of the Title.

THE significance of the title “Son of man” may be gathered from Mark ii. 9-11. There the Pharisees reasoned that God alone could forgive sins, and charged the Lord with speaking blasphemy when He forgave the sick of the palsy. By raising up that man, who lay helpless before them, the Lord answered their reasonings and demonstrated to them that the Son of man had power or authority on earth to forgive sins. He did not assert His own *divine* right or power to do this, but, by a miracle, proved that authority had been conferred upon Him for this purpose as the Son of man on earth.

In the Gospel of John, also, where His glory as the “Son” shines forth, it is asserted of Him that as “Son of man” authority to deal with men had been given to Him—“for the Father . . . hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.” “And He hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man” (chap. v. 22-23, 27).

The Gospels show us the subject place that the Lord took as Son of man on earth, asserting nothing of Himself and His divine rights, but receiving everything conferred upon Him in the

place He had taken as man to glorify God. He is the SON, and by Him and for Him were all things created; He is before all things and by Him all things consist. He became *Son of David*, born of the Virgin, and as such He is heir to David’s throne, and will reign over the House of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end.

But He is also *Son of man*; He is the seed of the woman who has bruised the serpent’s head, and He is heir to all that which it is God’s purpose to confer on man (*cf.* Ps. viii.). In the parable of the wicked husbandmen (Matt. xxi. 33-41) there is given the result of His presentation to those who were responsible to render the fruit of the vineyard to the householder who had planted the vineyard. When the husbandmen saw the son they said, “This is the heir, come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance,” and they caught him and cast him out of the vineyard and slew him. This was the sad answer of man to the presentation of God’s claims in the person of the Man Christ Jesus. Israel was that vineyard, and the husbandmen were the leaders of the nation: they refused to own the Lord as their Messiah and King, or to recognize in Him the Anointed and Sent-one of God; and in view of this, the disciples were instructed to tell no man that He was the Christ. He then took the

wider title, and told them the Son of man would suffer and be slain and be raised again the third day (Luke ix. 21, 22).

In consequence of Israel's rejection of Him, the time of blessing is deferred. Their house is left unto them desolate, and they will not see their Messiah till they shall say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

When the Greeks who represented the nations outside Israel came to Philip (John xii. 20), saying, "Sir, we would see Jesus," the Lord referred at once to His death, saying, "The hour is come, that the *Son of man* should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." The nations which were strangers to the covenants of promise could *only* be brought into blessing by the death of the Son of man; and Israel having rejected their Messiah must also be entirely dependent upon the same way of blessing.

We see, then, that the Lord, having taken the subject place in creation as Son of man, has had conferred upon Him of the Father the authority to forgive sins and to execute judgment on all the living and the dead; and further, that the way to all the blessing to be brought in, under the Son of man, is by His death upon Calvary.

The Son of Man upon Earth.

Let us now trace His pathway through the world as the blessed Man who came into it for the glory of God. In Matthew iii. He was baptized of John in Jordan to fulfil all righteousness, and He thus identified Himself with the godly in Israel who were wrought upon by the Spirit of God and who came to be baptized of John, confessing their sins. He took His place with them, though He had no sins to confess. When He came up out of the water, the Trinity was revealed; Jesus, the Second Person in the Godhead, was there in manhood, about to

enter His public ministry amongst men; the Spirit was there, descending like a dove upon Him; and the Father's voice from heaven was heard: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The presence of this blessed One on earth and the Father's expressed delight in Him set aside all other men, morally, even before man, as of Adam's guilty race, was judicially ended for God at the cross. Jesus, though born of a woman, and in the likeness of sinful flesh, was yet of another order entirely. The first man is out of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is out of heaven. "The first man, Adam, became a living soul, the last Adam is a quickening Spirit." "As is the earthy such are they also that are earthy, and as is the heavenly such are they also that are heavenly;" and "if any man be in Christ there is a new creation." Such is the light of divine revelation as to Jesus our Lord, of whom it is written: "A virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

From the first moment that the sentence of death was pronounced on Adam God never ceased with His governmental dealings with man, but, whether without law or under law, his history for four thousand years proved that the child of Adam could not rise out of the original state into which he plunged by the fall. He remained a fallen creature always breaking down, always rebellious against God; so that of Israel, His earthly people, Jehovah had to say, "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me. The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider." This is the invariable history of the responsible man, for the fall did not relieve the creature of his responsibility to the Creator, and the law was the measure of man's duty to God. When Christ came into the world the ten

tribes of God's earthly people were scattered amongst the nations, and the two tribes in the land were under the Roman yoke. They refused to acknowledge Him, saying, "We have no king but Cæsar."

Satan was in possession and man under his dominion, and when the Lord was accused of casting out demons through Beelzebub, He presented the actual state of things by a figure, saying, "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace his goods are in peace, but when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him his armour wherein he trusted and divideth his spoils." But it had to be proved that the second Man who had come into the world was superior to the temptations and assaults of Satan. Hence, ere Christ entered on His ministry, He was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. The enemy who had succeeded in seducing the first man to leave his subject place and disobey, that he might be "as gods, knowing good and evil," sought to induce the second Man to act independently of God, but Jesus had come not to do His own will but the will of Him that sent Him, and the assaults of Satan only made more manifest the perfect obedience of the dependent Man. He kept the place He had taken, and overcame the strong man by the sword of the Spirit, the written Word of God.

Again, in Gethsemane, when in His holy soul the Man of Sorrows, in communion with His Father, entered in spirit into the nature of the cup which He had to drink, the enemy sought to turn Him aside from the path, but without avail. He entered into all that it involved to become the bearer of sin and to suffer the hiding of God's face, and being in agony He prayed more earnestly. His sweat was as it were great drops of "blood falling down to the ground." He prayed that the cup might, if it were possible, pass from Him, but added, "Nevertheless, not

My will, but Thine be done," and there proved the perfection of His subject will. His will was obedience, therefore sinless and perfect. In every position in which man had been placed the second Man was found faithful. The 16th Psalm presents His perfect pathway on earth before God—trusting, depending, confiding, rejoicing—His flesh resting in hope, in the presence of death in the assurance of faith, that His soul would not be left in Hades, and that God would not suffer Him, His Holy One, to see corruption.

Never was there a moment when the moral glory of the Son of man shone brighter, though all His life was perfect, than when He hung upon the cross, made sin for us, and forsaken by His God. It was to this He referred in John xiii. 31, 32: "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him." There in His perfection He took that place and bowed His blessed head to the storm of judgment, thus recognizing all that was due to the outraged majesty of God. At that cross God was fully glorified and Satan vanquished by the Son of man.

The Son of Man glorified.

But if God was glorified in Him morally on the cross, God would glorify the Son of man in Himself, and He would *straightway* glorify Him. So God raised Him from the dead and received Him into glory, and He sits the risen and glorified Man in the Father's throne, the only adequate answer on God's part to the work of redemption. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." God's purpose for man now comes out, and the Man of God's purpose is righteously set in glory on high, having on earth vindicated God in His majesty, justice, and holiness, and solved the whole question of good and evil to God's eternal glory.

Death and the devil, whose works He came to destroy, are annulled, and life and incorruptibility are brought to light by the gospel. The cross of Christ is the ground for the judicial ending and setting aside of the race of the first Man. This same Jesus, once dead, but now alive for evermore, has been made Lord and Christ on high, and He is appointed Heir of all things, and the Holy Ghost is now gathering out of this world the joint heirs who are to reign with Him when He takes His inheritance. Christ has a threefold title to the inheritance: He is the Word by whom all was created: He is Son of David and the Son of man to whom all power is given; and He is the Redeemer through whom all things will be reconciled to God.

It is blessed to know that all things are put under the feet of the exalted, glorified Man, though we see not yet all things put under Him, but wait for the establishment of the millennial kingdom in the age to come. God is now bringing many sons to glory and has made known to us the mystery of His will "in the dispensation of the fulness of times to gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and on earth:" and He has not only "put all things under His feet," but has given Him to be "Head

over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." Adam had his Eve in the garden of Eden, and Christ will have His bride in the millennial day of glory. We wait for the moment when He will descend from the throne on which He sits, and when the dead and living saints will rise to meet Him in the air and be introduced into the Father's house in heaven.

Then when He asks (Ps. ii.), God will give Him the heathen for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession, and He will break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

In that day the heavens will open and He, the Rider on the white horse (who is called "Faithful and True," "The Word of God," and "King of kings and Lord of lords"), will come forth in righteousness to judge and make war. He will find the "beast" and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against Him, and at that time they shall be overthrown and His supremacy will be complete (Rev. xix.).

"Worthy, O Son of man, art Thou
Of every crown that decks Thy brow,
Worthy art Thou to be adored
And owned as universal Lord;
O hasten that long-promised day
When all shall own Thy righteous sway."

"Upon this rock [the Christ the Son of the living God] I will build my church."

MATT. xvi. 18.

THE material of which God's assembly is built are those who have come to Christ the living stone; they possess salvation and eternal life. We do not enter the assembly in order *to be saved*, but as those who *are saved*. The word is "on this rock will I build My church." Not on my church will I build the salvation of souls.

One of Rome's boasted dogmas is this, "There is no salvation out of the true church." But we can go deeper still and say, "Off the *true* Rock there

is no church." Take away the Rock, and you have nothing but a baseless fabric of error and corruption. What a miserable delusion to think of being saved by that! Thank God it is not so. *We do not get to Christ through the church, but to the church through Christ.* To reverse this order is to have neither Rock, nor church, nor salvation. We meet Christ as a life-giving Saviour before we have anything to say to the assembly at all, and in Him we have full salvation and eternal life.

The Feasts of the Lord.—No. 3.

(H. NUNNERLEY).

The Firstfruits.

Leviticus xxiii. 10-15.

10 When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest:

11 And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.

12 And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the Lord.

13 And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made

by fire unto the Lord for a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin.

14 And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

15 And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete.

THIS feast was indeed a joyous festival. It told, in figure, that the sunless night of death had passed, that a resurrection morning had dawned. The spirit of heaviness could be exchanged for the garment of praise, the bitter herbs for the oil of joy, the bread of affliction for fine flour, oil, and wine. We may transfer our thoughts from the sorrow connected with the Sin offering, to the sweet savour of the Burnt offering. Christ—our passover—once sacrificed for us, has endured the judgment and come out of death. He is risen, a triumphant Victor, the pledge of a mighty resurrection harvest.

Christ is not only risen but ascended.

50 And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven (Luke xxiv.).

The words used in the original to describe the manner of our Lord's ascension are significant. They are translated "carried" (Luke xxiv. 51), "taken up" (Acts i. 9 and 11). Legions of shining ones would seem to have borne Him back in triumph—conducted Him gloriously to the home from whence He came.

An angel proclaimed His first advent, announced Him as good tidings, the bringer of great joy to all people; a multitude of the heavenly host added their Amen, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill toward men." Angels were the guardians of His footsteps through this world, charged with His safe keeping lest He dash His foot against a stone, they ministered to Him in the wilderness, strengthened Him in Gethsemane, and forty-eight thousand—twelve legions—would have rescued Him from death, had He so desired. Now it was their honour, as their joy, to carry Him victoriously back to heaven.

But He who was *carried* was also *received*. He who had glorified the Father on earth should now be glorified in heaven; nor should He wait until He had reached the end of His journey before He had a pledge of the welcome that awaited Him. A cloud received Him out of their sight. The word for this cloud is the same as the glory cloud on the holy mount, out of which the voice came, saying, "This is My beloved Son" (Luke ix. 35). He was received *in* glory, as well as "into" glory (1 Tim. iii. 16) (N.T.). "In" describes the glorious accompaniments of His ascension.

In these glories He will surely return. *The way He ascended is the way He will descend*. We learn from His own lips how He will come back. The cloud will be there and great glory (Luke xxi. 27). The holy angels will be there (Mark viii. 38). The Father's glory

will accompany Him (Luke ix. 26). The *same* Jesus will come in *like manner* to the way He left the earth.

Who can conceive the joy of that moment when the Son of man ascended where He was before? What a feast for heaven, when for the first time Man entered the glory of God; and that Man the God of Glory! No wonder the gates were commanded to lift up their heads; the everlasting doors, to open for the King of Glory, the Lord strong and mighty, to come in. He had fought the fight alone, vanquished every foe, proved Himself the mighty Victor, and now with *filled* hands—spoils wrested from the enemy—He returns to the Father's house, but not *as He left it*. He left that house alone, traversed the earth alone, met the enemy alone, lay in death alone, but He is alone no longer, He is the Firstborn among many brethren, the *first* of the *firstfruits* (Exod. xxiii. 19).

The sheaf of firstfruits was representative—presented on behalf of others to be “accepted” for them. Christ's acceptance is our acceptance; He is the heavenly Man in a heavenly scene accepted for us. He is the “Beloved;” but we stand in all the favour, resting on Him. We who were dead are not only redeemed by His blood, but raised, seated, and graced in Him in the heavenlies (Eph. i., ii.). This feast is not connected with the wilderness, its fulfilment was reserved for Canaan. The place of its observance is typical

of the heavenly places of which we have spoken.

With this sheaf of the firstfruits there was offered the lamb, the meal, the oil, the wine—a burnt offering with its meat and drink offerings—typical of the life and death of the Lord Jesus. The meal sets forth the perfect humanity of Jesus, whilst the oil is a figure of the Holy Ghost, who guided, led, and anointed Him in life, by whom He offered Himself without spot to God, and who accompanied Him back to glory. Wine was poured out as a drink offering. How truly it sets forth that cheer to “the heart of God and man” which results from all that Christ has done!

The fulfilment of this feast proves, incidentally, the perfection of Scripture. It was to be observed on the first day, *after* the first sabbath, *after* the Passover. Was it a mere chance, a fortuitous circumstance, that the Passover fell on Friday, the year our Lord was crucified? Was it not rather an indication that every detail was so ordered of God, that Christ rose—the true firstfruits—on the *very day* the firstfruits were commanded to be offered, and thus perfectly fulfilled the type? This was only possible once in seven years, as the Passover fell on a different day in each year, whilst this feast was always on the same day. How perfect are God's ways, and how fully His hand is seen in type and antitype!

(To be continued.)

“We shall not attempt to adjust our Bible to human thought, but by the grace of God adjust human thought to the Bible. We must not fall into the error of the absent-minded doctor who had to cook for himself an egg, and, depositing his watch in the saucepan, stood stedfastly looking at the egg. The change to be wrought is not in the divine chronometer, but in the poor egg of the human mind. We shall not watch the world, either religious or profane, to take our cue from it;

modern thought shall not move us either in one direction or the other, but we will keep our eye upon the infallible Word, and speak according to its instructions.”

“One pair of heels is sometimes worth two pairs of hands. The common maxim that no man should turn his back upon an adversary is a false maxim: in some circumstances it is safest to flee and get out of a snare. Hence the exhortation, ‘Flee also youthful lusts.’”

The School of God in the Book of Daniel. (M. C. GAHAN).

Daniel iii. 13, 14, 16, 17, 18.

13 Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. Then they brought these men before the king.

14 Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, answered and

said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.

17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

18 But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

THE true inwardness of Nebuchadnezzar's state comes out in this chapter. His confession as to the God of Israel had gone no further than acknowledging that *Daniel's God* was a God of gods and Lord of kings—i.e. a Deity superior to his own—without any thought of transferring the allegiance of his own heart to such a God, though recognizing His hand in the bestowal of the dominion of the world upon him as supreme sovereign. His pride was satiated, but his conscience had not yet been reached. The goodness of God had not as yet brought him to repentance.

Having received universal rule at the hands of God, he did not worship the God who had so favoured him, but substituted for the invisible but living God the image of gold on the plains of Dura, the base creation of his own imagination.

Such is man at his best; whilst absolute debtor to God, yet resolutely refusing His control, and swayed by a will that has broken away from its only true and proper allegiance to the God who not only created him, but also endowed him with prosperity and power.

But Nebuchadnezzar had to learn that there were those in his realm who, owing everything, humanly speaking, to him, would yet put the claims of the living God first, and were prepared at the risk of their lives to refuse to bow to the imperial authority when it conflicted with obedience to Israel's God.

And through these faithful men the true God was about to demonstrate to Nebuchadnezzar His living power, ere it demonstrated itself upon the person of the king himself; thus furnishing clear testimony in grace, to His omnipotent control over one of the most uncontrollable elements, and that by way of object lesson to the autocrat whose will hitherto had known no restraint and his ostentatious pride no limits.

Heralds proclaim the manner and the moment of universal homage to "the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up," and the kingly wrath is roused by the disobedience of three captives of Judah, his "rage and fury" knowing no bounds. The king *commands* the obedience of the three faithful children to his imperious demands; the burning fiery furnace being the dread alternative.

The contrast between the king and the captives is striking indeed, the former swayed by "a rage that rose up to heaven," breaking in billows of human pride, passion, and power, against the immovable rock barriers of invincible faith and implicit loyalty to the God of heaven.

The very calmness of the three children, consciously in the presence-chamber of One greater than "this head of gold," must have added fuel to the flames of passion, as they reply in measured words to the king's most urgent demands. Of anxiety there appears no trace. "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful [full of anxiety] to

answer thee in this matter. And if it be so, our God . . . is able to deliver us . . . but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

What a life of practical intimacy with Jehovah must these have been living, up to the testing moment. For there was no place here for a mere momentary enthusiasm to carry them through so fiery an ordeal, seeing that the refusal to obey the imperious monarch's command would open at once the "burning fiery furnace." But "our God is able" was enough for these faithful Hebrews. They had served Him: He would by one means or another save them.

There is a moral grandeur about faith and faithfulness such as this, unembarrassed and imperturbable in the presence of imperial fury and physical flames, that is unsurpassed in the record of any other Scripture characters, and only eclipsed by Him who in all things hath the pre-eminence (Col. i. 18).

The issue was the practical and miraculous intervention of Jehovah on behalf of His faithful servants, for "the flame slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego," while it but loosed the cords that rendered them helpless in the flames, and set them free to walk in the midst of the furnace in company with a fourth of whom Nebuchadnezzar himself testified that "the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Called forth from the seven times

"Come, Lord Jesus!" Thou art coming,
For this blessed hope we wait;
Time's long night is swiftly passing,
And the hour is growing late;
But the watchers still are waiting,
Looking towards the Eastern gate.

"Come, Lord Jesus!" Thou art coming,
In that dawn-light hope we dwell,

heated furnace, the eyes of princes, governors, captains, and king's counselors were witnesses of the incontestable power of the God of Israel on behalf of the three children, "upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire passed on them;" spontaneously the king acknowledges the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego as worthy of praise, having power to control unquenchable flames; but without any personal acknowledgment of Israel's God becoming his God.

An imperial edict proclaiming summary judgment against any of his subjects "who shall say any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego" measures the extent of Nebuchadnezzar's respect for so great a God, and the promotion of the three children in his kingdom was the measure of his appreciation of their faithfulness to their God. But all this leaves Nebuchadnezzar's inner relations to Jehovah unaltered and unmoved. It needed the omnipotence of God brought home to him in a more personal form, to break up finally the callous conscience and hardened will that underlay patronizing concessions in favour of a foreign god. But God had a purpose of mercy towards this first imperial head of Gentile dominion and power, over whom His control was to be demonstrated as supremely as over apparently uncontrollable devouring flames, and this Nebuchadnezzar had yet personally and experimentally to learn.

(To be continued.)

Now, though shadows still lie heavy
Where the night dews thickly fell;
The fair radiance of that morning
Never thought nor tongue can tell.

I. H. S.

No one can reflect more than he has received.

Answers to Correspondents.

(THE EDITORS).

The Strait Gate.

J.V. Feeling your own deep need as a sinner you have come to the Lord Jesus Christ, and in Him alone do you put your trust for the eternal salvation of your soul; but you are troubled about the "strait gate" (Matt. vii. 13), questioning what it may mean, and whether it may be that you yourself have never really yet entered it, and whether too you have truly hated your own life according to John xii. 25.

Now just leaving yourself out of the question for a moment, let us look quietly at the scriptures themselves as to which you have difficulty. Take first Matthew vii. *You* are not contemplated directly there at all: the Lord Jesus is unfolding to His Jewish disciples the truth as to the kingdom of heaven. He had just (chap. iv. ver. 17) announced that that kingdom was at hand—the time when earth should be in deed and in truth ruled by heaven. The kingdom was not then set up: it was at hand. But that kingdom was not acceptable to man naturally: men love to do their own will, and care not for the rule of heaven; hence Christ, the King, was rejected by Israel, and crucified: and the actual setting up of the kingdom of heaven here was deferred.

The present dispensation of the Spirit is quite apart from all this: it is a kind of heavenly parenthesis during which time is not counted, and God is gathering out from the Gentiles a bride for His Son. Presently the church will be raptured to meet Christ in the air; and then the testimony of the coming kingdom, interrupted for the time being by the rejection and crucifixion of Christ, will in wondrous grace be resumed.

But just as the kingdom was unacceptable to men when Christ presented it in Galilee, and His disciples

in accepting His testimony and attaching themselves to Him, had in consequence to run counter to the stream, so will it be in those days yet to come; and then too, as when our Lord uttered the words, will it be found that both the entrance and the way itself that leads to life (and note that life is here looked at as future, as identified with the kingdom in display, as in Psalm cxxxiii.) are strait and narrow.

But whilst the whole context of Matthew vii. is Jewish, and we need to rightly divide the word of truth, yet we can make a present *application* of even this passage, for we ourselves have been blessed on the principle of faith, and faith excludes what *we* are and brings in *Christ*. The light of God has reached us, not only presenting to us His grace in Christ but also discovering to us our own sinfulness and worthlessness, so that we have gladly turned from ourselves to Christ for salvation and life; and this turning from all that *we* are, practically answers very closely to the strait gate of Matthew vii.; for repentance, which is the necessary prelude to our receiving any blessing at all, is very humbling to the pride of the human heart, and "few there be" that will take that way, and, abandoning all confidence in what they themselves are or can do, put their trust simply in Christ alone.

Now this may prepare for John xii. In verse 24 our Lord speaks of Himself under the figure of a corn of wheat, from which through its death in the ground springs a great harvest. But His death was necessary because man was in alienation from God. That is what characterizes man's life in this world—alienation and enmity. Hence he who loved his life, who simply followed his depraved natural bent and inclinations, finding his pleasure in the things of this world, was really

going on with that which caused Christ to die, and in result would lose his life in the most awful sense in which life can be lost. But the Christian does not thus : he hates that which he himself is naturally, and turns from the present course of things in an evil world to found all his hopes on the risen Christ, Giver of life eternal, and the One who will presently bring us into the home of that life. We need, of course, to learn this lesson very much more fully than we have any of us learned it yet, but it is upon *this* line that the grace of God has really set each one of His own from the first instant that we were led to turn from self to Christ.

Should Christians keep the Sabbath?

M.R. Phil. The Sabbath of the law is not the Lord's day of Christianity, and your friend is in confusion, because he has not understood the distinction between the two. The Sabbath and all other holy days observed under the law of Moses were a *shadow* of things to come, but the body, that is, the *substance*, is of Christ (Col. ii. 16, 17). In Christianity we have left the shadow for the substance.

Your friend has no right to take one of the commandments and press that as obligatory and ignore the rest. If he keeps the fourth, does he break any of the remaining nine? If so, let him read Gal. iii. 10 : "Cursed is every one that continueth not in ALL things which are written in the book of the law to do them." And, again, in James ii. 10 : "For whosoever . . . shall offend in one point is guilty of all." These passages should convince him of the utter folly of seeking salvation by law-keeping. But perhaps he would mix law and grace, but this cannot be. The day of law is past (Gal. ii. 16 ; iii. 11) ; by grace we are saved (Eph. ii. 8).

The Sabbath was given to Israel of old as the seal of God's covenant with them. That covenant rested on their obedience to the law ; in this obedience

they at once broke down, and their history proved that they loved their own way instead of God's ; they broke the covenant. When the Lord Jesus came into the world He had no Sabbath day, for He said, with regard to it, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John v. 17). He could not rest in a world where sin was, and the law of God was ignored.

But that first covenant, under which no man could get life and blessing and of which the Sabbath was the seal, has given place to a better covenant. (See Heb. viii. 7-10.) We refer to this passage to show that the first covenant is annulled, so that we, who never were under it, ought not to be putting ourselves under it, for it does not now exist in the ways of God with men. God is not now demanding as under law, but having proved by that law that all the world is guilty, He is now acting towards all men from what He is Himself, in free and sovereign grace.

Now in connection with this dispensation of grace, the first day of the week, the Lord's day, has a special place. On it the Lord rose up from the grave ; on it He twice appeared to His disciples after His resurrection (*cf.* Matt. xxviii., Mark xvi., Luke xxiv., John xx.). The early disciples met to break bread on that day (Acts xx. 7) ; the Corinthians were instructed to lay by their offerings for the poor on that day (1 Cor. xvi. 2) ; and John in exile was in the Spirit and received the Revelation on that day (Rev. i. 10).

The law said, Six days shalt thou labour, and on the seventh rest ; that is, the rest came at the end of the labour. Alas ! nobody really entered into that rest, for no one laboured aright. But in Christianity we *start* with rest, for on the first day of the week our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead—proof to us that the work is all finished ; and turning to Him who is the antitype of the Sabbath, we find *rest* and peace. With this we begin, and from thence can serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

Scripture Comments.

(J. T. MAWSON).

“Be careful for nothing.”

CAREFUL about nothing, and prayerful and thankful in everything, is the true attitude of those who know God, towards circumstances in this world; and what a life of blessed contentment and peace would this condition of things yield. But it is not natural to any one of us to be thus superior to circumstances, and it may be asked: Is it possible?

The Scriptures not only give us the most blessed precepts and exhortations, but these precepts are also presented to us, livingly, in men like ourselves. These are witnesses to the fact that a life of obedience to these precepts is not Utopian in character but within the reach of every one who, coming to God, believes that He *is*, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

The three Hebrew youths (Daniel iii.) stand amongst the chiefest of the witnesses to the fact that it is possible to be without care. They were confronted by the cruel power of a pagan autocrat, and threatened with destruction in the furnace of fire, but they stood forth without a tremor in the presence of the power of evil, and refused to be turned from the path of rectitude, saying, “O Nebuchadnezzar, WE ARE NOT CAREFUL” (ver. 16).

“Our God is able.”

Was it reckless bravado on the part of these three young men, or mere indifference to consequences, or the unyielding of indomitable wills that made them defy the Babylonian monarch? Nay, it was their faith in God; they could speak of Him as “*our God*,” and they knew that He was behind the circumstances and greater than them all; they knew that He was greater than the proud and wrathful king before whom they stood, and their faith rang

out clear and true, when they said: “*We are not careful . . . OUR GOD IS ABLE*” (ver. 17). The case was in God’s hand, He was the Arbiter of their destiny, He could deliver them from the fire or carry them through it; but whatever the consequences, they would trust in Him and serve Him. Noble youths! impregnable in their faith in a God well known, they were greater and more glorious than all the greatness and the glory that had gathered in the plain of Dura that day.

“His servants . . . that trusted in Him” (ver. 28).

And what was the result of this conflict between simple and unquestioning faith in God and the power of this devil-inspired monarch? The fury of the king knew no limit or mercy, and, bound hand and foot, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were cast into the fire. God did not quench or remove the furnace: He did a greater thing, He carried them through it; its hot breath was as the zephyr breeze of summer day upon their cheeks, and in the midst of it, free from every fetter, yoke, and care, they walked in happy concord with the Son of God. Thus by their faith and faithfulness was God glorified, and to the world that knew Him not, it was proved that He can and does deliver His servants who trust in Him.

“His servants . . . yielded their bodies” (ver. 28).

Yes, their bodies, not their spirits. Their bodies might be bound and burned, but their spirits were free, for they feared not them that kill the body, because the God of body and soul, the God of all circumstances, the God of time and eternity was a great and present reality to them.

“Because he believed in *his* God”
(Dan. vi. 23).

Daniel, also, is a witness to the blessed fact that God's servants may be careful for nothing, as he is an example, also, of one who was prayerful and thankful in everything. The plotting of his foes, the unalterable decree of Darius the Median, and the den of lions, changed not the prayerful habit of his life, he was garrisoned by the peace of God, *in whom he trusted*, and as aforetime “he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks to God.”

His enemies clamoured for his destruction, his king laboured for his deliverance: there was peace for neither; but he whose fate seemed to hang in the balance was perfectly and profoundly quiet.

And he was cast to the fierce beasts, but their jaws were locked and barred by angel hands, and Daniel rested in that rough-hewn den as peacefully and well as though in the curtain-hung bed-chamber at the palace.

“So Daniel was taken out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him because he believed in his God.”

“God is not ashamed to be called their God” (Heb. xi. 16).

With what dignity does true faith

clothe men! God Himself is not ashamed to be linked with them as their God; and this link is a very personal one.

Nebuchadnezzar could speak of Him as “the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego,” and Darius could call Him “the God of Daniel,” but these men knew Him through intercourse with Him, and they could call Him “our God” and “my God.” Blessed privilege!

God is the same to-day: His power is undiminished, and every circumstance in the lives of His people is in His hands. He may not intervene to quench the violence of fire or stop the mouths of lions. He may even permit them to be tried by “cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, by bonds and imprisonments;” they may be “destitute, afflicted, tormented,” but He knows the way He taketh, and their reward is with Him. He will say the last word about everything. He has already said it, and no power of men or demons can alter it. “I am the Lord: that is My name; and My glory will I not give to another” (Isa. xlii. 8). “I am the Lord; and there is none else” (xlv. 18). And “them that honour Me I will honour” (1 Sam. ii. 30).

The Lord's Presence in the Midst.

(H. D. R. JAMESON).

Where two or three are gathered together in [or, to] my name, there am I in the midst of them (Matt. xviii. 20).

The Fact.

WHEN as Christians we do not understand any part of God's Word, when what is proposed passes beyond our highest conceptions, when we have no experimental realization of its truth, then it is that we find ourselves very apt indeed to water down its statements, to explain them away, or to so “spiritualise” their meaning

as to make them coincide with our own experience.

In nothing is this more likely to occur than in connection with the truth of the Lord's presence with His own. His Word tells us that where two or three are gathered together to His name, there He is in the midst; but though gathering thus to His name, it may be we do not at all realize His presence in

the midst, and forthwith explanation is necessary. Perhaps the Lord only means that we shall have a deep sense of His love, and what we enjoy then of Himself and His grace is what He means by His presence; perhaps He means that it is only in a general kind of way, as that God is everywhere; perhaps He means our looking up by faith into heaven and seeing Him there; and so on.

Now there is another truth which is just as wonderful, and which has been "spiritualised" away in just similar fashion. I refer to the truth of the Lord's second coming.

But this truth is guarded in Scripture in a special way, and by the use of just one word; and if we refer for a moment to what is stated of it, we shall be prepared for the way in which the truth of the Lord's presence with saints to-day is likewise divinely guarded.

The Bible is full of references to the Lord's second coming: no one can read it, however casually, without admitting that. But that He will personally and visibly return to this world is so wonderful a proposition that repeated attempts have been made to explain it away. It is said in the first instance, and believed by multitudes, that the meaning of the coming of the Lord is that when we die He receives our spirits to Himself. It is said, again, that He is coming truly, but that it is in the gradual spread of Christendom. The world is looked at by those who believe this as gradually becoming (what it is not) better and better, and giving more and more place to Christ, so that eventually a millennium of blessing will be brought in by Christ having the control of all, and dwelling in the hearts of all, and so, as it were, "coming again."

But without pursuing further the various ways in which this precious truth is explained away, let us look at the one simple word by which it is guarded in Scripture. In 1 Thessalonians iv. 16 we read: "The Lord *Himself* shall descend from heaven."

It is by that one simple word "*Himself*" that the truth is guarded. He *Himself* is coming—not a spirit or pervading influence merely, but our Lord *Himself*, personally and actually, shall descend from heaven.

In Luke xxiv. 33-49 there is given to us a pattern or model of the Lord's gathered people, and in that passage, by the same word "*Himself*," is avouched the real presence of the risen Lord with those gathered to His name to-day. Here was the first gathering together to His name, that is to say, of those who came together just because of their common interest in the risen Lord; and then we read: "Jesus *Himself* stood in the midst of them"—*Himself*, not another: not a vision: not an influence, but "*Jesus Himself*." Three times over is the personality of His presence avouched in these words (vers. 15, 36, 39).

It was love that carried His footsteps on the resurrection day into the midst of the gathered company in that upper room. He desired their company. The same blessed love carries Him into the midst of His own thus gathered to-day, for *Himself* hath said: "Where two or three are gathered together to My name, *there am I* in the midst of them."

The reality of the Lord's presence with those gathered to His name we need to lay hold of in a simple faith. We may not always realize it, but it is always a great and wondrous FACT that He is there, our risen and glorious Saviour, God's beloved Son.

Its Character.

The truth of the Lord's presence is presented in Scripture in various connections, each of them distinct and with its own blessedness. The individual saint is "joined unto the Lord" and may realize the abiding presence of One who has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Again, when we meet one another by the way, He is there. No two of us can journey together without having

the presence of a Third, even as the two going to Emmaus on the resurrection day journeyed in company with their risen Lord, for "Jesus Himself drew near and went with them." If we accepted this more simply, how it would affect our intercourse one with another!

Again, looking wider still, Christ is not with the world, but He *is* with the Christian company according to His promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 20). This, as the context shows, has special reference to His presence with us in service and testimony, though not limited to that (*cf.* also Acts xviii. 10; 2 Timothy iv. 17).

But the presence of the Lord in the midst of those gathered to His name is, so to say, the crown of it all: it has a character all its own: there reserve is done away, and *His* things open up to the soul.

A reference to one of the beautiful types of the Old Testament may illustrate what is meant by saying that there "reserve" is done away. The ark of the covenant of shittim wood and gold prefigured our Lord Jesus Christ, and as from between the cherubim overshadowing the mercy-seat there shone the glory of God in the tabernacle of old, so in His unveiled face to-day shines the light of that same glory. Now the ark accompanied Israel in all their journeys from Exodus xl. onwards, even as Christ is with us to-day in all the circumstances of our journey through this wilderness world—with us each, and with us all.

"When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gathered thick and thundered loud,
He with His church has *always* stood;
His loving-kindness, oh, how good!"

But notice the significant fact that always whilst being carried from stopping-place to stopping-place the ark was by divine direction *covered*: over it was placed the vail of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and over that again a covering of badgers' skins and a cloth wholly of blue (Num. iv. 5-6): there

could not be, so to say, *full* disclosure of all that His presence meant save in the inside place, the holy of holies, where all was eloquent of His unveiled glory. In the wilderness, too, the cloud of the divine presence was *always* with Israel for guidance and blessing (Deut. i. 31-33), but at divinely marked stages the people halted, the tabernacle was erected, and the glory hidden in the cloud became *effulgent* between the cherubim shadowing the mercy-seat (Lev. xvi. 2; Exod. xl. 34, 35): that prefigures the fullness of His presence as it is known within where all is *suitcd to Himself*, and apart from the reserve, the necessary limitation of disclosure, that accompanies His presence with us in *our* circumstances.

We cannot read the account of the journey to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13-31) without feeling that there was reserve. Our Lord was *Himself* with them it is true, but we are made to feel it was with an end in view. In tender grace He walked by their side, and so ministered Himself out of the Scriptures that their hearts did burn within them; but when, in the house, He was known of them in the breaking of bread, He "vanished out of their sight." Why was this? Ah! He would lead them to find Him in His own sphere, on, so to say, His own platform; and we read that "in the same hour of the night" they rose up and returned to Jerusalem to meet with the company into whose midst came Jesus Himself: *there* they might freely gaze on Him, and there were their understandings marvellously "opened" (vers. 36-49).

If in that instant when they recognized Him in the house He had tarried with them, and eaten and drunk with them, they might easily have imagined that He was back with them on the old footing, but it was not so: they had to learn the lesson contained in His words to Mary Magdalene when she recognized Him as risen—"Touch Me not." He was no longer on the old platform, no longer in the flesh and blood condition in which He

might be known "after the flesh" (2 Cor. v. 16): He was RISEN; hence while in grace He might walk with them in their circumstances, it was in order to enlighten their faith, and lead them out of all that to which He had died to know Him on the new resurrection platform on which saints to-day are "all of one" with Him (Heb. ii. 11).

And this we too need to learn, for when the Lord comes into our midst it is as the Risen One; and if we are to have the gain of His presence we *must* recognize the truth of His new condition, and our association with Him on that new platform as "risen with Him."

Then what did He do when in the midst? He showed unto them His hands and His side, the witnesses of His matchless love (John xx. 20); and it is in allowing Him to do this to us to-day that we shall get the warmth and cheer of His blessed presence. He *is* with us whenever gathered to His name, whether we realize it or not; but once we have in a simple faith accepted the fact of His very presence, then it is not ours to try and realize His presence by efforts of our own, but just to let Him do as He desires to do when He has us together, and that is, showing to us, as it were, His hands and His side, to engage us with Himself and His love proved at Calvary; and it is as we come under the influence of His love that we shall realize the gain of that blessed presence which is appre-

hended by the "faith which worketh by love."

His Own Things.

But there is more: the Lord would lead us when gathered in this way into His *own* things, and so He says, "I will declare Thy name unto My brethren, in the midst of the assembly will I sing praise unto Thee" (Heb. ii. 12); and again, "I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them." He has entered the Father's house, as Man He dwells in those courts of light and love, and it is into those unclouded joys that are His that He would lead us even now—not that we can now actually enter those scenes of light; but He who dwells there comes into our midst, risen and glorified, and in unfolding to us that into which He has actually entered as Man, He causes us, as in His life, and as associated with Himself, to respond to the declaration of the Father's name.

May the Lord grant us not only to know the gain, the warmth and cheer of His presence, but there, too, to enter in spirit into *His* things (made ours through grace), the joys that are His as Man in the sunshine of the Father's love, as that love is known in scenes where all is cloudless light.

"We bless Thee, Lord, Thou lov'st to take Thy place
Amongst Thine own, who taste Thy boundless
grace;
'Tis here we learn Thee, as Thou'rt known
above,
In heavenly glory—home of perfect love."

The Life of Faith.

And God said unto Abraham, "Get thee out . . . unto a land that I will show thee." He did not say, Unto a land that I *do* show thee; and we read, "He went out, not knowing whither he went."

If Abraham had known all the way before him, the whole plan of a life of

faith would have been spoiled. The natural man desires certainty, and as he has no spiritual sight, the idea of a walk of faith is full of horror and repugnance to him.

The eye of faith looks not at the uncertainty, the darkness, and bodily discomforts, but rather to the One who is sufficient for all these things and lightens the way by His presence.

The Blessings of them that know the Lord.

A man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land (Isa. xxxii. 2).

SECURED *from the wind*, which is symbolical of Satan's power—he is the prince of the power of the air—for those who know the Lord are safe for ever (John x. 28), and their "life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 2).

SHELTERED *from the tempest*—the coming storm of judgment, for Christ has delivered them from the wrath to come (1 Thess. i. 10). "We shall be saved from wrath through Him" (Rom. v. 9).

SATISFIED *with rivers of water*. The world is a dry and thirsty land where

no fresh water—true satisfaction—is found, but in Him there are living streams. "He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst" (John iv.); "rivers of living water" (John vii.).

SUCCURED *under the shadow of a great rock*. The world is a place of tribulation where the heat—symbolical of the trying influences of the day—tests the spirit and tends to make the pilgrim faint. But what refreshment, comfort, and sustainment there is in the presence of the Lord. "He is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. ii. 18).

Practical Godliness.

(W. B. DICK).

Introduction.

Exercise *thyself* . . . unto godliness (1 Tim. iv. 7).

THE great need of the day is personal, practical godliness. Not talk, but walk; not platitudes, but practice. It is interesting to note that this subject is specially urged upon our attention in the epistles that make particular reference to the "last days;" so that we see at once how peculiarly applicable it is to the present period.

In the world evil abounds; in Christendom infidelity is rampant; in the church (viewed from our standpoint everything is in confusion. The question therefore arises: where, in the midst of all this, shall a true witness to God's character be found? We reply unhesitatingly: in the personal practical godliness of His children. Let us turn to 1 Timothy iii. 14-16, and read:

"These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

These words were penned at a time when God's house was subject to the Word of God, and so more or less in order. If essential then to know how to behave in the house of God, how necessary now; and if the Holy Spirit chose so to address a young man in that day, have not His words a particular significance for the young men and women of the present day?

In verse 16 we have one of those priceless gems which the diligent student of Holy Scripture finds ever and anon in unlooked-for places. The epistle is distinctly hortatory, and is full of wholesome instruction; yet here, right in the midst of it, we have this most precious and pregnant statement as to the truth of the person of Christ: His divine glory, His incarnation, life in the world, and His present exaltation; for, be it observed, this verse refers to Christ, and to Him alone. Great indeed is the mystery! God has been manifested in flesh. Do we realize it? Or have we simply accepted it as one of the dogmas of Christianity without stopping to contemplate it? The lowly Babe in Bethlehem's manger was Emmanuel—God with us. The wearied Man who slept in the hinder part of a ship, who sat on Sychar's well, and who was "an hungred," was God over all. It was the voice of God, come near to man in wondrous grace, when He spake as never man spake. He, who wept with the sorrowing sisters, and, later, with a voice of authority called the dead to life, was God. He who suffered in Gethsemane and agonized at Calvary was God manifested in flesh. At the very moment of His deepest anguish He was "upholding all things by the word of His power." The natural man cannot understand this, and therefore refuses to believe it. How He could be God, and man; in absolute dependence and yet Lord of all; weak and despised on earth yet mighty and worshipped by heavenly hosts, is to us also an inscrutable mystery. Yet we believe it, and delight to linger in the presence of such incomparable grace, and as we do so, we wonder and worship.

He brought all the light and love of heaven into a dark and loveless world. Men looked upon Him who Himself was God (but they, alas! were blind and perceived it not), for He said, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John xiv. 9). The proud religious leaders refused Him; but the poor and needy, the weary and heavy laden, the

publicans and sinners, were attracted to Him. They accepted His gracious invitation, and proved the great compassion and grace that was in Him; they believed on Him, their ideas of God were altogether changed, and that rest became theirs that He alone could give (Matt. xi. 25-30).

Angels who already knew His holiness and goodness and power also saw Him; they saw Him manifesting every divine grace in the midst of a rebel world, and the sight must have filled them with adoring surprise.

But all this aroused the malignity of Satan. By misrepresenting God he had compassed man's fall in Eden; and from that time he had been indefatigable in his efforts to keep men in darkness. There had been men who had sought to be for God. Alas! their testimony had been blemished by failure; but here was One whose enemies noted His every word and movement, and who, when asked by them, "Who art Thou?" could reply, "Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning," or, as another translation renders it, "Altogether that which I also say to you" (John viii. 25). His life was transparent; there was not one atom of failure; His words and His actions alike were the perfect expression of all that God is in His nature and being. It was not surprising, therefore, that against Christ Satan should marshal his forces and concentrate his power; nor did he rest till that blessed One had been cast out of this world by way of the cross. His course on earth was finished; but if He was condemned by men He was justified in the Spirit; if rejected by the Jews, He is preached unto the Gentiles; if cast out by the world, He has been received up into glory. As the ark of covenant was enshrined in the tabernacle of old, so is this precious truth as to the person of Christ committed to the house of God, and the behaviour of those who form that house is to be consistent with the treasure it holds. In this lies true godliness.

The effort of Satan was to keep man

from God, but the coming into this world of the Lord Jesus meant his utter defeat. How complete that defeat is was manifested when fifty days after the resurrection the Holy Spirit descended, filled the waiting company of one hundred and twenty disciples, and formed that which verse 15 of our chapter calls "the house of God, which is the church of the living God." By the lips of the Apostle Peter and others He bore witness to a glorified Christ; called for the allegiance of the very men whose hands were red with His blood, and at the close of the day of Pentecost there were three thousand one hundred and twenty souls indwelt by God the Holy Ghost, and set up in this world to represent God, according to the revelation made of Him in Christ. The good news spread, the number increased, and the Acts of the Apostles, really the Acts of the Holy Spirit, form a triumphant record of how Satan was vanquished and God's purpose fulfilled.

Here, we think, is to be found the connecting link between verses 14 and 15 and verse 16 of the chapter under consideration. As we have endeavoured to show, verse 16 sets forth the complete revelation of God in our Lord Jesus Christ when He was here—"The Word was made" (or, more truly, 'became') "flesh, and dwelt among us" (John i. 14). He has gone to glory; and now God's character is to be expressed in this world by those in whose hearts the truth is enshrined. "The house of God" as viewed in this chapter consists of those, and only those, who are His children by faith in Christ Jesus. The conjunction between the two verses—viz. 15 and 16—shows beyond all doubt that what Christ was when *He* was here, God would have us to be while *we* are here.

It may be remarked, that He was a divine Person. He was; be it noted, however, there is a divine Person in the world to-day. The Holy Spirit is here, and has taken possession of the bodies of God's children that, through

them, God may be expressed in the world now (see 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20). Do not let us be misunderstood; we do not for one moment suggest that we are divine; far be the thought; but we call attention to the great fact that a divine Person is in the world, that our bodies form His temple; and further, that, viewed collectively, we compose the house that is God's dwelling-place, and all this is in order that the true light as to God's character may shine out before men. The Holy Spirit seeks to accomplish this by engaging our hearts with our Lord Jesus Christ, where He now is at God's right hand; by filling the vision of our souls with Him who fills the heart and the throne of God, until as we behold Him we are morally transformed into His likeness, and He, up there, is reflected in us down here (2 Cor. iii. 18). As this is so, we manifest the graces and exhibit the traits of Jesus; we show forth His excellences; we walk in separation from this world where He is not; and yet in this world we unconsciously shed the beams of His love on the benighted children of men. We shall not be occupied with ourselves, or our progress; we should disclaim any suggestion of saintliness; but we seek to live where Christ lives, to feed on "the Bread of God;" to appropriate all that Christ is, because we are part of Him: thus we become like Him, and in measure as we are like Him we represent God.

May we not stop and inquire, How far do we rise to the height of our privilege in being left here to represent God? How men value the honour of representing an earthly potentate! Distance, discomfort, and disadvantages of various kinds are all esteemed unworthy of consideration in view of the great distinction this confers; and shall not we rejoice that we are called to represent the blessed God? It has been truly remarked that the men of the world do not read the Bible, but they read us; and we have to admit they read us pretty correctly. What our fellow-men learn of God is to a

considerable extent what they see in us ; hence the tremendous importance of our seeking to represent Him more faithfully. We are persuaded that just as Satan directed his power against Christ when He was here, so now those who seek to be here for Christ will be his point of attack ; hence the words of our Lord : "In the world ye shall have tribulation" (John xvi. 33), and of the inspired Apostle : "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. iii. 12).

The enemy's one great object is to divert God's children from the path of godliness. He adopts subtle means to gain this end : he may seek to allure us into association with the world in various ways ; he may endeavour to imbue our minds with ideas, religious in kind, but which do not form Christ in us. He will seek to act upon us each according to our varied temperaments, and do all he can to prevent our

constant occupation with Christ, our separation to Christ, and our being found here morally like Christ. The one thing he hates is personal practical godliness, for he knows that thereby the attention of men is directed to God, and they are drawn to Him.

The godly man will therefore be the tested man, but the testing will only serve to drive him nearer to Christ, with the result that Christ will shine forth more clearly than ever.

We propose in future papers, if the Lord will, to consider how personal practical godliness may be expressed in the home circle, in the company of God's people, and in the world.

May our God in His grace and by His Holy Spirit awaken us to a sense of the immense value of the present moment, and give us to be found here more for His pleasure, and for the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, for His dear name's sake.

A Great Contrast.

(J. H. HOLDSWORTH).

IN Genesis i. we see the world fair and beautiful as it came from the hand of God its Creator, and man set in innocence in the most ideally advantageous circumstances, but in *responsibility*, upon the fulfilment of which depended his blessing. He failed, sin entered, and death by sin, and the last verse of the closing chapter of the book presents to us the picture of the great and mighty Joseph, "lord of all the land of Egypt," *dead* and "in a coffin in Egypt." Thus ends all that rests on creature responsibility.

In the Gospel of Mark we get another beginning—not of creation, nor of anything dependent upon the creature, but "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus

Christ the Son of God," He who was indeed the Creator Himself, but who had taken the servant's place, in order to undo the works of the devil, and deliver men from sin and its consequences, and glorify the name of God in it all. That good news is all about *Him*. And note, in striking contrast with Genesis, how that book ends, not with the creature "in a coffin," but with Man in the glory, the Victor "received up into heaven" and sitting "on the right hand of God ;" and flowing out of His victory o'er death and the grave, the gospel goes out "to every creature : He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Blessed be God for such a message !

"Dig channels for the streams of love
Where they may broadly run,
For Love has overflowing streams
To fill them every one.

For we must share if we would keep
That good thing from above :
Ceasing to give we cease to have,
Such is the law of Love."

Bible Study.—Galatians.

(EDWARD CROSS).

Galatians iii. 1-14.

1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain.

5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel

unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith,

12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

WE come now to the more properly polemical part of the epistle, and with it to the consideration of the subject of the Spirit, than which there is none more important, as with it is connected the whole Christian state from a subjective, experimental, and practical point of view. The death and resurrection of Christ is the basis and fountain-head, the *fons et origo* of Christian life and deliverance. The Spirit is the effectual power of it, operating, through faith, experimentally in the soul. Without the former we would not have the possibility of deliverance; without the latter we could not have the actuality of it. The Spirit is the power of the deliverance in the soul practically, which we have essentially in Christ. If, therefore, it is of all importance that we have Christ operating deliverance on our behalf, it is of co-ordinate importance that we have the Spirit—His Spirit—that we should be in the good of that deliverance; for “if any one has not the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him” (Rom. viii. 9, N.T.). This is not a question of the new birth—all saints at all times were born anew—but of the Christian state, in the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, a liberty which did not, could not exist until He procured it, and in which we could not participate experi-

mentally and practically save by His Spirit dwelling in us. Pious desires are proper to the divine nature and inherent in the new birth; practical deliverance from the power of sin and from the principles of this age, so as to live to God, according to that nature, could not be but by the presence and power of the Spirit. Therefore, the question of the Spirit, and on what principle they got it, whether that of law or faith, was one of paramount importance. No wonder, then, that the language of the Apostle is alike vehement and indignant, as he sees the irreflective frivolity with which they were giving up the whole ground of practical Christianity, and so relapsing into their former pagan condition by a professedly Christian road, and thus leading the vanguard of an apostatizing Christendom, even as we see has actually taken place in the history of it from then till now (*cf.* chap. iv. vers. 9, 10).

Verses 1-3.

The vehemence of the Apostle's language shows how deeply he felt the issues that were at stake. They were bewitched as by an evil eye. Oh! had they but kept their eyes on Jesus Christ, who had been portrayed before them crucified. How senseless, after having received the Spirit, which is the seal of

righteousness, then to seek righteousness by the flesh under law—the flesh, which is “not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom. viii. 7).

Senseless Galatians ! Twice over he repeats the word. Were they to so high a degree so very senseless ? (ver. 3, *Ellicott*). Such is the estimate of the Spirit of God as to their state. The thinking faculty in them was, as it were, paralysed. Not that they were naturally devoid of sense ; contrariwise, they were extremely quick-witted ; but they were under a spell ; they were, as it were, hypnotized, their reasoning powers aborted ; proof therefore went for nothing, whether adduced from Scripture or from their own experience. All this shows something supernatural, the working of a spirit holding captive the human mind. Who can deliver from such a snare ? or by what means can deliverance come ? Only by the almighty power of the Spirit of God.

In different ways he appeals to them, if by any means he can bring conviction to them. First he appeals to their own experience. On what principle had they received the Spirit ; on the principle of law or of faith ? Now the Galatians were Gentiles, and had never been under the law. Yet they had received the Spirit. Plainly, then, it was not on the principle of law. Then what senselessness ! Who in the ordinary transactions of common life would have so acted ? But even their common sense was at default, being subordinated to the mysticism and dissimulation that were at work amongst them.

Verse 4.

Then, again, they had even suffered many things for the truth's sake which they were now giving up. Would not the consideration of this fact, which was within their own cognizance, affect them ? Or was it to be all in vain ?

Verse 5.

Nay more, God Himself, who had

given them the Spirit, had been working works of power amongst them ; and on what principle had He so wrought ? Let themselves answer. Would not that affect them ?

Verse 6.

But let Scripture speak. They all dated back to Abraham as their common father in the faith. From him they had sprung. Their title-deeds to blessing they would read in his. But on that point Scripture left no room for doubt ; as it is written, “Even as Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness” (Gen. xv. 6).

Verses 7-9.

They therefore who are of faith are his sons ; and that, moreover, not as pertaining to the Jew merely, but the Scriptures foreseeing the purpose of God to bless all on the same principle, announced the glad tidings to Abraham, saying, “In thee [i.e. in the very element of faith in which he stood] all the nations shall be blessed” (Gen. xii. 3). That was the divine prescription clearly cut in Scripture. To contravene it was to forfeit all title to the blessing thus proposed. Would not that affect them ?

Verse 10.

But again, while the principle of faith was the prescribed way of blessing, the principle of law was equally and unequivocally the pronouncement of a curse. And here he refers to the closing chapters of the Pentateuch, as the history of Abraham stands as the foreword in the promise of blessing. That blessing found its spring in God Himself and antedated the giving of the law and the consequent raising of the question of responsibility in man. God will return in due time for this blessing to the spring where it resides according to the secret purposes of His own grace (Deut. xxix. 29). But, in the wisdom which it is not difficult to trace, this intermediate question of creature responsibility must be first discharged. What part has

man in the securing for himself by his own efforts under law the blessings which must come to him, most certainly, in accordance with that law? For plainly he cannot get them in any way contradictory to it. And here we must distinguish between the law in itself, which is holy and just and good, and the effect of it on man, when he is placed under it.

The Book of Deuteronomy consists mainly of three addresses given by Moses to the people in the last month of the last year of their wilderness journeying.

1st address (chap. i. 6-iv. 40) is introductory and preparatory.

2nd „ (chap. v. 1-xxvi. 19) is a practical exposition of the whole law as bearing on their possession of the promised land.

3rd „ (chap. xxvii.-xxx. 20) is a renewal of the covenant, the great principles of which, as set forth “that day,” the heaven itself solemnly bearing witness to his appeal, are urgently pressed upon the people that they might choose life and live and not perish. This passage (Deut. xxx. 12-14) is quoted by the Apostle Paul (Rom. x. 8) as the “*magna charta*” of the blessings of the gospel, on the principle of faith alone, in contrast with the righteousness of the law; for “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” For a fuller understanding of the Apostle’s great argument on this account compare Deuteronomy xxx. and Romans x.

Now the section Deut. xxvii.-xxx. begins with a command to the people to “write . . . all the words of this law very plainly” upon stones. Then six of the tribes were to stand on Mount Gerizim to bless, and six on Mount Ebal to curse, whereupon the Levites pronounced “with a loud voice,” in dread detail, the curses, twelve in number, as many as there were tribes; but no blessings follow; and the whole

winds up with the words quoted by the Apostle here, “Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen” (Deut. xxvii. 26).

Note too that these curses do not refer immediately to what contravenes directly the literal wording of the Ten Commandments, but branch out into various sorts of carnal wickednesses, which come under the scope of the law applied spiritually, though not directly specified thereby (*cf.* Rom. vii. 8), and remark that of the works of the flesh sixteen are named in Galatians v. 19, 20; while “things like these” (N.T.) covers a countless host besides.

All this, again, should assuredly affect them. But will it do so?

Verses 11, 12.

But again, the prophets later on add their testimony to the same unalterable principle of blessing handed down from Genesis to Habakkuk, making it evident, if evidence were further needed, “that no man is justified by law in the sight of God, because ‘the just shall live on the principle of faith.’” But the law is not on the principle of faith, but contrariwise—“He that shall have done these things shall live by [or in virtue of] them.” Moreover, this is the constant statement of the Old Testament from Moses onwards (*cf.* Lev. xviii. 5; Neh. ix. 29; Ezek. xx. 11, etc.). So that under the law life could not be enjoyed, even under the best conditions, save by the successful accomplishment of one’s own works; and this at once provides those who now place themselves under law with a logical basis for the doctrine that a Christian may be saved to-day and lost to-morrow. In such circumstances the soul can enjoy no settled peace, no stable assurance of salvation, nothing that is eternal, and none of those blessings that are secured “in Christ,” in which the gospel abounds, because everything would be limited to what was within itself, and would depend unintermittingly on the success of its own efforts. The state of such is

described by the Apostle (Rom. x. 3) : "They, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God" (N.T.).

Verses 13, 14.

But more than this; the Apostle says, "Christ has redeemed us [Jews] from the curse of the law" (who were under it, the Gentiles never were), "being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is every one hanged upon a tree," in order that the curse being first removed from the Jew who was under it, "the blessing of Abraham," till then hindered by the curse resting on the Jew, "might come to the nations in Christ Jesus, that we" (Jew and

Gentile alike) "might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

Thus from every point of view he appeals to them—as he appeals to-day to the churches of Christendom; but, alas! without effect. When the soul is under a spell, hypnotized, nothing affects it but the spell that holds it captive. When the spell is broken there is liberty. And "if . . . the Son shall set you free, ye shall be really free" (John viii. 36, N.T.). But if that spell is bound on them judicially, then are they bound indeed.

In connection with this most solemn subject compare the following scriptures:—Isaiah vi. 9, 10; Matthew xiii. 12-16; Acts xxviii. 25-27; Romans xi. 18-22.

Correspondence:—How to Win Souls.

Further correspondence is invited upon this most important topic.

To the Editors of *Scripture Truth*.

I PRESUME that your correspondent does not confine "soul-winning" to the public preaching of the gospel, for it is evident that the work is often accomplished more effectually by individual dealing.

The need for this service is strikingly brought out in a very interesting and instructive book, recently published (*Taking Men Alive*, Religious Tract Society). The account in this book of the conversion to God of the late H. C. Trumbull, of America, greatly affected me, and the reproduction of it may be of help to others who have not seen the book in which it appears.

Of the time when he had just reached manhood he says: "Had any one spoken a personal word to me on the subject I should have welcomed it gladly; but no such word came. I was indeed surprised that my friend (who had confessed Christ as his Saviour) had no word to say on the subject, intimate as he and I were."

About this time he left his home and continued to correspond with his friend. He writes: "One noon, as I was returning from my midday meal, I stopped at the post office for the noon mail. A letter came from my Stonington friend. This surprised me, for I had not yet acknowledged his letter of a few days before. As I read the first few lines of the letter I saw that it was a personal appeal to me. At once crumpling the letter in

my hand I thrust it into my pocket, saying to a friend who was with me, 'I think there must be a big revival in S., if it has set my old friend preaching to me!' Then brushing the subject from my mind I started toward my office and my work.

"But the subject of that letter, and the letter itself, would not stay brushed away. I asked myself how it was that that letter, on that subject, had been written. In all our years of intimacy since my friend had come out openly for Christ he had never said or written a word on this subject. Had it been an easy thing for him to do it now? Was it a desire for his own enjoyment or for my good that had prompted this writing? It was worth while to read that letter and consider its contents before throwing it aside permanently. These were the thoughts that naturally ran in my mind as I walked towards the office.

"Shutting myself into the map-closet, where I could be entirely alone, I took out from my pocket the crumpled letter, smoothed it out, and began with real interest to read."

"The letter was an earnest appeal from one man, who had found the Saviour, to another who did not yet know that joy. It opened with a half-apology for the seeming intrusion; went on to explain how hard it had been to write on the subject; adding, 'I may never have the courage to address you again in this manner,' and closing with the earnest hope

that the reader would therefore 'be advised by me now.' What a timorous, reluctant effort it was, yet how blessed! Before I had read the last of that letter I was on my knees asking forgiveness of God and committing myself to a long-sighted Saviour. That was the turning point in my life course; and in half a century that has passed since then I have been more and more grateful for the writing of that letter, and for the loving spirit that prompted it, and I have wished that other friends were as true to their friends."

The lesson as to the need of individual effort for souls was just beginning to take root in this man's life, as it was the start of his own new life. But see with what startling vigour the lesson was reinforced.

"So soon as I had come to the point of Christian decision for myself, I looked about for another man. I did not have far to go. An associate with me in the office was a fellow-boarder with me in my temporary home; we were accustomed to walk together to and from the boarding-house to the office, and we sat near each other at the boarding-house table. As we walked together from house to office I told my friend of my new decision for Christ, and I urged him to make a like decision."

This was the answer that burned the need for individual work so deeply into the young believer's heart. "Trumbull, your words cut me to the heart. You little think how they rebuke me. I've long been a professed

follower of Christ; and you have never suspected this, although we have been in close association in house and office for years. I've never said a word to you for the Saviour whom I trust. I've never urged you to trust Him. And now a follower of His and a friend of yours, from a distance, has been the means of leading you to Him. And here are you inviting me to come to that Saviour of whom I have been a silent follower for years. May God forgive me for my lack of faithfulness!"

The effect on this man of the careless neglect on the part of his two friends of the greatest matter in the world was deliberately crystallized in this way: "I determined that as I loved Christ and as Christ loved souls, I would press Christ on the individual soul, so that none who were in the proper sphere of my individual responsibility or influence should lack the opportunity of meeting the question whether or not they would trust and follow Christ. *The resolve I made was, that whenever I was in such intimacy with a soul as to be justified in choosing my subject of conversation, the theme of themes should have prominence between us, so that I might learn his need and, if possible, meet it.*"

Surely if our hearts were stirred before the Lord to prayerfully and dependently make and carry out such a resolve it would result in blessing to many still without the knowledge of the Saviour, and incalculable good to ourselves.

Yours in His service, M.

"Shew me Thy Glory."

(J. ALFRED TRENCH).

Continued from page 139.

2 Corinthians iii. and iv.

WE have already seen that God has been infinitely glorified by the work of the cross; and that we rest for salvation where God rests; so that the work by which we are saved will be the everlasting glory of God.

The full force of the expression in 2 Corinthians iv. 4 (which must be rendered) "the gospel of the glory of Christ" will now be seen. It is not the "glorious gospel" of the A.V., expressing merely what is fine, and that even as connected with glory to the fullest degree, but it defines the glory, in which He is, as *the point of the testimony*. It is the glad tidings that God has found such glory in the work accomplished by the Lord Jesus as to our

sins, that He has exalted Him to the highest point of heavenly glory.

The consequent position of the believer is now presented to us in wonderful contrast to that of Moses in the last passage referred to: 2 Corinthians iii. The law had attached the promise of life to the condition of doing: "This do and thou shalt live," but we needed life to be able to do anything. "The Spirit giveth life" to begin with, in contrast to the letter that killeth. That is, the glory of Christ, though hidden beneath the letter, had been the mind of God according to spiritual intelligence of it in the Old Testament. The Spirit now reveals Him as the object of faith, and so gives life where alone it is

to be found, in Christ. The law demanded righteousness from those under it: "it shall be our righteousness if we observe to do all these commandments" (Deut. vi. 25); and of course it would have been but man's righteousness. But as righteousness never came by the law, and there was "none righteous," it became but a ministration of death and condemnation to man (vers. 7, 9).

But now the gospel as Paul preached it is a "ministration of righteousness" (ver. 9). From the glory where Christ is righteousness is ministered to us. "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him" (Luke xv.). And instead of man's righteousness (if there had been any), that never carried anything with it but long life and good days on earth—no ray of heavenly glory,—it is the righteousness of God, so perfectly suited to the glory of God that it has already carried Christ into that glory as Man, from the very depths of the judgment where divine love had led Him for us. Him who knew no sin, "God has made sin for us, that we might become God's righteousness in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21). Finally, as completing the whole individual Christian position, there is a "ministration of the Spirit" (ver. 8). To those who have received Christ as *their life and righteousness, the Spirit is given to be the power of an enjoyment of the whole wonderful revelation.*

Now looking at the position of Moses again, which was that of man under the law: there was, indeed, a place by Jehovah, a rock, "And it shall come to pass, while My glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with My hand while I pass by: and I will take away Mine hand, and thou shalt see My back parts: but My face shall not be seen." No hiding-place is needed now that the manifestation of the glory of the Lord might be only a partial one for us. There is no hiding in a cleft as the glory passes before us in John xvii. Every ray of it is concentrated on that face once more marred than that of any man; and we can look upon the glory

in His face; for it is that of Him who gave Himself for us.

But Moses could not be in presence of even the back parts of Jehovah's glory without bearing away a reflection of it; and so when he came down from the Mount the skin of his face shone. "And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, . . . they were afraid to come nigh him." They could not bear even the feeble reflection of the partial manifestation of it. The reason is not far to seek: what was that in his hands? The two tables of stone, rewritten by the finger of God—the "ministration of condemnation." The nearer the light of the glory came while it was still connected with the righteous claim of God upon them, the more intolerable it was. So "till Moses had done speaking with them he put a vail on his face" (Exod. xxxiv. 29–35).

No claim is connected with the glory on the face of the Lord Jesus. It was never revealed there, till every claim of broken law and outraged holiness had been gone into and settled for ever. It is the witness to us of God's infinite satisfaction with the settlement made in the propitiatory work of the cross. Moses had, indeed, proposed to make such a settlement, "Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin" (chap. xxxii. 30–32). But no creature effort was of any avail. "None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him" (Ps. xlix. 7). The Lord Jesus did not go up to God, till He had come down and given His life a ransom for many. Hence He could go up with no "peradventure" on His lips, but in the full consciousness of the indisputable claim He had established by His finished work to take His place as Man in the glory—a place He had won for us in divine righteousness.

The last verses of 2 Corinthians iii. bring us to the focus of the contrast of the Christian's position with that of Moses and Israel. Only we must read

verse 18 a little more true to the original. It is not our face that is unveiled: it is the glory of the Lord. "We all beholding [or looking upon] the glory of the Lord with unveiled face are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit." Moses had to put a veil upon his face for Israel: the Lord Jesus has not to do so for us: though the difference is great between the reflection of partial glory in Moses' face, and the whole glory of God shining in the face of the Lord Jesus. What would have been Moses' destruction is the holy liberty of the Christian in the power of the Holy Ghost: for "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." The light of that glory tells of peace made by the blood of His cross, and of the perfection of the work on the ground of which we are identified with Him in life and righteousness. Every motive of divine and unutterable love engages our hearts to be occupied with that glory as it shines for us in His face. Look round the circle of the nearest and dearest to us, is there any face we have the same title to look into as His who gave Himself for us, all radiant as it is with the glory of God?

The prayer of Moses is fulfilled, for the simplest believer, in a way beyond all that he could have conceived. So that it only remains for us through the Spirit to wait for the hope of righteousness by faith, as Paul expresses it in Galatians v. 5: which is defined to be the glory of God (Romans v. 2), the hope of which has become so real as to be the present power of exulting joy in our lives.

One thing more of the deepest practical importance to our souls flows out of the contrast the Apostle so fully develops between the glory of the system under which Moses stood, "which was to be done away," and the glory which excelleth and remaineth brought in by Christianity. It is that between the powerlessness of the law to effect anything, as the stones were cold and unimpressionable upon which

it was graven, and the full positive effect of the gospel of the glory of Christ in forming the assembly as a letter commendatory of Christ in the world. This was produced by a ministry through the Apostle by which the Spirit of the living God wrote Christ on fleshy tables; that is, the affections of the heart. The realization by the assembly of this its wonderfully privileged and responsible place, depends upon the response of heart, in the individuals that compose it, to such a ministry. Verse 18 brings out the formative power of it; first by the Object presented to our hearts, and secondly by the indwelling Spirit—"the Lord the Spirit," referring to verses 6 and 17. 'Looking upon the glory of the Lord . . . we are transformed . . . into the same image even as by the Lord the Spirit.' The Spirit dwelling in us is the power both of the objective presentation and the subjective effect produced. As the light of the unveiled glory in His face streams upon us from the opened heavens by the ministry of the Spirit, and the eyes of our faith are fixed upon an Object so worthy to absorb, by the power of the same Spirit, the affections take the impress of their Object, and the glory of Christ is reflected in the life and ways suited to Him of those who are His own.

Moses even bore the reflection of the partial glory he had seen. Could it be possible that we should look upon that unveiled glory that shines for ever on the face of Jesus, and not bring some of the reflection of it amongst those we come in contact with? This will be known in the moral traits of His glory, that lowly life of confidence, and dependence, purity, singleness of purpose, obedience, and devotedness, and all that was true in Him who is now become our life, being reproduced in us. As long as we are here it will only be in degree, and just that in which the growth of our souls consists "from glory to glory." There is no perfection of condition known to Scripture short of reaching Him: then we shall be like

Him, for we shall see Him as He is; meanwhile, having this hope in Him, we purify ourselves even as He is pure (1 John iii. 2, 3). The Lord Jesus has set Himself apart in heavenly glory that we may be set apart by the truth of all that He is there. Growth, then, in the Christian, in the blessed likeness of the Lord depends on His being before our souls continually. No effort of ours enters into it, or could produce any trait of His life in us. Nor can the eye be turned in upon self, nor diverted to any object in the world, without obstructing the transforming process. Not that it is meant that the soul should be ever conscious of the transformation.

A shining face never sees itself. Moses wist not that his face shone, though Aaron and Israel were well aware of it.

May our hearts then be simply set upon a life of increasing, adoring occupation with Christ. The result is assured. We shall then answer a little more to what we are by His grace and calling, the epistles of Christ known and read of all men, to His praise and glory. May the name of our Lord Jesus Christ be glorified in us before we go to be glorified in Him for ever, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. i. 12).

“Godliness with Contentment is Great Gain.”

“Some murmur, when their sky is clear
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue.
And some with thankful love are filled
If but one streak of light—
One ray of God’s rich mercy gild
The darkness of their night.”

In mansions there are hearts that ask
In discontent and pride,
Why life is such a dreary task,
And all good things denied.
And hearts in poorest huts admire
How love has in their aid
(Love that not ever seems to tire)
Such rich provision made.”

Eternal Punishment (IV).

(JAMES BOYD).

The World to Come.

IN the midst of my writing, a book has come into my hands entitled *Our Life after Death*, written by Arthur Chambers, a vicar in the Church of England. This copy is one of the one hundred and sixth edition. I can only say that if the sale of the book is any evidence of the popularity of the theories propounded therein another tremendous proof is furnished of the progress made by Christendom in the direction of the final apostasy. From beginning to end there is not an element of Christianity in the book. It is not one whit nearer the truth of

the gospel of God than is *The New Theology* by R. J. Campbell. With most other writers against the doctrine of eternal punishment he refuses to confine the preaching of the gospel to the present life, but declares it shall go on, with even greater advantages for the unsaved, in a *post-mortem* existence. But in this he joins issue with some others who contend for the same ultimate theory as himself. Both parties, however, seem agreed in this, that the present life does not end the hope of the rebellious, nor the preaching of the gospel. Some confine the

second presentation to the world to come, Mr. C. confines it to the separate state. Of course, to the worldling it will be a matter of little importance which of these notions is the correct one; either of them does away with the necessity of securing salvation in the present life. To him, even annihilation, could he be made sure of it, would be preferable to judging of himself, giving up the pleasures of the world, taking up his cross, and the following after the lowly, despised, and rejected Son of Man.

On these men, thank God, it is not my province to pass judgment. As to their relations with God I have nothing to say. I leave them to Him who judges righteously. There may be something at the bottom of their hearts, underneath all this rubbish-heap of soul-destroying error, which has been begotten by the Holy Spirit of God, and if there is He knows all about it; and, as it is both indestructible and incorruptible, it will come to light in His good time to His glory and praise. Still one cannot but feel, not only the greatest abhorrence of their pernicious doctrines, but alarm for the safety of their souls, and of the souls of those who hear them, in view of the terrible denunciations by Paul of those who dared to preach any other gospel than he had preached, or than that which the saints had received. But oh! how good it is that it is the Heart-Searcher, the One who knows all things, who is the Judge of mankind.

The world to come was never lost sight of in the preaching of the gospel by the apostles. The angels informed the disciples, from whose midst the blessed Lord had been taken up into heaven, that the same Jesus would one day return in like manner as they had seen Him go (Acts i.). Peter says: "He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead" (Acts x. 42). Paul says that God "hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the

world in righteousness by *that* Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts xvii. 31). For His coming the early converts were taught to wait. Peter says: "Be sober, and hope to the end for the grace which is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter i. 13). Through the preaching of Paul the Thessalonians are said to have "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven" (1 Thess. i.).

Believers were all fit for that glory where Christ is, so that they could confidently rejoice at the prospect of His speedy return. They were able to give thanks to the Father, who had made them "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. i. 12). They required nothing but the quickening of their mortal body, to complete the salvation which was their portion, as far as their justification and acceptance was concerned. And for this they waited, as we read in Philippians iii.: "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." With changed bodies they would enter the Father's house, and occupy, in His unspeakable love, that place which Jesus has prepared for those who follow Him in the day of His rejection by the world (John xiv.).

But there was one thing among others that they required to be specially instructed in after they had embraced the gospel, and that was the fact that the Lord would take away His church out of this scene before He would personally be manifested, when He would be seen by every eye. The gospel they had heard spoke of the coming of Christ to judge the living and introduce His personal reign, when He would sit upon the throne of His glory. For this manifestation of their Deliverer

they were waiting, and evidently not expecting to pass from this scene by death. The Thessalonians, as we have seen, were waiting for God's Son from heaven; but when some of their fellow-believers fell asleep in Jesus they were alarmed, thinking that such would miss the blessing at the coming of Christ. This the Apostle corrects in the fourth chapter of his first epistle to them. He says: "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

I quote this to show the order of events. The church waits to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, when He is advancing to take possession of the thrones of the world, which are rightly His. His sleeping saints will be raised in incorruption, power, and glory (1 Cor. xv. 42-54), the living shall be changed, and all shall go to meet Him in the air, so that when He appears we shall appear with Him in glory (Col. iii. 4). And this was the great hope kept before the early Christians. That the coming of the Lord has been delayed much longer than ever was anticipated by any human being is true, but perfect provision has been made for all who have fallen asleep: they are with Christ—that is, their spirits are—and they will lose nothing through having waited so long. They are better where they are than they would be upon earth, and the

resurrection is before them, when they will have bodies like Christ's; then their happiness shall be supreme, as, of course, ours shall be also.

They that sleep in Jesus will be in the *first* resurrection (Rev. xx. 5); such are said to be blessed and holy, and beyond the power of the second death; it is a "*resurrection of life*" (John v. 29), the "*resurrection of the just*" (Acts xxiv. 15), the "*resurrection from the dead*" (Phil. iii. 11); a resurrection Paul strove to attain to, knowing he would have to die; a resurrection which the disciples knew nothing about (Mark ix. 10), though they knew and believed in the truth of the resurrection of the dead. These will live and reign with Christ a thousand years (Rev. xx. 4). The rest of the dead, those who have been characterized upon earth by evil, those Scripture speaks of as unjust, are not raised until the thousand years of the reign of Christ are finished (Rev. xx. 5); then the great white throne is set up, the earth and heaven flee away, and the dead are raised and judged according to their works, and death and hades are cast into the lake of fire; that is, all those who were in that condition found their just and eternal portion in the second death. Death and hades, which had no existence at this time, except in the condition of the wicked dead, are said to be cast into the lake of fire, because all their contents were: just as we might say, "The whole city perished by the sword," meaning the inhabitants.

The resurrection which precedes the millennium is the resurrection of the just, that which Scripture calls the *first* resurrection or the resurrection of *life*, and all in this resurrection are said to be *blessed and holy*. Not one of those who have died in their sins shall ever see the personal reign of Christ. Their bodies will continue in the graves and their spirits in hades until that reign has drawn to a close, and then, as we have seen, they will come forth in the resurrection of judgment; but for these there will be no escape from

the lake of fire. All in that judgment are judged according to their works, and we know "that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ . . . for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. ii. 16). Therefore we read in the account given us of the great white throne judgment, where all are judged according to their works: "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Their works go for nothing, for they are all evil; the book of life is the only way of escape, and not one name seems to be found there of all those who are judged.

Therefore, to say that there will be a general resurrection previous to the millennium, and that those who have died out of Christ and without salvation will then have another chance of hearing the gospel, is "another gospel, which is *not* another" (Gal. i. 6, 7), for it is not a gospel at all; it has its origin from the father of lies, and those who listen to it and trust in it will most assuredly find one day, when it is too late, that they have given themselves over to believe a lie; but they will have no one but themselves to blame, for they will be convicted of having preferred the lie to the truth of God.

But let us briefly examine the effect which the coming of the Lord will have upon the world at large. I may say that all we have in Revelation, from the end of the third chapter until the end of verse ten of chapter nineteen, takes place after the church has left this scene, and before Christ comes with clouds, when every eye shall see Him. This may be questioned by some who in the main love and hold the truth of the gospel, but their objection will not materially affect what I have got to say concerning the appearing of Christ.

We see plainly from Scripture that the coming of Christ will be very unwelcome to the world at large: "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also

which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him" (Rev. i. 7). Again: "As it was in the days of Noah" and "as it was in the days of Lot," men went on regardless of the impending doom until destruction came upon them: "Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed" (Luke xvii.). We are told: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. i). The Antichrist and the head of the Roman Empire will meet their doom at His hand. They are spoken of in Revelation as the beast and the false prophet. The persecutors of His earthly people, the Jews, whom He will have taken up for blessing at this time, will also feel the hot breath of His wrath: "By fire and by His sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many" (Isa. lxvi.). The prophets give one united testimony regarding the dreadfulness of that day for all flesh. A tumult from the Lord shall be among the armies which invade the holy land, and they shall slay one another (Zech. xiv.). The nations of the earth shall, in that day, be gathered against Jerusalem to battle, but few shall return to tell the tale of the disaster which shall befall them (Ezek. xxxix.).

When the battle has been fought, and those found in open rebellion shall have been slain, the King shall take His seat upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered the non-combatant portion of the nations, and "He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left" (Matt. xxv.). Their hostility to the King, or their affection for Him, comes to light in the way they

have treated His brethren the Jews, specially those who had gone out with the gospel of the kingdom during the interval between the taking away of the church and the appearing of the Son of Man. The wicked go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life everlasting.

This judgment is at the commencement of the millennial reign of Christ, and is very different from that judgment which is brought before us in Revelation xx. In Matthew xxv. the judgment is of *living nations*, that which Scripture designates the judgment of the *quick*. In Revelation xx. we have the judgment of the *dead*, and it takes place at the *close* of the thousand years. The *first* resurrection, which is described as a resurrection of life and as blessed and holy, takes place, and is completed, before the thousand years begin to run their course. All such are raised in glory and are perfected for ever. In this resurrection there are none who have died in their sins. No one comes forth from the power of the grave to hear once more the message of grace. For a second opportunity,—granted to men of the present age of hearing the gospel in the age to come—there is not the slightest scriptural support. It is a spawn of the prince of darkness, sent out on its errand of soul-murder, among those who have no heart for the living truth of God. The poor wretched seeker after pleasure in this life may think that the world to come will be a much more convenient season for the reception of the grace of God, and consequently may determine to put the matter off until then, but what an awakening it will be for him, when, at the hearing of the voice of the Son of God, he comes forth from the grave, to learn that the day he depended on for salvation has passed away, and his opportunity is lost for ever!

During the thousand years the Lord will shepherd the nations with a rod of iron, but many will only yield feigned obedience (Ps. xviii. 44, lxvi. 3, see

margin), and when, at the close of the thousand years of the personal reign of Christ, the devil is let loose from his prison, and goes forth among the nations of the earth, the whole world seems to follow him (Rev. xx. 8, 9). Upon these rebels the fire of heaven falls, the devil is then cast into the lake of fire, the great white throne is set up, the dead are raised and judged, and whoever is not found written in the book of life is cast into the lake of fire. This closes the ages of time. The first eight verses of chapter xx. are a description of the eternal state, and in that eternal, changeless day we have brought to view the blessedness of those who love God. The holy city, the tabernacle of God, is with men, "and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." All these things abide to eternity. The world to come is for the subjugation of everything to Christ, but it is not a world for the conversion of sinners. "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation." "Seek ye the Lord *while He may be found*, call upon Him *while He is near*."

(To be continued.)

The Indwelling of the Holy Ghost.—No. 1. (J. T. MAWSON).

The Personality of the Spirit.

"The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost" (Matt. xxviii.).

THE Holy Spirit of God is often spoken of as though He were but an influence or a power, and it is well that we should be reminded that He is a Person—the third Person in the Godhead—co-equal with the Father and the Son.

The Father is the Source of all blessing FOR men ;

The Son, by His incarnation and death, has brought all that blessing TO men ;

The Holy Ghost, come down from a glorified Christ in heaven, makes that blessing real IN men.

Thus is the triune God engaged on behalf of guilty men, that they may be brought out of darkness into light, and find their eternal joy in the God against whom they had sinned.

The Time of His Coming.

"The Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John vii. 39).

It is important, in order to understand the character of the blessing now revealed to us in the gospel, to see that there was a time when the Holy Ghost did not dwell in men on the earth (though He visited, moved, and inspired His chosen vessels in all ages), and to see also from whence He came, and why. That He did not always *dwell* in men, as now, is evident from the Scripture quoted above. This verse also clearly gives the connection of His coming; it was the glorification of Jesus;—the exaltation of the risen Christ to the throne of God and the descent of the Holy Ghost to dwell in men are the two great facts of this dispensation. All who are indwelt by the Holy Ghost are united to the risen and exalted Christ by an unbreakable and eternal bond; and every blessing that is brought to them is through and in Christ, and heavenly in its character.

Who are indwelt by the Holy Ghost.

"This spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive" (John vii. 39).

In the cleansing of the leper (Lev.

xiv.) we have a very instructive type. There we find that, in the day of his cleansing, the leper had to have the blood of his trespass offering put upon the tip of his right ear, and the thumb of his right hand, and the great toe of his right foot (ver. 14). Then oil was put, first, upon the blood on ear, thumb, and toe, and afterwards was poured upon his head. THE LEPER set forth what we are by nature, sinful and defiled; THE BLOOD, with which he was marked, prefigured the fact of our redemption by the blood of Jesus; THE OIL was typical of the Holy Spirit, and teaches that it is upon the redeemed that the Holy Ghost comes; they alone are indwelt by the Spirit, and no others. The immanence of God in *all* men is an utterly false doctrine, for the Scripture distinguishes between those who have the Spirit, and those who have not (Rom. viii. 9).

Personal and saving faith in Christ must precede the indwelling of the Spirit, for it was "*after that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise*" (Eph. i. 13).

"Your body the Temple of the Holy Ghost."

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20).

It is an arresting thought that we are not our own. We do not belong to ourselves, but to God. We never did belong to ourselves; in the days when we knew not God we were "the servants [or slaves] of sin" (Rom. vi. 17). It is probable that we thought we were pleasing ourselves, but in reality we had yielded ourselves to a power that held us in an all-controlling bondage. We were sinners, and "whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (John viii. 34).

As slaves of sin we needed redemption, and for this a great price was paid; we are "*bought with a price.*" What a contemplation for us! God

was intent upon having us for Himself, and for this He has paid the price, even the blood of His own dear Son.

To Him who has bought us we belong by a righteous and inalienable title; and to Him it is right that we should yield ourselves.

But, further, God has taken possession of that which He has purchased; and the body of every Christian is a temple of God. How wonderful is this thought! The redeemed of God have become His dwelling-place for ever. It was for this that He paid the price, for this He has taken possession of that which He has purchased; and it is His desire, and His right, that His dwelling-place should be in full accord with Himself. *"Therefore glorify God in your body."*

"Ye were sealed."

"In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. i. 13).

It was the practice in ancient warfare to send the king's officers through a captured city to put the king's seal upon all the choicest things that the city contained; afterwards the soldiers were allowed to enter and pillage the place, but woe betide the man who dared to touch anything that bore the royal seal, for that seal was the mark that it was reserved for the king.

The Holy Ghost within the believer is the divine seal, and all who are thus sealed are marked off as God's, forever; they are not only His possession, but His choice treasure. When we understand this we are not surprised to read: "Woe unto him through whom [offences] come. It were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones" (Luke xvii. 1, 2).

In the days of the prophets God sent forth a man clothed in linen, having the writer's ink-horn by his side, to mark upon the foreheads, with the indelible ink of God, all those who sighed and cried because of Israel's shame. And all these were secure from the destruction that overtook the rest (Ezek. ix.). So are believers marked

for preservation from the wrath to come. Not by an outward seal upon the brow, but by an inward seal upon the heart, though the evidence of that inward seal should be seen in their lives by every beholder. Not only so, but that same seal marks them off as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

The Earnest of the Inheritance.

"The Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory" (Eph. i. 14).

God's love for those who have trusted in Christ is unmeasured and eternal, and He will not be satisfied until they have entered into the full enjoyment of their inheritance in glory, the portion for which they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. But His love is also a very present and tender reality, and He will not keep them waiting until they reach heaven in order to enjoy it. He has sent His Spirit into their hearts that they might begin to enjoy it now. In this sense the Holy Ghost is the earnest of our inheritance, and by Him, though not in actual possession of that glory which is ours in Christ, we can draw, as it were, a revenue from it now.

The Christian has been likened to a boy at school whose mother, week by week, sends him a hamper of good things from home. How eagerly he looks out for those home comforts during his absence from home; but every hamper received only makes him long the more to be in the home from whence those things come, and with the one whose love prompts her to send them.

It is by the Spirit that the Christian can be in the enjoyment of home comforts before he reaches home; for "we have received . . . the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor. ii. 12). Our only concern in this matter is, let it be said reverently, to keep on good terms with the Holy Ghost, or as the Scripture exhorts us, *"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption"* (Eph. iv. 30).

The Generations of the Heavens and the Earth.—Part II.

(S. L. JACOB).

THE Lord God having formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. Of these, two trees are specially mentioned, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Names such as these show plainly the allegorical character of the trees mentioned, the heavenly and earthly sides are evidently to be seen here. The trees are all good, and these two trees are surely very good. All would say this as to the tree of life, but some may be doubtful as to the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for it might be asked, "Why was it forbidden?"

This, however, forms no difficulty. Fire is good, and we could not do without it, yet we forbid our children to handle it, for they are not capable. The serpent told the woman that by eating the fruit of that tree their eyes would be opened and they should be as gods knowing good and evil. Yea, God Himself said, "The man has become as one of us, to know good and evil" (Gen. iii. 22). Therefore it is evident that the partaking of that tree conferred part of that God-likeness which, as we now know, was the ultimate purpose of God for man, but, in disobeying God, Adam grasped it in the wrong way to his utter undoing, instead of waiting God's time and way.

The fact is, we get in these two trees privilege and responsibility, and these things cannot with abiding certainty be combined in any creature, still less in man made of dust, unless he be brought into it by redemption, through Him who, though no creature, took His place among His creatures to lift

them into what were otherwise impossible blessings (Col. i. 15-18). Thus all speaks of Christ, in Him alone do privilege and responsibility have their true places. He Himself alone is the tree of life, though to be available for man He must die, for how otherwise can man eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood and thus have life in himself (John vi. 53)?

He is, therefore, the tree of life, and He is the tree of knowledge of good and evil; for the good and evil known through the premature eating of the tree was only a distorted knowledge: the Cross and the Spirit are needed to give the right knowledge of good and evil, for these things are an allegory. Yet that Christ is wisdom (also understanding and knowledge, see Proverbs i. 1-4) as well as the tree of life is plain from Proverbs iii. 13-18. God has really but one theme to speak of, and that theme is Christ.

Adam was not the tree of life, nor could any creature be it. All creature blessing (even for angels or any other creation) could be in the last Adam alone, for no one but He can be the tree of life. This is the great truth for this day, and for every day; but man's object under the instigation of Satan is the attempt to get life and to face responsibility apart from Christ, but it cannot be done. The sooner each one of us learns this lesson the better. Yet for man it is "an hard saying; who can hear it?"

From Genesis ii. 18 and to the end of the chapter Adam is seen as typical of Christ, both in his headship over all things, as portrayed in his naming of the inferior creation, and in his receiving of a helpmeet who is formed out of himself while he is in a deep sleep.

The making of a helpmeet is first mentioned because that was first in purpose, though before it is brought to pass in actuality Adam is set at the

head of creation. This is in figure the kingdom and the fulfilment of Psalm viii., though, as we know, only in Christ can there be the real fulfilment thereof, as we are told in Hebrews ii. 5-9. Again and again we have to be impressed by the fact that no blessing can be in Adam, not only because he failed, but because he is only a creature. Only through the Creator taking His place among the creatures and becoming the Head thereof (Head, too, of all principality and power, Colossians ii. 10) is any real stable blessing possible for the creature. How little this is understood by any of us is shown generally, in most, by the looking to the creature for blessing; and often, in the few who have knowledge, by such lack of grace as betrays that the one who lacks it has not learnt the lesson of 1 Corinthians iv. 7, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" Surely in all these things the earthly origin is betrayed and the heavenly is hidden. The heavenly side of the origin is God-likeness, which is Christ-likeness, the result of redemption and of the Spirit's indwelling, so that we live in Another, even in Him who was raised from the dead. Dominion on any other line is only a curse, though yet we must be subject to the powers that be, for they are ordained of God.

Next we come to the formation of the helpmeet, that which the Apostle tells us is "a great mystery," for surely now that we have the key thereof, we see in this the union of Christ and the church as we see nowhere else. Brides in the Old Testament are numerous, and many and beautiful are the applications we can draw from them, but in this case alone is the wife formed out of the husband, so that he can say, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. ii. 23, 24).

This is something to dwell on, to meditate deeply about, that the wonderful significance thereof may come home to us: the blessedness of the church's place with Christ, the manner of the relationship, the beauty of the intimacy. Only thus could a helpmeet for Him be prepared, one who could fully satisfy His heart. Surely we should prayerfully meditate thereon till we rise from the dust and enter into our calling on high, by the way of the cross up to Christ in the glory. Let us see to it that we are not enemies of the cross of Christ, but that we accept it with thankfulness, as the only avenue to life, though it destroys all that man in the flesh would fain glory in.

"When thou hast thanked thy God
For every blessing sent,
No time will then remain
For plaint or discontent."

The gospel brings us into living contact with God.

We believe *on* God (Rom. iv. 24).

We have peace *with* God (v. 1).

We are reconciled *to* God (v. 10).

We joy *in* God (v. 11).

These four things give us in a very blessed way the portion of the believer. God is the object of his faith and the source of his joy.

They lose much who read the Bible by chapters only. For not only is the continuous sense thus often marred and lost, but also contrasts in the sequence of consecutive chapters are missed by us in our weakness.

Two preachers met on a certain Monday morning. "I was giving the people 'The judgment to come' last night," said one of them. "I hope you did it with tears," replied his friend. That surely is the only right spirit in which to speak of the realities of this solemn subject.

The Feasts of the Lord.—No. 4.

(H. NUNNERLEY).

Pentecost or the Feast of Weeks.

Leviticus xxiii. 15-18.

“From the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the *sheaf of the wave offering*; seven sabbaths shall be complete; even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a *new meat offering* unto the Lord. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be *baken with leaven*; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord.”

THIS is the last of the four feasts which find their answer in connection with the present dispensation.

The Passover had its fulfilment amid the gloom of Calvary, when Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Consequent upon, and forming an integral part of it, was the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Then the sheaf of firstfruits was presented on the morrow after the first Sabbath succeeding the Passover, its answer being Christ, as Firstborn from among the dead, firstfruits of the great resurrection harvest. This sheaf was a sheaf of acceptance for others, setting the “many brethren” in all the worth and excellence of His person before God, showing how they are “accepted in the Beloved.”

Then after seven Sabbaths the Feast of Weeks was celebrated. It is the counterpart of the wave sheaf, showing that if Christ glorified sets forth the acceptance in which we stand with God, believers are to reproduce what He is in this world: they are a meat offering, called to walk before God as He walked.

The seven weeks between the two may serve to remind us—like the two thousand cubits which separated the ark from Israel on their entrance into Canaan—of the pre-eminence of this one Sheaf—Christ—over all the rest of the harvest. We are heavenly ones, but He is the “heavenly One.” We are brethren, but He is the “Firstborn.” We are His fellows, but He is anointed with the oil of gladness *above them all*. We are a meat offering, but He is *the* meat offering *par excellence*.

Fine flour was in this new meat offering; oil also was there, but there was also another, hitherto unheard-of ingredient present, for it was mingled with leaven! and so it is called “new.”

We have seen that leaven typifies evil ever and always, and hitherto had been strictly prohibited in all offerings.

The meat offering primarily sets forth Christ in the purity of His humanity, the perfect obedience which marked His earthly pathway, culminating in the supreme act of devotedness when He “humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. ii. 8). This was the closing scene in a life which had no motive but the will of God for all its activities.

It was composed of fine flour mingled with oil on which frankincense was poured, and from which leaven and honey were excluded.

The fine flour typifies the perfect evenness, the unruffled serenity of a Man so excellent in every way that no salient point in His character stood prominently out. Meek and lowly He truly was, but uncompromising when occasion served. The “honey” of fallen human nature never turned Him aside from the path of rectitude; the plaudits of the nation, or the patronage of the rich, never moved Him from doing the will of God—such a Man was Jesus.

Tenderly as He loved the family at Bethany, He hastened not to relieve them until He got the word from His Father. None had such pure human affections as He, but obedience to God

regulated them perfectly. His only motive for action was God's will. Leaven, with its evil workings, was foreign to His nature; tested in the desert, on the mountain top, and the pinnacle of the temple, Satan found no vulnerable point; in the garden of Gethsemane he was equally foiled.

But if there was neither leaven nor honey, there was oil. Begotten of the Holy Ghost; marked out as the beloved Son of the Father by the descent of the Spirit at His baptism: from that moment He was the vessel of testimony, led, filled, anointed for service.

All the frankincense ascended up to God. Christ was ever a sweet savour, always doing those things which pleased the Father.

This Feast of Weeks tells us that we are to be like Him, and ever seek to be agreeable to our God and Father, walking in the footsteps of Jesus, a meat offering of a sweet savour.

The fulfilment of this feast commenced on the day of Pentecost (see Acts ii.). A company were gathered, to whom had been imparted a new and divine nature; the wave sheaf—Christ risen—had breathed on them; henceforth they lived of His life. He had also set them in the same relationship with the Father that He enjoyed, as a Man risen from the dead.

On this *seventh* Lord's day, Pentecost being fully come, the assembled disciples *heard* a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind; *saw* cloven tongues like as of fire rest on each other; *felt* the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, as they received the gift of the Holy Ghost sent from the Father and the Son: they were there and then indwelt, anointed, sealed; and, receiving the Spirit of adoption, became a "kind of firstfruits" of the harvest.

Thus we find two elements which were component parts of the pure meat offering. A sinless nature, incapable of evil, had been given them; this answered to the fine flour (1 John iii. 9).

On this the Holy Spirit had been poured; this answered to the oil.

They still, however, retained that of which leaven is a type. The old evil principle, called the flesh, remained unchanged *within them*, and this answers to the leaven which was incorporated with the two wave loaves: but whilst leaven was present, its active principle was arrested. These loaves had been exposed to the action of fire; they were "baken" in the oven. This did not eradicate it, but effectually prevented the working of the corrupting thing. Fire is the symbol of the judgment which fell upon Christ when He was made sin (see Rom. viii. 3, margin): "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and *by a sacrifice for sin condemned sin in the flesh.*" The sin in us was *condemned* at the cross; there the *fire* did its work.

Christians are to "reckon" what was true of Christ when He died in their stead under the judgment of God, as true of them, and to view themselves as "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 11). Doing this, they are assured sin shall not have dominion over them (ver. 14). Its active principle will be kept in subjection. Power for this comes from the Holy Ghost; walking in the Spirit, fleshly lusts shall not be fulfilled.

These wave loaves in their component parts of flour and leaven are emblematic of two natures, one as opposed to the other, as light to darkness. The Christian is a complex being; for some wise reason, God has allowed the flesh to remain with him unchanged, whilst imparting a wholly new life and nature. The old nature cannot be improved or eradicated; it is as much in an aged saint as in a youthful convert. If we say we have *no sin* we deceive ourselves. We do not deceive God or our fellows. There it is, and there it will remain; the flesh will be flesh to the end of the chapter.

But an entirely new life is communi-

cated. Christ is the Christian's life, and this he will never lose; it is eternal; its characteristics are holiness and truth. Paul had this life, and lived it; Christ lived in him. We are also called to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Our lives are to be fragrant with obedience and devotedness, like Enoch, walking so as to please God, our bodies yielded a living sacrifice; obeying in the spirit in which Christ obeyed, not of compulsion but of a ready mind. Thus walking, we shall answer to the character of the true meat offering.

Failing to do so, we are to judge ourselves. A Christian ought not to sin, but *should he do so*, there is a provision to meet it. Confessing our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive and restore to a right spiritual condition. Power not to sin is in the Holy Ghost. He has taken up His abode in us permanently. There is no lust, no sinful desire He cannot overcome. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall in no way fulfil flesh's lust" (Gal. v. 16, N.T.).

Deliverance, *practically*, comes from looking always and ever to Christ the moment temptation besets us.

It is vain to look for improvement in the flesh; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. In it no good dwells; yet if kept in the place God has assigned to it as judged in the cross, it is no barrier to communion, for with the wave loaves were presented *seven* lambs, one young bullock, and two rams. These ten offerings of sweet savour, expressive of entire consecration, whole-hearted devotedness, and perfect lowliness, present that aspect of Christ's death which affords unceasing delight to God. In all the worth and excellence of this, each individual believer and the entire church of God is ever and always seen.

The goat for a "sin offering" met the leaven in the loaves, whilst the peace offerings (ver. 19) set forth communion. Evil has been judged and put out of God's sight for ever, and we are accepted in all the preciousness of Christ to God.

But these wave loaves were also firstfruits, and this feast was one of responsive and diffusive joy. Israel, blessed fully and freely of God, responded to the goodness showered so richly upon them, by a freewill offering. They presented to God that which is a type of the great harvest which has sprung from the corn of wheat which fell into the ground and died, the much fruit from the resurrection field.

By these firstfruits they recognized God as the source of all good, and honoured Him by rendering an offering to Him *first*; this they did not as a servile work, but as a happy privilege. Having honoured God, and owned His primary rights and sovereign claims, they were to reflect His character to others, and be exponents of the grace shown them, remembering they were once bondslaves. In the spirit of gratitude for the mercy which had snapped their chains, and the grace which had blessed them with the rich produce of the land from which God never withdrew His eyes, they were to be channels of blessing to an ever-widening circle. The desolate widow and the destitute orphan, the dependent Levite and the lonely stranger, were to share in the gifts of a gracious God (Deut. xvi. 11, 12).

Surely all this has a voice for us. May we not ask: have we set God *first*, rendered that which is primarily and rightfully due to Him, presented our firstfruits, saying, like David, "All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee" (1 Chron. xxix. 14)? Have we visited the widow and fatherless in their affliction? Have we carried the gospel to the stranger? Have we ministered of our carnal things to servants of our Lord who minister to us spiritual things? Or, are we selfishly occupied with our spiritual blessings and temporal mercies, not sharing them with others? If so, we shall miss the lesson which lies upon the surface of this feast and fall below a godly Israelite in glad worship and devoted service.

Proved from the Person of Christ and the Scriptures.

(Continued from page 133.)

NOT only do the Scriptures teach, as we have seen, the never-ending existence of the spirits of men, but they also teach that in the unseen world distinct consciousness and identity are maintained.

In Luke xvi. the Lord draws back the veil from the invisible world, or rather He shows us the contrasted states of two men in the seen world around us and in the unseen world beyond the gates of death. He shows us that in this world a certain man was rich, clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day; and in contrast to this there was a beggar called Lazarus, who lay at the rich man's gates, full of sores and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Both died, the rich and the poor; but in the unseen world how different was the state of each to that in this world! "The rich man died and was buried"—that must mean the *body*, not the soul, for in hell (or hades), the world of the dead, "he lifted up his eyes, being in torments," and "he saw Abraham afar off," and the once poor Lazarus reclining on the bosom of the father of the faithful: that is, he was resting in the bosom of the father of promise, the friend of God—the picture to a Jewish mind of a man in the enjoyment of God's favour and nearness. The erstwhile rich was now poor, and was "in torments." He saw the good that he could never enjoy; he felt the misery and the "torment" insufferable that he must ever bear, and he prays (too late) for "a drop of water" to cool his tongue, saying that he was "tormented in this flame." He prays in the *wrong place*, at the *wrong time*, and to the *wrong person*.

The reply that comes from Father Abraham is a solemn reminder that in the world of sense and time he had received his "good things and Lazarus evil things." But "a great gulf" was

now "fixed"—a barrier which could never be passed either by the *blessed one in the bosom of Abraham* or the *tormented one in the depths of hell*. No picture can more vividly convey to the human mind *continuity of being, consciousness, personality, and identity* of the human spirit, both of the lost and saved, the saint and sinner.

When our Lord was here, the Sadducees—the *ancient representatives of modern annihilationism*—came to him, presenting a case of a woman who had seven husbands in this life, and with their gross, carnal ideas, questioned Him as to which would be her husband in the resurrection. In answering their question He showed that God was not the God of the *dead*, but of the *living* (Luke xx. 37, 38), for "all live unto Him," establishing beyond doubt that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had a real personal existence when the Lord spake on earth, though they had passed out of the world of men some eighteen hundred years before.

In Romans xiv. 7–9, we have three great facts stated—(1) that when a man dies *he dies "to the Lord;"* (2) that he *"is the Lord's;"* and (3) that *the risen Christ is his "Lord."* It may be reasonably asked, then, how could Christ possess or be Lord over a being or thing that did not exist, that was *blotted out of being?* And the only answer that can be given is, When man passes out of this sphere *he dies to the Lord*. He has still to do with the Lord in his spirit, though he be dead as to his body. The order for wicked men is death, hades, resurrection, judgment, and finally the lake of fire (Rev. vi. 8; Heb. ix. 27; Rev. xx. 12–15, xxi. 8). The order for saints, now, is death or sleep (for the body), "with Christ" or "Paradise," resurrection, manifestation before the judgment-seat, and eternal blessedness (Acts vii. 60; Phil. i. 23; 2 Cor. v. 10; John iv. 2, 3).

In Holy Scripture judgment to come, on sinners who die in wilful rebellion against God, and slight His love, is presented in varied ways and in many forms of speech by prophets and apostles, but none unveil the awfulness of the sinner's doom as did the Lord Jesus, who revealed God's love. Mark how the Lord speaks of the fearful doom of sinners when He says, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark ix. 48). On the other hand, "the righteous" are taken away from the evil to come. They enter into peace, they rest in their beds, they walk in their uprightness, they behold God's face in righteousness; He receives their spirit. Death is "gain," it is "far better" (Phil. i. 21); they are "absent from the body," "present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 8). "They live together with Him" (1 Thess. v. 10). They rest from their labours, their works follow them (Rev. xiv. 13). They are called "the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. xii. 23), and at the Lord's second coming they will share His glory according to His promise. Any simple person that will survey the scriptural evidence can come to no other conclusion than that what is meant by the common term *the immortality of the soul* or spirit is *one of the holy truths of Christianity* (though to state things in the connection in which they are presented in Scripture we should not use this term exactly in speaking of the never-ending existence of the lost).

The denial of this, therefore, is a blow aimed at the truth of the person of Christ. It contradicts His words and the teaching of the apostles. It makes man merely a piece of material clay, and denies that distinct breathing of the Lord God into man so that he became a living soul, and, being formed in the image of God, was constituted a morally responsible being with *derived* but perpetual *existence*, with a spirit that enables him to commune with God as unfallen, to feel his responsibility when fallen, and, when born again and redeemed by blood, to have fellowship with God in holy righteous love.

No beast in the world is so created and endowed with such marvellous faculties as man. Scripture presents humanity in four states:—

1. Innocent in Adam unfallen.
2. Sinful in Adam and his race.
3. Holy in Christ as man on earth, unique and sinless.
4. Risen and glorified in Christ ascended, who is the Firstfruits, the pattern to which His heavenly people are to be conformed.

It is false, therefore, to say that man must always be under the dominion of sin and death, for in the first, third, and fourth of these states man is a sinless being, and therefore sin is not an inherent constituent in the nature of man according to the purpose of God. Scripture does, however, show that a portion of the human race who have never been born again and redeemed by the blood of Christ, who persist in wilful rebellion and defiance of God, shall pass out of time into eternity to that place which is called the lake of fire, and which is marked by *exclusion from the presence of God*, and all the joy of that presence, and *seclusion in this state of judgment*, where man can no longer rebel nor set God at defiance. All evil is there bounded—it is not a *sea* of fire but a "*lake*" of fire—showing the *restraining and confining* power of God over man in sin and Satan with his angels.

This is the last view that God gives of the wicked in Scripture, and no authoritative exponent of God's mind has since appeared upon earth to alter or recall His last recorded testimony to their final doom.

Nor could this testimony be altered, for heaven and earth shall pass away, but His word shall not pass away (Matt. xxiv. 25), it endureth for ever (1 Peter i. 25).

Finally, it is wiser beyond possibility of comparison to trust the revealed mind of God than to listen to the changing opinions propounded by our fellow-men, who have no authority for what they teach. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. viii. 20).

Answers to Correspondents.

(THE EDITORS).

The Church.

J.M. The church will be presented to Christ in its entirety, at His coming, as His bride, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing (Eph. v. 27). The rapture (on which we wrote more fully in our reply to you in April issue) thus gives us the definite termination to the period of its sojourn here upon earth.

Then as to the time of its inception, of which you also inquire, notice that it is spoken of as Christ's body (Eph. i. 22, 23), which is composed of many members, "for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor. xii. 13; and *cf.* ver. 27). Now the Spirit by whom the body is formed is the Holy Ghost, and John vii. 39 distinctly states that He was not given until Christ was risen and glorified in heaven. This clearly fixes Pentecost as the beginning of the church, which the Lord spoke of as yet future when He Himself was on earth (*cf.* Matt. xvi. 18).

Up to that time there had been but two circles in the world—Jew and Gentile. At that point a third came into existence, so that thenceforth and until the rapture there are three—Jew, Gentile, and church of God (1 Cor. x. 32).

Women preaching.

LOS ANGELES. The instruction in 1 Corinthians xiv. 35 is limited to the gathering together of saints "in assembly," but that in 1 Timothy ii. 11-15 is wider in its bearing and covers all times, for the stated subject of the epistle is behaviour "in the house of God" (1 Tim. iii. 15), and we form God's house at all times, for God is dwelling here to-day (Eph. ii. 22); hence the call that we should walk in suitability, and the great point is the conduct that is seemly in each—men or women, bishops or deacons, in eating and drinking, as to elder men or younger, elder women or younger,

widows, servants, or masters. As to the women, that which is divinely stated as suitable and seemly in them is that they do not usurp authority over the man, but be "in silence" as regards "teaching" and the like. The Holy Ghost has also seen fit in this scripture to give the reason why this should be so, and true blessing lies in filling our appointed sphere, being subject to the Word. Very real and necessary is the service of women, most precious, too, to the Lord, but it is not properly in a public sphere.

You ask how it is that, seeing the instructions given in Scripture on this matter are apparently so clear, they are in Christendom generally almost entirely disregarded. To this we would reply, Christendom generally disregards the whole of the precious truth presented to us in chapters xi.-xiv. of 1 Corinthians. In chapter xi. we have the saints gathered "in assembly," and partaking of the Lord's Supper as thus gathered. In chapter xii. there is revealed the truth as to the unity of the Body; in chapter xiii. the unfolding of love, which is the divine nature and the atmosphere in which the assembly should live and the motive and spirit in which the gifts set in the church are to be exercised; and then in chapter xiv., the assembly, so to say, *in junctio*: prayer offered by one and another, praise through another, prophecy through two or three others, and so on. We have very sadly to confess that these things are not followed by the majority to-day, and when the truth as a whole is thus disregarded we need not be surprised that, in a lawless day like this, the truth as to which you inquire is also disregarded, explained away, and practically set on one side.

Unleavened Bread.

SUBSCRIBER. You ask if it would be "more proper to use unleavened bread at the Lord's Supper instead of ordinary leavened bread." No, we think

not. There is no such instruction in Scripture, and we are not to be wise above what is written. The types of the Old Testament are not meant to be reproduced in this dispensation; these were shadows pointing on to what is realized to us in Christ. There are only two ordinances in Christianity, and these of the very simplest, lest our minds should be turned away from Christ Himself to be occupied with detail. Of just such a danger does the Apostle warn the Colossians in chapter ii. 16-23.

To sin wilfully.

H.C.K. We think that if you read Hebrews x. 26 and its context rightly you will see that our contributor was perfectly correct in stating that it is not there a question of "no forgiveness," but of "no sacrifice" (page 150). The passage contemplates one who, having professed Christ, apostatized back to Judaism. In the death of Christ we have an effectual sacrifice for sin, in Judaism there is none, nor in any other religion known to men. If, then, a man wilfully refuse that sacrifice, counting it an unholy thing, there remaineth no other, and where no sacrifice for sin is, there judgment of sin must be—"a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries." Certainly this judgment is eternal.

Prayers for the Dead.

H.C.K. No, the thought of praying for the salvation of the unsaved dead is entirely foreign to Scripture: we must face the terribly solemn fact, there clearly revealed, that death seals the doom of the impenitent; the eternal destiny of such is FIXED, for passage from the place of torment to the place of bliss is divinely declared to be impossible (see Luke xvi. 26, and *cf.* Ecc. xi. 3).

But if it be objected that Luke xvi. refers to hades, or the place of departed

spirits, and that the conditions might be modified on resurrection taking place, we go further and point out that the "resurrection of life" is explicitly confined to those "that have done good" (John v. 29). The "resurrection of damnation" (or "judgment") takes place a full thousand years later; then are raised those "that have done evil;" they are raised for judgment "according to their works," and lest any should think it possible that these "works" might include the good which it is imagined they *might* do in the disembodied state in turning to Christ and repenting towards God, Scripture plainly declares that the judgment meted out to each in that day is in respect of the "things done *in his body.*" The issue of that judgment is the lake of fire, for death and hades are then "cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death" (Rev. xx. 5-15; 2 Cor. v. 10).

Suffering.

J.R.S. writes as follows:—

What is the difference between suffering for righteousness' sake; being reproached for His name's sake; and suffering as a Christian, as we get them in the First Epistle of Peter iii. 14 and iv. 14, 16?

The first clause of 1 Peter iv. 14 is literally translated "If ye are reproached in [the] name of Christ," i.e. as bearing that name; and this is what is spoken of just after (ver. 16) as suffering "as a Christian." Suffering "for righteousness' sake" (iii. 14) is very closely connected with this, as we may see on reference to the last two words of chapter iii. 16; but some distinction of aspect is to be observed in that in the latter case persecution arises because of the believer's *conduct*, which, being good and righteous, tacitly rebukes the evil works of the wicked, and so arouses their hatred (1 John iii. 12); whilst the former (reproach in the name of Christ) is caused directly by *testimony* to Christ. The one has to do with the Christian's *works*, the other rather more distinctly with his *words*.

" Love found me in the wilderness, at cost
Of painful search, when I myself was lost.
Love on its shoulders joyfully did lay
Me, weary with the sadness of my way."

Notes and Comments.

The Truth as to the Lord Jesus.

AS to His *person*, He was the Word, who in the beginning was with God and who Himself was God (John i. 1). He was "in the form of God" and "thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (Phil. ii. 6).

As to His *humanity*, He was "made of a woman" (Gal. iv. 4); as to His *genealogy*, He was "made of the seed of David" (Rom. i. 3); as to His *humility*, He "made Himself of no reputation" (Phil. ii. 7); as to His *responsibility*, He was "made under the law" (Gal. iv.

4); as to His *ignominy*, He was "made a curse" (Gal. iii. 13); as to His *atoning sacrifice*, He was "made . . . sin for us" (2 Cor. v. 21). What mind can conceive the height from which He came or the depths into which He went! How immeasurable is the distance between Godhead's fullest glory and the suffering and shame and unutterable depths of woe into which He passed for sinners! But that is the measure of the love of God to men—"for God so loved the world."

The Ass and the Lamb.

Every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck; and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem (Exod. xiii. 13).

The *ass* is figurative of the sinner, the *lamb* of Christ. It is instructive to see that *by nature* we are ranked with an unclean animal; *by grace* we are associated with Christ, the spotless Lamb of God. There can be nothing lower than the place which belongs to us by nature; nothing higher than that which belongs to us by grace. Look, for example, at an ass with its broken neck; there is what an unredeemed man

is worth. Look at the precious blood of Christ; there is what redeemed man is worth. All who are washed in the blood of Christ partake of His preciousness before God. As He is the "living Stone," they are living stones. As He is "the precious Stone," they are also precious stones. They get life and preciousness from and in Him; for they are as He is.—*C.H.M.*

The Exhortations of Scripture.

The exhortations of Scripture are not in any sense *legal* commands, to be carried out under pains and penalties. But they define in detail that which is the proper outcome of the divine life that we have received as the children of God; and, if we read *Christ* into them, the blessing and joy in carrying them out is greatly enhanced. Take, for instance, the Lord's answer to Peter's question, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?"—"Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven" (Matt. xviii. 21, 22). If

that were taken up as a legal command, how irksome it would be; absolutely impossible to nature we would say. But if we read Christ into it and say, *that is the way He has treated and does treat me*, what a feast of love it yields to the soul! What tender compassion, what unlimited grace! And thus with heart softened and made glad by a sense of His grace to me, with the full glory of this grace as shown in Him before my soul, it becomes a joy and a privilege to forgive others, and to be, as it were, a mirror, kept bright by the hand of divine grace, for the reflecting of Christ here.

There are exhortations of a different character also, such as "Lie not one to another" (Col. iii. 9). Strange that such exhortations should be necessary, but there they are, placed as the red light of a danger signal, to flash out their warning when we are tempted to turn from the highway of Christian integrity into the bypaths of deception and shame, in the which our joy and peace will be lost, our faith wrecked, and the Lord dishonoured.

But in these words of warning Christ also shines, for He is *the truth*; guile was never found in His mouth, He was always what He said, and *grace and truth*, blessed and divine qualities which subsist in Him, are to be here reproduced by the power of the Holy Ghost, in those who have been delivered from the thralldom of sin by the truth that is in Jesus.—*J. T. Mawson.*

Christ Enthroned within the Heart.

Our Lord is yet going to sit upon "the throne of His glory;" He is going to be exalted and extolled in the scene of His rejection and humiliation (Isa. lii. 13); but there is a throne He values even more than this, and that is the throne of our affections. Are we prepared to admit His claim?

The Son of God—(oh, that we apprehended something more of the sacred majesty of His person!)—the Son of God has given Himself in love for His own, even to the death of the

cross; and by virtue of all that He is, and all that He has done, He is entitled to reign without a rival in the affections of our redeemed hearts. Hence the closing word in John's first epistle, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." May God enable us to give earnest heed to that word, and, keeping ourselves from anything that would come in between us and Him, gladly accord Him His rightful place as supreme upon the throne of our affections.—*Thomas Oliver.*

The Activities of the Love of God. (H. D. R. JAMESON).

Luke xv.

1 Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

3 And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

4 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

8 Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

THE words of the Lord are spirit and they are life; in all His words and acts God was revealed. He who ever dwelt in the bosom of the Father hath declared *Him* and made *Him* known; and in this chapter His words present us with a marvellous unfolding of what the blessed God is in the activity of His love, and that toward sinners.

The definite moment at which the

parable was spoken must be noticed to learn its import. The point in question was, "this Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." The parable was the blessed answer to *this*. Verses 7 and 10 are the Lord's own application of it to the sinner.

Look at its beauty: first the "shepherd," then the "woman," then the "father," all in one parable (see ver. 3,

“*this parable*”): it takes all three parts to bring out the truth. The chapter is, I believe, the gospel on the *divine* side, the point is the *shepherd's* joy, the *woman's* joy, and the *father's* joy. It is a wonderful unfolding by the Lord Jesus of *God's heart*.

The Activity of the Son.

We get the Son active in love in the first part. Counsels belong to the Father, as has been said by others, but the carrying of them out is on the part of the Son. How much lies between those words, “go after that which is lost,” and the words following, “*until* he find it.” Calvary, the wrath of God, the waves and billows of divine judgment, and the forsaking of God, all lay in between. As He spake these words, with all their deep meaning, He was already so far on that wondrous journey after the sheep which was lost, but *not yet* fully come to the place where it was—not yet fully in the place of guilty men; only when we see Him veiled in darkness, in absolute distance, and under measureless wrath from God, do we see Him fully come where was the sheep which was lost. It is this which binds our hearts to Him; there is not only love which *receives*, but here in this divinely drawn picture we see God active in love, God in Christ *seeking* the sinner, and at infinite cost.

The Activity of the Holy Spirit.

What a moment was that when from that cross of suffering the Saviour cried “It is finished.” There was His work done, redemption accomplished, and the way fully opened for the flowing out to men of God's unmeasured grace. It needed the resurrection and exaltation of that triumphant Saviour, and then from the glory the Holy Spirit came to spread wide the story (Luke xxiv. 49).

In the “woman” is presented a further unfolding of the activity of God's love: there is the sweeping diligently, and with a light. It is here the evangelist comes in: he is properly a light-bearer (see Acts xxvi. 18, “*to open their eyes*”), and the end reached in his

service is the bringing to light of the lost piece. Still it is *God* active in love, for the gospel is preached with the *Holy Ghost* sent down from heaven (1 Peter i. 12). It is perfectly wonderful to think of the present activity of God's love in this way—*God seeking*—God seeking His poor lost creature; and every beating of compassion and longing in the heart of the preacher but a faint (yet divinely produced) echo, as it were, of what is so marvellously seen in Him.

The Activity of the Father.

Following on all this is the *reception* on the part of the Father; and here for the first time we have the subjective side—the exercises on the part of the prodigal—and then in greater prominence—for that is the point in question—a wondrous unfolding of the Father's heart. “He *ran*, and fell on his neck, and kissed him;” or to give another reading, “covered him with kisses”—*that* is the reception.

The whole house is set in motion and there is brought forth the *best* robe (what he never had before he became a prodigal, for all that substance was wasted); and the fact that it was the *best* most blessedly figures our acceptance in the Beloved, the Christ of God, the holy, spotless, *perfect* One; then is given the ring of everlasting love, and on the once wayward feet are placed the shoes of conscious sonship.

And yet there is more, for now is spread the feast, and again it is the best, the “fatted calf,” setting forth most clearly *CHRIST*—the One in whom is all the Father's pleasure, and we (such is the glory of divine grace) now called to drink of the river of His pleasures (Ps. xxxvi. 8).

Inside now in divinely given suitability “*they began* to be merry.” Oh, wondrous scene! my soul, ponder those words of meaning, “they,” the blessed God and the one who was once His poor lost creature—“*they began* to be merry.” Blessed beginning to joys that never shall end!

The School of God in the Book of Daniel.—No. 4.

(M. C. GAHAN).

Daniel iv. 1, 2, 3, and 37.

1 Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.

2 I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me.

3 How great are his signs! and how mighty are his

wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.

37 Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

THE events related in this chapter are remarkable as being, not the historical record by the prophet *about* Nebuchadnezzar, but the record by Nebuchadnezzar himself of the wonders of God's ways with him. It is, in fact, the confession by the monarch of the world, in detail, of the humiliating process by which his will was broken and his pride humbled. So Nebuchadnezzar himself is the spokesman. Nor was the revolution less marvellous than that wrought in power by the same God in the person of Saul of Tarsus. To this the opening words bear abundant witness, for Nebuchadnezzar had been brought to the point in soul history in which he is not ashamed to proclaim his own humiliation and degradation, and the supremacy of the Most High God, to "all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth. . . . I thought it good [seemly or suitable] to shew the signs and wonders that the High God hath wrought toward me. How great are His signs! and how mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation."

Centuries after, when writing of the fullness of the Gentiles (Rom. xi. 25) which Nebuchadnezzar's headship of gold inaugurated, and having the whole range of divine counsels before him, only partially revealed to Nebuchadnezzar, Paul breaks out into the doxology of verses 33 to 36: "O the depth of the . . . wisdom and knowledge of

God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! . . . For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things."

In the first place the great king relates his vision. It was of a majestic tree, reaching "unto heaven, and the sight thereof unto the end of all the earth;" its leaves were beautiful, and its fruit abundant, furnishing meat for all; beasts of the field shadowed under it, fowls of the air found shelter in its branches. But in the very zenith of its glory the sentence goes forth by the word of a watcher—for God takes note of conferred privileges and consequent responsibilities—and a holy one: "Hew the tree down, and cut off its branches; shake off his leaves and scatter his fruit; . . . nevertheless leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field. Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given to him, and let seven times [years] pass over him."

Again, the light necessary to illuminate the heavenly vision is found with Daniel alone, Jehovah's chosen and faithful vessel, but not without producing its own distinct exercise in his soul: "Then Daniel . . . was astonished one hour, and his thoughts troubled him," and his exercise was, evidently, too apparent to escape the notice of the king.

When recovered from his astonishment and concern as to the mind of

God about the king, Daniel interprets the dream in terms expressive of the inexorable government of God, consequent upon the abuse of His grace and the high privileges bestowed upon Nebuchadnezzar, whose imperial pride was now to be effectually abased and his will broken by Jehovah's dealing with him individually. Yet the glory of the kingdom transferred to him was to abide, while he himself, by the omnipotent hand of God, was reduced to a level of degradation only equalled by the condition of the beast of the field.

But governmental discipline was not to be carried to its extreme limit in final judicial judgment, for the terms of the interpretation further ran: "Whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots, the kingdom is sure unto thee, *after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule.*"

It must be remembered that the king is himself recording, with an enlightened conscience and in detail such as could be only furnished by himself, "the signs that the Most High God hath wrought toward me;" hence the transparency and sincerity of his record of events as they took place. These events included Daniel's warnings and exhortations (ver. 27); his own self-glorification in spite of the same (vers. 28-30); the minute details of the appalling catastrophe that overtook him (vers. 31-33); and the revolution permanently effected in his own personal relations to the only true God (vers. 34-37).

How infinitesimal is man at his best estate, how puny his passions and his power when actually in the hands of the God that created him. Will, fortified by human pride and earthly power *to whatever extent*, must surely and ultimately give way before that of the living God.

It is well when the outcome of divine discipline issues in a subject will and a broken spirit; when the dealings of

God, as in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, are justified and His paths approved.

"This head of gold" had now learnt to worship the Most High God, the first use of restored reason being to lift up his eyes to heaven and bless and praise and honour Him that liveth for ever; but further to confess that he himself was but a suzerain of the God whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom from generation to generation; that the inhabitants of the earth, however great their glory, are reputed as *nothing* before Him; that He doeth according to His own will in heaven and earth, none having title to challenge Him: that the deprivation and restoration of reason are in His hands, and, as a consequence, human capacity to exercise dominion and authority.

So the monarch who defiantly challenged the title and power of the supreme God—"And who is that God who shall deliver you out of my hands?"—has by divine dealings been transformed into a willing worshipper of the Most High God, the lips that once uttered defiance now celebrating the praises of Jehovah: "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment [or justice]; and those that walk in pride He is able to abase."

For the warning of the sons of men Scripture furnishes several instances of the varied ways in which the infinite God can accomplish what He wills with the creatures of His hands, where a rebellious will manifests itself, or pride and power assert themselves.

When the world in unity of language and purpose sought to demonstrate its will and power by the building of a tower reaching up to heaven, its defiant spirit and purpose was confounded by the distribution of languages, which shattered effectually and in a moment the unity necessary to such impious designs.

When Pharaoh's hardened heart refused every overture of grace and patience on the part of God, overwhelming destruction overtook him and his hosts in the waters of the Red Sea.

David's wilful sin in defiance of grace that had transferred him from the sheep-fold to the throne, and of the mind of God expressed in the decalogue, brought down the sentence of God upon him, issuing in domestic tragedies that followed one another in quick succession; the word of God by the prophet Nathan being fulfilled to the letter, "The sword shall never depart from thy house." For David's whole after life was shadowed by domestic governmental consequences never remitted, though, through grace, these resulted in a truer knowledge of the grace of God, and in a fuller self-knowledge, as he writes: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me," thus evidencing that "broken spirit . . . and contrite heart," utilized by the Spirit of God in inditing psalms of chastened melody, voicing the experiences, for all time, of individual saints bowed beneath the consciousness of departure, more or less serious, from the known mind of God.

Of the Assyrian it is recorded: "Wherefore . . . when the Lord hath performed His whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the . . . stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks" (Isa. x. 12, fulfilled in 2 Kings xix. 35).

So the man of sin, the son of perdition, is yet to usurp the throne to which Deity alone is entitled, "He as God sitting in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God," the incarnation of all previous sin of man, as of all Satanic pride and power, "whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders"

(2 Thess. ii. 9). Of this human personality, termed "that Wicked one," it is written, "Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and destroy with the brightness of His coming."

Finally, the pride and fall of Satan himself, impersonated in the king of Tyrus (Ezek. xxviii.) and identified by the testimony, "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God," are prophetically announced; "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee;" while his final doom is recorded in Revelation xx. 10 as "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

Thus the sceptre of dominion and power ever remains in the hand of the Most High God. On the one hand, "the Lord shall judge *His people*, and shall repent in favour of [N.T.] His servants *when He seeth that power is gone*;" on the other, His language towards *His adversaries* is, "If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me" (Deut. xxxii. 36, 41).

The swiftness with which judgment overtook Nebuchadnezzar, even "*while the word was in the king's mouth*," contrasts vividly and solemnly with the instantaneous response of grace to Daniel on the occasion of his confession and prayer to Jehovah on behalf of Israel's condition, viz. "*Whiles I was speaking and praying and confessing. . . . the man Gabriel . . . touched me . . . and said, O Daniel, at the beginning of thy supplication the commandment went forth.*"

We are in a defective condition if we are not in principle taking in every member of Christ. There is one body—the whole church; there can be only

those who are within and those who are without. The "within" are the church of God, the "without" are the world.

The Indwelling of the Holy Ghost. No. 2. (J. T. MAWSON)

The Holy Ghost as the Comforter.

I will pray the Father, and he shall send you *another* Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you (John xiv. 16, 17).

ALL the words that issued from the lips of the Lord Jesus were fitly spoken, and they shine as apples of gold in pictures of silver. This promise of the Comforter must have been so to the disciples, made doubly comforting as it was by the announcement that the Spirit of Truth was to be *another* Comforter. The Lord Himself had been their Comforter, guarding and guiding, leading and teaching, and bearing with all their ignorance and folly with an infinite and gentle love. In this way He had made Himself indispensable to them, so that when He asked them, "Will ye also go away?" they answered with the quickness of true affection, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

But now the time had come for Him to leave them, and their souls were weighed down with sorrow at the thought; they stood trembling and troubled like children who were to be bereft of both parents at one fell stroke.

He knew the fear that oppressed them, and with a tenderness entirely His own He spoke of *another* Comforter. How that word "another" must have enhanced the blessedness of the promise, for it meant that the One who was coming was to be all that He had been to them. He would take charge of them, lead, guide, guard, and teach them; His grace, and love, and forbearance would be as that which had been shown towards them by their all-sufficient Lord, for both were divine and one with the Father in the God-head.

Such is the blessedness of the Person to whose care they were, and we have

been, committed, such is He who has come to us, and dwells in us.

Every human illustration falls lamentably below the blessedness of divine truth, but sometimes one may help to a clearer understanding of those things which surpass all knowledge. Upon the curbstone yonder stands a timid child, she has missed her way, and is hungry and weary; the sight of the whirling traffic fills her with fear, and she dare not venture across the crowded roadway that lies between herself and her still-distant home.

Presently there comes one, a friend of the mother's, who, seeing her in distress, takes her in his strong arms and carries her to where her hunger is appeased, then leads her with loving care through all the dangers of the way, and brings her at last, happy and light of heart, to the home where a mother's welcome awaits her. He acted the part of a comforter to the child, and such a Comforter is the Holy Ghost to us.

Fear not, Christian! He will not fail; and food for your hunger, drink for your thirst, rest for your weariness, wisdom for your ignorance, confidence for your fear, and joy for your sorrow are all brought to you by Him; nor will He cease from the gracious ministrations of His office, until, with boundless joy, He presents us to our Bridegroom, who awaits us in the glory-home on high.

But if the Holy Ghost is *another* Comforter, He does not displace the Lord Jesus Christ in the affections of His people; but He dwells within them to command every beat of their hearts towards their exalted Lord. He

subordinates Himself to the glory of Christ; He has become the never-tiring servant of that glory. His mission is to testify of Christ and glorify Him. If the Father has decreed that every man should honour the Son, that every knee should bow before Him, and every tongue confess Him, the Holy Ghost has come that, now and here, in the lives of believers this might be a great reality; and so He takes of the things that are Christ's and shows them to us. His blessed mission is to present to our hearts all the sweetness and the glory of the Saviour, so that we may be enraptured with Him, and have neither eye, heart, nor time for the trifles of Vanity Fair. It is by this ministry of Christ to our souls that we have food, and rest, and confidence, and joy. He is everything to the Father, He is everything to the Holy Spirit, and God would have Him to be everything to us.

In this promise of the Lord there is emphasized that which has already been noted, that the Spirit does not dwell in every man, for the "world cannot receive Him." The world walks by the sight of its eyes; its vision is bounded by the fleeting present; but the Christian believes in an unseen but well-beloved Saviour. He is indwelt by an unseen but all-powerful and all-wise Person, and by the indwelling

Spirit his faith lays hold of unseen blessings.

The Comforter is the Spirit of truth, and He proceeds from the Father (xvi. 26). The Lord Jesus is in Himself *the truth*; in Him the Father was fully revealed, but this revelation of the Father was in the power of the eternal Spirit. That same Spirit dwells in us. Amazing fact! He has become the sharer of our pilgrimage, and the servant of our necessities, that He might lead us in His own power into the full joy of *the truth*; and that eternal life, the knowledge of the only true God and Jesus Christ His sent One (xvii. 3), might be truly and blessedly the life in which our souls rejoice as the one true life which is ours by the gift of God.

It is scarcely necessary to add that all that we thus enjoy is stated for us in the Holy Scriptures. There our place and blessing is clearly defined; there are the things of Christ recorded, and outside those Holy Writings the Spirit of truth does not travel; but we can only get the comfort of the Scriptures as we give ear to the teaching of the Comforter; strange that we should ever turn aside to other voices, and yet the exhortation is needed: "*And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption*" (Eph. iv. 30).

A Condition of the Road.

(J. WILSON SMITH).

Exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God (Acts xiv. 22).

IT is most certainly true that the ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness and that "all her paths are peace," and such is the witness of all who faithfully tread those ways. To say otherwise would be to belie the very life they lead, and their experience of the grace and goodness of their God.

At the same time the entire course of the believer is one of testing; and,

undoubtedly, the greater the faith the more severe the test.

We all remember how that "God did tempt Abraham" by the offering up of his only son. The test was great beyond measure; but then, God knew whom He saw fit thus to test, and the result was fully for the glory of God and for the enhanced blessing of Abraham. This case is, of course, exceptional, but

it illustrates the fact that where faith exists it will be tried ; and so the trial is, in truth, an honour : it shall redound "unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

Hence, in some way, every true believer may anticipate trial : it is bound to come ; indeed, where there is none it may be safely questioned whether faith exists or, at least, whether it is in healthy exercise. This need not cause disturbance, but it should cause exercise of conscience. But do not let it be supposed that trial means discouragement ! If that were so we might well shrink from it. Nay, it means our present help and invigoration of soul ; for our blessed God ever has our truest welfare at heart. He loves His people ; He knows what is for their good ; He makes all things work together for that end.

"With mercy and with judgment
My web of time He wove ;
And aye the dews of sorrow
Were lusted with His love."

And as the warp and woof are thus blended together in weaving our fair raiment, each can add :

"I'll bless the hand that guided,
I'll bless the heart that planned,
When throned where [Christ] dwelleth
In Immanuel's land."

Then let us face the facts. We must be tested : we should prize the testing. It should be a joy to us to fall into divers trials, and it would be so if we saw the purpose God has in view.

However, whether seen or not, the testing lies before each child of God, and he will discover, ere long, that it is one of the chief conditions of the road to the heavenly kingdom. In keeping with this it is ever interesting to remember the faithful exhortation of the Apostle Paul, on his return visit (along with Barnabas) to Lystra and Iconium and Antioch, how that he not only exhorted the young disciples to continue in the faith, but warned them that "we must through much tribulation

enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts xiv. 22).

These were plain words and true. That was the prospect which this faithful servant of Christ held out to these disciples. Such should and must be their lot ; and mark, "much tribulation" too. It is well to learn that at all times this is the condition of the journey to the everlasting kingdom.

Much tribulation lies before each disciple—each true believer. It is this through which we must all pass ; not, however, through the "great tribulation" spoken of, for instance, in Revelation vii. 14, because, ere that comes, every saint of this dispensation, whether dead or living—all that are Christ's—shall have been caught up to be for ever with the Lord (1 Thess. iv. 13-18), far removed, therefore, from a judgment which shall be as special as it shall be "great." But "much tribulation" is continuous. It may assume various forms ; it may be Satanic ; it may arise from the hatred of the world, or from false brethren in the way of persecution ; or it may come from domestic trial, as in the case of Job.

Anyhow there must be the wear and tear (for such is the meaning of the word "tribulation") of the wilderness ; its adversity ; its contrariety ; its lessons of patience and dependence on the Lord ; its necessary education which, after all, is only designed to fit us spiritually for that kingdom of which grace has already made us the happy subjects.

And it may be safely said that when the kingdom is reached, and the glorious result of all God's wise and patient ways with His people seen, we shall adore for ever the chastening hand, which, while it corrected, yet sustained ; while it humbled, yet elevated ; and while it tested, yet sanctified.

We shall remember all the way the Lord had led us, and see that the leading, in whatever way, was all His own, and therefore for His glory and our eternal good.

Eternal Punishment (V).

(JAMES BOYD).

Hades.

WE have seen from Scripture that the hope of the believer is the coming of the Lord ; that he is fitted for sharing the portion of the saints in light (Col. i. 12) ; that he is God's workmanship (Eph. ii. 10), wrought for the glory (2 Cor. v. 5) ; and that all that is needful to complete the work of God regarding him is the quickening of his mortal body (Phil. iii. 21). When the Lord comes the dead in Christ will be raised in incorruption, power, and glory ; then the bodies of the living saints will be changed and fashioned like the body of the glorified Saviour, and dead and living will be caught up to meet Him in the air. The first resurrection will take place before the thousand years of the reign of Christ begin to run their course ; the last resurrection does not take place until the thousand years are finished. The first resurrection is that of the just, the last that of the unjust ; the first that of life, the last that of judgment ; the first that of those who have done good, the last that of those who have done evil ; the first includes only those who are blessed and holy ; the last only those who have died in their sins, and who must stand before the great white throne, to be judged for the deeds done in the body, and to have their eternal destiny determined by the merit of their works. This must, and does, result in the lake of fire for all thus judged (John v. 29 ; 1 Cor. xv. 35-54 ; 1 Thess. iv. 13-18 ; Rev. xx.). No one who dies in his sins shall ever see the personal reign of the Son of God ; they will not be raised from the grave until that glorious reign is at an end ; and when they are raised the earth and heaven will have fled away, and only a great white throne for judgment will greet their resurrected vision.

There is no hint in Scripture that anyone will be raised at the appearing

of Christ to hear once again the message of the grace of God ; nor would the truth of resurrection, thus made evident to them, have any saving effect upon them. Abraham says, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke xvi. 31). Such a false gospel has its origin in the heart of him who is spoken of in the Word of God as a liar and a murderer : and woe to the soul that is deceived by it.

But we will examine in the light of Scripture the teaching of the schools which relegate the supposed second opportunity of salvation to the intermediate state. Though disagreeing as to the time and place in which this second opportunity is granted to men, both agree in this, that it will be granted, and in more favourable circumstances for its acceptance than are to be found at the present moment upon earth. Mr. Chambers is very pronounced upon this point. He says, speaking of some sailor lads who were drowned by the foundering of the training-ship *Eurydice* : "Had they been permitted to reach manhood, it is possible that the sinful allurements of earth might have so hardened their moral character as to make it very difficult for them to attain eternal life ; and knowing this, God mercifully removed them to the unseen-life in order that the work of salvation in them might be more easily accomplished. The influence of bad companions, and the disadvantage of an evil environment, might have rendered them insensible to the pleadings of an earthly preacher. And so God placed them in a world where the atmosphere of eternal realities would make them more likely to listen to the message of salvation when preached to them there" (p. 172).

This quotation sets clearly before us

what, according to the theology of Mr. C., we may expect to find going on in hades. Here on earth we find the world, the flesh, and the devil in opposition to the gospel and the salvation of men. There there will be none of this trinity of evil to influence the mind; and Mr. C. concludes from this that the work of salvation will be comparatively a very simple matter, and that therefore, when people die in their youth, it is a special mercy of God to them, which is not vouchsafed to others; but why it should not be vouchsafed to others we are left to conjecture. If God does not act toward men with regard to salvation in the way of sovereignty, it is rather difficult to see why some should be removed in their tender years to where nothing can hinder them from submitting to Christ, while others are left to struggle against visible and invisible forces of evil, which conspire to "render them insensible to the pleadings of an earthly preacher." I do not believe that "fairness" or "unfairness" can be spoken of in connection with God's dealings with His creatures; but Mr. C. does, and how the removal of some in early life to a more favourable environment, while others are left to be hardened by the sinful allurements of earth, is compatible with his idea of "fairness," I must leave him to say.

That God would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, is the plain statement of Scripture. On account of this He has approached men in a Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus, who, in harmony with the limitless character of the grace of God, gave Himself a ransom for all (1 Tim. ii.), thus opening up in righteousness a way of salvation for all. And therefore is the gospel preached to all men without exception (Col. i. 23). That all men have not heard it is true. The heathen have but in few instances heard the glad tidings of a Saviour God, and I suppose many even in the British Isles have never heard

the gospel in its purity. Why this is so the Lord will tell us in the day in which He shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. In the meantime we may leave it with Him who knows all things: it does not touch the question which we are considering. To build upon this fact a system of preaching in hades would be very foolish indeed, and not only foolish but ruinous to souls, for it would hold out to them a hope which those who trusted to it would one day find to be a horrible mockery and a delusion of the devil.

But Mr. C. is all wrong when he supposes that God has left men anywhere without sufficient testimony to guide their wandering footsteps back to Himself. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world" (Ps. xix.). Paul tells us that even before the gospel of the grace of God was preached "He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts xiv.); again, "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they should feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us" (chap. xvii.). In no part of the world are men left without testimony from God, and their judgment will be according to the light they have had. Those who have sinned in the *law* shall be judged by the law, and those who have sinned without law shall perish without law (Rom. ii.): for "that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be

beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Luke xii.). It will be found in the day of judgment that all men have had abundance of light from God, and according to their ways in that light their judgment will be. No man will be condemned for rejecting a testimony which was never presented to him. Whatever darkness the heathen may be in, the verdict of the Holy Spirit of God regarding their case is, "*they are without excuse*" (Rom. i. 20).

It is a great mistake to suppose that if men refuse one testimony of God there is any likelihood of their receiving another. Our Lord said to the Jews, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" (John v. 46, 47). The testimony of the universe is surely as easy to believe as is the letter of the gospel of the grace of God, and, if left to himself, the one who rejects the former will most surely reject the latter. Is the voice of God in the gospel so much more credible than His voice in creation? To the human mind it is not nearly so credible. It is surely easier to believe that God created the worlds than that He gave His Son to die for sinners. Therefore it will be found that those who have never heard the gospel will have no cause of complaint against the righteousness of God, when they come to stand before Him in judgment.

¶ Mr. C. is wrong again when he says that "the question upon which the judgment of mankind will turn, is not whether they have been sinners, but whether they have turned to Christ for pardon and sanctification" (p. 160). That men who have refused the grace of God in Christ will be judged for doing so is clear from Scripture (John xii. 48), but this is only one of the

many sins for which they must give an account, though surely the greatest of all. The Ephesians are warned against the uncleannesses of the flesh, and the statement is made that "because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" (Eph. v. 6). And in the day in which God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish" will be visited "upon every soul of man that doeth evil" (Rom. ii.). Again, in Revelation xxi. 8 we have "the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars" in the lake of fire, and not a word about the Christ-rejecter at all.

But were the gospel to be preached in hades, it could not be presented to the responsibility of men, for nowhere in Scripture do we find responsibility connected with deeds done in hades; that is, if we can even speak of deeds done there at all. Men are to be judged on account of the deeds done *in the body*. But judgment for deeds done *out* of the body is nowhere in the revelation which God has given to His people. There are but two classes of people raised from the dead, namely, those who have done evil and those who have done good, and those deeds were done in the body (2 Cor. v. 10). Again, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27). Mr. C. has it, 'Once to die, and after this the preaching in hades.' But the Scriptures pass over the intermediate state, with regard to the conduct of man there, as though there was no such state at all. We have enough, as I have already shown, and as Mr. C. admits, to give us the most perfect confidence that the dead live to God, but that they are actively engaged in His service is not substantiated by the Word of God. Judgment clearly refers to deeds done here upon earth and in the body, and has no reference to the conduct of people in the unseen world.

(To be continued.)

“His leaf also shall not wither.”

(C. KNAPP).

WE were recently journeying through the interior of Guatemala, Central America. It was the “dry” season and there was scarcely a bit of green to be seen. Mountain, valley, and plain were alike dry and parched with the tropical heat, and it seemed as if a match struck anywhere would set the whole country in a blaze. After more than one hundred miles of this colourless scenery the constant sight of burnt and apparently dead vegetation became almost painful. But the absence of anything to relieve the eye was not total. Here and there was to be seen a rich green shrub or tree, standing out in all its living freshness from the background of withered and leafless bush around it. Its nature must have been markedly different from that of the other vegetation. Some of these shrubs were covered with the most beautiful golden yellow blossoms; and we thought, as we looked with pleasure at them, of the Christian as he is, or might, or should be in this desert world. All about him is spiritual death and fruitlessness; ready to be consumed by the fire of judgment, at the kindling of the wrath of a long-suffering and long-insulted God.

But as God looks down from heaven upon it all, who will say that His eye finds no pleasure in the freshness and fruitfulness of His saints! Oh, may

our “leaf” not “wither.” We have a nature given us that can, and does, live when all around is death. And we are as plants set to bud and blossom for the pleasure of our God in the midst of a scene where there is everything to grieve His Holy Spirit and provoke Him to His strange work of judgment.

But how can the Christian keep fresh and green in the midst of the surrounding dearth and death?

Thank God! The Lord Jesus has been here and has left us an example that we should walk in His steps.

He grew up before God as a tender plant—“a plant of renown;” He was the one living root out of a dry ground; and though men saw no beauty in Him, He was the Father’s well-beloved in whom was all His delight.

He it is who was “like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season,” and whose “leaf also shall not wither” (Ps. i.). For ‘His delight was in the law of the Lord; and in His law [did] He meditate day and night.’

Let this same blessed law—the Word of God—be thy food and meditation, O child of God, then shalt thou grow and keep green; and though no other eye finds pleasure in thy freshness and fruit, God’s eye will behold it.

“We’ve now to please but One.”

*My cup is full and floweth o’er;
My soul a ceaseless song doth pour:
My Lord! I worship, I adore.*

*Thou gav’st Thyself, God’s Holy One,
His spotless Lamb, His blessed Son;
O Love! what wonders thou hast done!*

To Thee, O Lord, we bring our note
of praise—
To Thee who bore for us the cross of
shame!
What grief Thou knewest on that day
of days,
When curse and death on Thee the
Victim came!

How great Thy grace! no mind of
man can grasp
The love told out in suffering on the
tree;
Love that has gathered now within its
clasp
Those once far off, but now brought
home to Thee.

Bible Study.—Galatians.

(EDWARD CROSS)

Galatians iii. 15–29.

15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.

21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Verse 15.

THE tension of the Apostle's spirit seems now to relax somewhat as he turns, in illustration of his subject, to an analogy in the ordinary course of human affairs. A covenant, even a man's covenant, being once confirmed, cannot be abrogated or altered by the addition of new conditions. It stands as it was made and ratified. Now, whatever purpose the law served, it could not abrogate the promise already made.

Verse 16.

"But to Abraham were the promises made and to his seed." The A.V. is entirely misleading as to this verse. It is not "to Abraham and his seed were the promises made"—they were made to Abraham, and were confirmed to his Seed (*Ellic., J.N.D., etc.*). Much confusion and discussion have arisen as to the meaning of this verse. The translation given above will help to make the meaning plain.

Different promises at different times were made to Abraham. Some were made to "Abraham and his seed." These are national blessings in connection with the possession of the promised land. They are found in

Genesis xiii. 14–17, "All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed for ever," etc.—and are ratified, by the rite of circumcision, in these terms, viz. "I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee . . . and I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession," etc. (Gen. xvii. 7, 8). But there were other promises, made to Abraham alone, and afterwards confirmed to his Seed—what Luther calls "the Blessed Seed." They are found in Genesis xii. and xxii., as follows:—

- (1) "I will make of thee a great nation,
- (2) and I will bless thee,
- (3) and make thy name great;
- (4) and thou shalt be a blessing;
- (5) and I will bless them that bless thee,
- (6) and curse him that curseth thee;
- (7) and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xii. 2, 3).

Here there is no mention made of the Seed; but, saving that item which is personal to Abraham himself, they are afterwards all enhanced and con-

firmed to the Seed alone, as follows, viz. :—

- (1) "In blessing I will bless thee,
- (2) and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand of the sea shore ;
- (3) and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies ;
- (4) and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xxii. 17, 18).

And all this, promised before, was confirmed here by an oath. Now, men indeed swear by a greater : but there is none greater than God, and an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife. And so God sware by Himself : that, by two immutable things, His word and His oath, in which it is impossible for God to lie, He might show to the heirs of promise the unchangeableness of His purpose (Heb. vi. 13-20). For promise is, as has been said, "the revelation of purpose."

Conceive, therefore, the foolish bewitchment of those who would forsake the certainty of the truth of God for the false hopes of a perverted gospel ! Verily, there is a spirit behind all this, working ever since then in a corrupt Christendom, according to the fore-warnings of prophetic scriptures, to an apostasy, total and complete.

Verse 17.

Now it is plain that the promises made to Abraham cannot be affected by a subsequent transaction that took place 430 years after. In the affairs of life such a thing would be contrary to the most elementary principles of morality. Were it possible, therefore, to establish such a charge against God, all truth would be obliterated. There would be no ground of confidence, no "AMEN" (Isa. lxxv. 16) in the domain of thought, and trust would be impossible. God has promised, and He will abide by His promise, all subsequent covenants or transactions notwithstanding. All His promises are in Christ "Yea," and in Him "Amen," to

His glory by us (2 Cor. i. 20). "For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven" (Ps. cxix. 89). Were it not so, to what refuge could the agonized soul turn in the tempest of bewildering doubt ? and what moral basis of integrity, what standard of righteousness and stability could be established in the world ? "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do ? The Lord is in His holy temple : the Lord's throne is in heaven" (Ps. xi. 3, 4).

The words "confirmed before of God in Christ" are misleading. It should rather be "to Christ" if the words are used at all ; but by many the words "to Christ" are regarded as a gloss, and left out accordingly.

The chronological difficulties in the reconciliation of the periods named in Genesis xv. 13 and Acts vii. 6 with Exodus xii. 40 have nothing to do with the argument of the Apostle. The fact is affirmed, that the law, which was so long after the promise, cannot render it of none effect : and the inheritance cannot be on both principles, law and promise. They are mutually exclusive, each of the other. 'But to Abram, once for all and for ever, by means of promise, not of law, God made the gift freely.' The words here are most emphatic. There is no escape from the logical issue.

Verse 19.

But, this being so, the question arises naturally—What is the use of the law ? of what import is it ? Uncompromising and unlooked-for reply ! "It was superadded because of transgressions," i.e. to bring out in the form of transgression the sin that was already there. Romans iv. 15 and v. 13 make this clear. Here it is said, "It was added." In Romans v. 20 it comes in as an extra thing, or "by the by," that the offence might abound. There is no such thought as getting righteousness thereby. Contrariwise it is to make transgression manifest. Moreover it was for a limited time "till the Seed

came, to whom the promise was made:" the *terminus ad quem* of the newly introduced institution (*Ellic.*). So that whatever its office during the term, that term is now past; the coming of the Seed has determined it. And further, it was ordained through angels, in the hand of a Mediator.

Now if a promise is made conditionally, and the conditions are not fulfilled, the promise is rescinded. But if a promise is made unconditionally, no subsequent enactment can annul it. In the former case there is the mediation of a condition: in the latter it stands on the sole word of the promiser. But "God is One," and the promise stands on what He is alone.

Now the promises to Abram were unconditional, and they are confirmed to Christ risen from among the dead. The promises to Israel under law were conditional, and depended equally on their part of the contract. "If ye obey . . . ye shall indeed . . ." (*Exod.* xix. 5, etc.); and twice over the people, "all of them," accepted the conditions (*Exod.* xix. 8, xxiv. 7), and thereupon the covenant was solemnly ratified by blood (*Exod.* xxiv. 8). Foolish people! But therein is the wisdom of God displayed, to make plain beyond dispute the helplessness of man to establish his own righteousness by the law, and to "shut him up to the faith which should afterwards be revealed."

Verses 21, 22.

The question then arises, "Is, then, the law against the promises of God? Far be the thought." It would be very serious if it were so; for the law was equally given by God, as was the promise. But, as already shown, it was given for another purpose. Now if a law had been given able to give life, then the life it gave would have kept the law, and would have delighted in it; it would, so to speak, have been natural to it, and righteous-

ness would have been thereby. But instead of that it woke up, provoked the evil of the flesh, and brought condemnation. Had they obeyed the law according to their promise—and, so far as we can judge, their honest purpose was to do so—they would have inherited the land, they and their seed after them, to this day; but instead of that, they brake it in its central point, before they passed from the station in which they had made the declaration of their obedience, and having made the golden calf, they forsook the worship of the God who had redeemed them, and lost thereby their title, under the law, to inherit the land of promise (*Exod.* xxxii. 22). Thus Scripture has shut up, as in a prison awaiting deliverance, all things under sin, in order that the aforementioned promise, on the principle of faith of Jesus Christ, should be given to those that believe. "All things," in the neuter, is idiomatically and instinctively chosen, as best suiting the generality of the declaration (*Ellic.*); it enhances the comprehensiveness of the statement—and is not only co-extensive with the human race, but it excludes every kind of human motive and attempt (*Howson*). It is the most absolute way of stating it.

Verses 23, 24.

But before the coming of faith, i.e. the system characterized by it, we (Jews) were guarded under law, shut up to the faith that was about to be revealed; and in this way the office of the law is fully explained. It was our guardian pædagogus up to, or with a view to Christ, with this express purpose, in order that we should be justified on the principle of faith.

The word "schoolmaster" does not convey the meaning of the original. The pædagogus—from *pais* and *agōgos*—among the Greeks and Romans, was the escort, or guardian slave, to whom was entrusted the care of the child during his minority. He was his conductor to and from school, and his office was distinguished from

that of teacher—*didaskalos*. The word is also used in 1 Corinthians iv. 15, and means guardian or tutor (from "tutor," to watch, watch over, guard), in the French sense of *tuteur*, one who exercises authoritative care over the person and goods of a minor (*Littre*), rather than instructor, as generally understood in English. Moreover, the *pædagogus* was a person who, from the nature of his office, not infrequently provoked feelings of antipathy or dislike; and it is quite possible that this thought was not absent from the Apostle's mind in his use of the expression.

Verse 26.

But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For "ye"—and here he passes from "we" Jews to "ye," for the blessings of faith are available in their highest form for Gentiles also (*cf.* Hosea i. 10; Rom. ix. 25, 26), "for ye are all God's sons by faith in Christ Jesus:" no longer in the bondage of the law, but in the full liberty of sonship (*cf.* Isa. viii. 32-36), at least, that was what they were called to, whether they realized it or not. For as many as had been baptized to Christ had put on Christ externally; they had thereby assumed the profession of His name. It is not a question here of what is subjective and vital, but of what is ritualistic and ostensible. Such was the bearing of the rite. They had been thereby invested symbolically with the profession of that name.

Verse 28.

And that name admits no rival in any sphere, either national, social, or creational. "Jew nor Greek; bond nor free; male nor female:" these were all separative distinctions in the flesh. But in a risen Christ, as Isaac in Genesis xxii., there is a "new creation" (*chap.* vi. 15; 2 Cor. v. 17), "for ye are all one in Him." So that as the Seed is one, and that Seed is Christ, these diversities are lost in Him, as the sprouting seed leaves all behind it but

what is of its own essence (Lev. xi. 37): and this seems to be a governing idea in the Apostle's mind, permeating the whole body of his teaching, and appearing in various ways from time to time in his writings (*cf.* Eph. 1-10, ii. 14-18, iv. 3-6; Col. i. 16, etc., v. 29). Now if ye, not "we" Jews as before, are of Christ, i.e. of the Seed to whom the promise was confirmed, then, by a better way than the law, are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to the indefeasible right of promise, resting on the immutable foundation of what God is Himself.

"Seed" (*sara*, Heb., from *sara*=to sow, scatter, disperse, whence the Greek *speiro*, *sperma*, and our "strew") conveys the idea of continuity, expansion, prosperity. Where the seed fails, there is no reproduction, no continuance: the thing dies out. So in the royal line of Solomon, of his descendant Jeconiah, we read, "Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days; for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah" (Jer. xxii. 30). He was led captive into Babylon, and was succeeded, not by his son, but by his uncle, Zedekiah, who was in his turn carried captive; and thus the dynasty of Solomon ended (2 Kings xxiv., xxv.). Accordingly Jesus is never called the Son of Solomon: and His genealogy is not traced through him, but through his brother Nathan (see Luke iii. 31). So, in a wider sense, the purposes of God in respect of man have failed in him. Death is stamped upon him. But in Christ, the blessed Seed, risen from the dead, they are secured, as prefigured in the history of Genesis xii. and xxii. And now mark: not seeds, but "Seed;" only one seed to produce it all. The very thought of it is stupendous. Failure, removal, death are stamped on all before. Life, permanence, and prosperity "in crescendo" are brought to light by the gospel.

"Multiplying, I will multiply thy

seed, as the stars of the heavens [Heb.], and as the sand which is upon the sea shore." Who knows the meaning of Multiplication? Listen.

In the simplest geometrical progression, one multiplied by two, and that again by two, and so on, i.e. 1-2-4-8-16, etc., for just 30 times, amounts to the amazing number of 537,511,912. What would it be for 30 times 30?

"In spite of our familiar toying with large figures, Number remains to the thinker in its higher potentiality an impressive and frightful mystery. To take an instance. The largest number that we can write in 3 ciphers is obviously 999. When we pass to the powers of this number we meet with the expression 9^{99} , 'nine to the 99th power,' a number with 90 places, and so huge that a globe whose circumference was equivalent to the circuit of the earth round the sun would contain far fewer grains of sand. Almost equally stupendous is the number 'nine to the ninth power to the ninth power.' Here our faculty of imagination has already deserted us. But when we write the number $9^{(9^9)}$, it is as if on the mere addition of this bracket, like a powder-magazine on which a spark has fallen, the digit had exploded into a gigantic, diabolical, superhuman magnitude; for these 3 numerals now denote a number with 370 million places, which would extend in an ordinary-sized handwriting from Berlin to the Adriatic (620 miles), and for which all the languages of the world combined could not provide

a stock of words; a tolerable portion of which not all the men in the world could reckon over in as many millions of years as there are grains of sand on the globe. Yet this number exists, first of all in the divine mind, next in infinite space as a magnitude, in infinite time as an æon: and millions of such magnitudes and æons do not exhaust space or time. Where shall we immortals be during those unimaginable æons? All our present ideas superseded, how may we progress towards God? For there is a divine progression, and a divine expansion of the divine in the divine.

"That we comprehend number only in its truest, simplest elements, and that it soon grows out of our reach, is a proof that we stand only at the outset of our eternal development. There may be beings having as clear a grasp of the above figure of 370 million places, and who reckon it as speedily as we do those of two. With regard alike to Time, Space and Number, we must confess unhesitatingly,—Ignoramus!" (*Better*). cf. Dan. viii. 13, marg.

And is Christ not worthy of this? Yes: and far more; more beyond all thought. Here the mind passes from computing the incomputable, and the soul abandons itself in the infinite bliss of endless adoration to contemplate the exceeding riches of His grace who multiplies blessings to us, beyond the stars of the heavens and the sand of the seashore, by Christ Jesus—the blessed Seed—Jesus the risen, glorified Son of God (Eph. i. 3).

"Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

We bring to our Lord most glory when we get from Him much grace.

If I have much *faith*, so that I take God at His word; much *love*, so that the zeal of His house eats me up; much *hope*, so that I am assured of fruit from my labour; much *patience*, so that I can endure hardness for Jesus' sake; then shall I greatly honour my Lord.

Your talents may be slender, but if your heart is consecrated to the Lord your life will burn and glow with the glory of the Lord. You may not get credit for your work in the statistics which reckon converts by the scores and hundreds, but in that other book, which no secretary could keep, where things are weighed rather than numbered, your register will greatly honour your Master.

Correspondence :—How to Win Souls.

To the Editors of *Scripture Truth*.

IT would appear that the greatest hindrances to really powerful and solid work in the gospel spring from two opposite extremes.

For long years the church has been afflicted with controversy as to "election" on the one hand and "man's free-will" on the other. Sometimes the volcano has slumbered, at other times it has been stirred to violent and destructive eruption; but at all times, whether quiescent or active, the difference of thought and judgment has been there. The extremes of Hyper-Calvinism and Arminianism are with us to-day. I do not think it will be difficult to show that both extremes are alike inimical to the furtherance of the gospel.

Hyper-Calvinism is, as most of your readers are aware, that system of religious thought which sees little else in Scripture than God's sovereignty in election. The responsibility of man is so little thought of, if not denied, that he is reduced to a mere puppet. He is a plaything in the hand of fate. If he is elect he must be saved, come what may; if he is not he must be damned, and there's the end of it.

Arminianism, on the contrary, sees little else than the fact of man's responsibility, often to the total exclusion of God's sovereignty, and His gracious work by His Spirit in the souls of men. Man is a free and unfettered being in the exercise of his own will, and the great thing is to persuade him by hook or by crook to exert the force of his will in the right direction.

The Hyper-Calvinistic spirit is absolutely fatal to all real work or success in gospel work. Those who profess its doctrines necessarily and logically decry it in every possible way. Men are dead, why preach to dead men? Why say "Repent!" to men who *can't* repent? or "Believe!" to men who *can't* believe? Moreover, is not God able to look after His own affairs? Does He require our busy interference in the saving of His elect? Supposing we encompass sea and land in our zeal for souls, not one *more* than the elect will be saved; and if we fold our hands and do nothing, not one *less* than the elect will be saved. Masterly inactivity is then the only possible policy, and all the energy of the servants of the Lord is only so much unprofitable waste of time and breath.

Permit me to say, in passing, that I often wonder why this kind of argument seems to be only used against evangelistic effort. If valid at all it is just as valid against all forms of Christian service. Is not God perfectly able to care for the souls of His elect without our endeavours to edify them? Will not the sovereign work of the Spirit in building up their souls progress even if we don't "lecture" and conduct "Bible readings?" even without our pastoring and teaching? The

exponents of these teachings seem blind to the fact that they are cutting the ground from beneath their own feet.

I shall be reminded, doubtless, that comparatively few people nowadays adhere to these views; they are out of date. That is so. There is about them, distorted though they are, a rugged strength of dogmatism and an honest recognition of man's fallen estate quite foreign to the spirit of the age. Hence the other extreme is largely in favour.

I believe we should be correct in saying that Arminianism, often of an extreme type, is accepted by the great majority of truly Christian people. They feel the need of sinners, and rejoice in the glad tidings of forgiveness through a crucified and risen Saviour. The great question now with them is how best to get at sinners and persuade them into that definite act of their own will whereby they shall choose life in accepting Christ for themselves. The more in earnest such Christians are the greater are their labours, and often the more questionable or even unscriptural their methods. The great end which they feel they *must* reach is, however, considered by them to sanctify the means.

What are the practical results of all this? At first sight very different from the results of Hyper-Calvinism. There, all is stagnation and death. Here, all is movement and apparent success. So many scores pass through the inquiry-rooms in a single night at this mission; so many hundreds moved to tears under a solo impressively rendered at that; so many standing up to signify their acceptance of Christ at a third.

And what then? Ah! we may well ask. At the close of a large mission in London a few years ago fifty-two names and addresses were handed to the pastor of a large chapel as being members of his place who had professed conversion. A year afterwards the pastor—a warm-hearted evangelical man he it noted—said that of those fifty-two he could only speak of *one* as being converted. Thank God for the one! Yes, but what shall we say of the fifty-one souls grievously damaged by their false profession? Is it necessary to decoy fifty-one on to the wrong road in order to lead one into the right?

Shall we not, by the grace of God, endeavour to steer a middle course between this Scylla and this Charybdis? Scripture must be our guide. The truth of divine sovereignty is written plainly in its pages (see John vi. 37; Rom. ix. 10-24; Eph. i. 4; 1 Peter i. 2; etc.). So also is man's responsibility (see Matt. xxiii. 37; John iii. 16, 18, v. 40; Rom. ii. 6-16; 1 Peter iv. 5, 6; etc.). Let us, then, accept both—even if we do not as yet see far enough to discern exactly how they fit in with each other—and let us bring each to bear upon the practical work of evangelization.

If we were more profoundly convinced of man's responsibility we should be marked by more deep-toned earnestness. How we should look at men in the light of eternity! How we should yearn after their souls, even to tears! With what zeal and vehement power should we both publicly and privately declare eternal realities. And then if, in addition, an equally profound conviction of divine sovereignty took possession of us; if we were fully convinced of the absolute necessity of the Spirit's work in souls, and that nothing in the way of persuasion or emotion *apart* from that work has any lasting value, what reliance upon God it would produce! Instead of feverish inefficiency there would be entire dependence. We

should be lifted above a hundred and one unworthy methods; for the work is God's and not ours. We should let the mere arts of the revivalist severely alone. Instead of bending our energies so much to working up people's emotions in public we should spend much more time in waiting upon God in private--that the blessing might come down--and He would not fail us.

We might not be able to enrol so many *professions* on earth, but there would be more divinely wrought *conversions* registered in heaven.

Yours in Christian bonds,

F. B. HOLE.

The Glorious Gospel Story.

(JAMES BOYD).

BLESSED be the glory
Of that marvellous story,
Told in Jesu's journey from the cradle to the grave;
Told in priceless offering,
Told in deep soul suffering,
Told when o'er His head went roaring wrath's devouring wave;
Told when sin enthralled us,
Told when death appalled us,
Told in darkness, cross, and curse upon Golgotha's tree;
Told from lust to win us,
Told our hearts within us,
God's great love to guilty rebel creatures such as we.

Jesus, Lord of glory,
Help us tell the story;
Help us to the weary heart the tale of love to bring.
To the soul despairing
Send us, Saviour, bearing
Tidings which shall make the heavy-hearted sinner sing.

Bid the heathen hear it;
Bid the lost revere it:
Bid Thy servants carry it in heavenly grace and might,
Where, in darksome places,
Blind, benighted races
Stumble in th'encircling gloom, oh, say, *Let there be light.*

Jesus, blessed Jesus,
In Thy grace release us
From the cords of worldliness and from the fear of men,
Bid us tell the story
In its power and glory,
Till with hallelujahs glad the welkin rings again;

Till throughout creation
 Every tribe and nation
 Hears the heavenly music of the mercy of the Lord ;
 Till the dead awaken,
 Till the gloom is shaken,
 Till the powers of hell fall back before the living Word ;

Till the heirs of glory
 All have heard the story,
 Till there's not one left with conscience, heart or soul to hear ;
 Till the trump is sounding,
 Till, in grace abounding,
 Heaven is rent, and, glory crowned, Thou shalt in might appear ;

Till it needs no telling,
 Till its praise up-welling,
 Melody immortal thrills the universe abroad ;
 Till redeemed creation,
 Safe from sin's invasion,
 Tells the glory-story back into the ear of God.

From the Author's poem "The Story of the Glory."

The Old Covenant and the New Dispensation.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews the new covenant, founded upon the infinitely perfect sacrifice of Christ, is contrasted with the old covenant, not in the way in which the light of the knowledge of God is contrasted with the darkness of heathen ignorance, for the old covenant was of God, and therefore possessed divine glory.

Beautiful is the night in which the moon and stars of prophecy and types are shining ; but when the sun rises,

then we forget the hours of watchful expectancy, and in the calm and joyous light of the day there is revealed to us the reality and substance of the eternal and heavenly sanctuary.

Great is the glory of the old covenant, immeasurably greater is the glory of the new dispensation, when in the fulness of time God sent forth His Son and gave unto us the substance of those things of which in the old times He had shown types and shadows.—*Saphir*.

Martin Luther quaintly compared the saints of Old and New Testaments to the two men who brought the branch with the cluster of grapes from the promised land. They were both bearing the same fragrant fruit ; but one of them saw it not (1 Peter i. 10, 11, 12), though he knew what he was carrying. The other saw both the fruit and the man who was helping him. Thus is it ; the prophets who came before Jesus testified of Him, although they did not yet behold Him ; and we who live in the fulness of times see Him of whom they testified, in all the full glory of His

perfect grace and love revealed on earth.

The Scriptures are that complete and infallible record of the revelation of God from which all our knowledge of His grace and will is derived.

God is the Author of revelation in both Old and New Testaments ; Christ is the substance and centre of that revelation in both ; and the glory of God's name in a people brought nigh to Him, to love and to worship Him, is the end of the revelation.

The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus.

(J. S. OLIPHANT).

No. 5.—As Judge.

And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead (Acts x. 42).

And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead (Acts xvii. 30, 31).

In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel (Rom. ii. 16).

The Day of the Lord.

IN the paper on the Son of Man we noticed that all judgment is committed to the Son, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father; and that the Father has given Him authority to execute judgment because He is the Son of Man.

The thought of judgment to come carries the mind on to "the day of the Lord" which will come on the world as a thief in the night (1 Thess. v. 2). Now it is the day of salvation, the day of the Spirit of God on earth. Grace is reigning through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. In another aspect, the world aspect, it is "man's day," but "the day of the Lord" is approaching, and that day will be ushered in by judgment on the enemies of Christ.

The Apostle Peter, in his address to Cornelius and his friends (Acts x.), announced that God had commanded him to testify that the One whom the Jews had slain and hanged on a tree was the One whom God had raised from the dead and appointed Judge of living and dead.

God has borne in patience with the world since it crucified His beloved Son, whilst by the gospel He has been gathering out of it those who are to form the bride of Christ and are to be joint-heirs with Christ when He takes His inheritance. In the meantime Christ is sitting at God's right hand till He makes His enemies His footstool. At the right moment He will ask, and God will give Him the nations for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession.

His rights as Heir to the throne of David were refused by His earthly

people, and the husbandmen said, "This is the Heir, come, let us kill Him and seize on His inheritance; so they caught Him and cast Him out of the vineyard and slew Him."

Nothing therefore remains but for Him to come in power, take His throne, and fulfil all the promises and accomplish all the purposes of God.

We may well tremble when we think of the destruction of those who will be found in open rebellion against Him; but it is a consolation to the heart of the Christian to remember that judgment is God's strange work, though it is absolutely necessary to vindicate His character and display His power and authority, and to banish from the face of the earth those who will not give glory to His name nor bow to the One by whom He will judge the world in righteousness.

The gathering out of Christ's kingdom all things that offend and them that do iniquity is, as in David's day, only the prelude to the reign of peace, clearing evil out of the way that the kingdom of Christ may be established in righteousness for the peace and blessing of man for one thousand years.

Scripture does not leave us in ignorance as to the development of events on earth before the Lord comes, especially in that sphere where Christianity has been professed. We have only to turn to the Revelation to find the plainest testimony as to the things which will take place after the history of the churches, and as to the state of rebellion against Christ in which the world will be found when He returns in power and glory, in righteousness to judge and make war.

The book is one of judgment. Hence

Christ is seen in a judicial character in chapters 11 and 13, walking in the midst of seven golden candlesticks. The professing church is viewed in its character as a responsible witness for Christ in the world. Consequently everything that is inconsistent with His name and His word, in fact, with Himself, is exposed and condemned, and the removal of the candlesticks is threatened if the call to repentance is unheeded. This is seen in the case of Jezebel (the corrupt Roman system), of whom it is said, "I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not," direct dealing in judgment with her is threatened, and the Lord announces, "I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."

The final state of the professing church is presented in the epistle to the assembly in Laodicea. Self-satisfaction, and complete ignorance of her spiritual poverty and blindness, is the terrible condition which is disclosed, and Christ is outside, standing at the door and knocking, and the refusal and setting aside of the church as a responsible witness is given in these words: "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth."

We know from other scriptures that the true church, composed of all saints who have received the Holy Ghost and to whom Christ's body on the earth may be translated into heaven at any moment, and will be with Him and like Him for ever, and we have the assurance of the Lord (Rev. 13:10), "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee out of the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

After the Rapture.

The Christian assembly is not seen upon earth after the history of the

churches in chapters 11 and 13 of the Revelation. The Bride is seen in heaven at the marriage of the Lamb in chapter 19, and the heavenly saints come out of heaven with Christ when He comes, as presented in that chapter. 2 Thessalonians 11 and 13 prove that the gathering together of the saints unto Christ precedes "the day of the Lord," and that that day will not come until the apostasy shall have taken place and the Man of sin have been revealed.

Let us now consider what Scripture teaches as to the development of evil on the earth after the translation of the true church to heaven. The Apostle Paul, in 2 Thessalonians 11, wrote: "The mystery of iniquity doth already work only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed." There he connects the Man of sin with the mystery of iniquity which was working in his day, and has been working in the professing church ever since. The full development of iniquity will be seen in a man "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, . . . [he] sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

Satan cannot destroy the true church nor stamp out the truth of the resurrection of Christ, for the Holy Ghost is on earth to maintain the body in its unity and the truth as to Christ's person and work. Hence Satan's work has been characterized throughout the church dispensation by corruption and imitation of the truth, and we find in the Revelation that his great masterpiece will be a kingdom formed by his power, and that he will give the beast, who will be the head of it, his power and his seat and great authority. All the world will wonder after the beast, the head of this mighty empire, and the second beast, called in Revelation 19:20 the false prophet, the representative of corrupt religion (chap. 13:11), does great wonders and "causes those who dwell on the earth to worship the beast, and to receive a mark

in their right hand, or in their foreheads: that no man might buy or sell, save he had the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of his name."

In chapter xvi. the Apostle sees "three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. They are the spirits of demons, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

In chapter xix. we find the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against Him that sitteth on the white horse and against His army.

We have thus traced shortly the working of Satan, after the church is translated, to show the state in which the world will be found when the Lord comes to judge.

From other scriptures we learn that the Jews will be in Jerusalem, and a godly remnant of them will be undergoing great persecution; and then will be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world, nor ever shall be (Matt. xxiv. 15-22).

Gentile Christendom will not have continued in the goodness of God (Rom. xi. 22) and will be cut off. The corrupt church is described in Revelation xvii.: "Upon her forehead was a name written, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." For a time she is carried by the beast; but the ten kings, which agree to give their power and strength unto the beast, "hate the whore, and make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." Her judgment is celebrated in heaven before the Lord is seen coming out of heaven in chapter xix. 11.

When evil is shown fully ripe on earth, can it be wondered at that God then commences His strange work and that judgment must take its course in the world when it is manifested to be completely given up to the power of Satan?

The Warrior Judgment.

Heaven then opens and the One who is called Faithful and True comes forth, sitting on a white horse, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war; He is crowned with many crowns, and clothed in a vesture dipped in blood; His name is called the Word of God, and out of His mouth goes a sharp sword for the smiting of the nations whom He will rule with a rod of iron. He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. "On His vesture and on His thigh a name is written, King of kings and Lord of lords."

What a contrast, we may remark in passing, to the meek and lowly One who rode into Jerusalem on earth, in fulfilment of the prophecy, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee meek and sitting upon an ass, a colt the foal of an ass." The details of this warrior judgment, as it has been called, need not be described. Suffice it to say that the beast and false prophet are taken, and both are cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. The remnant are slain, and all the fowls are filled with their flesh. Satan is bound for a thousand years and cast into the bottomless pit, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled.

All Christ's enemies outside the sphere of the beast's empire will also be subdued by His power, as other scriptures testify.

Sessional Judgment.

The sessional judgment follows. It is recorded in Matthew xxv. that when the Son of Man shall come in His glory and shall sit upon the throne of His glory, before Him all nations will be gathered, and He will separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats.

After the translation of the heavenly saints a testimony will be raised up by God, different in character from that connected with the church as Christ's body and Christ's bride (Rom. xvi. 25, 26).

Revelation xiv. 6 shows that that everlasting gospel is to be proclaimed to all nations outside the sphere of the kingdom of the beast where God is blasphemed. The messengers with this gospel call on man to fear God and give glory to Him, because the hour of the judgment has come, and to worship Him who made all things. It is evident from the account of the sessional judgment of the living nations that the brethren sent out on this mission of the King are Jews spared from the apostate mass who receive the Antichrist.

Those who recognize these messengers and receive their testimony are owned by the King as sheep, on the ground that their treatment of His messengers was treatment accorded to Himself, and their portion as the blessed of His Father is to inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. "The goats"—rejecters of these messengers and their testimony—"go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. xxv. 46).

The Millennium.

In Revelation xx. 4 we find thrones occupied by the saints who come out of heaven with Christ, and those that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and the Word of God, and those which had not worshipped the beast nor his image, and they live and reign with Christ a thousand years.

But at the close of this mediatorial reign of righteousness and peace and blessing for men upon earth there is yet another test of men when the devil is loosed out of his prison. Finding man's heart still unchanged he deceives the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, and gathers them together to battle. They compass the camp of the saints about and the beloved city, and fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours them.

Satan is then "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

The Final Issue.

Then follows the final scene before the great white throne, when the earth and the heaven flee away from the face of Him that sits on it. The dead, small and great, stand before God and are judged out of the things written in the books according to their works. Death and hades are cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever is not found written in the book of life is cast into the lake of fire. How solemn is this ending of the history of Satan in man's world, and of those who fall under his power. The Son of God was manifested to annul the works of the devil, and here we have arrived at the close of the millennial age when, as we find in Corinthians xv. 24, Christ will have put down all rule and all authority and power. The last enemy destroyed is death: God will wipe away all tears, for there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain, for the former things are passed away. That will be the moment when Christ, having subdued all things unto Himself, and having delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father, will Himself, the Son, also be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

What a glorious vista is opened up to us in the Scriptures as we trace the wondrous future of which Christ, the object of God's eternal counsels, is the centre, and in which He is seen as the Victor over all the power of evil.

Christ is the hope of the church, and the Spirit and the bride say "Come;" but we can also say with the Apostle Peter, "We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," and may our hearts be attentive to the exhortation, "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Peter iii. 13, 14).

The Generations of the Heavens and the Earth.—Part III.

(S. L. JACOB).

THIS chapter (Genesis iii.) shows the serpent upon the scene in Eden. As to who he is, we are not left in doubt. He is named for us in the book of Revelation (which is the complement of Genesis) as the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world. What a fearful enemy he is, how clever and how subtle! Why is he at large? Why should he have been allowed in Eden? Why did not God protect man from being tempted by him? There are many questions we cannot answer at all, and many we can answer but dimly. Yet if we know God we know that He does not blunder, that every way of His is perfect, and that He will bring to pass a greater blessing than could otherwise have been possible without the temptation and its results. We have all been injured by the work and oppressed by the power of the devil, but in this condition we have been made to feel our sore need of Christ who was revealed to destroy the works of the devil, and in Him we have a greater blessing and God has a fuller glory than if sin had never been. We see these things but dimly now, but one day they will all be very clear. What a comfort is this to our hearts as we contemplate the havoc wrought in God's once fair creation.

The tempter attacked Eve the weaker vessel, and that when she was alone; she trusted her senses, instead of believing God, so she fell and dragged her husband with her to share in her fall, he being led apparently by his affection for her (1 Tim. ii. 11-14).

The lie by which Satan deceived the woman is just the simple one he has been telling in a thousand ways since, and how readily we take the bait. It is this, that man can make himself happier than God will make

him; that God is a hard master, and to follow our own wills and to cater for our own happiness is the way of life instead of being the way of death. The Son of God came to expose the devil's lie, and to show that in God's will lay the path of life, and that any other way meant death. Have we learnt this lesson? Do we know practically that to seek to save our life is to lose it, while it is only by losing it for the sake of Him who came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him, that we can keep it unto life eternal?

As soon as Adam and Eve had sinned their eyes were opened and they knew that they were naked. Mark, they discovered now what had been no trouble to them before the fall.

Clothing in Scripture is symbolical of righteousness (Isa. lxi. 10 may be quoted as proof: "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness"). The question of clothing did not enter the mind before the fall, because they were then in innocence. But sin put them at a distance from and utterly unfitted them for the presence of God. Moreover, there could be no return to the state of innocence, and their unfitness for God could only be met by the "gift of righteousness" (Rom. v. 17), a covering of God's providing.

Nakedness can only be covered by Christ, no creature can in himself be fit for the presence of Him who charges his angels with folly while the heavens are not clean in His sight (Job iv. 18 and xv. 15), and before whom the holy seraphim veil their faces, and cry, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isa. vi. 3).

We need to press this again and again, for the idea of creature excel-

lence and independence is the sin of every age, and especially of the present day, and it leads up to the apostasy, and to the taking of God's place by a man (2 Thess. ii. 4). We may boldly say that there would never have been any creation at all unless it had been God's purpose that His Son should be incarnate, work redemption, and fill all things. Till He fills all things nothing can be worthy of God, nor can God rest (except, of course, in a limited sense, as in Gen. ii. 1-3), for God's rest is Christ.

How great was the difference between *unfallen Adam* and *Adam fallen*. Adam unfallen is the product of the heavens and of the earth, the handiwork of God: but in Adam fallen sin was present, introduced by the devil (1 John iii. 8), and sin is an awful thing. It is an outrage against God. The whole honour and character of God is at stake in this matter, and sin must be got rid of. The heavens and the earth must be utterly cleansed, everything must be made new. Sin and blessing are incompatible. It is only when the will of God is paramount that there can be peace, and this is what Christ came to accomplish. Oh, to see more clearly than we do the purposes of God and the greatness of Christ!

When Adam and Eve perceived that they were naked, they set to work to make themselves aprons of fig leaves. This while being the most ancient is also the most popular of all the manufactures of men: it is to make clean the outside and to cover up the real state of affairs; to produce an outward covering of apparent righteousness and so hide their nakedness of soul and deceive the eyes of others—to this are the efforts of men continually bent.

Doubtless, what Adam and Eve made was very simple, but this manufacture has greatly developed since then, and in the marvellous compound of religion with art, science, and commerce, Babylon has devised such

masterpieces of garments wherewith to cover human nakedness that humanity is making itself believe that it is neither fallen nor naked, and that it is advancing rapidly in the direction of absolute perfection. By this are many being deceived, yea all, except those who are humble and kept in dependence on the Lord by abiding in Him (compare Eph. iv. 14 with Rev. xviii.). Even in that sphere where the truth of man's fall and need ought most surely to be known there is the proud boast of being rich and increased in goods and having need of nothing, and they know not that they are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked (Rev. iii. 17). We need to dread this extremely, we need to remember that Satan is the god of this world, and that his object is to prevent the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, shining forth upon men (2 Cor. iv. 4). Let us remember also that that *which is highly esteemed among men* is abominable in the sight of God (Luke xvi. 15).

The aprons were made, but Adam and Eve now had consciences, and, do what they would, they could not but be conscious of the stain upon them, so that directly they heard the voice of the Lord God in the garden, they hid themselves from the presence of the Lord amongst the trees of the garden. Oh, thank God for conscience, and that, do what man may, and will, he cannot altogether stifle it or stop its accusations! May the Lord keep our consciences from being seared as by a hot iron: otherwise there is no hope.

What a voice for Adam to hear, the voice of the Lord God saying "Where art thou?" Where was he? Away from God, alienated from the life of God. What awful darkness had come in, what distance! To be away from God is death.

Adam did not die an actual physical death on the day on which he ate of the forbidden tree, but in the fullest way the word of God was fulfilled

—"Dying, thou shalt die" (Gen. ii., marg.); for not only did his physical body instantly begin to die, and Adam thus became a dying creature, but, of more awful importance still, in that same instant spiritual death came in in the new and terrible state of alienation from God. In this state of alienation is the essence of death—death which involved the forsaking of Christ on the cross by God, and only this can fully show how awful a thing sin is.

Those who see only physical death in the penalty are apt to be ensnared in that subtle error called "conditional immortality" by which so many earnest souls are entrapped. They teach that physical death is the penalty of sin, therefore men perish like beasts and exist no more unless they receive eternal life through Christ. Once, however, it is seen that the reality

of death consists in existence in alienation from God (see Eph. ii. 1 and iv. 18) and this error is detected and made evident.

Let fashion and human wit and learning devise all that it can, death is still upon man—and he that liveth in pleasure is dead while he liveth—for sin is here; and all man's ingenuity is paralysed in the presence of sin and death: man's thirst cannot be slaked, man's hunger cannot be assuaged. Satan will drive him from one pursuit to another, to device after device, but whether in the centres of civilization or in the depths of paganism, man (out of Christ) is away from God, and the wit of man can devise no remedy; man has morally died, for he is away from God (2 Cor. v. 14). Therefore death lies upon him, and after death the judgment.

Practical Godliness.—II.

(W. BRAMWELL DICK).

The Home Circle.

Learn *first* to shew piety at home (1 Tim. v. 4).

THE Holy Scriptures leave us in no doubt as to where godliness is to be first expressed. Our Lord said to the man out of whom He cast a legion of devils:

"Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee"

(Mark v. 19).

Again:

"Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee"

(Luke viii. 39).

He had to bear witness in the *home circle*, by lip and life, to that gracious power that had delivered and transformed him. That circle which lies nearest to us has the first claim upon us; if we cannot practise there it is useless to preach abroad. Moreover, it is there where we are fully tested. There is a veneer, a measure of reserve—or shall we say unreality?—about

every person when abroad, but at home we are seen just exactly as we are. It is when we are at leisure, unfettered by the restraint of strangers, and able to do as we please, that what we are is manifested. Our home life has much to do with our walk as saints of God, and our testimony as servants of God. That God takes account of this is evident from the way in which the practice of personal godliness is urged in His Word, and is shown to be essential in every relationship of life.

If, for example, we turn to Ephesians v. and vi., this is strikingly demonstrated. In this epistle Christian blessing is presented in its highest aspect. Here we are taught our place in the purpose and heart of God, our position now in Christ before God, and that as composing the church of God down here in this world we

form an object lesson which principalities and powers contemplate with wonder, and in which they learn the "manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. iii. 10).

In our last paper we noticed that angels saw God fully revealed in Christ. He has gone back to God. The church is now here in Christ's place, Himself its life, united to Him by the Holy Spirit, and now in the church these heavenly beings learn the wisdom of God.

We are not surprised that the beloved Apostle to whom this precious truth was revealed was overwhelmed by it, and that twice over he should bow his knees before Him in whose heart it all originated. While filled with praise as he thought of the immensity of the blessing, he was alive to the fact that there should be an answer on the part of those so called, a walk worthy of such a vocation, and therefore after leading us in chapters i., ii., iii. to such a marvellous height, he proceeds in chapters iv., v., vi. to indicate the manner of life that becomes those who are so loved and those who are invested with such dignity. He puts all in a single sentence in chapter v. 1, "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children," or, if we may quote from another translation, "Be ye therefore *imitators* of God, as beloved children." This is the essence of godliness. It is not the special perquisite of a select few who live under more or less favoured circumstances; it is normal Christianity. God looks for it, the Holy Spirit works to produce it, and the Lord Jesus Christ lives to maintain it in every true Christian. As we read down the chapter we learn what is requisite for it. Another has remarked that here we have God as our goal and object, Christ as our pattern, and the Holy Spirit our power. In verse 2 we have love; now "God is love," and this was most perfectly expressed when Christ was in this world. In verse 18 we have power, "Be filled with the Spirit"—that is what Christ was, and

that is what our God would have us be. This is not, as many think, a special filling for a special purpose, but it marks that complete surrender on our part whereby we place ourselves absolutely under the Holy Spirit's control, so that having God as our goal and object, and Christ as our pattern, those blessed traits that were so manifest in Christ may be seen in us; and that, on the one hand, principalities and powers may learn in us "the manifold wisdom of God," and, on the other hand, our fellow-men may see His love and His power, working in, through, and out of us, who are the subjects of His grace. Love that has conquered us, power that has revolutionized our lives, and which enables us to be found here seeking to become "imitators of God."

All this becomes manifest first in the home circle—there the light shines; from there, we might almost add, the light radiates; for if we fail at home, we are powerless abroad. Hence the importance of the salutary exhortations which follow:

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" or "of Christ" (ver. 21).

That which marked Christ, who is our pattern, when here was submission. He who was God's eternal Son, whose right it had been to command, became man in lowly grace, and His wonderful path, culminating in the sorrow of Gethsemane and the suffering at Calvary, was marked by unquestioning submission to His Father's will. Well may we sing in His ear:

*"We wonder at Thy lowly mind,
And fain would like Thee be."*

Many a true heart says, "I do want to be like Him, but I am only a poor, obscure, unknown, and uncared-for 'nobody.' I cannot engage in prominent service, or go to the heathen. I have but little intercourse with any. Where can I live for Christ?" Our chapter answers the question—At home.

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, AS UNTO THE LORD" (ver. 22).

Submission is not agreeable to the natural mind. Eve took her own way

in the Garden of Eden, and all her posterity have sought their own way since, but the evidence of the work of God in the soul is that the woman recognizes God's order, she accepts the place that God accords her, and she yields willing submission to her husband. If at times she differs from his judgment, as a wise helpmeet she may offer counsel; but she will in no wise usurp authority over him, but submit "in the fear of Christ," which being interpreted means, in all that does not affect her conscience before the Lord. If the husband errs, and acts contrary to the Word, either through self-will or ignorance, she has her resource in the Lord, and by her own chaste conversation, being subject to the Word herself, she may win him from the error. When this divine order is set aside the authority of Christ is ignored, prayers are hindered, godliness ceases, and the witness for Christ is null and void.

"Husbands, love your wives" (ver. 25).

Wives are to be taught to love their husbands (Titus ii. 4), but here the exhortation is significant. Man naturally is dangerous when invested with a little authority. The Christian husband who is not an imitator of God may become overbearing and tyrannical. The wife is the "weaker vessel;" she is to be nourished and cherished, and the husband is responsible to the Lord for his treatment of her. We have heard talk of being dead to human relationships, of the danger of a man loving his wife too much, etc. Such ideas are not to be found in the Word of God; on the contrary, a man's love for his wife is to be "even as Christ also loved the church"—whole-hearted, self-sacrificing love. We admit that it is possible for a man's wife to become his idol, and so come between himself and the Lord: in such circumstances both are to be pitied, for the pure joys of communion in the things of the Lord will cease, a guilty conscience intervene, and that which has been grasped to the exclusion of

Christ become as ashes in the mouth and a misery to the heart.

In this chapter, however, it is revealed to us that the wife's relation to her husband is that of the church to Christ, while that of the husband to the wife is that of Christ to the church. In the knowledge of this, both seek that their home should be after the model of that relationship, and that there godliness should be practically expressed.

Then we have the word to children:

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right."

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord"
(Eph. vi. 1-4).

One of the most melancholy features of the day in which we live is the insubordination of children, and one of the greatest hindrances to the progress of the gospel is the conduct of the children of God's people. Disobedience is prevalent on every hand. Instead of nipping it in the bud it is overlooked. Instead of commanding, like Abraham (Gen. xviii. 19), parents entreat like Eli (1 Sam. iii. 13). Instead of correcting, as Scripture enjoins, they spare the children now, and not only heap up for them retribution and sorrow here, but endanger their souls for eternity. Christian children, of course, *will* obey their parents "in the Lord." They will submit "in the fear of Christ." They will not question, or chafe, or rebel even in heart, knowing that it is not only to their parents but to the Lord, and that angels are witnesses of, and are learning by, their conduct.

Fathers are not to provoke their children to wrath. How often chastisement when inflicted is only a means of giving vent to the parent's temper, and that is communicated to the child. The godly parent will desire that from him his child may receive a right impression of God's just and righteous government in any chastisement inflicted; and if there be naughtiness he

will be careful to show how God is affected thereby. Godly parents create a godly atmosphere, and thus God becomes a great reality to the dear children. Our children are a priceless gift from God; shall we not, then, seek with all our heart so to train them, so to live before them, that from their early days He may be known by them, and that His grace may be magnified in them?

“Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

“With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men” (Eph. vi. 5, 7).

Servants are to obey their masters. At times this may be difficult; but the word is there; they submit “in the fear of Christ,” and those who do so will be divinely supported. It is significant that in Titus ii. 10 it is upon servants that the distinguished honour is bestowed of “adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour.”

“And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither

is there respect of persons with him” (Eph. vi. 9).

Masters are reminded that they also have a Master, and that if they issue oppressive commands their Master will call them to account for so doing.

Needless to state, this also applies to mistresses who in our present-day domestic arrangements have much to do with servants, and may prosper or mar the testimony by the treatment they mete out to them.

How perfect all this is. Christ as Lord presides over the Christian household; the husband owns His authority, the wife is subject to her husband, the children obey their parents, and the servants are submissive to their master. Each fill their own niche; each recognize that in submitting to the head of the house they are owning the lordship and headship of Christ; in this way they learn to show piety first at home. The far-reaching results of this are obvious. The way in which all God's people in every department of life may thus give joy to His heart is manifest.

“God hath spoken” (Heb. i. 1).

How little do we think of the grandeur and majesty and all-importance of this simple declaration. A living and a loving God *must* needs speak. The God of the philosophers is a silent God, for he hath neither life nor affection; but our God, who *is* and who *loves*, must speak. But it is because God is the God of redemption that He is

the God of revelation. It is because in Jesus Christ there is atonement that God can seek the guilty sinner, saying, “Where art thou?” The love of the Father, the blood of Jesus Christ, and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost—these are the three necessary foundations upon which the Scripture rests.

Answers to Correspondents.

(THE EDITORS).

Knowing Christ after the Flesh

(2 Cor. v. 16).

J.J. No, we do not think that knowing Christ “after the flesh” is, as it is suggested, “knowledge the flesh is capable of.” It is not a question of the kind of knowledge, whether spiritual or carnal, but of the condition and relationship in which Christ is known.

The subject is one of great importance, and that the truth may be dwelt on in some detail, we have asked one or two contributors to write specially upon it in our Correspondence Column: *and further letters are invited.*

Alluding (as in the above) to remarks on page 73 of this magazine, you ask further, “Did the eleven receive their

commission from Christ in the days of His flesh?" If the commission given in Galilee (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20) were all, we should say "No," for when Christ was risen He was no longer in "the days of His flesh." He was there the beginning of an entirely new order. But that was *not* all; for, in the days of His flesh, the disciples were distinctly set by the Lord in the place of witness and testimony which they were so really to fill after His departure (see John xv. 27).

You quote Romans i. 2 as against our contributor's statement as to the fulness of the sense in which the Apostle Paul received what he calls "my gospel" directly by revelation from the Lord. But though, undoubtedly, the "gospel of God" had been promised afore in the Holy Scriptures, yet what the gospel is in its fulness was not revealed. That all nations would be blessed in faithful Abraham was known; but when was it stated that the Gentiles should receive the Spirit of sonship, and cry "Abba, Father?" that they should be conformed to the image of God's Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren? and that in and through them should be manifested to an emancipated creation the glorious liberty of the sons of God? All this is connected with Christ risen, and we in Him, the risen Man, having His life and spirit in adoption.

"Justified in the Spirit."

C.H.B. asks :

"What is the meaning of justified in the Spirit (1 Tim. iii. 16)?"

Amongst the multitudes that gathered to John the Baptist at Jordan there was One alone upon whom the Spirit of God could descend as a dove, and remain upon Him—the holy, sinless Son of God—and He was thus marked out as the One whose way John came to prepare, the One of whom all the prophets had spoken.

The whole of His public ministry was in the power of the Holy Ghost, so that when the Pharisees wickedly charged him with casting out devils by Beelzebub, He said they blasphemed

against the Holy Ghost, and so had never forgiveness (Mark iii. 28–30); and it was by the eternal Spirit that He offered Himself without spot to God.

But even His disciples could not understand why that blessed life, so acceptable to God, should have come to an end on a malefactor's gibbet; and one thing more was needed—His resurrection from the dead.

And of Him we read that He was "*declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*"

His resurrection was in the power of the Holy Ghost, and thus was the seal and confirmation of God put not only upon the blessed life in which God was manifested, but also upon that wondrous death which was the full declaration of the heart and nature of God. Thus was He "justified in the Spirit."

Eternal Punishment.

G.H.S. You state that the articles on "Eternal Punishment" now appearing in this magazine are "simply astounding in their contradictions;" we read these papers carefully before permitting them to appear, but did not notice these "contradictions," and as you do not point them out to us we cannot deal with them.

We believe, however, if you will, without bias, read prayerfully the scriptures quoted by our contributor in the May issue, and the papers on "Immortality" (May and June), you will be convinced that your annihilation theories are contrary to the revealed mind of God in the Scriptures.

We are not responsible for the statements of others to whom you refer, and we should certainly condemn some of the extracts which you send as most mischievous and dishonouring to God.

Eternal punishment is a solemn matter, and we do well to keep close to the words of Scripture when we are called upon to speak of it. To draw upon the imagination in describing the condition of the lost is, we feel, a most reprehensible proceeding.

Other answers held over through lack of space.

Notes and Comments.

What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? . . . And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? (2 Cor. vi. 14-16).

IT was boldly stated, in connection with the recent world-wide Missionary Congress in Edinburgh, that the missionary no longer says to the heathen "Your religion is a lie," but "Your religion has the root of the matter in it; you, too, feel the hunger for the Eternal even as we do; you have the half-truth—we bring you the whole truth." Further, "Ere the missionary sets himself to build the city of God, he must first ascertain how far the city is built to his hands."

When the Galatian church desired to mix the ordinances of Judaism with the truth of Christ, Paul, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote to them "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" (Gal. iii. 1). "How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements? . . . I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain" (Gal. iv. 9, 10).

When the Colossian church was in danger of being deceived into thinking that the philosophy of the Greeks could help to complete what they supposed was lacking in Christ, he wrote: "Beware lest any man beguile you with philosophy and vain deceit . . . and not after Christ. *For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*" (Col. ii. 8, 9).

To the Corinthians he wrote: "For I determined not to know anything among you, save *Jesus Christ and Him crucified*" (1 Cor. ii. 2).

When he first visited that heathen city he did not find the city of God

partly built within it, for he wrote: "According to the grace of God which is given to me, as a wise master-builder, *I have laid the foundation*, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is" (1 Cor. iii. 10-13).

In that day of manifestation what shall be said to those who are attempting to build the gold, silver, and precious stones of the truth as it is in Jesus, with the wood, hay, and stubble of a corrupt and devil-inspired heathenism? For their religion is not "the half-truth;" for "the things that the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils" (1 Cor. x. 20; cf. Lev. xvii. 7; Deut. xxxi. 17).

That there are many in heathen lands, awakened of God, who are hungering after Him, we believe to be blessedly true, but that deep heart-hunger will not be satisfied by the false gospel that tells them that they have the half-truth, but by Christ and Him alone, the Bread of God—a full Christ for empty and hopeless sinners, the One who said "*I am the Truth.*"—*J. T. Mawson.*

"What think ye of Christ?"

Even thus would we say to unbelievers who extol Christ's life: "Hold your peace! We know your enmity, disguise it as you may. Jesus

is the Saviour of men or He is nothing; if you will not have Christ crucified you cannot have Him at all." My brethren in Christ, let us glory in the

blood of Jesus, let it be conspicuous as though it were sprinkled upon the lintel and the two side posts of our doors, and let the world know that redemption by blood is written upon the innermost tablets of our hearts.

Brethren, this is the test point of every teacher. When a fish goes bad they say it first stinks at the head, and certainly when a preacher becomes heretical it is always about Christ. If he is not clear about Christ crucified, and you hear one sermon from him—that is your misfortune; but if you go and hear him again, and hear another like the first, it will be your fault; go a

third time, and it will be your crime. If any man be doubtful about Christ crucified, recollect Hart's couplet, for it is a truth:

"You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of Him."

I do not want to examine men upon all the doctrines of the Westminster Assembly's Confession. I begin here, "What think ye of Christ?" If you cannot answer that question, go and publish your own views where you like, but you and I are wide as the poles asunder, neither do I wish to have fellowship with you. We must have plain speaking here.—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

True Unity in the Truth Alone.

If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds (2 John 10, 11).

"Thank God, there are still Christians who believe that God in His supreme love became Man, and so died for them, and that the first of duties, the truest affection, without which all others are vile, is to appreciate this and Him who did it. The first of all obligations is to the Saviour; and to slight Him and yet attempt to sustain love in despite of this is the chiefest wickedness and the worst of all dispositions. We owe something to Christ; and if He is dishonoured and slighted I may seek to win, but I cannot be the loving companion of one who has deliberately denied my Lord."

"'To me to live is Christ.' To profess His name and yet walk with those who dishonour Him is worse than heathenism: it is to own and acquiesce in His dishonour when I know better. The man who believes Christ to be God and remains the professed christian companion of him who denies it is worse than the latter. We may all, alas! err, but he who knowing and accepting the truth yet deliberately prefers ease and the companionship of those who deny Christ degrades Him even though he may dignify his conduct with the name of brotherly love. Every effort to recover others

from error is right, but a step in acquiescence is a step in disloyalty to One whom no one would have dared to dishonour if He had not come down in love."

"I do not understand communion where Christ is denied. I believe that Christ, not opinion, is the centre of union; but a true Christ and a false one cannot be equally good as a centre, provided people were amiable with one another, for this means that union is man's amiability and the denial of Christ. What do I want with union if it be not a union in Christ, according to the power of Christ through the Holy Ghost?

"The business of those united is Christ's glory. If Christians even unite on a condition of that not being essential, their union is not Christian at all. I have no reason for union but Christ, the living Saviour. I do not want any union but that which makes Him the centre, and the all, and the hope of it. We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren; but to make a plea for indifference to Christ's glory in order to be one with him who, calling himself a brother, denies and undermines it is wickedness."—*J. N. Darby.*

“Not by works of Righteousness.”

(F. B. HOLE)

Man's Patchwork and Christ's Seamless Robe.

AFTER the great earthquake of January, 1907, which practically destroyed the town of Kingston, Jamaica, large numbers of homeless people flocked to the old race-course, and there, in the course of a few days, sprang up a small town of huts of every description.

Great ingenuity was displayed in their construction. Old crates and packing-cases were largely used, doors and broken framework from ruined wooden houses were requisitioned. Here and there biscuit and oil tins beaten out flat or patches of canvas or clothes were worked in, and since each man built his hut just where he fancied, the general effect was very quaint. Amidst such scenes we frequently preached the gospel to attentive audiences.

One day, on crossing the race-course, I noticed that practically every hut boasted a flag of some kind. Flags of many nationalities and of no nationality fluttered in the breeze, though the Union Jack largely predominated. In the distance was one of unusual size, and failing to make out its design, curiosity tempted me to walk across to inspect it. On drawing near I saw the black owner seated complacently beneath it, and the flag I discovered to be his patchwork quilt mounted on a pole!

This thing instantly resolved itself into a kind of parable before my mind, and I thought sadly of many of my fellow-creatures who are travelling to eternity under the patchwork flag.

“Are you right for heaven?” is a question often asked.

“I hope so” is the almost invariable answer.

“But under what flag are you? Upon what does your hope rest?”

An average reply runs somewhat as follows:—

“Well, you know, I was always well brought up (1); and I have lived a decent and respectable life (2); I always pay my way (3); I do nobody any harm (4); I attend public worship (5); I say my prayers (6); and read my Bible (7); I am a member (8); a communicant (9); a Sunday-school worker (10); I give as much as I can to good causes (11); and I trust that if I come short at all before the judgment seat the merits of Christ will make good my deficiencies (12).”

Do you perceive the patches that go to make up this flag under which so many are sitting to-day? I have numbered them that you may clearly see them.

Now let me plainly say that to work in the merits of Christ in this way as part of the patchwork is adding insult to injury. It is an *injury* to the glorious atoning work of our Lord Jesus Christ to be linked up with any paltry effort of our own, but to bring it in last of all as a kind of make-weight for the scales, as the last patch, entirely subservient to the others and only added to make the symmetrical outline of the flag complete, is an *insult* indeed!

Depend upon it, this patchwork flag is entirely meaningless and unintelligible. Heaven does not recognize it. It will never enter there.

The *red* of the atoning blood; the *white* of a soul which that blood has cleansed; the *blue* of a heavenly life

upon earth ; or the *stars* of glory which result from the *stripes* of Calvary, will have a place there : this miserable patchwork business—NEVER ! In truth it is the flag of a rebel against God, for “ going about to establish their own righteousness [they] have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God ” (Rom. x. 3).

Let us change the figure as we assert the positive side of this matter.

The ground of the Christian's safety and peace is the *one indivisible* work of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that *alone*. It is like unto His coat of which we read : “ Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout ” (John xix. 23). Nothing could be more opposite to patchwork than that. Being without seam there was no natural line of partition. It must be cut or rent to divide it, but that would mean its destruction. Therefore it was that the soldiers said, “ Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be ” (ver. 24).

Even so is it with Christ's glorious work. From the top — Godhead's highest glory in heaven—it was woven in one piece throughout down to Calvary's depth of woe, until He cried out “ It is finished.” Then without a seam the work was done ! His work was the “ *one righteousness* ” (Rom. v. 18). “ This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God ” (Heb. x. 12).

My reader, let me say with all reverence—it is a case either of *take it* or *leave it*. Accept it in its undivided entirety, making it altogether and only your resting-place, or turn from it altogether, for if it is not *everything* in the matter of your salvation, it is *nothing*. You cannot detach a small piece to weave into patchwork of your own. To do so is to *destroy*—not THE WORK, but the *effect* of the work as regards your soul.

Man's love of patchwork was manifested very early. Immediately sin

entered the world, Adam and his wife made an ineffectual attempt to hide their nakedness from the eyes of their Creator. “ They sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons ” (Gen. iii. 7). An apron made from fig-leaves must have been patchwork indeed ! Any of my readers who is familiar with the shape of a fig-leaf will agree with me in this. This is the first mention of the fig-leaf in the Bible, afterwards it becomes symbolical of man's good works (so called), the outward profession of religion (compare Mark xi. 13, Luke xiii. 6-9). Yet when Adam wore his fig-leaf apron and found himself in the presence of God he was the first to condemn it and treat it as though it did not exist. He said, “ I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked ; and I hid myself ” (Gen. iii. 10).

When a little later both Cain and Abel desired to draw near to God the same thing became manifest. “ Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord ” (Gen. iv. 3). See him approach with his offering of choicest fruits heaped together ! Do you not recognize the “ patchwork ” idea once more ? Let each separate fruit represent a patch and you have it.

Abel, on the other hand, “ brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof ” (ver. 4). Recognizing the death sentence which lay upon him, he drew near with that which spoke of *death* accomplished in his stead—of the one finished work of Christ.

“ And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering ; but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect ” (vers. 4, 5). Man's patchwork is rejected, Christ's one offering is accepted. Thus it must ever be.

Where are you resting, dear friend ? and on what is your hope based ? Solid rest and peace can never be yours until, abandoning all else, your faith looks up to the *one finished* work of our Lord Jesus Christ ALONE.

Practical Godliness.—III.

(W. BRAMWELL DICK).

In the Company of God's People.

Thou, O man of God . . . follow after . . . godliness (1 Tim. vi. 11).

WE have already remarked that Satan's great effort is to prevent God being expressed in His people. That the events connected with and consequent upon the inauguration of the day of grace and of the Holy Spirit's residence in this world were quite outside the scope of his calculations there can be no doubt. He sought by persecution to crush the movement, but it was divine. Stephen was stoned, James was slain with the sword, saints were shut up in prison; but the more fiercely the opposition raged the greater were the triumphs of grace. The reality of true godliness was exhibited, lives were devoted to Christ, lips were opened to preach Christ, the truth was spread, and souls without number were saved. The enemy saw that if he was to cripple the progress of the gospel he must change his tactics; and therefore he worked assiduously and insidiously to introduce the leaven of worldliness into the company of God's people, to get those who belonged to Christ to associate with those who did not, and thus lower the divine standard and be content with something short of true godliness.

There were indications of this when Paul wrote his First Epistle to Timothy. Thence the urgent necessity of the exercise of personal godliness, as set forth in the peremptory and weighty exhortation to the young disciple :

"Be THOU an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

And further :

"Take heed unto THYSELF, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Tim. iv. 12, 16).

The individual character of these injunctions is deeply encouraging. The failure is now very manifest, and we are in the days of the form of godliness without the power (2 Tim. iii.); yet, notwithstanding that, it is the privilege of every child of God to be "an example"—a model—"of the believers," to exhibit the traits which are here indicated, and which may be summed up in one word—"godliness." Timothy's work was not to lecture his fellow-Christians on the subject, or chide them for the lack of it, but he himself was to practise godliness and thus provoke them to emulation. Now let us see how this was to be effected. "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." In the beginning of chapter iv. we have the express warning by "the Spirit" of the day when men would be found "giving heed to seducing spirits," etc. (ver. 1), and by celibacy, asceticism, neglecting of the body, and the like, would present a spurious imitation in order to deflect the people of God from the pursuit of godliness. The first step on the down-grade taken by these men was foretold, namely that they would "depart from the faith." And here we have the key to all the declension that characterizes the present day. It must be apparent to the most cursory reader of the Epistles to Timothy and Titus how closely the practice of godliness is connected with the holding of and continuance in the doctrine.

"The doctrine" or "the faith" centres round the person of our Lord Jesus Christ—He who being God came into manhood that He might make God known in this world, but who, refused by the world, has been received up into glory. The great fact that He is God

and Man in one Person, the mystery of incarnation, the truth as to the atonement, the reality of the resurrection and ascension, and the acknowledgment that there is an all-glorious Person—very Man yet very God—on the highest pinnacle of the glory of God, is that which gives its character to “the house of God which is the church of the living God.” Now the church is heavenly. Heavenly in origin, heavenly in character, and heavenly in destiny; called out of the world that has rejected Christ, united by the Holy Spirit to a heavenly Person—the glorified Christ. The church and the world have nothing in common, and the mission of the church here is to be what Christ was when He was here: representative of God. In our day we see full-blown that of which the Spirit has warned us. Many have departed from the faith; they deny the deity of Christ, they have “difficulties” about the incarnation, “doubts” about the atonement, and they are unable to accept a literal resurrection. Instead, they have propounded what the Apostle does not hesitate to call “profane and old wives’ fables” (1 Tim. iv. 7), “profane and vain babblings” (1 Tim. vi. 20), and with this they have coupled the flesh-mortifying process to which we have directed attention. In short, they have rejected Christ crucified, the Christ of the Scriptures, and have substituted educated, cultured, and religious flesh.

Timothy is clearly instructed as to the antidote to this. He was to “give attendance” to doctrine, to “meditate” upon it, to “take heed” to it, to “continue” in it (vers. 13, 15, 16), and to express it in testimony (ver. 6) and in life (ver. 12). He was to hold fast the form of sound words (2 Tim. i. 13). With great subtlety the devil has succeeded in destroying in many quarters the sense of the need for sound doctrine on the plea that conduct is of greater importance; and, as a consequence, ethics have taken the place of the great gospel verities in

hundreds of pulpits. But to depart from true Christian teaching will surely be followed by a lower standard of conduct, and to make little of “the faith” is to make little of Christ, and to lay ourselves open to the pernicious influence of seducing spirits who would drag us down from our heavenly calling to the world with its politics, its pleasures, and its pursuits. Timothy was not commissioned to denounce the departure and the false teaching; he was not authorized to carry on a destructive propaganda; he was not empowered to engage in teaching of a merely negative character; but he was encouraged to put the brethren in remembrance of the doctrine, to present that which would be constructive and would build them up on their “most holy faith,” to deal with that which was positive and real, to “preach the word,” to minister Christ.

Before he could do this he must get it for himself, and have it wrought into, and made part of, his very being by the power of the Holy Ghost. This would produce an answer in his life; there would be manifested that “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. xii. 14), that godliness without which none have any claim to be numbered among the company of God’s people; it would also give power to his testimony, would commend the doctrine he set forth, would exalt Christ. We see, then, the importance of “following after godliness,” fostering what another has aptly termed those “antiseptic qualities” which are calculated to preserve us, and those with whom we come in contact, from the seducing and corrupting effect of that which Satan has introduced to draw us away from Christ. In the company in which he found himself Timothy was to be an example, a model, “in word:” his lips were to speak not of himself, nor of his brethren, but of Christ. “In *conversation*” or “conduct:” thereby he was to exalt Christ. “In *charity*” or “love” or “love in the Spirit:” he was to look

upon his brethren as Christ did, to feel towards them as Christ did, to love them as Christ did. "In *faith*:" the older he grew the greater the difficulties would become and the more testing the path; but this would only afford more opportunity for bringing God in; and even as the path of Christ was a path of faith, so would be the path of those who seek to follow Him. "In *purity*:" there was to be separation from the world: its social functions, its political forces, its religious organizations. The remembrance of the fact that the world had crucified the Lord, the recognition of the fact that He has called us out from it, and the recollection of what He said of us to His Father—"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John xvii. 16)—will help in this. What blessing would flow out to the world if every believer were living after this pattern! There would be neither time nor inclination for difference of opinion, fault-finding, petty quarrels, and the thousand and one things that sever saints and dishonour Christ, but there would be the continuance in and the manifestation of "the doctrine that is according to godliness" (1 Tim. vi. 3). Timothy was not exhorted to look for this in his

brethren, but to practise it himself, and he was assured that he would thereby promote it where it was lacking. For this, divine energy was required; that which was contrary to God he was to "flee," while with regard to that which was of God he was to "follow after"—"fight"—"lay hold" (chap. vi., ver. 11). All this suggests opposition and conflict; but Timothy's course was to recognize his privilege and responsibility, to find his resource in God, to live in the home of divine love, and thus be in very truth "a man of God." We urge it even at the risk of repeating ourselves. What was addressed to Timothy was also intended for us, and the very personal word to him, "Be *thou* an example," rings down through the ages; and to us the Spirit says, "Be *thou* an example." The word of God does not change, the principles contained therein are unalterable. We are connected with One who is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8), and it is ours not to move with the times, not to advance (?) with the age in which we live, but in dependence upon God, in nearness to Christ, and in subjection to an ungrieved Spirit to

"FOLLOW AFTER GODLINESS."

The Intercession of Christ.

The intercession of Christ for His people is perpetual, unceasing, and sovereign. Even as He died for us, and rose again, and ascended into heaven, so He ever liveth to intercede. As His infinite and inexhaustible love brought Him from the throne of His glory to live and die upon earth, so the same love is now the source of His constant care and faithfulness, and of His never-ceasing intercession. It was not in answer to our prayer, or according to our works or merits that He died for us, and according to that same unasked, unmerited, unthought-of grace is His divine and sovereign intercession on our behalf. We are upheld accord-

ing to His loving-kindness, and according to the multitude of His tender mercies.

So entirely redeemed are we that not a hair of our heads is omitted from the inventory of the possession which He has purchased in purchasing us.

No service in itself is small,

None great, though earth it fill;

But that is small that seeks its own,

And great that seeks God's will.

Then hold my hand, most gracious Lord;

Guide all my goings still;

And let this be my life's one aim,

To do or hear Thy will.

The Generations of the Heavens and the Earth.—Part IV.

(S. L. JACOB).

Genesis iii.

WHEN brought to account by the God whose law he had broken Adam began to make excuses, casting the blame upon the woman whom God had given him. The woman in her turn cast the blame on the serpent. To make excuses for ourselves is the opposite of confession of sin. To confess our sins is the outcome of true repentance, and is always the way of recovery and blessing; to excuse ourselves is to find fault with God, for it means: Why did He allow us to be tempted in this manner? May God teach us to refuse the latter and to do the former, for only thus can we be cleansed from all unrighteousness.

The Lord God then turned to the serpent. He asked no question of him, but proceeded at once to pass sentence upon him; yet in this condemnation of the serpent there is the announcement of the greatest of blessings that man could know. Adam and Eve had not repented, comfort could therefore not be ministered directly to them, yet these things were said in their hearing for faith to lay hold of.

The serpent was first told that he was cursed above all cattle, that he should go on his belly and eat dust all the days of his life. The language is, of course, figurative, yet it certainly means that Satan, who is represented by the serpent, should be most degraded, and defeat (eating the dust) should be his everlasting portion. He did not therefore gain any glory by seducing man.

Verse 15 is pregnant with meaning, both in its simple, direct interpretation as pointing to Eve and to Christ as the Seed of the woman, and also in the

underlying wider scope of its application. It says: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

This speaks of a terrible warfare, a warfare to be long continued and only to be ended in the annulling of the tempter's power, who would indeed be able to inflict the greatest pain upon his conqueror in the conflict.

There are many things to be considered in this striking verse, which contains so much and which covers the whole period from Adam to the great white throne (though, of course, Satan is bound during the millennial reign of Christ and is then inactive), in fact, the whole period covered by the Scripture narrative, except the account of creation up to the fall, and the few verses which speak of the eternal state. The fearful warfare covers all this period without intermission, for our adversary never sleeps, and God Himself has put this enmity into the hearts of all engaged in it.

First let us ask, Who is the woman's seed? Without doubt it is Christ. But is it only Christ personally? Surely not, though it is only through and in Christ that the saints can enter upon this warfare. While therefore the answer is, CHRIST, and pre-eminently Christ, and we see that on the cross of Calvary Satan did terribly bruise the heel of Christ, *i.e.* give Him the greatest pain, to have in return his own head bruised, *i.e.* his own power destroyed, and to be cast into the lake of fire at the end, yet it is remarkable that the only reference to this verse is in

Romans xvi. 20, where it says of the (Roman) saints that, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly," showing clearly that they also form part of the woman's seed, share in the sufferings, and will participate in the triumph.

The sufferings here spoken of are not atoning sufferings. It is Satan who inflicts them, whereas the atoning sufferings of Christ were from God, and in the atoning sufferings the saints could have no part. Yet it is the privilege and honour of the saints to share with Christ *these* sufferings, as it is written, "If so be we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. viii. 17). God grant that we may not shirk what is thus given to us (Phil. i. 29), for they are to us the token of salvation and that of God. He who lacks this token should beware, lest haply we should never have tasted of the grace of God.

Then if the woman's seed is Christ and those who are of the Christ, who is the woman? It cannot be simply Eve after the flesh, for she is the mother of all, both of those who are of the seed of the woman (as Abel) and those who are of the seed of the serpent (as Cain); though doubtless in Eve (looked at as the mother of all living, according to verse 20, where Adam showed his faith in what he had heard) this woman found first and primary representation.

It cannot be the Virgin Mary, the literal mother of our Lord (though she is this woman also in figure), because, as we have seen, the woman's seed includes all born of God, and does not refer to ordinary birth at all. The woman is there undoubtedly *a figure* for the vessel of grace, used by God for spiritual travailing and begetting of children. This woman is called in Scripture Jerusalem (Gal. iv. 26); the free woman (Gal. iv. 22, 23, 31); and Zion (Isa. lxvi. 7, 8). She is seen in Revelation xii. as a woman in heaven; then bringing forth a manchild on earth; and then later on the remnant

of her seed is mentioned, and they are characterized by keeping the commandments of God and by having the testimony of Jesus Christ. Indeed, the whole chapter is a commentary on the remarkable verse in Genesis iii. which we are considering.

God wants us indeed to form part of the woman as well as of the woman's seed. The Apostle Paul did so (see Gal. iv. 19). We are to sow (the work of the man) in tears (the work of the woman), if we are to reap with joy, and any one who takes the trouble will see this double character running all through the Scripture. Also we must not forsake the law of our mother (Prov. i. 8, vi. 20).

These things are most important for us to meditate upon.

The history of two women runs all through Scripture: the first, this woman symbolized by Zion, or Jerusalem, and typified by the holy mothers of old time; the other, symbolized by Babylon, the mother of harlots (Ps. cxxxvii. 8, 9), and typified by Jezebel (Rev. ii. 20-23) and other evil women. The woman is in figure the state or condition of the nation or the church; the man is in figure the active agent. It is very helpful to trace these histories in Scripture.

(Besides these two women there is a third symbolized by Jerusalem, that now is, which, with her children, is in bondage (Gal. iv. 25), typified by Hagar, and her children typified by Ishmael. These will ultimately get *a* blessing, but not *the* blessing (see Gen. xvi. 10, 11, xvii. 20, xxi. 18); though it will be then a changed Hagar and a changed Ishmael, even as we said it will be a changed fig-tree which blossoms in that day. At present, however, the word is "Cast out the bond woman and her son," for the blessing is entirely heavenly in the present dispensation, and there is no room for anything else till the church is gathered in.)

In Genesis iii., however, there is no

mention of Babylon, only of Satan, who is the father of those who are evil (John viii. 44; 1 John iii. 10-12). The conflict between those and the seed of the woman has been long and dire, terrible are the sufferings which the former have inflicted on the latter, beginning from the time of Abel. Still the conflict goes on, and still the woman's seed must be content to suffer till the day of triumph comes. Still the saints have to overcome by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony and not love their lives to the death (Rev. xii. 11), for there is a literal death of those who lose their lives for Christ's sake, and there is their no less real acceptance of death even in life, as in Matthew xvi. 25. How far are we of the number of those who thus suffer? If we are true to Christ suffering cannot be avoided, pretending is no good. Our love to Christ is measured by our willingness to suffer with and for Him.

To Adam God spake of toil and sorrow. To the woman of travail, sorrow, and subjection. These are parts of the curse brought in by sin; nevertheless, *sin being here*, they are blessings in disguise. What a devilish world this would be if sin reigned but suffering had no place. God's curse is better than the devil's blessing, and we can thank God that while sin lasts there is suffering, for God uses it for discipline and to bring us into blessing. Sorrow is better than laughter, for by sadness of the countenance the heart is made better (Eccles. vii. 3), and blessed are those who weep now, for they shall laugh (Luke vi. 21), though sorrow is, of course, of two kinds, that which worketh death, and that which bringeth repentance, not to be repented of (2 Cor. vii. 10).

To abide in Christ is to be continually drawing one's strength from Him, depending upon Him, and remaining faithful to Him.

When we get to heaven oppor-

Hope evidently dawned in Adam's soul, for he calls his wife the mother of all living, instead of the mother of all the dying, as we might have expected. Also God clothes Adam and Eve with coats of skins, symbolizing the righteousness of God's providing, provided for us through the death of Christ. This speaks of atonement made in figure, and if we have eyes to see, then doubtless fallen Adam clothed thus with God's provision was better off than innocent, unfallen, but naked Adam before the fall. His position, by reason of God's righteousness and God's mercy, was stable, though when he was unfallen all was unstable. There is no stability save through and in Christ. It was also mercy which caused God to drive Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden, for what would living for ever in a fallen condition be but misery? No, man is not to eat of the tree of life till he can feed on Christ as the true tree of life, that a man may eat thereof and not die, may never hunger or thirst for ever (John vi. 35, 50), may enter into life eternal, even now be dwelling in Christ and Christ in him (ver. 56). Anything else is worse than useless to poor fallen man.

Cherubim and a flaming sword were set to keep the way of the tree of life until He came who is Jehovah's fellow; then did the sword awake, and the Shepherd was smitten, in the place of the flock. Thank God, He has come, He has been smitten, He has been raised and put in the glory, and the Holy Spirit has been given, and the life eternal is ours already: the "eternal now" has begun for us who are in God's blessed secret. Reader, do not miss this great and wondrous blessing as your present portion.

tunities, as far as we can judge, will be gone for ever of gladdening the heart of our Lord by trusting Him when all seems wrong. Let us treasure them now; they are part of life's deepest wealth.

The Unchanging Truth.

"AN ALL-ROUND MINISTRY."

"Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning."—1 John ii. 24.
 "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God."—2 John 9.

THE doctrines of the gospel are certain verities—essential, abiding, eternal—from which it is ruinous to swerve. We do not bow down before men's theories of the truth, nor admit that true theology consists in "views" and "opinions." We are told that it is want of intellect which prevents our departing from the good old way; but even this were better than the want of grace which lies at the bottom of men's perpetual chopping and changing of their beliefs. Rest assured there is nothing new in theology but what is false, the facts of the gospel are to-day what they were when it was first preached in the power of the Holy Ghost by the servants of the risen and ascended Christ.

If it be folly to keep to what we find in Scripture, and if it be madness to believe in verbal inspiration, we purpose to remain fools to the end of the chapter, and hope to be among the foolish things of the world which God hath chosen to confound the wise, that no flesh should glory in His presence.

In these days the self-styled "men

of progress," who commenced with preaching the gospel, degenerate as they advance, and their divinity, like the snail, melts as it proceeds. I have likened the career of some of these preachers to the journey of a Roman wine-cask from the vineyard to the city. It starts from the wine-press as the pure juice of the grape; but, at the first halting-place, the drivers of the cart must needs quench their thirst; and when they come to a fountain they substitute water for the wine which they have drunk. In the next village there are numbers of lovers of wine who beg or buy a little, and the discreet carrier dilutes again. The watering is again and again repeated, till, on its entrance into Rome, the fluid is remarkably different from that which originally started from the vineyard.

There is a way of doctoring the gospel in much the same manner. A little truth is given up, and then a little more, and men fill up the vacuum with opinions, inferences, speculations, and dreams, till their wine is mixed with water, and the water none of the best.

"In the beginning was the Word." He is the expression of every thought that exists in God. In His existence *eternal*; in His nature *divine*; in His person *distinct*.

There are various degrees in the development of life in the family of God.

Babes is the earliest state, the infancy of Christian life, but even at this, the first stage, God is known as the Father, and the Holy Ghost has been received as the Spirit of adoption.

Young Men. This is the stage in

which, built up by the word of God, the wicked one has been overcome and the spiritual life puts forth its strength against the world.

Fathers. The state of soul in which Christ is everything (1 John ii. 12, 27).

Christ crucified is the power and the wisdom of God; where gathered the uttermost shame there shone the brightest glory, and the gibbet of the malefactor became the throne of sovereign and omnipotent love from whence there flows boundless and eternal blessing.

Bible Study.—Galatians.

(EDWARD CROSS)

Galatians iv.

1 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world;

4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.

9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, wherunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

12 Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all.

13 Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first.

14 And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.

15 Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.

16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

17 They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.

18 But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you.

19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

20 I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

22 For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman.

23 But he who was of the bond woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise.

24 Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

25 For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

27 For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, that thou travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

29 But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

30 Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bond woman and her son: for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman.

31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond woman, but of the free.

Verse 1.

CONTINUING the argument of the preceding chapter, the Apostle now adduces a new analogy of unquestionable pertinence. From the position of a minor, he draws the contrast between the heirs under law and the Christian position through faith in the Son of God, the true Isaac, risen from the dead.

The heir while a child differs nothing from a slave, though he be lord of all. The word child here, or minor, sometimes translated "babe," is found also in 1 Corinthians iii. 1, xiii. 4, Matthew xxi. 16, and elsewhere; while the idea of the "slave" is probably drawn from

the "pædagogus" of the preceding chapter.

The minor is not in possession of his estate, nor in the intelligent communion of his father's mind. He possesses nothing, in fact, though he is heir of all. He is not in the liberty and dignity of sonship, but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

Verse 3.

This was the state of the Jew under law; held, like a slave in bondage, under the elements of the world.

This expression, the "elements," or rudiments of the world, is peculiar to

Paul. It is found again in Colossians ii. 8, 20, connected with philosophy and Jewish ordinances—the rational and religious outcome of the mind of man. The same word, “elements,” is used in 2 Peter iii. 10, 12, in a material sense; and, while retaining its root idea of what is elementary, is used in a moral way in Hebrews v. 12. From this it is plain that the Apostle means to stigmatize as of the most rudimentary, babyish kind, those things which the pride of man’s intellect and religious ritual exalts as the lofty end of all his aspirations. He counts himself as having thereby reached the sum of all perfection, while in fact he has not yet crossed the threshold of research into “the deep things of God.” See what the Apostle says in 1 Corinthians ii. 7-16.

Man in the flesh—literally, man after or according to flesh—belongs to the order of things in which he was created, and his attempts therein to worship God are limited to the elements of the world to which he belongs. Moreover, this world is a fallen one and corrupt. Among the Gentiles this worship is idolatry. God was not known to them. They worshipped “no-gods,” and their ritual was purely evil (*cf.* Deut. xxxii. 21; 2 Chron. xiii. 9; Isa. xlv. 9-20).

In Judaism God adapted Himself to man in the flesh by means of ordinances, which symbolically had an ulterior meaning, but which did not of themselves lift the worshipper above the plane of the world to which, as ordinances, they belonged. Their virtue was that they pointed forward to Christ. But Christ being come, the virtue is in Him, and not in them: and they have lost the virtue that they had.

But further, “God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” This was impossible under the law. Worshipers were not formed thereby, such as the Father seeketh (John iv. 23). But when

the fulness of the time was come—corresponding to the time appointed of the Father (ver. 2)—according to His eternal counsels, to set the children in the liberty and estate of sonship, God sent forth His Son, come of a woman, come under law, as a Jew amongst Jews, and identifying Himself with the whole position and status of man in the flesh, for this express purpose—the original is very emphatic—first, in order that those under law He might ransom from it; and second, in order that we Christians, Jew and Gentile alike, might receive thereby sonship, the estate and liberty of sons, with the glorious dignity thereof, which the Apostle so earnestly desired to magnify before them.

Verse 6.

And seeing that ye, Gentile believers, now are sons, as a proof and consequence of this new position, God has put the signal seal of His good pleasure thereto by sending forth from Himself the Spirit of His Son into *our* hearts—Jew and Gentile believers alike—crying Abba, Father. Compare the message of Jesus, sent by Mary to His disciples on the morning of His resurrection: “Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God” (John xx. 17).

Verse 7.

So that the believer is no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, an heir also through God, *i.e.* directly through His grace alone. The words “through Christ” are an added gloss. They enfeeble, rather than enforce, what the Apostle says.

Verse 8.

What, then, was the folly of these “senseless Galatians” in turning back from all this rich blessing to the bondage and idolatry, under another guise, out of which they had been called! As heathen they knew not the true God, they worshipped idols. Now,

having come to the knowledge of God, or rather being known of Him, which made their defection the more serious, they were turning again to these very elements, "weak and beggarly" as he now calls them, desiring again, anew, to be in bondage to them. They had been in bondage to them before as heathen; they were now going back to them through Judaism in a new way.

And how serious is the consideration that from the Apostle's day until now all this Judaistic ritual, with its sensuous service—the glory of the cathedrals and churches of Christendom—is but the metamorphosis of Judæo-paganism in Christian guise!

Verse 10.

They were zealously observing these Jewish sabbaths and sabbatical years, fasts and feasts and new moons, all which belonged to a system of things now obsolete. There was no lack of zeal about them. There seldom is for evil doing, especially in a religious way. It were well for them had it been spent more worthily.

Now to the Jewish festivals of which the Apostle speaks the Christian church has added others purely pagan, attaching to them Christian names. Take, for instance, Christmas. It is well known that it is the festival of the Saturnalia, turned in the fourth century into the Feast of the Nativity. It was impossible to prevent the revelry of the 'christianized' heathen, and so they christianized the orgies from which they could not be detached; and, in defence of this practice, which became common, Augustine avows frankly that, since people will get drunk, it is better they should get drunk in honour of Christ than in honour of Bacchus!

The "Saturnalia" were celebrated at the return of the sun from the winter solstice; and it is easy to understand how convenient it was to change the *natalis solis invicti* into the birth of the Sun of righteousness.

That Christ was not born on Christmas Day is almost certain. Zacharias' lot fell to him in the course of Abia (Luke i. 5), which was the eighth course of 1 Chronicles xxiv. 10, and counting from the month Abib, the beginning of the year would therefore fall in the end of June or the beginning of July. Calculating from that date through Luke i. 26-36, and allowing nine months from the date of Gabriel's message to Mary, which would be in December, we come to September of the following year, and to the Feast of Tabernacles, the celebration of the joy of creation at the Saviour's birth. Moreover, the shepherds were watching their flocks in the open fields by night when the angel appeared to them (Luke ii. 8, 9). But by winter their flocks are housed. Again, the Oriental churches celebrate the birth and baptism of Jesus on 6th January and call it Epiphany; while others again put 20th May as the day of His birth. So much for Christmas Day.

Take, as another example, Easter. This was originally a pagan feast, accommodated to the Passover, which was rather earlier in the year. It was devoted to the worship of Astarte or Ishtar, whence the word "Easter" is derived; and the Lenten fasts, so religiously followed by ritualistic devotees, are but the "forty days' fast of Ceres in her excess of sorrow (*violentia maroris*) for the rape of Proserpine by Pluto, the god of hell" (*Hislop*). The word "Easter" is wrongly introduced in the A.V., Acts xii. †, where the reading should be "after the passover." "The name Easter is peculiar to the British Islands."

Further, the Passover was timed on a certain day, in a lunar month, by divine prescience (Exod. xii. 6), so as to fall on the Friday of the crucifixion; and it is evident that it could not fall on the same day of the week every succeeding year. But the truth had little weight with those who made the Christian calendar, which in result is

not Christian, and is even more pagan than Jewish. And so with others of the so-called Christian festivals.

There are no Christian festivals. They would not be appropriate to the present period, while Christ is rejected on the earth and hidden in heaven (Col. iii. 3). The nearest approach to anything similar is the commemoration of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week, as we find in Acts xx. 7, "when the disciples were gathered together to break bread." In this is united the symbol of the death of Christ with the time of His victory over it. When He returns to the earth to reign, then, and not till then, will be a time of universal joy and festivity (Ps. xcvi.-ci.).

Verse 11.

With the sensitiveness of prophetic instinct the Apostle sees that if the judaizing teachers succeeded in establishing the principles of Judaism among the Gentile converts in this way, his labour in the gospel was bestowed on them in vain; or, the object of the enemy would be equally gained by creating a breach between them (*cf.* 2 Cor. ii. 11).

Verses 12-16.

Very touching is his appeal now to them on the ground of sympathy and the maintenance of the former good relations existing between them. Previously nothing could exceed their love to him. Now, suddenly, was he to be regarded as an enemy because he told them the truth? There is nothing new under the sun; and need we wonder if we see the same evil spirit doing the same evil work to-day? How poor and petty a thing is man! Take no heed of him. He is not to be accounted of (Ps. cxliv. 3, 4).

Verse 17.

The same insidious proselytizing spirit that was condemned by the Lord (Matt. xxiii. 15) is here paying court to these Galatians; not from any real love for them, mark you, but simply to

proselytize them, and withdraw them from the wholesome influence of the Apostle, so as to make them the more zealous partisans of this new clique. Zeal and interest in souls are good, if they be good. But let us beware lest we turn them into the very essence of sectarian badness itself! But as the ground is cursed for Adam's sake, and it brings forth weeds of its own accord (Gen. iii. 17), so in result, spite of all the Apostle's warning, as the history of the church shows, this judaistic legality, with its concomitant evils, has carried its flag to victory, and the ministry of the Apostle has been practically choked thereby (Luke viii. 7).

Verse 19.

Again he appeals to them pathetically, not with the righteous authority of a father (*cf.* 1 Cor. iv. 15), but with the tender feelings of a mother travelling in birth again for them (*cf.* 1 Thess. ii. 7), that they might come to a true and proper Christian birth—that Christ might be fully defined in their souls. As it was, they were more Jews than Christians, and they were on the fair road to revert to their original pagan state under a new name. And amid the ritual of Christendom and the sensuousness of histrionic worship, both in the Eastern and Western churches, where is Paul or "his gospel" to be found to-day? or what essential difference is there between the moral and religious condition of Christendom as it now is and what it was when it was called pagan? The name is changed, but the thing remains the same.

Verse 20.

If he were only present with them once more, how tenderly and forcibly would he address them! But he was absent from them; and he felt it the more keenly that his influence with them had been undermined. He knows not what to say about them, nor what will be the issue of this conflict; and we see him, as it were, pausing in thought and

anxiety, lost in a reverie, while he reviews the whole situation. It is so fatuitous! What more can he say to meet it? When, again, another thought comes to his mind—another argument that must convince them; and he says in effect:

Verse 21.

“Tell me, ye who want the law, what does the law say? Let Scripture itself settle for you the difference between the son of law, born after the flesh, the son of the bond woman, and the son through promise, the son of the free woman.”

Verse 24.

Now the story of Hagar and Sarah is allegorical, a mystical meaning underlying what is literal. For these women represent two covenants: the one from Sinai begetting children for slavery answers to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children; but “the Jerusalem above,” *i.e.* the city of heavenly grace, is a free woman, begetting free men, and she is *our* mother, (not as in the A.V., the mother of us all).

Remark that he does not name Sarah as being in contrast with Hagar, but “Jerusalem which is above;” for Sarah is the Jewish nation, blessed in the coming day.

Verse 27.

Moreover, this agrees incidentally with the passage which he quotes from Isaiah xlv. 1, where Jerusalem in her barren, desolate state, without a husband, is found, in the day of coming kingdom glory, to have more children than when Jehovah was her husband—

There is a curious little spider in South America that has a home under the water. It forms a bubble about itself in which, like a diving-bell, it sinks to the bottom, and will remain there for hours, living below, yet breathing the air of the world above. When it returns to the surface it is

for all the children of the gospel are counted to her. Here the contrast is not between Sarah and Hagar, but between Jerusalem desolate and Jerusalem with a husband.

Verse 28.

“Now we, brethren,” as he calls them affectionately, “after the pattern of Isaac, are children of promise.”

Verse 29.

But Scripture forecasts the same spirit of persecution which is rife to-day when it says that, in the “great feast,” when Isaac was weaned, in the midst of all the joy, “Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian mocking” (Gen. xxi. 9). Hereupon the two families are parted for ever—the two principles of law and promise, of flesh and spirit, of works and grace are mutually exclusive; they cannot abide in the same house. Where the one is the other cannot be; for, “what saith the scripture? Cast out the bond woman and her son; for, the son of the bond woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman.” The principle of law contemns the principle of grace; and contempt breeds the bitterest hate. The persecutions of the world, of pagan Rome, were violent; the spirit of Papal Rome and of her children has a virulence *sui generis*: it is more fiendish: and her motto, whatever dress she wears, is *semper idem* (Rev. xviii. 24).

Verse 31.

The chapter closes with the clear affirmation that we are not children of a bond woman—such is not our position at all—but definitely of the free woman.

found to be perfectly dry, not the slightest moisture having penetrated the atmosphere in which it lived.

Even so we may live in the world breathing the air of heaven (Col. iii. 1, 2) and keeping our garments undefiled (Rev. iii. 4), keeping ourselves unspotted from the world (James i. 27).

“Brethren.”

(INGLIS FLEMING).

“All ye are brethren.”

AMONG the many terms employed by God in the Scriptures to express the privileges of all His people—of all Christians—one of the most blessed is the term “brethren.” It is found in various associations in the different passages in which it is used. Let us briefly consider some of these.

“My Brethren”—Spiritual Privilege and Relationship.

The first to which we would call attention is in Hebrews ii., where we read, “He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare Thy name unto My brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praises unto Thee” (vers. 11, 12). Here we find the exalted position of the believers. They are “sanctified,” they are “of one” with the risen Christ, and on that account Christ is not ashamed to call them “brethren.” He has sanctified them by His death, that is, He has delivered them from judgment by bearing it Himself and separated them *from* all that which could keep them from God, and He has also set them apart *to* God. They are “of one” with Himself—of one order—of one kind—of one kindred, and as such can be called “brethren.” Death has closed, for ever, their history as sinners, and now, as associated with Christ, they are sons of God, by God’s calling, and thus He can designate them “brethren,” “My brethren.”

Spiritual privilege and relationship with Christ are presented here. And His is the delight in being able thus to speak of “His own.” He speaks from the position of triumph in which He stands as come forth from the domain of death. The corn of wheat has brought forth many grains for God.

He has secured priests for God and companions for Himself.

In John xx., where the expression, “My brethren,” is used, we learn how the first message from the risen Christ to His disciples was sent, very early on that resurrection morning, by means of the devoted woman who in love to the Lord clung to the spot where she had last known Him to be. That message was, “Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God” (ver. 17). We rejoice with great joy in the privilege and relationship thus announced, but the exceeding joy was His in being able to tell out the fulness of blessing He had won for His own. Hitherto He had been straitened, pent up, unable to express all that was in His heart for them, but the “baptism” of His sufferings was accomplished now, and He hastens to make known to His loved ones what a portion He had secured for them—that henceforth they may have “part with” Himself in His joys before His Father and His God.

We might have thought that He would have said, “Go tell those poor sinners that I have blotted out their sins for ever, and that the judgment is passed for them.” That was true, but it was not the message. No! the Lord presents before them the truth of the relationship He had won for them, and which it was now His joy to lead them into: “My brethren . . . My Father . . . your Father . . . My God . . . your God.” Well may our souls bask in the blessedness of our place and as we revel in the sunshine of it pour out our souls in praise to Him. He has died for us that we might live together with Himself, that we might live in the love of His Father

and His God, here on earth, in the power of the Holy Ghost given to us.

“Many Brethren”—Glory with Christ.

If we turn now to Romans viii. 29 we shall find the expression “brethren” in another association, an association which speaks of glory with Christ. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. “Many brethren” are to be with Christ and like Christ in the day of His glory. God’s purpose to glorify Christ is disclosed, and part of that glory is to consist in His having co-heirs in the midst of whom He can stand. For the glory of Christ, for the joy of His heart, they are to be conformed to His image. They will rejoice in being like Him (how conscious we all must be of our unlikeness to Him now!), but His will be the surpassing joy that His loved ones are like Him and that He is the firstborn among “many brethren.”

From Jew and Gentile they have come, “called” by God’s grace, “justified” by Christ’s blood, and “glorified” with Himself He will stand triumphant among them as “many brethren.”

For that day He looks and for that day we should look, and while we look for it seek to be more and more in accordance with His own mind. True “non-conformists” here, “not conformed to the world.” True “transformists” too, “transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God” (Rom. xii. 2).

“Our Brethren”—Unity.

In Acts xv. 36 we read the words of Paul to Barnabas—“Let us go again and visit our brethren.” “Our brethren” brings before us the thought of “unity.” In the passages spoken of already we have found our association with Christ as sanctified before the Father in glory. Here we are on lower ground, it is *our* association with one another. Those who are *His* brethren are *our*

brethren. And if His heart goes out in love to all His own, our hearts, under the control of the Holy Spirit, will go out in love to them too. We shall each regard them all as near and dear to us, seeing they and we are near and dear to Him. The fruit of the Spirit is “love.” And the Holy Spirit being given to those who believe, produces this fruit, in measure, in them all. In Jew and Gentile alike “the love of the Spirit” will flow out towards all who are thus linked together as in one family—“the brotherhood.” Many are the expressions in the various epistles showing the unity which subsists in the thought of God, and should subsist in our thoughts too, and produce practical results in our lives and in our ways one towards another while here on earth. “Love the brotherhood;” “Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous,” says Peter (I Peter ii. 17, iii. 8). “We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren,” says John (I John iii. 16). These are in accordance with the words of the Lord Himself, who said: “One is your Master, even Christ, and *all ye are brethren.*” Thus Christians are exhorted to act in the light of this relationship one towards another.

It may be we do well to inquire who are our brethren in this blessedly real and spiritual sense. And the only true answer is, Not all men, but all real Christians, are our brethren. *Wherever* they are, whatever name they are called by, all who are Christ’s are our brethren. All those who are His brethren are our brethren. Our hearts and prayers should go out towards all, and we should sorrow that sin in one form or another has so sadly scattered and divided those who should walk together.

The Lord said to Peter, “When thou art converted strengthen thy brethren.” This was doubtless in Peter’s mind when he wrote his epistles, and also in all his service. This was evidently the thought in Paul’s mind when he suggested to

Barnabas to go and visit the brethren again. And this should be in our mind, for we are "by love" to "serve one another," and "a brother is born for adversity." To the full extent of our powers we should lay ourselves out to be for the succour, spiritually and temporally, of all those whom God has linked with us in this blessed bond.

In this time of brokenness and confusion the word still holds good for each one of the brethren in Christ, "*Strengthen thy brethren;*" and may each of us have grace to seek to fulfil the Lord's word to us.

"My Brother"—Moral Affinity.

In Mark iii. 34, 35 we find the expression "brethren" used in another connection still: "And He looked round about on them which sat about Him, and said, Behold My mother and My brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is My brother, and My sister, and mother." This speaks to us of *moral affinity and suitability*, and applies to us in our responsible life in this world.

The words were uttered by our Lord to those who told Him that His natural relations stood outside the crowd desiring to speak with Him. They had said, "Behold, Thy mother and Thy brethren without seek for Thee," and He, answering, said, "Who is My mother, or My brethren?" and continued in the words already quoted.

It may be we have overlooked this scripture and this use of the term "brethren." Here it is applied to those who "do the will of God," and to them alone. The Lord Jesus was here for the good pleasure of God. He had stepped into manhood, saying, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." In His childhood this was before Him, as shown by His memorable words, "Wist ye not I must be about My Father's business?" And in His blessed service of later years He could say, "I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of the Father which sent Me." Then at the

close of His pathway, when the shadows of the cross with its judgment, and the prospect of being forsaken by God as the Bearer of sin, gathered thickly about Him He cried, "Nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done."

Now as He was sent into the world to do His Father's will, so He sent His apostles, and so He has sent us. Thus Epaphras prayed for the Colossians that they might stand perfect and complete *in all the will of God*. Paul prayed for them also that they might be filled with the knowledge of God's will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, "that [in order that] they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing." Praying for the Hebrews the Apostle says, "The God of peace . . . make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

These passages—and we might readily quote many others—show that as Christians we are left on earth to know and to do the will of God. This is our mission. This is our business. Alas! that we should ever live as if we were our own to please ourselves, as if we had not been bought with a price, as if we were not called to glorify God in our bodies. Surely if we thus live the Lord could not say of us "My brethren" in the sense it is used in Mark iii.

Those who sat about Him in that inner circle were those who had forsaken all to follow Him. Parents and boats, professions and trades, had all been left for His company, and that they might fulfil God's good pleasure for them whatever that good pleasure might be. And were they really losers? By no means. Are we set for God's will to be done? Can we take as our life motto "What Thou wilt," echoing in some feeble way our Lord's words in the garden? Then we too shall reap the joy of conscious present association with Him, and He will be able to say of us, "My brother" or "My sister and mother."

Correspondence :—Knowing Christ after the Flesh.

2 Cor. v. 16.

The question is asked if to know Christ "after the flesh" is "knowledge the flesh is capable of." We shall be glad to receive letters in reply.

To the Editors of *Scripture Truth*.

A FEW words as to the setting of the truth in which this verse is found may be helpful. The immediate connection is the way the love of Christ has been shown in His death, which brought out the truth of man's condition, "because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead." So that, if, as the result of His having died for all, there were those that live, they do so according to the power of life seen in verses 1-4 of the chapter, as expressed in a risen Christ and involving a new creation. For "if any man be in Christ, there is a new creation" (ver 17), while the basis of the whole new and wonderful position for us is found in Christ having been made sin for us in verse 21.

Up to the cross God had been dealing with man as alive in the flesh in successive dispensations to bring out the state of the flesh, as, for instance, without law, under law, and by the testimony of prophet after prophet. But now the last test had been supplied in Christ come after the flesh. God having yet one Son, His well-beloved, sent Him also last unto them saying, "They will reverence My Son." But they took Him and killed Him and cast Him out of the vineyard (Matt 21:42). It was the first great fact in the ministry of reconciliation given to the apostles (vers 18, 19), that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." He had come in Christ into the world not to raise any question of sins, but to let all His goodness be manifested, if by any means to win this poor world's heart for Him. But the rejection of Christ proved that if alive and active enough in seeking the things of the world, man was perfectly dead to God, nothing in man's heart to answer to anything in God's, further evidence of this as the full truth of man's condition being given in God having to give up Christ to death in order that any might live; if one died for all, then were all dead. It was plain, then, that all probationary dealings of God with the race were over. All possible sin had been consummated against God in the cross of Christ. When God had been manifested in nothing but goodness to man, man had been manifested in nothing but enmity against Him. The synoptic Gospels give us the history of this side of Christ's presentation in the world, and trace it to its close in His death. We know Him no more after that order of things.

But now the word (LOGOS) of reconciliation (namely, that in which reconciliation was actually effected) is added to all that brought out man's hopeless state in the flesh, in his rejection of Christ when presented to him in the full revelation of God's goodness. Now, instead of God not imputing or passing over sins any longer, He who knew no sin has been made sin for us, and the full end of all we have done and been after the flesh has come for God, and for the faith of our souls, in the judgment of the cross; so that we have become God's righteousness in Christ raised from the dead. "Therefore if any man be in Christ there is a new creation" (NT): "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new; and all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ." Nor could there be any sweeter fruit of what God has wrought for us than that in a new creation there should be no disturbing element found between our souls and God.

But if the truth of this be apprehended in any measure it will be readily seen that it involves, not only that we know Christ after the flesh no more, but henceforth *no man* on that ground. And this first supplies a needed test as to the reality with which we have entered into it. How do we regard an old acquaintance? It is no longer a question of "auld lang syne," or anything of that sort. If he is in Christ old things are passed away in the wonderful position we have in common by God's infinite grace according to a new creation, but if not in Christ he is dead, dead in his sins though still within the reach of Christ being presented to him that he may live. Note, too, how really all things have become new as to the *new spring* of life, it is the love of Christ that constrains us (ver 14); as to the *new object*, He who died for us and rose again has become the centre of our new existence instead of self as formerly; while our *new motive* is, whether present in the body when He comes or absent from it, whether amongst those who are alive and remain or those who sleep in Him, we may be well pleasing to Him (ver 9). When the passage is taken thus in its connection it does not need to be said that it in no way excludes other aspects of Christ's presence in the world, which abide for us in all their eternal significance. Here was found for the first time the lovely path of perfect man before God, and over Him heaven opened and the Father's voice expressed His perfect

delight in Him Here, too, was God manifest in the flesh, and the Father revealed in the Son. Eternal life, too, brought to light in this relationship of Him with the Father as never before here, as come down out of heaven to be governed only by the will of Him that sent Him. He is the bread of God, the food of God's own deepest joy, in which we are given to have part when we have reached Him through His death (John vi 33, 53, 57)

It is well, too, to remember, in such a connection, that, if it is only as ascended up where He was before that all the light of the glory is shed back upon what He was down here, we know nothing of Him in the glory—not one characteristic trait of His blessed perfection, that was not manifested in Him here, who is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. Yet the Spirit has been given to us to bring to our remembrance by the Gospels all things whatsoever He said unto us, and He is essentially what He spake (John vii 25, NT), not only that the thrilling memory of all He was may ever be in our hearts, but that He may be the present living object before our souls in glory, according to all that He was manifested to be down here.

When, then, the force of no man or even Christ being known any more after the flesh is apprehended, it will be seen that it in no way touches the question of the natural relationships in which we have been placed by the will of God towards one another. It is, in fact, only in the Epistles that bring out our full place in the risen Christ that we find the full recognition of those relationships, as furnishing us with the heavenly springs and motives needed for a walk in them according to God.

J. A. TRENCH.

The cross is the basis of all subsisting relationships according to God. Genesis vi 6, 7, 13 is not merely historical. "The end of all flesh" represents, in the forecast of the Spirit, a wider range than the Nothic world. Death is stamped on the whole scene. The creation in itself was feeble and temporal (Ps cii 25, 26), as a fact it is fallen and corrupt. It has failed to satisfy the mind of God. His purposes are in Christ and a new creation—a creation of a wholly new order. Death, dissolution, the judgment of God so expressed, is

Signal piety shall be crowned with signal power

Sin is sovereign, till sovereign grace dethrones it

Sin's misery, and God's mercy, are beyond measure

Salvation begins with self condemnation

stamped on all the old, that a new order, purposed in the wisdom of God "before the ages of time" (1 Cor ii 7), might in due course be established in a risen Christ, "who had annulled death and brought life and incorruptibility to light by the gospel" (2 Tim i 10)

The purposes of God were never in the first man—man according to flesh. But God set him in this world, and in the various relationships in which we find him as a responsible, moral being, created in the image and after the likeness of God (Gen i), and He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (Gen ii), that man might live to Him. Was He unwise in so doing? Was His work doomed to failure in the conception of it? Was it a mistake on His part from the beginning? The history of man "going astray from the womb" would seem to say so. But Christ is the wisdom of God—and while He is God's resource and power for the accomplishment of still vaster schemes, and vaster still, He must first come down in "flesh and blood, that He might take part in like manner in the condition in which the children were" (Heb ii 14) and become a man amongst men, apart from sin (Luke i 35), in order that He might justify God in His creation of man from the beginning, and finish up that section in the ways of God by bringing glory to Him (Luke xxiii 47, Isa xvii 4).

But though by the death of Christ on the cross God was glorified in respect of 'man after flesh,' there still remained the accomplishment of His purposes in Christ risen from the dead, and, after such sort, He is the text of Paul's ministry, the Christ he now knows, in part it may be, but whom still he knows, and whom to know wholly and absorbingly is the one desire of his soul (Phil iii 7-15), the bent and energy of his whole life (Phil i 21)

Christ's life in itself was ever morally the same—holy, pure, and spotless, but the condition in which He held it, as identifying Himself with man's circumstances in flesh, necessitated His death, not on His own account, but on man's, and in that state, as having the question of sin still unsettled, the Apostle now no longer knows Him. "In that He died, He died unto sin once, in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. He knows Him henceforth as a risen man, and as connected with a new creation.

E. CROSS.

The tears of saints are better than the triumphs of sinners

It is better to have holiness without comfort, than comfort without holiness

Sanctified afflictions are spiritual promotions

The praise of the lips should be but the echo of the praise of the heart

“The Red Heifer.”

(JOHN GASKIN).

Notes on Numbers xix.

IN the book of Numbers we have the divinely given record of the walk and warfare of the Israelites in the wilderness. It is in this book that the ordinance of “the Red Heifer” is given and not in Leviticus, the book of the sacrifices. The reason for this is that it was God’s provision for the cleansing of defilement contracted by His people on the way to their inheritance. The wilderness journey is figurative of the journey which the Christian is taking to his heavenly home, and the ordinance of the red heifer is typical of the death of Christ as a *purification* for sin, to meet our need in passing through a defiling world to our eternal rest above.”—*Note*.

The chapter may be divided into two parts: (1) The preparation of certain ashes as a purification for sin (vers. 1-10); (2) The application of those ashes to the person defiled (vers. 11-22).

The Preparation of the Ashes.

Verse 2 describes the qualities of the heifer which was to be sacrificed, and presents typically the absolutely sinless perfection and unreserved devotion to God of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is its antitype.

It was to be red. This colour is figurative of the devotedness even unto death of the Lord Jesus Christ to His Father’s will.

“Lo, I come . . . to do thy will, O God” (Heb. x. 7).

“The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?” (John xviii. 11).

It was to be without spot.

“Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth” (1 Peter ii. 22).

It was to be without blemish.

“And in him is no sin” (1 John iii. 5).

It had never to have been under yoke.

“Who knew no sin” (2 Cor. v. 21).

Verse 3.

It was brought without the camp to be slain as a sin-offering in the place of reproach.

“Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate” (Heb. xiii. 12).

Verse 4.

Its blood was sprinkled seven times directly before the tabernacle of the congregation. It was not carried into the holiest of all and sprinkled before the ark as on the day of atonement, but before the tabernacle, in the place where the people stood to commune with God. In this is typified the abiding efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ, in the value of which we stand in the light, and have fellowship with God and with one another.

“THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST” (1 Peter i. 19).

“The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” 1 John

Verse 5.

It was wholly burnt and reduced to ashes, teaching that Christ was judged and condemned because of sin, that about which we are often, alas! so careless in our walk.

The burning of the heifer typifies the soul-suffering of Jesus at the hand of God on the cross, the only place where we can learn how immeasurable our sin is, and where is brought home to the soul the sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

"He . . . spared not his own Son" (Rom. viii. 32).

"God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. viii. 3).

Verse 6.

Cedar-wood, hyssop, and scarlet were to be cast into the burning. Cedar-wood was figurative of all that is great and noble in man, hyssop of all that is lowly and despised, and scarlet of the glory of this world, with which man may clothe himself, and the fact of these things being cast into the burning teaches that the judgment of God has passed upon all that man is, whether in his nature or attainments, for from the best to the worst all is tainted with sin.

"No flesh should glory in his presence" (1 Cor. i. 29).

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. vi. 14).

Verse 7.

The priest washed his clothes, and bathed his flesh in water. The clothes set forth the outward character seen of the eyes of men, the flesh that which is hidden, but which is open to the eye of God. Here is prefigured practical separation from evil—consistency with the sacrifice on the part of those who have been brought into contact with it. So Paul, a living example of the truth, could say :

"Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe" (1 Thess. ii. 10).

"Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. vii. 1).

Verse 9.

The ashes laid up for future use as a purification for sin in a clean place outside the camp typify the record of Christ's death in the written Word of God.

The Application of the Ashes to the Person Defiled.

Verses 11 and 12.

The defilement was immediate, but the consequences remained for a time, for the defiled person was unclean seven days. Thus we are taught that sin is no light matter, and restoration to communion must be preceded by self-judgment, repentance, and confession.

"Remember . . . from whence thou art fallen, and repent" (Rev. ii. 5).

"I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though . . . but for a season. . . . Ye sorrowed to repentance . . . after a godly manner. . . . For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of" (2 Cor. vii. 8-10).

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 9).

Verse 13.

The Israelite who did not purify himself after contact with defilement was cut off from the congregation: teaching us that there can be no

restoration to communion with God and His people without self-judgment and repentance.

"Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matt. xviii. 17).

"Humble yourselves in the sight of God, and he shall lift you up" (James iv. 10)

Verses 14, 15, and 16.

Every one coming into contact with death, whether in the tent or in the open field, was defiled, and every open vessel in any *tent* where death was. The tent and the field set forth life in this world at home and abroad, and teach us that we cannot find any place in this world where there is not defilement. If we are "open vessels" we shall undoubtedly suffer. We need to pray :

"Take Thou our hearts and let them be
For ever closed to all but Thee.

Be Thou the object bright and fair,
To fill and satisfy the heart."

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do : and the God of peace shall be with you" (Phil. iv. 8, 9).

Verses 17 and 18.

The ashes of the burnt heifer typify the remembrance of the sufferings of Christ for us and their issue in death itself. The running water speaks of the Holy Spirit applying this in separating power to the soul. Here we see, in figure, the remembrance of those sufferings for sin brought home to the soul by the Holy Ghost, and this must produce in those who love the Lord abhorrence of sin, and deep self-judgment for having allowed that which caused the holy Son of God the inexpressible sorrow of Calvary.

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. *For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us :*

"Therefore let us keep the feast, not with . . . the leaven of malice and wickedness ; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. v. 7, 8).

The clean person may prefigure the Lord Jesus, who has risen from the dead and is ever active in His love towards us. He it is who washes the feet that are defiled (John xiii.).

He is our "ADVOCATE ; and when we have sinned He intercedes for us to re-establish the interrupted communion : for it is here a question of communion only. Righteousness and propitiation remain always perfect and form the basis of that which is done for us when we have failed. The effect of this grace is that the Spirit applies the word, humbling us in convincing us of sin, and brings us near to God. The red heifer is a very distinctive development of this renewing of communion" (*J. N. Darby*).

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous :

"And he is the propitiation for our sins : and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John ii. 1, 2).

Observe there is no blood in this cleansing from defilement. The blood is for judicial cleansing, for our justification before God, and this is done once and for all when first the soul turns to Jesus.

"By him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 39).

"Being now justified by h's blood" (Rom. v. 9).

But for this restoration to communion after failure there is *the application of the truth to the soul* to bring about, as we have pointed out, self-judgment and confession of sin.

Eternal Punishment (VI).

(JAMES BOYD).

The Spirits in Prison.

MR. CHAMBERS, with whose statements I am dealing, says that he builds his theory of preaching in hades on the Scriptures. He claims that this preaching to sinners in hades was predicted by our Lord when He said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead [*i.e.* the departed] shall hear the voice of the Son of God" (John v. 25).

But the dead in this passage are those who are *morally* dead, those who have no life Godward, those dead in sins. The hour was *coming* when the Lord was here, but it was also *present*, in which sinners morally dead were to be made alive by the quickening voice of the Son of God. This is contrasted with "all that are in the graves" hearing His voice and coming forth (ver. 28). For those actually dead and in the graves to be said to hear the voice of the Son of God would be equivalent to saying they were raised. I could understand *spirits* of men being addressed who had departed this life, but I could not understand such being designated as dead, for dead they are not, viewed in connection with their spirits. But John v. 25 is not a prediction of something about to take place which had not then come to pass, for the Lord says "and *now is*," and He was not at that moment preaching in hades. Souls in moral death were getting life through His word. This was taking place then and there, and has been continued in the testimony of the gospel up to the present time. Verse 24 tells us who has this life. It says: "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life." Such, should they die before the coming of the Lord, will be in the resurrection

of *life*, not in that of *judgment*; for into judgment they do not come.

He quotes also "them that are dead" (1 Peter iv. 6). But I would remind him that when Scripture speaks of people as dead, that is to say *actually*, as in this scripture, not *morally*, as in John v. 25, it always refers to their connection with their bodies. This is why God declares He is not the God of the dead but the living (Luke xx. 38). That the dead live to Him is true, and I have already brought Scripture forward to bear upon this fact; but they live to Him in their *spirits*. It is the *body* really that is dead, and when men are said to be dead *actually* the reference is always to the body; therefore, to say the gospel was preached to the dead is to say that it was preached to men who are *now* dead, but preached to them *while they were alive*: preaching cannot be to dead bodies.

But Mr. C.'s great text for this preaching of the gospel, in what he calls "the unseen-life," lies, he tells us, in 1 Peter iii. 18-20.

As to the antediluvians, who perished in the flood, he says that in them "the discipline of the Unseen-world had developed new and better traits of character," and that when the spirit of Jesus "passed at physical death into the unseen world He preached to these very beings who had preceded Him to that world" (page 159). Then he tells us the *object* of this preaching. It was:

"That these persons, at the bar of God's judgment, might stand on the same footing as those to whom salvation by Christ is offered during the earth-life . . . viz. by the gospel message itself. The question upon which

the judgment of mankind will turn, is not whether they have been sinners, but whether they have turned to Christ for pardon and sanctification. This implies that all men must, at least, be told of the Christ to whom they must turn. These old-world sinners, however great their wickedness, had never rejected Christ in the sense in which we, to whom He has been preached, may reject Him. Hence, for them to be judged hereafter by the same standard as that by which we and all men will be judged, it was necessary that there should be vouchsafed to them the same opportunity of salvation as has been granted to us. To imagine otherwise would be to impute unfairness to the Judge of all the earth."

This quotation from Mr. C.'s book on *Our Life after Death* sets clearly before the reader the scripture upon which he bases his theory of preaching in hades, and the object of that preaching. His notion being that men are only judged for their rejection of Christ, and that therefore judgment would be impossible, or at least unfair, for those who never had any offer of mercy through Him. According to his idea every child of Adam, some time or other, must have an offer of Christ and salvation through Him, in order that every man may be on the same level in the day of judgment. I have already referred to this erroneous notion of Mr. C.'s, and have shown that Scripture is dead against such an idea, that men are only judged for their rejection of Christ. But I have also shown that judgment applies only to deeds done in the body, and that anything which takes place in hades is not the subject of judgment. No one, therefore, could be judged for rejecting Christ in hades.

Another of his proofs that the gospel must be preached in the unseen-world we find on page 190. He tells us that the church was to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,

This is just another example of Mr. C.'s careless way of handling Scripture. This was the blessed risen Lord's commission to the *eleven*; but the church, as such, neither preaches nor teaches. There are servants gifted by Christ for the purpose, but the church is preached to and taught: she does neither herself. But supposing it were so that the church were to do this, what has that to do with hades? He tells the eleven to go *into all the world*. Mr. C. is quite sure He must have meant them to go to hades. He asks us if Christ did "not know that millions would die without so much as even hearing His name?" Surely He did, but such will not be judged for not believing in it. They will be judged by whatever light God has graciously given to them. The apostles had no commission for any part of the universe other than earth. In Matthew the commission is to *all nations*, in Mark it is to *all the world*, in Luke it is *all nations*, in John we have, "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, so have I also sent them into *the world*," and "as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you" (John xvii. 18, xx. 21). Preaching in hades is not contemplated in the commission given to the apostles.

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" was the command given to the disciples by the risen Lord. Not a word about going into hades. Their preaching, at least their commission to preach, did not warrant their having a thought of another sphere beyond this world of living men. "Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations." Here the nations of the earth are in view: there are no nations in hades. Then as to the effect of the preaching—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark xvi.). Here reception or rejection of the word preached appears to settle for eternity the state of those who hear. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; but

he that believeth not the Son shall not see life ; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36). As to the present, the wrath of God abides on the unbeliever ; as to the future, he shall not see life. Of such an one there is no hope held out in hades. "They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation [judgment]" (John v. 29). "*Done good*"—when? "*Done evil*"—when? Not in hades ; they can do nothing there ; they have not their bodies : and judgment is for deeds *done in the body*, as we have already seen (2 Cor. v. 10). And why should those who have died have a second opportunity, when the living who know not God and who obey not the gospel will be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" (2 Thess. i. 9) at the appearing of Christ? Paul was sent out to the nations with the gospel ; a dispensation of the gospel, he says, was committed to him, and his great desire was to finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God (Acts xx.) ; and in his Second Epistle to Timothy he speaks of that course as being finished. What, then, was he looking for? He tells us *a crown of righteousness*. Not a continuation of his blessed service in the glad tidings in hades, but the reward of a service which he was now for ever laying down.

Were the propagators of this spurious gospel not confident that their teaching would be very acceptable to the great mass of humanity, they would never attempt to put upon paper the utter absurdities which they publish with such a flourish of trumpets. The popularity of this doctrine is evidenced by the tremendous demand there is for all this kind of literature. A well-known and very popular preacher tells us : "*No collections are necessary when a man preaches against the existence of a hell. Money rolls in voluntarily from people all over the world to help the*

propagation of such glad tidings. . . . How to spend the money that comes to me is one of the problems of my life." Put along with this the word of the Lord to His disciples : "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you ; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also" (John xv.). But, then, how very sad it is to see men who take the place of servants of Christ, and ministers of the word of truth, filling the minds of men and women with hopes which not only can have no realization, but which must give tremendous encouragement to their corrupt and godless hearts to gratify their every desire without a thought to the future.

If it be true that in the millennium, or in the unseen world, people will have another and a better chance of embracing the gospel, we cannot after all regard them as being so very foolish when we find them careless concerning their souls' interests in this present time. Felix the Roman governor was not wanting in wisdom when he told Paul to go his way until a more convenient season ! The acceptance of the gospel, where it is a real thing in the soul, means the giving up of all that the carnal heart holds dear, the taking up of the cross and following the rejected and outcast Nazarene. The world, the flesh, and the devil are a terrible trinity of evil, and they have all to be met and overcome if one is to obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus ; therefore a man cannot be branded as either thoughtless or foolish who puts aside the question of salvation until he enters hades, where none of these hindrances exist, but where every influence is in his favour, and where every wind bears the voyager peacefully onward into the haven of eternal life. Such a man seems to have the wisdom which enables him to act so as to make the most of both worlds.

(To be continued.)

Answers to Correspondents.

(THE EDITORS).

Romans ii. 6-10.

A.W. This solemn passage states very clearly what many other scriptures confirm, that God will judge men according to their deeds in this life. No man who obeys unrighteousness can expect glory and honour, incorruptibility and eternal life at the end of his course, for the end of a life of unrighteousness is indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish; whereas patient continuance in well-doing is crowned in the end with glory, honour, and peace.

There were those who did patiently continue in well-doing. A list is given of such in Hebrews xi., and we are exhorted to do the same, to run with patience the race that is set before us (xii. 1). The life of the Apostle Paul was characterized by this, as described by himself (Phil. iii. 7-14; 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8).

The question as to whether this patient continuance in well-doing is natural to any does not arise in this passage; it is dealt with later on in the epistle—and there we learn that there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

So that we know that apart from the grace of God by which we are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (iii. 24, and cf. v. 18) we should, every one of us, have travelled on to the end of the downward road.

The power for a life of patient continuance in well-doing is not found in the flesh, for "they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (viii. 8), but the righteous requirement of the law is fulfilled in those who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit (viii. 4, N.T.).

The foundation of the Christian's certain hope is Christ Himself and His finished work—not his own conduct, even though it be true that characteristically he is marked by well-doing; and because this is so it is well to note that the correct reading of Romans ii. 7 is "them that *in* patient continuance in well-doing seek," etc., not "*by* patient continuance," as though that were the foundation of their hope.

But whilst the believer's course as a whole is such as must issue in eternal life it is yet to come into review *in detail*. He himself can never come into judgment, for he is in Christ, where there is no condemnation; but all his works will be tested, and he will suffer loss or gain reward in the kingdom ("the day") according as they have been of God or otherwise (1 Cor. iii.).

As to Colossians iii. 25, we think it is quite possible that it may have a present application, for even here we reap what we sow, but whether this be so or not, you may be sure that everything will be rightly adjusted at the judgment seat of Christ. What encouragement, then, if our motives and work are not properly appreciated now, to continue in the fear of God to do whatsoever we do heartily as unto the Lord.

If you write to the publishers of this magazine they will send you pamphlets on Romans; we should recommend "From Adam to Christ," and "The Believer Established," by C. A. Coates.

The Place of the Christian in the Future Government of the World.

J.H. We should not agree with all the conclusions of the writer of the book you mention, and should also be sorry to contrast *true* knowledge and

service to the detriment of either; they both have their God-given place and value, and will, where the heart is right with the Lord, blend together in the lives of His own for His glory.

It is evident that the saints shall judge the world, and angels (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3); and in this all will have part.

The discernment necessary for this, which the saints will have in perfection then, is *not*, as far as we can judge, acquired at the judgment seat of Christ, but they have it now, and can exercise it if they are spiritual, *i.e.* subject to the Holy Ghost who dwells in them; and the Apostle blames the Corinthians upon this ground, because they were not settling their own matters.

“The Spirit searcheth all things . . . he that is spiritual judgeth all things” (1 Cor. ii. 10, 15). “Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things” (1 John ii. 20). Now, however, a carnal mind often hinders and warps the judgment, and so leads saints astray; *then* that will be left behind for ever, and the wisdom of God will be actively manifested through them.

Our individual place in the kingdom is evidently determined by our faithfulness in this world (Luke xix.), and faithfulness, we should judge, is knowledge turned to account in service and testimony for an absent Lord. We all have knowledge, but some, alas! are puffed up by it (1 Cor. viii. 8), and it is evident that such are not *good and faithful servants*, for they are thinking more of themselves than of their Lord.

Sovereignty and Responsibility.

A READER. 1 Corinthians iii. 1-3 makes it very clear that those who divide themselves into schools of doctrine are not spiritual but carnal; and so it follows that those who take up either of the two extremes known as Hyper-Calvinism or Arminianism

come, as you say, under this category. We think that you will find that often they are right in what they *affirm* and wrong in what they *deny*. Your preservative, *It is written*, will keep us right. May we all be more subject to the word of God.

It is true that the terms “sovereignty” and “responsibility” are not Biblical words, but they are words expressive of the truth, as is “substitution,” to which you also refer. Yet by no words we may employ can any truth of God be fully expressed; hence there is always danger of becoming stereotyped and limited in our grasp of the truth when we allow ourselves to be satisfied simply with terms adopted by men. We agree with you that it is well to stand closely by the very words of Scripture.

As to your last question, a Christian, in the scriptural sense, is undoubtedly one who is indwelt by the Holy Ghost, and is able, in consequence, to call God his Father; and such an one *will* desire at all times to walk in the Spirit, for apart from the Holy Ghost he will neither prosper himself nor be fruitful for God or of blessing to others.

“Should Prayer be addressed to the Lord Jesus Christ?”

A.W. There is no warrant in Scripture for addressing our prayers *exclusively* to the Father, though we have no doubt that those who pray, according to full Christian intelligence, *for Christ's interests in this world* will address the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and this is evidently peculiar to this present period and connected with our being witnesses in the world to our absent Lord (John xvi. 23, 24).

If it be a question of our temporal needs it would seem right to address our requests to God (Phil. iv. 6): we know Him as our Father and so can have perfect confidence in Him.

But there are other matters which turn us directly to the Lord Jesus as our Lord and Master, so we find that Paul "besought the Lord thrice" as to the thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. xii. 8), and received a most blessed answer.

We must ever bear in mind that though in immeasurable grace the Lord Jesus became Man in order to save us, and will never divest Himself of manhood, yet He is God over all blessed for ever; and it is the Father's will that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father (John v. 23). Praise and thanksgiving are rightly offered to Him (1 Tim. i. 12; Rev. v. 9, etc.), and so should prayer be also. To lay down rules would be utterly wrong; if we are simple we shall be guided aright in our prayers by the Holy Ghost, but this guidance will always be according to the Scriptures.

Fire.

D.S. writes us as follows :

"I have been reading No. iv. 'The Feasts of the Lord.' Do not the two wave loaves of Leviticus xxiii. represent 'Jew and Gentile' and set forth typically the one 'new man' of Ephesians ii. 15, the new creation of 2 Corinthians v. ? Man 'in Christ' is new creation. Writing as to the leaven with which the two wave loaves are to be baked, the writer says they had been exposed to the fire in the oven. He goes on to speak of it as being the same as the fire on the altar. But could that be? He says fire is the symbol which fell on Christ when He was made sin. There were different strengths of fire in connection with the meat offering—the oven, the pan, the frying-pan. After the fire in the oven had done its work a memorial of it was to be burned by the priest on the altar. Does not the action of the fire in verses 4, 5, and 7 speak of the testing the Lord passed through—totally different from the cross? The writer noticing the oven (p. 187) says 'This [the fire] did not eradicate it [the flesh], but effectually prevented the working of the corrupting thing.' Is this the case?

Yes, we think there may be an allusion in the two wave loaves to that of which you speak. We have not, however, here the saints looked at exactly as a unity, but whilst recognizing the diversity of the component parts, there

is yet communion and fellowship—no discord, even though leaven was present—so that those typified were indeed an acceptable offering to God. "The multitude of those that believed were of one heart and one soul . . . and great grace was upon them all" (Acts iv. 32, 33).

Now as to the symbols of Scripture. We believe, as the Word is inspired and perfect, there is entire consistency always in the way these are used, though we are such slow learners that we often fail to discern the harmony that exists. Clearly the action of fire before us in the early verses speaks, as you say, of "the testing the Lord passed through—totally different from the cross;" yet we may not hastily say, therefore, "Fire in Scripture represents testing." Testing is the result of the fire, but it is not the fire itself. Clearly too the fire which wholly consumed the sin offering in the place of the casting out of ashes outside the camp speaks of the judgment of God, His wrath against sin, which fell on Christ when, forsaken of God, He was "made sin for us;" yet we may not specifically define "fire," therefore, as "wrath and judgment."

What is it, then? Scripture throws light upon it in the words "Our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. xii.). It is what God is in the intrinsic holiness of His nature. Let this be grasped and difficulty disappears. Where the holiness of God has to say to sin, wrath and judgment are necessarily involved, not as a merely arbitrary decree but, as another has well said, as "the result of His own nature—of what He Himself is." But (save when on the cross made sin for others) the holiness of God never came in contact in Christ with anything but what yielded a sweet savour—the fire but tested and demonstrated His infinite perfections.

Apply this thought now of the holiness of God to the two wave loaves. The company upon whom the Spirit

of God descended on the day of Pentecost was *in heart and mind in accord with the holiness of God* : it was not that they had no sin, but sin was not active in them, it was judged in the light of the cross ; to speak figuratively, the leaven was "baken," its corrupting power arrested. That presents the Christian company according to God ; we know, of course, that they did not continue to walk in the Spirit, and so, alas ! the leaven again worked ; but that condition is abnormal. The *normal* condition is what is presented to us in the two wave loaves of fine flour baken with leaven and waved as an acceptable wave offering before the Lord (the inherent sin typified in the baked leaven being met by the sin offering offered with it).

The " Keys " given to Peter.

R.H. writes enquiring whether the words as to the "keys of the kingdom of heaven" in Matthew xvi. 19, afford any foundation for the claim of authority asserted by the Pope of Rome and his priests. He also asks for light on Matthew xviii. 18.

To Peter were committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven. The expression is symbolical, of course, but we can see how he, so to say, used these keys when on the day of Pentecost, speaking in the power of the Spirit, he opened the door of faith to the Jews, and 3000 souls responding, and being baptized unto the Lord Jesus Christ, were brought heart and soul under the rule of heaven. We may mark, too, how he filled the distinctive place assigned to him by the Lord when in the house of Cornelius he by divine instruction likewise opened the door of faith to the Gentiles, and, the Holy Ghost falling upon those present, commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.

In the distinctive service thus assigned to Peter he was divinely instructed and led of the Spirit of God, and thus that which he did had the sanction of

Heaven. The service was personal to himself, and therefore intransmissible. We may just remark here as to all that was apostolic whether as connected with the assembly, or (as here) with the kingdom, that there are *no* apostles today : they are the *foundation* (see Eph. ii. 20).

An instance of the "binding" referred to in this verse is seen in the sentence upon Ananias and Sapphira by the word of Peter.

Matthew xviii. 18 stands on quite a different footing. Here it is what is committed to the assembly : that which it binds on earth is bound in heaven, and that which it looses on earth is loosed in heaven ; that is to say, its actions in binding and loosing have the ratification of heaven. And the reason for this is given in the next verse—*Christ* is there.

The assembly acts in respect of those only who compose it ("thy brother," verse 15); and what is in question is trespass, or more properly translated *sin* (verse 15). It may be well to add that it is assumed, of course, when the *assembly* is spoken of, that it acts in the reality of what that word signifies as Christ's "called-out-ones" ("My assembly" Matt. xvi. 18), not in self-will, or otherwise than in dependence and as led of the Spirit of God, and so subject to the Word of God.

Do we need the Constant Cleansing of the Blood ?

L.V. In order to understand this matter aright we must distinguish between judicial and moral cleansing. By *judicial* cleansing is meant the removal of the *guilt* of sin, and *it is the blood that does this* ; it has made expiation for our sins, and by it we are justified—cleared judicially from all charge of guilt before God (Rom. v. 9). This is done once and for all ; it has never to be repeated, so that God can say "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. x. 17). The question of sins can never be

raised judicially with the one who has put his faith in Christ, for by the one sacrifice which Christ has made for sin, he is freed from its guilt and penalty, and by that one offering he is perfected for ever (Heb. x. 14). So that there is no re-application of the blood to the believer. In Old Testament times there were constantly repeated sacrifices, for they could never take away sin; in *Christ* we have the one perfect offering.

But "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John i. 8); and the question is rightly raised, What happens when a believer sins? This brings us to what is called *moral* cleansing, and for this we have the *water*, which has a very prominent place in Scripture. "But one of the soldiers pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and *water*" (John xix. 34). "This is He that came by water and blood; not by water only, but by water and blood" (1 John v. 6). God will have a moral answer in His people to that place in which He has set them on the ground of the shed blood. The fact that Christ died for our sins is to have a practical purifying effect upon us, leading us to judge and be separate from that which brought Him into death for us; it is this side that the water sets forth. The truth as to this is brought home to our souls by the word of God, so that the Word is spoken of as the means by which we are washed and cleansed (Eph. v. 2), not judicially, but morally, *i.e.* it produces within us separation of heart from sin, and, also, moral correspondence with God.

But if the Christian should sin, his conscience is immediately defiled and his communion with God broken. What then? The answer is, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 9). This confession is not that he might be again justified as when he first believed in Jesus, and

for which the blood was needful, but that as a child communion with the Father might be restored; and the cleansing here spoken of is not judicial cleansing from the guilt of sin, but practical purifying from its defilement. We are led in His presence to the very root of the failure. And what could make us hate and abhor the sin more than seeing that the blood of Jesus has been shed for it, that all those sorrows of Calvary were borne that we might be saved from the penalty of sin? The truth as to this leads us to judge ourselves for being ensnared, and condemn that from which the sin sprang, and so we are clear of it morally. The Lord's service towards us in this connection is very blessed: He is our Advocate with the Father (ii. 1), and He washes our feet from the defilement which we are so prone to contract in this sinful world, so that we may have part with Him; and note this washing is by *water* (John xiii.).

We would refer you for further help on this subject to an article on "The Red Heifer" in this issue.

Baptism (Acts xxii. 16).

S.H. The Apostle Paul, along with the whole Jewish nation, was guilty of openly rejecting the Lord Jesus Christ; he had hated the name of Jesus, and been exceedingly zealous for the traditions of the nation to which he belonged. Baptism was the outward sign of the breaking of the former links, of his repentance for past, and of his acknowledgment of the lordship of Christ. It was in his case the passing from the position of condemnation in which he stood as belonging to the people upon whom rested the guilt of slaying the Lord, to salvation under His lordship. And by this act his sins of complicity with that deed were washed away. Had he refused to be baptized and chosen to remain outwardly a Jew, it would have proved that he had not *really* bowed to the Lord, and, of course, his sins would then have been retained.

Scripture Notes.

Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him (John xiii. 31, 32).

HERE is a wonderful truth to burst upon the soul, that the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, ignominious as it was, was really His glory: the truth that a Man should do a work in which everything that God is should be glorified! His righteousness! His majesty! His power! His love! all glorified.

This is where Christianity begins:

I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also (John xiv. 2, 3).

Christ has prepared a place for us in His Father's house. The Father loved us in such a way that He spared His own Son for us, and the work of the Son is so perfect that He must have us there, in the Father's house, the eternal

we have not a God unknown and hidden behind a veil, giving promises for the future; but Christ down here, declaring all His love, and now Man raised from the dead and gone into His presence. In Christ we see God amongst sinful men to bless and save them, and Man in the glory of God in full accord with that glory. Blessed be His name!

witnesses to the efficacy of the work of Christ, and objects of the Father's love. If He is gone away, He is gone to prepare a place for us; we know where He is gone, and we know where we are going.

The glory which thou hast given me I have given them (John xvii. 22).

The way He gives is never as the world gives: if we give a thing we have it no longer; but that is not Christ's way. He does not give it away. He brings us into it, and this applies to everything. He says "My Father and your Father, My God and your God." He has brought us into this position and rejoices that we should rejoice in

it. We are but earthen vessels, but the heart of Christ would not be satisfied if there was the sense that He kept back anything from us; that is the manner of His love. Yet He is not brought down thereby, His personal glory and blessedness are carefully guarded. He does not say *our* Father, but "*My* Father and your Father."

But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom (Heb. i. 8).

The Lord is called "the Son of God" in different aspects. He is such by divine decree (Ps. ii. 7). He is so called as born of the Virgin (Luke i. 35); He is also declared to be the Son of God by resurrection (Rom. i. 4). This is true and remains true, though further revelation be made to us of His eternal Sonship. He is the Son, and yet has obtained the name of Son (Heb. i. 1-3). In the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, the

voice of God from the heavens declared His Sonship of God at His baptism (Matt. iii. 17; Mark i. 11). Luke goes farther back, for there Gabriel is sent from God to announce it at His birth (Luke ii. 31, 32). But John goes back farther still, even to the immeasurable, unspeakable distance of eternity, and declares His Sonship in the bosom of the Father (John xvii. 5, 24).

Jethro.—Exodus xviii.

(H. P. BARKER.)

6 And he said unto Moses, I thy father in law Jethro am come unto thee, and thy wife, and her two sons with her. . . .

9 And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done to Israel, whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians. . . .

17 And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good. . . .

19 Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee. . . .

27 And Moses let his father in law depart ; and he went his way into his own land.

IF this copy of "Scripture Truth" does not fall into the hands of some twentieth-century Jethro it will be very surprising. For there are such to be found in almost every town and village.

Speaking of them after the manner of men, they are generally excellent folk—courteous, liberal, of good repute amongst their neighbours, well disposed to all, there is much to be said in their favour. *But they are Jethros.*

Let me explain what I mean.

(1) *Jethro was sincerely glad to hear of a good work going on amongst other people.* Moses told him the story of God's gracious dealings with the people of Israel, how He had delivered them from the cruel bondage of Egypt, and had marvellously provided for their need in the wilderness. "And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done to Israel" (ver. 9).

(2) *Jethro could give very wise counsel as to how God's work should be done.* He saw that Moses was bearing too heavy a burden, and suggested to him that he should share it with others. Able, God-fearing, truth-loving men were to be selected, who should share the judicial responsibilities of the great Law-giver, and should relieve him of all concern as to the minor matters that might call for judgment.

(3) *Jethro was kind and hospitable to his relatives.* It is uncertain whether he was Moses' father-in-law or brother-in-law. The Hebrew word "khoten," in verse 1, may mean either. But whether Zipporah was his daughter or his sister, Jethro kindly took charge of

her, and her two sons, under his hospitable roof, while Moses was away in Egypt seeking the deliverance of Israel.

But while all this was true of Jethro, it was also true that he refrained from fully identifying himself with the people of God. He took no part in their conflicts and their wilderness exercises. He acknowledged the greatness and supremacy of the true God (ver. 11), but he never rose to the height of His glorious purpose for the people of His choice.

It was not for want of opportunity. Probably Jethro was the brother of Hobab, of whom we read in Numbers x. (Some think that Hobab and Jethro were two names of the same man.) In any case he is likely to have received the same urgent exhortation from Moses: "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: *come thou with us.*" Hobab's reply was an emphatic negative:

"I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred" (Num. x. 29, 30).

If Jethro, in Exodus xviii., did not so emphatically refuse to accompany the people of God, his action spoke loudly enough of the absence of all desire on his part to be a participator with them in the prospect God had set before them. "*He went his way into his own land*" (ver. 27).

It is to be feared that there are many to-day whose portraits bear a striking resemblance to that of Jethro. In spite of their many excellent qualities,

they fail to rise to the height of God's purpose for His people. They apprehend but feebly the nature of the calling of God. Their appreciation of the heavenly relationships in which Christians are set is small indeed, and they give a very secondary place in their thoughts to the wonderful portion that belongs to the church, the body and bride of Christ.

They may rejoice in the prosperity of the Lord's work in their own locality or in regions beyond the seas. They may be ready to offer valuable counsel as to how things should be done; but when one speaks to them of God's wonderful purpose for us, and of our heavenly calling, one finds but little response. They are not *practically* "strangers and pilgrims" on earth. They do not throw themselves whole-heartedly into the wilderness conflicts which are the experience of those who seek to appropriate, in the energy of the Spirit of God, the *heavenly* portion of the church. As a result, they have very little of that priceless treasure, that gain unspeakable, *the reproach of Christ*. In the reckoning of Moses this was greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt (Heb. xi. 26).

Beloved reader, are these things of which I speak *great* in your eyes? Or are they of secondary importance?

"When will people learn that association with evil is evil itself?"

"To go on with unity at the expense of truth is high treason against the Lord."

There are many points in which God's children need education, and one is the conviction of the efficacy of prayer.

Saints are never far from home. In the remotest places they are in their Lord's dominions and on the borders of heaven.

Do you apprehend anything of the purpose of God, to have us conformed to the image of His Son, and that we should be His dwelling-place, for His own pleasure, for all eternity? How much greater a thought is this than merely "going to heaven."

Do you lay it to heart that the calling of the people of God is a *heavenly* one, and that we are not left in the world for a while in order to throw ourselves into the current of its politics and pursuits (even with the best of motives), but that we may be altogether apart from it in spirit, yet serving the interests of Christ as His ambassadors in it?

Are you prepared, by the help of God, to take up the pathway suitable to one whose calling is heavenly and whose citizenship is in heaven (Phil. iii. 20)? Do you value the place that is yours as a member of Christ's body, united to Him, the glorious Head, by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost? Do you appreciate the prospect before you, as part of the bride of Christ, that pearl of great price for which He sold His all?

These are pointed and personal questions. Carry them, dear Christian reader, into the presence of God, and seek grace from Him to keep you from being a twentieth-century Jethro.

The truth needs not man; man needs the truth.

The abiding in the sense of grace, in the presence of God, is the secret of all holiness, peace, and quietness of spirit.

He will not always use us in everything, but He will always do His own work, and we can or ought to trust Him for it.

God could find no rest save in Jesus. We may look throughout the world, we shall find nothing which can satisfy our hearts but Jesus.

The Missionary Problem (No. 1).

(COLONEL JACOB).

“The Present Hour.”

WITH reference to the missionary problem no doubt the present moment is unique.

A mighty conference of missionaries has lately assembled in Edinburgh, in which all denominations of Protestants were represented. For two years previously experts had been gathering information about every department of Christian missions. This information was presented in carefully condensed form at the conference, and amidst great enthusiasm an appeal was sent to the church in Christian lands, from which appeal we make a few extracts :

“Our survey has impressed upon us the momentous character of the present hour. We have heard from many quarters of the awakening of great nations, of the opening of long-closed doors, and of movements which are placing all at once before the church a new world to be won for Christ. The next ten years will in all probability constitute a turning-point in human history, and may be of more critical importance in determining the spiritual evolution of mankind than many centuries of ordinary experience. If those years are wasted, harm may be wrought that centuries are not able to repair. On the other hand, if they are rightly used they may be among the most glorious in Christian history.”

“The old scale and the old ideal were framed in view of a state of the world which has ceased to exist. They are no longer adequate for the new world, which is arising out of the ruins of the old.”

“God is demanding of us all a new order of life, of a more arduous and self-sacrificing nature than the old. But if, as we believe, the way of duty is the way of revelation, there is certainly implied in this imperative call of duty a latent assurance that God is greater, more loving, nearer, and more available for our help and comfort than any man has dreamed. Assuredly then we are called to make new discoveries of the grace and power of God, for ourselves, for the church, and for the world; and in the strength of that firmer and bolder faith in Him, to face the new age and the new task with a new consecration.”

This is the view taken therefore by the mass of Protestant churches, as

represented by their delegates at Edinburgh this year.

It is proposed here in a few short articles to study briefly some aspects of the missionary problem, especially those which refer to the individual missionary, and we hope to look at “HIS CALL,” “HIS MESSAGE AND LIFE,” “HIS GOAL,” and finally to survey “THE OUTLOOK,” as it appears now, and will be.

For the last forty-two years the greater part of the writer's life has been spent in India, and he has been, and is, in close touch with Indian people—Christian, Hindu, and Moham-medan; and prayerfully, and humbly, with Bible in hand, he has studied these questions on the spot, seeking to understand the matter reverently and impartially in the light that God gives by His Spirit through the Word of truth, which alone can make us comprehend what is taking place under our very eyes.

As introductory to our theme let us say our comfort is that God will not give His glory unto another; that divine persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, cannot possibly fail; whatever They have set Themselves to do, They will do. We may yield ourselves to the will of God, and this is most blessed. We may insist on doing our own wills and going our own way; this is appallingly sad. Nevertheless, whichever we do, the purpose of God will be accomplished, His glory will be established, sin will be overthrown; for Christ must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet, and God shall be all in all.

It is written, “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, and

by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts ii. 23). This verse is a marvellous illustration of the fact that the purpose of God will be accomplished whatever happens, though our responsibility is unchanged thereby. God is determined to have His own way, and to the Son He has committed the task of carrying out His purpose; that is to Him "who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. i. 3). Of Him it is said, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Heb. i. 8); and again, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands: they shall perish; but Thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail" (Heb. i. 10-12).

The Holy Spirit of God is the Agent through whom all the purpose of God is subjectively accomplished.

It is most necessary to bear all these things in mind, for otherwise we shall assuredly become swollen by the idea of our own importance, or else we shall despair, our eyes being opened to behold the real state of things in the world to-day, and be inclined to give up the whole thing as hopeless.

Thank God for the greatness of Christ, who is the power and the wisdom of God! We know that the crucified One is on the throne, and all is safe in His hands. In view of His greatness, how puny are we, how trumpety our efforts, how paltry are our works. When we have done all that is commanded we are still unprofitable servants. And on the other hand, how stable are our blessings, how gracious must be the results of what Christ is working out in us and by us. "Therefore will we

not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea" (Ps. xlvi. 2). If apparently the foundations are destroyed, yea, and all should seem to go wrong, we can still bless the Lord and rejoice, for not one jot or tittle of the purpose of God shall fail in its accomplishment.

The Missionary: His Call.

The Apostle Paul is the model missionary, and no one can be successful save in so far as he follows his steps. The Lord appeared to him from the glory and sent him to the nations "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me" (Acts xxvi. 18).

No one can truly serve God as a missionary unless first he is the subject of the operation of God. God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness must have shined in his heart to give him the light (or, for the shining forth) of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (see 2 Cor. iv. 6). This is entirely personal; it is not obtained by being born of Christian parents, by education, forms or ceremonies, or any such thing, but by the sovereign action of God. It is God's own act.

Secondly, God must send him: a missionary is a sent one, and only Christ has authority so to send. The disciples were told to pray to the Lord of the harvest that *He* would send forth labourers into His harvest. The initiative must come from the Lord, and not from himself, and the Lord will equip him as He equipped the Apostle Paul. The missionary will be absolutely useless unless these two conditions are found in him: Christ must be revealed in him (see Gal. i. 15, 16), and Christ must send him, for "how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom. x. 15). The task is such that

unless there is a God-given conviction that the Lord has sent, and the Lord will sustain, it is useless to take up such a mission. The Lord is supreme, and while there is the general call in the written Word, there must be also the individual personal call by the Spirit within, if we are to go out as from the Lord. This call may come in a variety of ways, but the true call will always have something of these two characters :

(1) There will be a longing for the glory of God, and a great desire that God may, by Christ being known, find His pleasure in men; and

(2) There will be the bowels of compassion which yearn over men, longing that they may be brought to God through Christ.

In each case it will be seen that Christ alone is the way to God, and by Him alone can men be blest. If the call be really from God it will abide in the soul and become a great burden till obeyed; definite instructions and guidance will be received by the subject soul, and the true heart will obey the call, whether men approve or the reverse. The call of God is paramount, though, of course, the call of God will never require a soul to disobey or ignore the written Word.

The work of God is very varied, as it is written, "there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all" (1 Cor. xii. 4-6). They therefore who go out to heathendom will not only preach among the heathen: a great deal else has to be done, especially in connection with the

care of the converts, etc.; yet, whether it is a question of deliverance in the first place from heathen darkness or the maintenance of the Christian life and works afterwards, it is necessary to see that Christ is the only governing object before the soul, and the only One to be presented to men.

The missionary's object is not to educate or civilize; it is not to make the heathen nicer people, to deal with or to uplift their moral status; it is not to remedy flagrant abuses, such as polygamy and concubinage among Moham-medans, or the treatment of Hindu women, etc., though all these results will follow indirectly where Christ is received. But the one object which the missionary should have before him should be *Christ*—Christ presented objectively, that He may be found subjectively in the souls of men by the Spirit of God. This is all, and the only Agent is the Spirit of God. Human wisdom and philosophy, the inventions of modern science, etc., may break down superstition, but will do nothing to win to Christ nor form Christ within; and the missionary should be able to say, "One thing I do!" The Epistle to the Colossians is very clear on this subject, and we do well to take heed to it, especially to chapter ii. 8-10.

Another thing to be borne in mind is that *the religions of the heathen are a terrible hindrance to the knowledge of Christ*. In this connection an entirely new wave of thought is evidently sweeping over the missionary world, for it is boldly stated that in their religion is the "half-truth;" and if this is not met firmly and courageously by the truth the results will be fatal.

(To be continued.)

In the measure in which the Lord Jesus knew what it was to be holy, He felt what it was to be made sin before God. In the measure in which He knew the love of God, He felt what it was to be forsaken of God.

The clouds and darkness that come upon us are forerunners of showers of blessing—larger blessing than we could receive without the deepening of the work of God in the soul that comes through trial.

“A Better Country.”

From the Rhythm of Bernard de Morlaix.

FOR thee, O dear, dear country !
 Mine eyes their vigils keep ;
 For very love, beholding
 Thy happy name, they weep.

The mention of thy glory
 Is unction to the breast,
 And medicine in sickness,
 And love, and life, and rest.

O one, O one-ly mansion !
 O Paradise of joy !
 Where tears are ever banished,
 And smiles have no alloy.

Thy ageless walls are bounded
 With amethyst unpriced :
 Thy saints build up its fabric,
 And the corner-stone is CHRIST.

The cross is all thy splendour,
 The Crucified thy praise,
 His laud and benediction
 His ransomed people raise :

JESUS, the gem of beauty,
 True God and Man, they sing,
 The never-failing Garden,
 The ever-golden Ring ;

The Door, the Pledge, the Husband
 The guardian of His court :
 The Day-star of salvation,
 The Porter and the Port.

Thou hast no shore, fair ocean !
 Thou hast no time, bright day !
 Dear fountain of refreshment
 To pilgrims far away.

The Victory of Love.

(J. T. MAWSON).

. . . And they took Jesus, and led him away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst (John xiv. 16, 17, 18).

“THEY took Jesus and led Him away :” in that the guilt of men reached its flood-tide.

“He bearing His cross went forth :” in this was manifested the great victory of divine love over human hate. He was not dragged forth, nor driven forth: He *went* forth. No man took His life from Him: He laid it down Himself. The shouts of the rabble smote His ear, and, with a holy sensitiveness, He keenly felt it all, and yet no thought of saving Himself was in His heart. In majestic lowliness He went forth, bearing His cross. He knew, to its last bitterness, all that the cross meant. He was not taken by surprise, nor did He go forth on the impulse of a moment. On the night

that was passed in Gethsemane’s garden He had looked into the darkness and had fully counted the cost. He had talked of it on the holy mount with Moses and Elias. This hour had been planned in the council chamber of eternity ere ever He came, and now He does not draw back. There was no resistance, no regret, and every step He took towards Golgotha shook the kingdom of the devil.

And there “they crucified Him :” and the crucified Christ is God’s answer to the devil’s lie in Eden. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John iii. 16). If God had left us to reap the bitter

harvest of our rebellion and sin, we could not have complained; but, instead of this, He undertook to dispel the darkness and overthrow the power of the devil by this mighty and convincing proof of His love to us. Satan had made men believe that God was a hard Master, gathering where He had not sowed. God has proved that He is full of love by giving the very best gift that heaven contained, even His own beloved Son, to bear the penalty of our sin; and it is when the glorious light of this love shines into the hearts of men that Satan's thralldom comes to an end. Jesus was lifted up upon the cross, and that lifting has declared the whole truth, and we who believe it have been drawn to Him. He has become our great attractive centre, and the devil no longer holds us as his prey. The lie is laid bare, the darkness of ignorance past, and God has triumphed; for the prince of this world is cast out of the hearts of those who believe. He no longer holds them as his citadel. They have surrendered themselves to the God whose perfect love has been demonstrated in the cross of Christ.

How great is the splendour of Calvary! By its glorious light we have been awakened from our night of sleep as by the rising sun at morn. We have been

compelled to exclaim: "Then God did love us, after all!" The entrance of His word has given light, and with light has come liberty. The curtains of darkness have been torn asunder, and our souls have stepped forth into the day.

Science has revealed to us the fact that light, like sound, is caused by vibrations, and with all vibration there is music, and if the auditory nerve were as sensitive as the optic we should hear the music of the light as well as see its beauty. Certainly the light of God's love brings sweetest melody with it, even the melody of heaven—and the chord that was lost in Eden is found again; only the music is sweeter, the strain higher, and the glory of the praise more wonderful; and as we gaze upon Him who is now upon the throne, and in whose face all the brightness of God's grace shines, our hearts will be kept in tune, and our whole souls vibrate in responsive praise to the love of God.

Nor have we any doubt as to the completeness of the triumph of Jesus, for He is alive from the dead, and His glorious words to us are: "Fear not; I am the First and the Last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. i. 17, 18).

"Where is the Lord?"

(C. E. H. WARREN).

Neither said they, Where is the Lord that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt? (Jer. ii. 6).

THIS was a most important inquiry that Israel of old refused to make; it is as important to us as to them, and to answer the question referred to is the object of these few thoughts.

What a bright day must that have been for those two of the Baptist's disciples when they heard their teacher's Spirit-taught utterance, "Behold the

Lamb of God;" and, following Him of whom John spake, were welcomed to abide with Him. They could go forth from that dwelling-place and say with confidence to others, "WE HAVE FOUND HIM" (John i. 36-42).

But this was a picture of Christianity in which is found the new and only Centre for the saints of God, and the One in

whom every desire is met, and on whom the heart can rest in full satisfaction.

At the Right Hand of God.

Those days of earthly manifestation are past, and the Lord is no longer here on earth. The disciples saw Him taken up into heaven, and Stephen beheld Him where He is, and made known the fact in those glowing words: "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts vii. 56). This is the answer to the question, "Where is the Lord?" But what effect has this great fact had upon our souls? The revelation of Christ in glory was not for Stephen alone, and until in some way we know for ourselves what he learnt we have not entered into what Christianity is in its fulness.

That this is for *all* may be learned in 2 Corinthians iii. 18: "We *all*, beholding the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, are transformed" (think of this last word, not merely saved but *transformed*). By this revelation the path of the believer through this world is at once determined. He has found One who is outside all earth's confusion and corruption, whether political or ecclesiastical, the vision of whose glory blinds the eyes to all the false glory of this world (Acts xxii. 11); so that the heart is taken from earth to heaven, and the feet, guided by love, not driven by law, are placed in that upward path "where life and glory are"—the way Stephen went. The knowledge of Christ in glory makes a man a stranger on earth and a pilgrim to heaven, it transforms him from glory to glory, so that his body becomes the vessel for the display of the life of Jesus, as he bears about the dying of Jesus (2 Cor. iv. 10). If we are not right in this, nothing can be wholly right. It is the lack of *this* acquaintance with Christ which has operated so disastrously to mar the expression of the unity of the church, and to impair collective testimony to the truth.

A well-known servant of Christ wrote in the year 1828: "The unity of the church cannot possibly be found till the common object of those who are members of it is the glory of the Head;" and the same writer elsewhere makes this remark from the opposite side: "Worldliness always destroys unity; the flesh cannot rise up to heaven, nor descend in love to every need. It walks in the separative comparison of self-importance. 'I am of Paul,' etc." How much the unity of the Spirit is thus seen to differ from that which can be brought about by human arrangement I need scarcely say.

But the Spirit of God not only reveals to us the place and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven, but He would have us know the relationship in which we stand to Him. "At that day" (the day of the Spirit's presence on earth) "ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." Which of us at all adequately realizes that Christ where He is describes our life, our place, our portion?

This identification of the saints with Christ in glory was revealed to Saul of Tarsus at the moment of his conversion, and by him made known to believers everywhere (Acts xxvi. 16). Let us consider this glorious triumph of divine wisdom (Eph. i. 8), power (i. 19), and love (ii. 4), which secures, out of a world of death (i. 20, ii. 1), a people for an eternal union with the Saviour, the exalted Son of Man—a redeemed people whose relation to Him is described as that of His body, His fulness, His bride. In Genesis ii. 18 God's thoughts are revealed in the words: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him," i.e. his counterpart.

This was a figure of Christ and the church (Eph. v. 32) and helps us to understand what the church is to Him. As the body of Christ the church is for the telling out of the Head. And as we understand this we can rightly value the Apostle's prayer that we might

know the hope of God's calling, and rejoice in the conscious knowledge of the divine triumph over all the forces of sin and Satan.

In Believers on Earth.

Now though the church has miserably failed in its responsibility, yet the Spirit who is here will, so surely as He is God, produce and maintain an answer on earth to Christ "till He come." This answer was set forth in the conversion and ministry of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. In Acts vii. Saul heard the dying Stephen speaking to Christ in heaven; this judicial murder of Christ's witness was really the answer of the already guilty nation to the renewed offer of mercy in chapter iii. 19, 20. Christ was refused by them, not only when He was on earth, but He was also refused as the One whom God had glorified in heaven. But from heaven there came, in answer to this crime, the declaration that though personally rejected and cast out of the world, yet He was really here in His saints—"Why persecutest thou ME?" Here is another answer to the question—"Where is the Lord?" Yes, in spite of every opposing power, HE IS HERE. If His saints are identified with Him in His place in heaven, speaking from that place He identifies Himself with them on earth. Doctrinally this blessed fact is stated in 1 Corinthians xii. 12: "Even as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, *so also is the Christ* [N.T.]. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." Again, in Colossians i. 27 we learn how God desires to make known to His saints what is the wealth of the glory of this mystery—"Christ *in you*." Also in chapter iii., referring to the new man, it is written: "Christ is all and IN ALL." If it is a glorious triumph and victory for God that Christ and His own are one in heavenly glory, it is no less a defeat of the enemy that He is here in us who believe and cannot be

displaced till the last member of His mystical body is saved out of the hand of the mighty one (Isa. xlix. 24) and His shout calls the church home (1 Thess. iv.).

Notice how the inspired Apostle uses the word *all* (cf. Col. iii. 11). This is no select company of Christians, but includes every believer on earth. Do our thoughts follow these lines? Or are we making churches of our own with artificial limitations to unity and fellowship? Let us remember that the Holy Spirit includes in His unity every bit of Christ on earth, for there is nothing of Christ on earth which is not the fruit of the Spirit's work. If we reject one in whose life Christ is truly manifested, might not his Master and ours ask, "Why rejectest thou Me?" I say, "one in whose life Christ is manifested" because there is no other way that we have of knowing who are His. Such show that they are calling on the Lord out of a pure heart. As to others, "the Lord knoweth them that are His." We are certainly responsible to recognize and own the work of the Spirit where it is seen. Thus holiness is maintained and the unity of the Spirit honoured. It is interesting to notice how this principle is applied in Philemon (ver. 6), when Paul desires that the fellowship of his faith might become effectual, or operative, in the acknowledgment of every good thing that is in us towards Christ. This is how the Apostle, to whom the mystery was revealed (Eph. iii. 3), seeks that it should come out in practice—in the recognition of the good in our brethren. Let us ask our own consciences how far we are travelling this happy road in the communion of the Holy Ghost.

How blessed is this knowledge of Christ in heaven, the saints one with Him there, and Christ expressing Himself in the lives of His own on earth! Should this not fill us with the joy of heaven, and point the way of happy fellowship for earth? Is any other way the way of the Spirit? If He has

come from heaven to witness of Christ, He will surely direct us in this recognition of Him. Christian fellowship has Christ for its centre, who is personally the object of our faith and love, and Christ for its circumference in His saints.

In the Midst.

In order to realize this in practice Matthew xviii. 20 is given us for guidance—a scripture so often quoted, so little known, and, alas, so often sinned against. I quote the words of a departed servant of Christ, who loved his Master and His saints well: "I believe that it is most lamentable and reprehensible the little sense or faith there is in the Lord's presence in the assembly." Nevertheless, the word abides—"Where two or three are gathered together unto My name, there am I in the midst of them." Here is another answer to our question—"Where is the Lord?" In this case, however, His presence is conditional on the action of the Spirit who gathers to His name;

It is a time to be entirely heavenly, for the earth is far from God, and daily its darkness closes in, but we belong to the light, and await the coming of the Lord.

If you were constantly waiting for Him, would it not change you? . . . Would people be heaping up money or treasures when they know He is coming?

It is of all-importance that our inner life should be kept up to the height of our outward activity, else we are near some spiritual fall.

It is not dangerous, as people often say, to be on the mount; but to have been there. When Paul got out of the third heaven, he wanted the thorn in the flesh. Then there was a danger of his saying, "No one but you, Paul, has been there."

and let it be remembered that as the magnet attracts the steel, so "the name" (see 3 John ver. 7, R.V.) only attracts what is akin to itself. In the flesh, whether amiable or vicious, there is no response, and just as nothing in us but the fruit of the Spirit's work is attracted to that name, so no other power than that of the Spirit can keep us in accord with Himself thus known "in the midst." Let us cultivate a real horror of human regulation and legislation where the voice of Christ should alone be heard and His authority recognized.

I am persuaded that the knowledge of Christ in these three relations will be to us as compass, rudder, and motive-power in all the difficulties of these perilous times, and we shall have our souls rightly adjusted towards the Lord in heaven and His church on earth.

May the Spirit give grace and energy, so that we may make it our aim to be well pleasing unto Him (2 Cor. v. 9, R.V.).

Is the thought of the Lord's coming your daily delight? Does it influence you in the ten thousand details of your everyday life? Or are you so walking hand in hand with the world that the very thought of His coming fills you with shame?

The Christian may sometimes say, "I am not in a state to praise;" he may, it is true, be more or less capable of doing it well, but he is always in a state to do it . . . because Christ is always suitable to a sinful soul. His praises will be modified, but he will always praise.

Whenever God has made His will known to us, we are not to allow any after-influence whatever to call it in question, even although the latter may appear to take the form of the Word of God. If we were morally nearer to the Lord we should feel that the only true and right position is to follow that which He told us at first,

The School of God in the Book of Daniel.—No. 5.

(M. C. GAHAN)

Daniel v. 25-31.

25 And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

26 This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it.

27 TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.

28 PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

29 Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

30 In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.

31 And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.

IF Nebuchadnezzar's case represents the final triumph of grace over human pride "when He seeth that power is gone," the history of King Belshazzar tells of the "glittering sword" in the hands of Jehovah, executing vengeance on His enemies.

But Nebuchadnezzar appeared on the scene as one absolutely ignorant of the majesty and power of the living God. His sin was great surely, but it must not be forgotten that he emerged out of a domain of moral and spiritual darkness that enveloped him and his kingdom, directly into the presence of a God hitherto unknown, there to learn for himself experimentally the characteristics of *the true and only GOD*.

Hence warning dreams and supernatural interpretations, patient remonstrances and governmental discipline, resulting in "a broken spirit and a contrite heart."

Not so Belshazzar, who from early years, it may be from infancy, was nurtured in the light of all that Israel's God had done and was able to do, the memory of which was yet fresh in the minds of court and State officials, by whom Belshazzar in his youth had doubtless been surrounded. In addition to which the most striking demonstration of divine power formed the subject of public proclamation by Nebuchadnezzar himself, while it is

more than probable that Daniel would faithfully impress upon the prince, when yet young in years, a fuller knowledge of the true God.

Undeterred, however, by the fate that overtook his grandfather, Belshazzar added to the spirit of presumption and defiance that characterized him that of profanity and contempt for Jehovah, in desecrating "the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God," out of which a licentious company "drank wine and *praised the gods of gold and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, of stone.*"

Thus the object-lessons presented by Jehovah in His dealings with Nebuchadnezzar were treated with scorn by Belshazzar, and His power again challenged in the full blaze of well-known facts and unmistakable warnings.

Defiance reached its full limits when the sacred vessels were utilized for the drinking of libations to licentious deities. This was not resistance born of ignorance as in Nebuchadnezzar's case, but a deliberate hardening of the heart and closing of the eyes to demonstrations, oft repeated, that carried their own convictions as to the omnipotence of the God of Israel. But just when the revelry and festivities were at their height, "upon the plaister

of the wall of the king's palace," fingers of a man's hand are discerned by the king, writing those words that proved uninterpretable by the royal astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers. This writing, that struck consternation and terror to the heart of the king, gave Daniel a new opportunity of witnessing for God. It seems as though the queen-consort had been arrested, if not seriously impressed by previous events with which Daniel had been so intimately connected, since it was through her prompt remembrance of Daniel's prominent part in the interpretation of former dreams and visions, that he was urgently summoned into the presence of the king.

But Belshazzar's opportunity had come and gone: the light that was vouchsafed had become darkness, and the grace with which he was historically familiar had but petrified his conscience, rendering it impervious to any emotion but that of terror-stricken remorse.

To such an one, exalted though he was, and occupying the throne of a vast empire, Daniel would place himself under no obligations. The very terms in which he expresses himself towards Belshazzar breathe severity and condemnation, strikingly in contrast to his utterances of gracious remonstrance with Nebuchadnezzar: "Let thy gifts be to thyself and thy rewards to another, yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known the interpretation." In few words Daniel revives the king's memory as to all that had befallen his ancestor, whose pride and presumption had brought about his degradation to the condition of a brute beast; an arrow deliberately adjusted to the bow going home, barbed with steel, to the king's conscience: "And thou his son, O Belshazzar, *hast not humbled thine heart,* **THOUGH THOU KNEWEST ALL THIS.**" A few more words epitomize the pride of the king's heart, and the profanity of his deeds of desecration and defiance against the living God, closing with a

reminder as to the relations in which the king's life stood towards the God whom he had defied, and the responsibilities which his knowledge of Jehovah had created, only to be contemptuously discarded. "And the God *in whose hand thy breath is,* and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified." From such an offended and insulted Deity the part of a hand was sent, by which the mystic words were written, "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN."

"MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it." The last sands of the hour-glass of Chaldean empire were about to run out in the person of its last impious king.

"TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." Jehovah's estimate of Belshazzar's course is announced here, when weighed in the balances of the sanctuary.

"UPHARSIN; Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians"—with whom at that time Belshazzar was at war.

But the proximity of the judgment was evidently unknown to the king. Secure in a false confidence as to the strength of his defences, he gives orders never to be fulfilled, in spite of Daniel's rejection of his patronage, for the due recognition of his services, and his early exaltation to the position of third ruler in the kingdom.

But the invading conqueror was at the gates, for judgment was to be swiftly executed: "*In that night* was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain," and Darius the Median took the kingdom.

Surely "he, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy," and as truly "he that walketh uprightly shall be saved; but he that is perverse in his ways *shall fall at once*" (Prov. xxviii. 18, xxix. 1).

Correspondence :—Knowing Christ after the Flesh.

To the Editors of *Scripture Truth*

The question asked—viz “Is to know Christ after the flesh & knowledge the flesh is capable of?”—seems very easily answered. That answer is a distinct negative. The answers already given are very fine expositions of what it is to know Christ in the new place which is Man. He has taken. But I do not think that they meet the mind of your questioner.

What does he mean by the flesh being capable of knowing Christ? He would need to define the word ‘flesh.’ No doubt he simply means “flesh and blood, or man in nature.” If so, what is such in one but a fallen being who is incapable of knowing God apart from that work of the Spirit whereby alone he can be made to see?

The flesh is totally incapable of knowing Christ in any condition. ‘They that are in the flesh cannot please God—they are “alienated from the life of God through the darkness that is in them.” Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ Saul was stricken with blindness before his eyes were opened!

A more important truth for the child of God to-day can hardly be conceived than that he should know Christ where He now is seated on high, for that alone gives the right idea of Christianity and of its precious heavenly links. It detaches the heart from things here, and binds it with the blessed Lord where He is. It determines our place and our path. But it is only the Christian, the man who has been converted and in whom the Spirit is who can know the Lord at all.

Do you not feel that this question should receive a very specific answer to this? The questioner may not have stated his query with the clearness requisite, but the answer to the actual words should be as decisive as firm. For one thing I am thankful and that is that the two answers given have presented the truth in the passage in a charming and most helpful way—but let us give “the flesh” no kind of quarter anywhere.

J. WILSON SMITH

To the Editors of *Scripture Truth*

THE question is asked if to know Christ “after the flesh” is “knowledge the flesh is capable of”

In clearing the ground for an answer it would be well to state that ‘flesh’ is used in two senses in Scripture. (1) To indicate a condition of flesh and blood, a link with the first creation, and in this connection alone does it refer to our Lord, in His case, of course,

absolutely and entirely apart from sin or the effects of the fall. (2) To describe that evil nature which our first parents acquired at the fall, and transmitted to all of their race, except the one blessed exception already mentioned.

I take it the questioner uses the word “flesh” in the first sense only. It *must* be so in connection with our blessed Lord, and as to mankind, flesh in the second sense could not know Christ at all. The demons recognized who the Son of God was, it is true, but such recognition and true knowledge are two different things—and the recognition of demons was very much fuller than that of men.

Now arises the inquiry—“Was Christ when in this world, known ‘after the flesh’?” He was—but here we tread on sacred ground for the questioner adds, ‘Is this knowledge what the flesh is capable of?’ and to that I should answer No for you must emphasize the words *capable of* and give them their true meaning.

What is the only impression the flesh is capable of in this connection? Isaiah tells us “*He hath no form nor comeliness, and therefore shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him*,” yet in the eyes of God He was as ‘*a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground*,’ the one object of beauty and comeliness in this world.

The Gospels tell us what impression the flesh is capable of. Men saw His miracles and they considered Him to be a mere prophet. Again, they charged Him with being devil-possessed and lunatic. He moved among men, and they did not know Him. John is very sweeping in his refusal of the idea that flesh is capable of knowing Christ after the flesh. “*He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not*.”

When Simon Peter, in contradistinction to the wild guesses the flesh was capable of, recognized in ‘Christ after the flesh,’ “*Christ the Son of the living God, the Lord*” clearly indicated that flesh was not capable of such knowledge when He replied, “*Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven*.”

Of course more than manhood was involved in this answer, for it must ever be remembered that manhood did not cover the truth of Christ’s person. He was even as a Man absolutely unique and besides that He was more than Man even God and the Sent One of God, the Messiah the Christ, for Christ is but the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Messiah. The mystery of His person may never be solved by us. It is beyond us, and to attempt it has brought sad trouble in numberless cases. It were well to lay this

most remarkable and absolute statement of our Lord's to heart, "*No man knoweth the Son, but the Father,*" and let it ever be the absolute check to the prying of irreverence into what is not nor could be revealed.

And now can we go a step further. 2 Corinthians v. 16 shows that if it was once possible to know "Christ after the flesh," that knowledge is not possible now. He has died out of that order of things. Indeed, He came into that order of things for the definite purpose of setting that order aside, as being unprofitable in every sense of the word. "He . . . came by water and blood," that is, He came in that connection. If blessing had to flow to us it must be so. "Water and blood" express the scope and purpose of His death—"blood" to expiate for our guilt, "water"

to set aside the order of things that made "blood" necessary. If the fruit of a tree is bad you need to end the tree as well as pluck the fruit.

Christ's death has set this whole order of things aside, and whilst we are left in it, and have our links for the moment, and rightly so, with flesh and blood, *in those links our TRUE life does not consist.* And any knowledge we have of Christ necessarily is outside of this world, its order, "flesh and blood," and is connected with Himself where He is, in a new order of things, summed up in the expression "new creation," Himself the glorious Head of a new race with new affections and links.

ALGERNON J. POLLOCK.

The Editors accept no responsibility for views contributed to the Correspondence page; though they do not propose to publish all letters received on subjects under discussion.

Eternal Punishment (VII).

(JAMES BOYD).

The Spirits in Prison—continued.

MR. CHAMBERS tells us some very wonderful things, things we should never have dreamed of had he not told us. He says that the popular idea is

"That when a good person dies, he goes direct to heaven; and that when a wicked person dies, he passes at once into hell. . . . But it is not true. You may search the Bible from end to end without finding a passage which will justify such a statement."

Indeed! We are told in Luke's Gospel that our Lord was carried up into heaven (chap. xxiv. ver. 51); and Peter says, "Jesus Christ; who is gone into heaven" (1 Peter iii.); and Stephen: "Behold, I see heaven opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God;" and then he says, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts vii.). Had Mr. C. not put me on my guard I should have thought Stephen's spirit went to heaven where Jesus was. Paul also speaks of departing and being with Christ: one would have thought, where Christ was. Why he should in this connection refer to such passages as Matthew xiii. 40-43, xxv. 31-46, John

v. 28-29, is beyond my power to understand, as they have no connection with the subject at all. But he finds a passage in John iii. 13 which is "more convincing," and "the force of which it is impossible to explain away." The passage is, "No one hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." He makes this passage refer to "the good men who had departed the earth-life before He [Jesus] came." This is a sample of Mr. C.'s way of handling Scripture. Where were Enoch and Elijah? They are said to have been taken to heaven, at least Elijah is (2 Kings ii. 11). And there are no contradictions in Scripture. Had Mr. C. paid the least attention to the words of the Lord to Nicodemus he would have seen that the Lord is speaking about bringing to light heavenly things, and foretelling the hopelessness of their being believed by man in his natural condition, for he had not believed the earthly things which he had heard from the lips of Jesus; the earthly things being the new birth, and the things relating to the kingdom of God. He

had told them earthly things, now He was about to tell them heavenly things, and no one on earth had ever been to heaven, except Himself who could then be said to be in heaven. He is not speaking about people who have passed away from this scene, but of men on earth who might take the place of communicating anything to others. None of such had ever gone up to heaven and come down again to report anything about such a place. All were shut up to Christ for any information on heavenly things.

He is right when he says that people do not go to hell when they die; if by *hell* he means the lake of fire. Righteous and unrighteous alike go into *hades* at death. *Hades* is simply the state of the departed, but refers always in the New Testament to the spirits of men, and not to their bodies. In the Old Testament sheol seems to have reference to both body and spirit. Indeed, in the New Testament hell (*hades*) and the grave are very carefully distinguished. But while it is so that the judgment of the wicked has as yet to take place, and that it is in the *body* they will be judged, still their eternal doom is just as certainly fixed when they are found in *hades* as it will be when the last judgment has taken place and they are in the lake of fire. That they can be spoken of as in a flame of torment is evident, but that they are not yet being dealt with according to their works is just as evident (Luke xvi. 24; Rom. ii. 5-16; Rev. xx. 11-15). What the torment proceeds from we are not informed. But, as I have said, their doom is fixed. There is no crossing the great gulf. Indeed, the doom of the Christ-rejector is fixed before he leaves this world. Jesus says, "He that believeth not is condemned already;" "the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36).

There is no room in Scripture for preaching in *hades*. As we have seen, the "dead in Christ" are, at His coming again, raised in incorruption, power, and glory; living believers are

changed; and all are caught up together, and are for ever with the Lord. At His appearing again, those who know not God, and those who believe not the gospel, are punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord; the living nations are judged, and the unrighteous are cast into everlasting fire. At the close of the millennial reign of Christ the wicked dead are all raised and judged for the deeds done *in the body*; that is, for that which they have done on earth; and the result of that judgment is the lake of fire for all who come into it. There is no reference to *hades* at all except to say that death and it are cast into the lake of fire. Death and *hades* cease to exist by the fact of all who are found in that state being raised, judged, and cast into the lake of fire.

To what, then, does 1 Peter iii. 19-21 refer? This we must now consider. Now when Christ died all who had ever died from sin entered into the world were in *hades*—that is, their spirits were there and their bodies in the grave. Why the blessed Lord should single out a special class of sinners to whom He should preach the gospel is rather puzzling. But it is not at all puzzling to Mr. C. Nothing seems puzzling to him. How, then, does he explain it? The way in which he explains all his other theories; it would not be "right or fair that the Almighty should act thus." All shall have an opportunity of hearing and embracing the glad tidings. "His church would preach the gospel in the intermediate life, and its mission, incapable of fulfilment here, would be accomplished there." This is from the pen of Arthur Chambers, Associate of King's College, London, Vicar of Brockenhurst, Hants. He takes upon himself to inform us concerning the service of the church in *hades*, and knows no more about her service, *as regards the earth*, than he would have done if he had never seen a Bible. If he had read the Scriptures better he would have found out that

the church as such neither preaches nor teaches. The Lord has His *servants* for this purpose. When He ascended up on high He gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers for the perfecting of the saints and for the work of the ministry, and these gifts have their place *in the church* (Eph. iv. 11; 1 Cor. xii. 28). But the church herself does no preaching.

Even if we accepted Mr. C.'s view of the passage in 1 Peter which is under consideration we would still have to ask ourselves why those *Antediluvians were singled out for this favour*, for we cannot very well accept what Mr. C. tells us about the others, as he is not inspired. He must be held by us as knowing no more than what has been revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and if the gospel was preached in hades to those sinners, we have no record of others having a like post-mortem opportunity. But he has not only the Lord preaching, but the church also. His estimate of the intelligence of those into whose hands his book would fall is not very flattering. If he had made some attempt to show us from Scripture that the *Sodomites, and all such who were cut off in their sins*, had also the gospel preached to them in hades, we might have taken him seriously, and have believed that his object in writing the book was an honest attempt to help us into the mind of God; but from the way he handles his subject the conviction is forced upon us that his *prejudices* are of more importance to him than is the truth of God. His whole book is built up on a passage which has caused no end of contention amongst Bible students, while all the plain and simple statements are passed by as though they had no existence. Now, my contention is that there is no preaching in hades at all, that there is no room for it in the revelation which God has so graciously given to His people, that it would be absolutely valueless if there were, for the judgment has only reference to the deeds done in the body,

and that this being so, the reception or rejection of the gospel by the spirits in prison would not count. But I have already proven from the Scripture that such a notion proceeds only from the mind of man, or from Satan his fell destroyer.

What, then, are we to learn from the scripture referred to, and what was the object of the Spirit of God in placing such a statement on record? How does it fit into the framework of the epistle in which we find it? In both Peter's epistles the blessed Lord would have us learn that He "knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Peter ii. 9). The angels that sinned are said to be reserved unto judgment in chains of darkness (ver. 4; Jude 6). In chapter ii. 17 there are those spoken of to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. The present heavens and earth are said to be reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men (chap. iii.). Jude 13 speaks of some to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. 1 Peter i. tells us of an inheritance which is reserved in heaven for believers. Now the deliverance of Noah, and the keeping in custody of the spirits of those who were ungodly, are simply instances among all these others of how God can deliver the godly out of temptation and keep the unjust until the day of judgment to be punished. Nothing could be more simple; and it is also in perfect harmony with the way in which things are brought before us in the epistles of Peter and in that of Jude. These facts clear away every ambiguity which could exist in any mind on the whole subject. Noah was delivered from the temptation, and the Antediluvians are reserved in prison until the day of judgment, when they shall receive their punishment.

But I must say a word as to why the special case of the Antediluvians is instanced by the Spirit of God. A

Messiah of the seed of David, in flesh and blood, in the midst of Israel, and on the throne in Zion, was the hope of the nation, and for this they waited. But by their rejection of Him they had lost Him in this character. He was *put to death in the flesh*. But in resurrection, "quickenened by the Spirit" (or in Spirit), He could only be among them in a spiritual way, as He was with Noah. But not only had the nation rejected Him when presented to them in the flesh, but in resurrection they also refused Him, and emphasized that rejection by the stoning of Stephen. Then began the day of God's long-suffering with that disobedient nation, answering to His long-suffering with the Antediluvians in Noah's day. The godly were being delivered, and the unjust reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished. But just as the Spirit of Christ strove with the Antediluvians while the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, so was the Spirit of Christ speaking to the guilty nation by the gospel which was preached by the apostles, for He was *not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*. The salvation accorded to Noah came to light in another world after the old world was destroyed by the flood; so the salvation accorded to the believing remnant could not be revealed in this world, but it will be revealed at the coming of Christ, and for this they were to wait (1 Peter i. 1-13). It was by His Spirit Christ preached to those Antediluvians through Noah, but without any saving effect, for they were disobedient.

We shall sorrow at no sacrifice when we meet Him.

Whatever produces a care in us produces God's care for us.

Faith is the receiving agent of the soul, as the hand is of the body. Faith must lay hold of spiritual truth as the hand does of food, and convey it to the hungry soul.

Therefore there is a strong analogy between the world that then was and the Jewish nation consequent upon the putting to death of Christ in the flesh.

Noah had to bear the derision of an unbelieving world, so must the believing remnant among the Jews. There were but *few* saved in the ark, and the number of the *remnant* saved by the gospel was comparatively small. Noah's salvation came to light in another world, so will the salvation of all in this dispensation. The Spirit of Christ, not Christ in flesh and blood, was with Noah; so was the Spirit of Christ with the believing remnant. By means of the ark Noah left the world before the judgment fell upon it; by means of baptism the remnant of Israel broke with the ungodly nation. The remnant were delivered out of temptation and the ungodly nation reserved unto judgment, a judgment which will be swift and terrible when it comes; the destruction of Jerusalem was a kind of first instalment of it. I may add that it is a way of Peter to speak of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ.

We see that various classes of sinners, both of angels and men, are kept in custody until the day of judgment, and the Antediluvian sinners are no exceptions. The passage is simplicity itself, when once the way in which the writer presents the truth is apprehended. But there are certain people who have a pernicious way of wresting Scripture to their own destruction.

(To be continued.)

Suppose my soul is out of communion, the natural heart says: "I must correct the cause of this before I can come to Christ." But He is gracious; and knowing this, the way is to return to Him at once just as we are, and then humble ourselves deeply before Him. It is only in Him and from Him that we shall find that which shall restore our souls.

Bible Study.—Galatians.

(EDWARD CROSS).

Galatians v.

1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

7 Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

8 This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.

9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

10 I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded; but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.

WE now come to the third and closing section of the epistle, in which the Apostle enforces practically the exhortations he adduces from the earlier chapters.

There is a considerable difference of judgment as to the connection between chapter v. 1 and the closing verses of the preceding chapter. Some read it: ". . . we are children of the freewoman in the freedom wherein Christ has set us free. Stand firm therefore . . .", making chapter v. i. the conclusion to the middle section of the epistle (*Ellic.*). Others read as in the A.V. while still connecting verse 1 with the preceding chapter. Others again begin a new section with this verse and read: "Christ has set us free in freedom. Stand fast therefore, and be not held again in a yoke of bondage" (*Darby*). But happily the moral point of the exhortation remains the same, whichever connection we adopt.

The danger was that they would not "stand," as a soldier stands his ground in the day of battle, but would give way to the pressure brought to bear upon them. The same expression is found in Ephesians vi. 14 and 2 Thessalonians ii. 15; and it is noteworthy to see the earnestness with which the Apostle presses this valour on the saints in these different circumstances. Alas! how little response has there been to his appeals. The gospel has been given up here, the church there; and the

"traditions of the apostles" (2 Thess. ii. 15), which would have preserved them from the "strong delusion" and the "mystery of iniquity," have been given up elsewhere for the lying traditions of a corrupt hierarchy.

They had been under a yoke of bondage as pagans worshipping idols. He warns them here, as before (chap. iv. 9) that they were reverting to a similar bondage under another name. And the history of the church ever since fully justifies the prophetic warning of the Apostle. The liberty of Christ and the energy of the Spirit in that liberty were speedily lost, and the darkness of the "Dark Ages" soon followed on the apostasy from the light of apostolic times. "I am fully satisfied," says Darby, "that from Paul's death they were never on the true ground of salvation." And as a proof of this you have but to read ever so little of what has come down to us from what are called "the Fathers," to be abundantly satisfied that the statement is correct.

"The influence of heathenism on the Fathers, particularly of the Alexandrian school, was frightful. No one can doubt that such as Origen and Clement were largely tainted with it; and Western Christianity did not escape the inroad of evil. There is the worshipping of saints and angels: there is the forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats; there is

pretended human righteousness by works and ordinances: there is the lordship as well as the grace of Christ widely denied. That is, the elements of Judaism, Gnosticism, and heathenism are all there, the mass having cast off the lordship of Christ really altogether" (*Darby*).

Quotations from the Fathers would be irrelevant to these "Studies"; but take as an example "The Visions of Hermas." Of these *Darby* writes: "I have little doubt that they were well-intentioned. . . . But they are ill-conditioned and unseemly fables, fostering the most disgraceful practices or commencing superstition and asceticism, and teaching doctrine heretical in itself and unworthy of all the dignity of divine things. He is forbidden to live as a husband with a wife, but in a figurative way sanctions the system of *pareisaktoi* (*παρείσακτοι*); as devil-devised a piece of infamy and wickedness as ever was called sanctity in the primitive church, and characteristic of it. I am aware these seem harsh words; but they ought to be used for such things."

There exists now only a Latin version of this book. "It was never received into the canon; but yet was generally cited with respect only second to that which was paid to the authoritative books of the New Testament and was held to be in some sense inspired" (*Smith's "Bible Dictionary"*).

Mosheim says of him: "The writer (*Hermas*), if he was indeed sane, deemed it proper to forge dialogues held with God and angels, in order to insinuate what he regarded as salutary truths more effectually into the minds of his readers. But his celestial spirits talk more insipidly than our scavengers and porters." And of the apostolic Fathers *Dr. Murdoch* says: "The value of the genuine works of the Fathers is to learned theology very small: but, as affording us acquaintance with the true spirit and sentiments and reasonings of Christians in the very first age after the apostles, they are of inestimable value."

It is plain therefore that the vehement earnestness with which the Apostle sets himself by all the force at his disposal—by affection, by personal authority, by warning, by entreaty, by logic, by direct and seemingly irresistible appeal to Scripture, and by their own experiences, to which he can refer as corroborating his statements, in fact by every possible way in which he can—to bring home to them the supreme importance of the gospel they were so fatuitously giving up—that all this earnestness was by the Spirit of God, in the clear vision of his soul, as he saw the speedy wreck of everything that he had so sedulously built up, and the fatal apostasy from all the blessings and liberty of the gospel to a relapse into the abyss of darkness, Jewish or heathen, or a mixture of both under a Christian name, from which the grace of God had called them. Surely he was divinely inspired in the foresight of all he saw so speedily and so inevitably coming; and the history of the church ever since is the unqualified justification of this minatory and uncompromising epistle.

Verse 2.

He asserts the authority of his own name, if it were possible thereby to stop them in their foolish course. If they were circumcised, in the circumstances in which they were following the rite, then Christ would profit them nothing. The circumstances in which, as already explained, he had Timothy circumcised were quite different. There it was on his part to appease the consciences of others who were weak; here it was on their part to gratify their own. Timothy attached no importance to it for himself; they sought to obtain righteousness thereby.

Verses 3, 4.

Nay, further, he bears witness, to every man being circumcised, that he is debtor to do the whole law. There is here probably a play on the word debtor. Christ will profit you nothing,

i.e. He is in nothing debtor to you: whereas you make yourselves debtors to keep the whole law. It was a terrible debt to contract, and that with their eyes open, and despite all warning (*cf.* Exod. xxiv. 3, 7); and he adds a word one might almost call Pauline, as he uses it twenty-five times in his epistles (not including Heb. ii. 14), while in the rest of the New Testament it is used only twice (Luke xiii. 7 and Heb. ii. 14): "Ye are deprived of all profit from the Christ; His efficacy is lost to you, who are justified by the law. Ye have fallen from grace," from which, in contrast to the principle of law, all their blessings came.

Verse 5.

But now, as a fact, righteousness has been accomplished by Christ, God has been glorified by Him, and as a consequence we have received His Spirit, the earnest of the glory founded on that righteousness; and we are waiting, on the principle of faith, for the hope of it; *i.e.* for glory, "the glory of God" (Rom. v. 2). What a contrast between this and the law, by which neither righteousness nor glory comes! But how little is it understood, even by those who are the most interested in it!

The glory of Jesus, the Son of Man, is the natural consequence of His having come in manhood and therein having glorified God (John xiii. 31); and on this fact is founded the gospel and the hope of it, whether for Israel or for the world. The glory of God secured by Christ secures that glory for all His people. This is the subject-matter of Isaiah from chapter lii. 13 onwards.

Isaiah liii. presents the sufferings of the Messiah until all is accomplished, and He sees of the travail of His soul and is satisfied.

Then (Isa. lv. 5) David's Son is glorified, as it is said (Acts iii. 13): "The God of our fathers hath glorified His servant Jesus."

Then (Isa. lx. 19, etc.) this glory is put upon His redeemed people, in

language which transcends conception (Isa. lxiv. 4; 1 Cor. ii. 9): "The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory."

Now Christ has come, and having accomplished righteousness has gone to the right hand of God, waiting until He returns in the glory of the kingdom. Meanwhile the Spirit has come, seal of righteousness accomplished and earnest of the coming glory; and so the Apostle says: "We, by the Spirit, on the principle of faith, await the hope of righteousness."

Verse 6.

And this is independent alike of circumcision and of uncircumcision; for, plainly, "in Christ Jesus," it is not a question of either, but of "faith which worketh by love." In fact, as he tells them later on (chap. vi. 15), it involves a "new creation," into which these carnal elements do not enter. How thoughtless, therefore, how senseless, to confound a system of legality with faith, and what is operated in the flesh, with a wholly new kind of creation. Truly man, religious man, spite of all his vain glory, is a senseless animal. How it behoves us then to cease from boasting and to eschew self-confidence, so that we might be found of God in a humble and teachable spirit meet to learn His will and do it.

Verses 7, 8.

Already he regards his labours amongst them as being in vain. They had lost the truth he had given them; they had not obeyed it, it had no power over them, its value for them was gone. The gospel Paul had brought them was the power of God unto salvation to set their hearts free to serve God in the liberty of His grace. They could not have so soon forgotten this; but another influence was at work amongst them to turn their hearts another way. Plainly it was not of God, who had called them to Himself; and this alone ought to have been sufficient to expose to them its

source. But they were spellbound ; and the same spell is at work to-day ; and who can deliver from it ?

Verse 9.

Moreover, this leaven, small as it might appear at its inception, has corrupted the whole lump, and all Christendom to-day is under its power. Look where you will, in the Eastern or Western churches, the law is the religious framework over which all Christian profession is venerated.

In 1 Corinthians v. 6, 7 leaven is connected with evil conduct, and the Corinthians are commanded to

“purge it out ;” and apparently they did so, to some extent at least (2 Cor. vii. 11). But the leaven of legality is more tenacious ; and we do not learn that the churches of Galatia made any attempt even to clear themselves of it.

Verse 10.

Still his confidence is in the Lord about them, that they would have no other mind, and that he who was troubling them would bear the guilt of it. In chapter i. 7 he speaks of “some ;” but probably he signalizes here the individual who was the responsible mover in the matter.

The Indwelling of the Holy Ghost.—No. 3. (J. T. MAWSON).

The Spirit of God's Son.

And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father (Gal. iv. 6).

THE Gospel of Luke unfolds the grace of our God which is more than sufficient to meet all the need of guilty men, no matter how varied and vast that need may be. This grace shone out in all its blessedness in the words and works of the Son of God ; it brought Him into constant touch with sinful and heart-broken men and women, for He was here as “the Son of man [who] came to *seek* and to *save* that which was lost.”

The Eternal Purpose of God.

But this seeking and saving had an end in view ; there was behind all the activities of love a wonderful purpose, and this purpose is fully disclosed in the Gospel of John ; it is made known in the first chapter of the Gospel, for there we read that those who received the Sent One of God had title given to them to become children of God (ver. 12). This was the divine thought, the intention of God's boundless love before all worlds. In those eternal ages He determined to fill His home with “many sons” who would find their eternal joy in His presence, and reciprocate, with un-

divided heart, the love that flows from His own.

It was to give effect to this purpose that the Son of God was sent into the world, and He has accomplished His mission perfectly, and now no power on earth or in hell can rob God of the satisfaction of His deep desire.

We see how full was the heart of the blessed Lord of this one thing in His ministry to the guilty woman in John iv., when He said to her, “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: *for the Father seeketh such to worship Him*” (ver. 23). Then again, when He had come back, all-victorious, from the grave, “Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto *My Father, and your Father* ; and to *My God, and your God*” (chap. xx. 17).

We shall ever, in joyful adoration, accord to the Lord Jesus Christ the place of supremacy ; we worship Him, as did Thomas, as our LORD and our GOD ; and yet we find that the purpose of God is that we should share His

place in the love of God. He became MAN and died, that in resurrection we might be associated with Him, as His brethren, in His Father's presence. And in this sense God has no younger sons. In the family of the British peer the firstborn enters into the titles and the estates, and, if possible, there is left to him the means to enable him to maintain the titles with fitting dignity, while the younger sons often have to do the best they can for themselves. It is not so in God's family, for we read that all His children are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus (Rom. viii. 17). The glory that the Father has given to Christ is given to them all, and the love with which He is loved is precisely the same love where-with they are loved (John xvii. 22, 23). He who, personally, must always be pre-eminent, the "Firstborn," shares His place and inheritance with the "many brethren." This is true of all who have believed in Christ Jesus, "for ye are all the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 26). The question of our merit or demerit does not enter into the matter at all, it is the fruit of infinite grace; and true humility accepts in simple and adoring faith that which God reveals.

The Capacity Needed.

But it is not enough for us to have the position of children, we need to have a capacity given to us, in order to intelligently understand and appreciate the position. And it is evident that this capacity does not lie in the natural man, for he understandeth not the things of God, nor can he know them (1 Cor. ii. 14). You may send a man to the universities, and he may possess himself of all the learning that they can give—theological or otherwise—but if he has not come under the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost he will remain as ignorant of the things of God as the dog that runs at his heels.

But our God would not give us the position of children merely, He has also, in infinite grace, imparted the nature

and life that truly belongs to the relationship, and has given to us the Spirit of His Son; otherwise the thought of His heart would have been void of blessing to us and delight to Him. To illustrate: a dark cloud rests upon yonder home, there is a perpetual sob at the hearts of the parents, for their only child is an idiot; they love him with an intense and tender affection, but his mind is a blank, he has not the capacity to realize their great love for him, and so cannot return it again. It would have been thus with us in a spiritual sense if the relationship of children had been given to us, and the Spirit of God's Son withheld.

Nor could we without the Spirit have been at rest and at home in the presence of God, as another illustration may make plain.

Suppose the King of these realms, exercising his royal clemency, pardoned a criminal lying under a life sentence, and after setting him at liberty introduced him to his own immediate circle, and took him to his palace to be one of his companions, and to be treated as one of his sons. We cannot question that that man would be grateful to his gracious Majesty, but his feelings would be very mingled, for he would be altogether out of place in the King's home, having had no training for court life, and, being a stranger to all who gathered there, he would have been happier in the prison. Moreover, gratitude for favours received is a very different sentiment from the love of a known relationship, and the position of a son without the love and liberty of that relationship would be but a mockery.

But if the King could give to him the spirit of his son, everything would be changed, for he would then be able to enter into the ways and thoughts of his benefactor and be perfectly at home in his new sphere.

The King could not do that, but God has done it for us: He has delivered us from the sentence that lay upon us; He has pardoned the crimes of which

we have been guilty ; He has brought us to Himself as His children, and given us a resting-place within His bosom for ever ; but He has also given to us the Holy Ghost that we may know the height and depth and length and breadth of His thoughts, and be perfectly happy in His presence, and intelligently enter into all the reality of the place He has given us in Christ. What a signal proof of God's love towards us is the gift of the Holy Spirit !

The Manners and the Means.

But there are further thoughts connected with the gift of the Holy Spirit

in this character. The King would not raise a poor labouring man to the peerage and attach him to his court, for, however estimable he might be in his proper surroundings, he would possess neither the *manners* nor the *means* for such an exalted position, and could only become a laughing-stock in it. But God raises sinners from the dunghill and by His own divine power they are regenerated ; by the gospel they are called and justified, and they will soon be glorified. They are brought to Himself as His children now, and in the Holy Ghost they have the means, and learn the manners suited to the great dignity of their new relationship.

“Tears.”

(THOMAS OLIVER)

THERE are those who sneer at the thought of our shedding tears—it is mere sentiment, they say.

Blessed sentiment ! Oh, that there were more of it ! One has been here from above, and as He looked upon Jerusalem, the city of divine promise, we read : “ He wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace ! but now they are hid from thine eyes ” (Luke xix. 41, 42). Who, I must ask, was the source of these tears ? There can be but one answer—the Spirit of God, who animated every thought, word, and action of Christ ; in God was the source of those blessed tears of divine compassion.

Look, then, at the tears of Paul the Apostle—“serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears.” We read lower down the same chapter (Acts xx.) : “ Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.” How closely did he follow his blessed Master, and how evidently was he moved by the same divine Spirit of compassion. These many tears were shed in the fear

and knowledge of that which was yet to come in and scatter and divide the flock of God.

Beloved fellow-Christians, how deeply should we be moved in days when God's children are in actual fact scattered, divided, and sub-divided into a thousand factions. If near to our Lord how we should *feel* it with Him, and our tears would but evidence that deep emotion which must possess the soul when the wreckage of all here is viewed in any measure from the divine standpoint.

Then, as to the wicked : “ Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake Thy law ” (Ps. cxix. 53). Who, let us ask, is the source of the horror which here possessed the Psalmist's soul ? Again there can be but one answer—the Spirit of God ; and to what does it lead ?—read verse 136 : “ Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not Thy law.”

But, fellow-believers, what do we know of all this ? If we walk in the Spirit we shall be moved and affected by that which moved our blessed Master and Lord. May we be found thus near to Him.

Practical Godliness.—IV.

(W. BRAMWELL DICK).

In the World.

We should live . . . godly in this present world (Titus ii. 12).

AN idea seems to obtain that Christianity consists of a person having the knowledge that his sins are forgiven, and that he will spend eternity in heaven, and that for the rest he must scramble through the world as best he can. This may be due to defective preaching or other causes, but the consequences following upon such a belief are deplorable in the extreme. It means that Christianity, like the religion of the mere formalist, may be donned and doffed with Sunday attire; it leads to laxity of conduct, and brings dishonour upon the holy name of our Lord Jesus Christ. When we turn to the Epistle to Titus, we learn that one great object for which we have been left here is that we should live . . . godly in this present world. The Cretans, amongst whom Titus lived and worked, were a licentious and impious people (Titus i. 12), but God's glorious gospel had been preached amongst them, many had been brought under its subduing influence, and the great desire of the Apostle was that these should so live as to be witnesses to its transforming power. Conversion had not altered their circumstances, but it had changed *them*, and where they had formerly lived for the gratification of their own will they were henceforth to live unto "Him who died for them and rose again." It is interesting to note that while this epistle, like the Epistles to Timothy, is not doctrinal, but exceedingly practical, it begins and ends with eternal life. At the very outset our feet are placed firm upon the bed-rock of divine purpose, and we learn that our eternal blessing depends not upon us or our ways, but upon "God

who cannot lie," and upon the promise that He made in eternal counsel "before the world began" (chap. i. ver. 2). Then at the end we are pointed on to the moment when we shall enter upon our inheritance and enjoy eternal life to the fullest extent. Thus we are reminded that our origin and destiny are heavenly, and that it is our privilege now to live as heavenly people in this world. Many Christians unfortunately look upon this as abnormal: some call it "the higher Christian life," and consider it an ideal unattainable except perhaps by a favoured few. But there is only one Christian life: that is the life of godliness, and if we come short of this we fail to answer to God's desire for us. That this applies to all classes and touches every relationship of life is manifest, for Titus is instructed to exhort "aged men," "aged women," "young women," "young men," and "servants" (chap. ii. vers. 2-9). These exhortations may be summarized in two words, namely, "Live godly!"

Live! LIVE!! LIVE!!!

Words are cheap; mere profession is worthless. That which glorifies God, exalts Christ, and gives evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit in us is a life that sheds the fragrance of heaven in an ungodly world. In writing to "servants" the Apostle came down to what was at that time the lowest stratum in the world's estimation, for these, be it remembered, were slaves, but to them he presented this great privilege in its highest aspect. Their position, their environment, their circumstances, were not calculated to help them in this respect; their path was beset with disadvantages; but let us see the immense

opportunity that was theirs, and as we read may we discover it to be the word of our precious Lord to us in no matter what sphere we find ourselves. So important is the exhortation that we quote it in full :

“Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things ; not answering again ; not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity ; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared¹ to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world ; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus ii. 9-14).

In the first place, he cast them right back upon the grace of God. Why, among the mass of the Cretans, had *they* been reached and saved ? Shall not *we* for ever ask, as we gratefully contemplate *our* deliverance :

“Why was *I* made to hear Thy voice,
To enter while there's room,
While thousands make the wretched choice,
And rather starve than come ?”

The grand secret lies in the unmerited favour of God that reached us, that broke us down, that saved us ; and knowing this, we take up the strain, and sing with happy hearts :

“’Twas the same grace that spread the feast,
That sweetly forced *me* in,
Else *I* had still refused to taste,
And perished in *my* sin.”

That grace has not only met our past, and provided for our future, but it sets us up for the present so that we may express in a godless world the character of the God of whose grace we are the recipients. The grace that has reached us carries with it salvation for all men, and as we realize this our desire will be that we may so live that all men with whom we may come in contact may be impressed by what the grace of God has effected. Salvation is presented in the Holy Scriptures (1)

¹ Marginal readings.

with reference to our soul (1 Peter i. 9) : *that* we enjoy now ; (2) with regard to our body (Rom. viii. 24), which is still future ; and (3) as in the portion now under consideration, where we learn that God's desire for us, and that which Christ died to effect, is our salvation from the present world. This the Holy Spirit of God seeks to produce now. So that as our souls are established in the true grace of God, there will be a clean cut with the world in every shape and form. There is no middle course ; there is no suggestion in Scripture of a person being saved from a lost eternity, and yet going hand-in-glove with the world. It is assumed that we shall be so in the benefit of what grace has effected, and so in the joy of the salvation that has been brought to us, that we will deny all that is not consistent with the new position that we now occupy. This does not convey the idea of giving up those things that we may consider wrong, but it assumes that we are so supremely satisfied with the blessing of God which maketh rich, that we refuse as worthless all that in which we once found pleasure. May we stop and ask ourselves, Is this true of us ? If so, that same grace will teach us how to “live soberly, righteously, and godly.”

Soberly. This is urged in the New Testament : (1) by our Lord in Matthew ix. 15, because Christ is not here (fasting is a similar idea) ; (2) in Titus ii. 10, because thereby we “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour ;” (3) in 1 Peter v. 8, because of the vigilance of Satan, our adversary ; and (4) in 1 Peter iv. 7, because the end is near. Shall *we* join our laugh with the hollow merriment of the world ? Shall we follow the pursuits of those who crucified our blessed Lord ? Shall we, by associating with the ungodly, assist Satan in his nefarious work of dragging souls down to a lost eternity ? We do not plead for sanctimoniousness ; nothing is more hateful to God or more distasteful to men. The godly man is the happy man,

and he who lives "soberly" manifests a joy that is calculated to bring men in touch with the God who is the source of it.

Righteously. Whether in our home life, or in our association with God's people, or in our dealings with the world as master, as servant, as merchant, as customer, as mistress, as maid, we are to live with the consciousness that God's eye is upon us, and that "by Him actions are weighed" (1 Sam. ii. 3), and that our every deed must come before the searching scrutiny "of the judgment-seat of Christ." If we were all in the power of this there would be no ground for charges of shady dealing so frequently brought against those who name the name of the Lord.

Godly. This covers all the rest. In an ungodly world we are to live godly. Surrounded by men who are hateful and hate one another, we are to show love. In a scene of moral darkness we are to shine as lights; in a place of death, we are to be pulsating with divine life. Do we realize the magnificence of our opportunity? We have something for which to live. God has bestowed upon *us* an honour that angels would value, but it is not theirs. We appeal specially to our young brethren and sisters in Christ to covet before everything else the distinction of being found here well pleasing to God. As a further incentive, we are pointed on to the "blessed hope" (ii. 13). This is not the coming of the Lord for us (John xiv. 13). No prospect can eclipse that; our joy will then be complete, and His will be "exceeding joy." He might come to-day, and our hearts beat high at the thought. This verse, however, looks still further ahead to the day of public manifestation, when He shall appear in glory. Those who are now despised and considered of no account in this world, will then

be displayed as the exponents of the grace of Christ, and He shall "be glorified in His saints, and wondered at in all them that believe" (2 Thess. i. 10).

Lastly, to drive the point home, the Apostle uses yet another argument. Already he has stated as an unanswerable reason for it that "the grace of God" teaches it. Then he reminds us—by way of encouragement—of the coming day of glory; and finally, as the strongest possible motive power, he tells how Christ gave Himself for the very purpose that all this might be effected. He "gave Himself." Let us ponder over it till our hearts are melted in His presence, and we find ourselves prostrate at His feet. He did this that He might deliver us from the lawlessness that was natural to us, and send us forth into the world as His peculiar people that we might be what He was when He was here, "zealous of good works." He "went about doing good" (Acts x. 38). He was a ceaseless, indefatigable, day-and-night Worker. He came in contact with the world *only* to make God known to it, and our path should be like His. Even in earning our daily bread, when of necessity we come in touch with the world, we have the privilege of "doing good," and thus making God known. "Live!" is the important word in this short epistle; "Live!" is the divine call to us to-day. The time for preaching will not end till the Lord comes for His people, and the opportunities for lip testimony will ever present themselves. Both, however are more or less limited, but to "live soberly, righteously, and godly" is a privilege that belongs to every child of God every moment of his or her sojourn in this world. May we all value it much more deeply, and seek to respond to it more thoroughly "till He come."

Habitual faithfulness in judging the flesh in little things is the secret of not falling.

There is nothing in this world like the dignity of a man always walking with God.

“Our Father.”

HOW grieved are we who are parents, if our children disobey us, what pain it gives us if they slight our word, and choose other advice, and prefer the company of strangers to our own. We have a Father also, and His love is perfect and unchanging. What is our conduct towards Him? Does He not feel it when we are indifferent towards

Him, and when our ways run counter to His words? We are grieved or delighted as our love is disregarded or appreciated; and is not our Father affected by our response to His great love to us? The whole volume of Scripture answers, Yes! Let us also remember that His great object is our profit (Heb. xii. 10)—is ours His glory and joy?

Answers to Correspondents.

(THE EDITORS).

The Fatherhood of God.

R.G.S. writes us as follows :

“I would be glad if in your magazine you could give me some help on Matthew xxiii. 8-10. There is what I consider to be an erroneous doctrine, commonly spoken of as the ‘Universal Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man,’ which is received by a large number of professing Christians. This scripture is quoted to support it, and it is pointed out that Jesus not only addressed His disciples but also *the multitude* (ver. 1). I am quite convinced that this doctrine is not of God from the many scriptures bearing on the subject, and would like to have a satisfactory answer to give to those who say this scripture teaches that God is the Father of *all*.”

In replying to this inquiry let us point out that the word “Father” conveys in Scripture, as also in ordinary language, several thoughts, sometimes distinct and sometimes combined; and just what thoughts are intended to be conveyed is clearly shown always by the context. Thus no one would have difficulty in seeing that in the sentence “Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother” (Gen. ii. 24) natural generation and relationship *is* spoken of, whilst equally clearly in the words Jubal “was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ” (Gen. iv. 21) no question of *begetting* or of *relationship* comes into the statement at all.

Now, without space to examine the subject at all exhaustively, we remark that of the various thoughts connected in Scripture with the term “Father” as

applied to God there are *three* at least which stand out very clearly. First, there is the thought of His being the *Source* whence all things spring. In this sense the angels are the “sons of God” (Job i. 6). Thus, too, according to Ephesians iv. 6 there is “one God and *Father of all*” (He is the source whence all things proceed), “who is above all” (He is supreme, or transcendent), “through all” (*i.e.* omnipresent, all-pervading), “and in *us* all”—here note the personal pronoun confining His dwelling to believers in similar sense to that in which they are said to be His “habitation through the Spirit” (Eph. ii. 22). Again, in the same sense as Source, God is referred to as the “Father” of rain (Job xxxviii. 28), that is to say, He produces and causes it. He is, in similar sense, spoken of as the “Father of mercies” (2 Cor. i. 3), the “Father of glory” (Eph. i. 17), and the “Father of lights” (James i. 17). With this same thought, too, of God as Source does Paul address the heathen Greeks gathered on Mars’ Hill and say, “We are the offspring of God.” It is well to recognize this fully while at the same time clearly setting out that nothing *more* is involved than the simple thought of origin or source as in Job xxxviii. 28, already referred to, where it is evident that no question either of relationship or nature could possibly enter; and as, indeed, in everyday language in such ex-

pressions as "Chaucer is the father of English poetry," "Stephenson is the father of railways," etc.

(2) But the scripture on which you write embraces the further thought of a *relationship taken up*. Now God may take up a place as Father, in the sense of caring for, protecting, and training, either towards a *nation* or towards *individuals*. It is with the former we have first to do, for, whilst still dealing with the man in the flesh, God was pleased to take up that relationship towards Israel as a redeemed nation. So Deuteronomy xxxii. 6, "Is not He thy Father that bought thee?" (and note how closely purchase or redemption is connected with this thought of God taking up a place as Father towards a people, cf. Isaiah lxiii. 16). So, too, referring to the very beginning of Israel's history as a redeemed people, when God brought them out of the land of Egypt to bring them into Canaan, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called *My son* out of Egypt" (Hosea xi. 1). It is in this *national* sense that Christ in Matthew xxiii. addressed the Jewish multitude and His disciples—looked at here as a part of the chosen nation to whom God was Father in the sense pointed out, and here instructed in the behaviour in that position which was suitable under the eye of God. But these words spoken to all would only be understood and taken up by those who were truly in heart, and not in name only, the people of God.

But notice that while here we have God taking up this relationship towards the nation as a whole, yet that is *all* that can be said: there is still no thought of their being begotten of God in family relationship, and possessing a nature and life corresponding to the relationship. This aspect of the Fatherhood of God may be in part illustrated by Job's words in chapter xxix. 16, "I was a father to the poor:" that, of course, suggests no thought of their having been begotten of him or of their possessing any link either naturally or

by moral affinity with himself, but simply that in his care and compassion he had *taken up that position* relatively to them. So though God had been pleased on His side to take up the position of Father to the nation of Israel as a whole, yet they were not children by *birth*, and there was no response on their side nationally to His grace and love. Morally, indeed, many individuals in the nation in the days of our Lord's flesh were of the devil, as He said, "Ye are of your father the devil."

(3) Now when we come to the sense in which Christians can call God "Father" we come to the truth in a new and deeper sense—embracing truly both the preceding senses, but going far beyond them. We do not stop here to speak of the Fatherhood of God as in Matthew v. 44-48, where the truth applies directly to the elect remnant of Israel, and where true moral affinity is seen, but pass on now to consider *relationship by generation*.

Christians are *begotten* of God (John i. 13), they are thus *of Him* and morally like Him: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;" "Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God" (1 John iii. 9, iv. 7.) Then, too, the place given is Christ's own place with the Father, His place in the divine affections ("Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me"—John xvii.), and His place in dignity as sons, for it is "in Christ Jesus" that we are sons (on the principle of faith), and as such we share in all that He inherits (Gal. iii. 26, iv. 1-7). How far is all this *beyond* the knowledge simply of His perfect care for us in this world, precious as that indeed is! Again, we have not only the glorious *position* of sons, but have received the *Spirit of adoption* whereby we cry "Abba, Father." Here, therefore, we have what is totally lacking in the two former aspects considered, that is, individual and family relationship to God in the highest and fullest sense, by being begotten of Him and by being "in Christ Jesus;" moral

affinity; a suited nature and spirit; reciprocal affections proper to the relationship; and, finally, the revelation of a glorious consummation in that the "many sons" shall be brought "to glory," the proper sphere of their life (Heb. ii. 11).

We trust these remarks will help to make clear to you some simple but very necessary distinctions in the consideration of the subject of the Fatherhood of God.

Healing the Sick.

A.H. writes :

"Can you tell me the meaning of James v. 14, 15? Does it refer to the church? Is it physical sickness or spiritual? As the sixteenth verse speaks of healing it looks like spiritual."

Yes, it is the Christian assembly that is referred to in verse 14: it is not "synagogue," as in chapter ii. 2 (see margin). The sickness, too, is clearly ordinary sickness of body, as also in verse 16. The instruction given affords *principles* on which faith will ever act; though as the epistle is addressed to the twelve tribes, and contemplates Jewish believers in circumstances and relationships now passed away, it has not exactly direct application to ourselves in all its details.

These believers, in Israel, are looked at here as still linked with the nation—very much as the disciples of Christ in the days of His sojourn here, whilst following One whom the nation refused, were yet of it, their links with it unbroken. The moment during which James wrote his inspired epistle was unique, and lasted, in the mercy and forbearance of God, until the destruction of Jerusalem publicly evidenced the judicial setting aside of the nation.

The Christian was to recognize *God's* hand in everything—in sickness as in all else. The sickness might arise as needful discipline in the divine ways with the individual soul without springing at all from sins committed (ver. 15) upon which sickness was governmental judgment, as in *1 Corinthians xi. 30*; or it might, in fact, have that character.

If the latter, those sins were to be confessed—not, notice, to the elders, but one to another (ver. 16)—and in response to believing prayer the sick one would be healed.

As to the elders there are none such to-day, *i.e.* none that can claim divine authority for their appointment; the assembly too is scattered, no longer one unbroken whole. We also read of elders in Gentile assemblies, but these were always appointed by apostolic authority, either direct or delegated. They too belong to the initial period of the assembly's history down here, and the inspired Word, since completed and put into our hands, affords a full and sufficient guide without provision being made, or needing to be made, for any further such appointments.

But whilst noticing these differences in details the instruction given is yet important for all time—God deals yet with His people in disciplinary government, and now, as ever, "the prayer of faith shall save [or heal] the sick."

Evolution.

A.B. No, Psalm cxxxix. 15, 16 in no wise supports the theory of evolution. Let us quote verses 13–16:

"For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.

"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

"Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

The whole psalm is in praise of God's omniscience, omnipresence, and creative handiwork. From verses 13–18 we find that David had also discovered, when he wrote it, that he was an object of interest to God, and that while he had yet no knowledge of God at all, while he was yet in the womb of his mother, God covered him; and the secret of his life and of the formation of his members, secrets which even the bold-

est of scientists have not even dared to guess, were all known to God, in fact, they were all known to God beforehand, and were His own work.

To such a God he would gladly and with confidence commit himself and the very secrets of his soul, with the prayer that the One who foreknew and fashioned him might fully possess and lead him.

But the structure of the Word of God is marvellous, and a deeper and mystic meaning attaches to the words before us, one in which the expression "curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth"—which evolutionists twist to support their theory of man's gradual evolution from the lowest forms of animal life—is seen to shine with the splendour of divine love. The passage portrays truly the mystery of man's natural being, how he, whose origin is but the dust, is fashioned and marvellously framed in secret, but it does more: the language is prophetically the utterance of the godly remnant of Israel in the day when God shall raise them up from the dust of death in which the nation lies, and fashion them anew, so that He shall say: they are "the work of My hands" (Isa. lx. 21). And though the Psalms do not unfold for us the truth of Christianity, yet having that truth now we can see beautifully delineated for us in these verses the mystic origin of all who in *this* day also are "His workmanship" (Eph. ii. 10). How came the church, the body of Christ, into being? It was made "in secret," planned in deep eternal counsel ere ever the world was made; that thought was "*kept secret*," too, "since the world began" (Rom. xvi. 25), and though now made known to faith is yet to the world a mystery. But whence is its origin? It was "curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." In three other passages this expression "low parts of the earth" occurs (Ps. lxxiii. 9; Isa. xliv. 23; Ezek. xxvi. 20, which read), and in them we find it placed in contrast with the "land of the living" as being symbolic of the grave,

the domain of death, the uttermost depths. Out of *death* is our origin, the death of Christ. Of Himself did He speak when He said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit:" out of Himself in death springs the great harvest.

The tabernacle of old figured the universe as the dwelling-place of God as it yet will be in the beauty of Christ, derived from Him and founded on His death; and, bearing this in mind, it is interesting to note that the words "curiously wrought" are those which appear as a noun in Exodus xxxv. 35 and xxxviii. 23 in connection with embroidery in blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen for the typical tabernacle. We thus have in this one expression not only the mystery of our origin but also a mystic reference to our glorious destiny. Surely we can say in the language of this psalm, "How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them."

As to evolution, the most enthusiastic supporters of the theory have to own that they have no proofs as to it; they say: "We do not know whence man emerged . . . nor do we know how man arose . . . for it must be admitted that the factors of the evolution of man partake largely of the nature of maybe's, which have no permanent position in science."

But we who believe that in Genesis we have God's inspired record of His own creation know that the "evolution" of modern theoretical science does not lie within the realm of even "maybe," for the living creatures in the waters were brought forth "after their kind," and the fowls of the air "after their kind;" and God made the beasts of the earth "after their kind," and the creeping things "after their kind;" but man He created "*in the image of God*" (Gen. i.).

"The Lord's Table."

H.H.H. The Lord's table (1 Cor. x. 21) evidently defined Christianity in contrast to heathenism—the table of

demons ; and in contrast with Judaism—the altar ; and still does so define it. It is true that in many places the partaking of the cup and table of the Lord have become a meaningless form, or have had other meanings than the divine one attached to it, but the responsibility connected with doing this remains, and we judge that responsibility is the side of the truth presented in 1 Corinthians x. Your question, we take it, means—*Can they partake of the Lord's table who deny the truth as to His person, and refuse to be subject to His authority?* In replying to this we would draw attention to the divinely given parallel illustration in the passage,

“Behold Israel after the flesh. Are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?” (1 Cor. x. 18).

It was no question of the consistency or otherwise of those who eat of the sacrifices—to many it was all a meaningless form, nevertheless, all who eat were “partakers of the altar.” Now what is common to all who profess to own Christ as Lord is the Lord's table, for “we are all partakers of that one bread.” Here, again, it is no question of the consistency or reality of those who partake, but simply of the bearing of the act—all who take the cup of blessing which we bless, and partake of that one bread, drink the cup of the Lord and are “partakers of the Lord's table.” If they eat and drink “unworthily” they bring judgment on themselves (chap. xi. 29) ; but in chapter x. it is, as we have said, simply a question of the bearing of the act.

But “to us there is but . . . one Lord” (1 Cor. viii. 6), and if one-time professors actually apostatize (notice carefully that we speak now of full-blown apostasy) from Christianity, and cease to call upon the Lord's name (chap. i. 2), then of course they cannot be said to continue to partake of the Lord's table, though responsibility is

theirs as having once partaken. And if it be asked, “Of what, then, do they partake?” we would remark that everything outside of (1) Judaism, which was divinely set up, though now set aside, and (2) Christianity as a profession, is heathenism, and is of the devil, whose direct energizing is behind the far-reaching world-movements which culminate in the great apostasy ; and their sacrifices or sacraments, or whatever else they may choose to call them, but partake of the character of “the table of the demons.” We must be very careful, however, never to apply the expression “table of demons” to the communion of *any* who profess to own Christ as Lord, however hollow and unreal their profession may appear to be.

The God of Peace.

H.H.H. further asks :

“Why does it say in Romans xvi. 20 the God of peace, etc.? Why not the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, or God our Father?”

The titles of God in the various parts of the inspired Word cannot be transposed without doing violence to the truth : all is beautifully fitting and apposite. Let us quote the scripture : “I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.” Evil is here spoken of : we are not to meddle with it, we are to be simple concerning it, our occupation being with the good alone ; but the ceaseless conflict between good and evil is not for ever to continue, *God* will intervene, and, bruising Satan under our feet shortly, the stress of conflict, thus for ever terminated, will be succeeded by peace—eternal peace. Very fittingly, then, is our God spoken of here as the “*God of peace.*”

ERRATA

On page 210, line 29 : 9 (⁹) should be 9 (⁹).

Page 240, under verse 27 : Isaiah xlv. 1 should be liv. 1.

Page 240, under verse 29, last line : “*semper idem*” should be “*semper eadem.*”

Notes and Comments.

(J. T. MAWSON).

THE church of God has received two great gifts from God, or to state the truth more exactly, it is by two great gifts that the church of God exists—they are *the Word of God* and *the Holy Spirit of God*.

It is in the all-inspired Word that the truth as to Christ is found, and He is the perfect revelation of God to men. The Holy Spirit speaks in and through the Scriptures; He is the interpreter of them, and it is by His power alone that the truth is made effectual in men, for it is He alone who can take of the things of Christ and show them to us, for the natural man understandeth not the things of God (1 Cor. ii.). So that apart from the Scriptures and the Holy Ghost men lie in the darkness of that ignorance of God into which sin has plunged the race, for God is only known as Christ is known.

It will be readily understood, since these things are so, that every energy and subtle device of Satan will be brought into operation against these two great and holy gifts; and he has so far succeeded as to have firmly established in the very heart of Christendom two mighty engines by which to shatter and destroy the Word of God, and make null and void the presence of the Holy Spirit upon earth. *These two great powers are Rationalism and Rome.*

Rationalism does not now wear the blatant and profane garb of former days, it is highly cultured and of eminent respectability, but its attack upon the Word of God is more determined than ever. The trained intellect of the world's scholars is directed against the Scriptures, and the great seats of learning seem to exist chiefly for the purpose of "blasting at the Rock of Ages."

Nigh 3000 years ago David prophesied that the day would come when men would say, "Let us break [God's] bands asunder and cast away [His] cords from us." This day is

surely upon us, for what a loosening of the bands of God has followed the work of "higher criticism." From its profane tamperings with Holy Scripture to the utter rejection of the God of Scripture and His laws has been an easy and quick descent. An American writer states that: "The widespread college teaching of the day is, that there are no God-given commandments, and that notions of right and wrong are adopted as the result of custom and training;" and that "God is but another name for all-conquering truth."

But as men must have a god to adore, these "advanced" thinkers are exalting man to the throne in the place of the true God, and they believe they are nearing "that awfully triumphant epoch when man shall recognize his existence as that of Jehovah;" and they claim that "science is demonstrating that man is God made manifest." This is the goal of Rationalism, the end of that road the gate of which is higher criticism.

If these evil views were shut in, and kept behind college doors, they would be comparatively harmless, but the design is disclosed in the words of an American professor, "We move our students that we may move the world;" and so the poison flows out through many channels to wherever the gospel of Christ is carried. Letters from distressed missionaries in heathen lands bear witness to this; one received a few days ago from China states:

"The leading English paper for workers is given up to higher criticism, and other articles tending to elevate man but not convert him; and in the leading paper for Chinese Christians, which has a circulation of 4000 weekly, it is stated that China was not destroyed by the flood. . . . We are on the down grade in China."

Rome does not reject the Scriptures, but the presence of the Holy Spirit on

earth is entirely ignored, and His offices usurped by her: this is seen notably in the fact that she insists that she alone can interpret the Scriptures, and that the pope, claiming infallibility, is Christ's vicar on earth.

It would seem on the face of it as though Rationalism and Rome were mortally opposed to each other, but as Herod and Pilate became friends on the casting out of Christ, so will these mighty forces find common ground in the exaltation of Antichrist; for they have been conceived for this very purpose.

The unity of Christendom is the great ideal before many minds, and in this connection the president of the Wesleyan Reform Union stated recently, "That all great movements commenced at the top, and it seemed to him that the great agency for the unification of Christendom was the Roman Catholic Church," and so he asked prayers for the pope. When you find the president of a Protestant union owning the pope as at the top, and looking to Rome as the great unifier, you may be sure that in that union, at least, the Holy Spirit of God has no place, and the unity of which He is the energy and power is to them of little or no moment. But is the condition peculiar to this society?

We refer to these things because we believe that many excellent Christians, living in a little world of their own, are ignorant of, or indifferent to, the onward march of evil, and we would that they, and we, were mightily stirred in our spirits because of it.

In the first place we must be free ourselves from these things; we may say that we are neither Rationalist nor Romanist, but let us beware. The tide of evil runs strongly; and complete subjection to the teaching of the Holy Spirit through the Word can alone keep us from being influenced in one or other of these directions. We must test

our associations also, for evil communications corrupt good manners; and the words of those who would overthrow our faith eat as a canker; and the principles that underlie these great movements are very insidious. Let us not parley with any weakening of the authority of the Scriptures, or any displacement of the Holy Spirit in the things of God. God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

But are the Scriptures indeed the Word of God to us who profess to hold them as such? Do we hearken to His *communications with ready ears and obedient hearts*? Is the law of the Lord our delight and meditation?

And are we subject to the Holy Ghost? "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God?" Is this indwelling the dominant fact in our lives, and, truly realizing it, have we turned away from our own wisdom and power to be taught, led, and sustained by the Holy Ghost? These are questions we do well to ask ourselves.

To contend for the faith (Jude 3), to hold forth the word of life (Phil. ii. 16), and to pray for the prosperity of the word of the Lord (2 Thess. iii. 1) is our privilege and first responsibility, and every other claim falls into insignificance in comparison with this. But we shall not fulfil our mission in this world aright unless we appreciate God's two great gifts.

Finally, the Scriptures testify of Christ (John v. 39), and all the prophets bear witness to Him (Acts x. 43); and the Holy Ghost is here to glorify Christ and to show to us His things. God's intention is that in all things Christ shall have the pre-eminence, and all who know "the love of Christ which passeth knowledge" will determine that this shall be so, as far as they are concerned; but for this the Word of God and Spirit of God must have the supreme place with us.

“Gave Himself.”

(H. P. BARKER).

AN old tale is often far more affecting than a new one. I have seen men, thousands of miles from the land of their birth, stand unmoved while the finest classical music was being played. Then the band struck up a simple air like “Home, sweet home,” and immediately there came a quivering of the lip and a moistening of the eye. Old memories had been awakened, and the heart turned longingly to familiar scenes and the faces of loved ones far away.

So it shall be an old story that I will tell, and its theme shall be the words that stand at the head of this paper. I will sing you an oft-sung song, and its most melodious notes shall be those two words. Is there music in them to *your* ear? *What* thoughts, *what* memories do they awaken in your mind?

You do not need to be told to whom that word “Himself” refers. A Christian, blessed with marvellous powers of memory, once learnt the whole of the New Testament by heart, and could repeat any chapter correctly at a moment’s notice. A fatal illness laid him low, and his retentive memory began to fail. Soon only the most familiar chapters remained, and then only a few verses. By and by even these oft-repeated verses faded from the memory of the dying Christian. One word alone was remembered, but it was a word which contained a mine of comfort. The sufferer lisped it again and again to himself, and uttered it in the hearing of his visitors. It was all he could say, but he said it, time after time, with most evident joy. It was the word “Himself.”

Bible in hand, let us pursue this theme, and study the various settings in which the words appear. May the Spirit of God strike a responsive chord in our hearts as we do so.

(1) “*The Man Christ Jesus, who GAVE HIMSELF a ransom for all, to be testified in due time*” (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6).

From an earlier verse in this same chapter we learn that it is the yearning desire of our Saviour-God that all men should be saved. And it was to provide an outlet for the heart of God that Christ Jesus “gave Himself.” How could a single sinner be saved, how could the claims of justice be met, how could God righteously offer to pardon and justify the ungodly apart from this “ransom”? Impossible. So Christ “gave Himself,” first of all, that the love of God might flow out world-wide in a broad, deep stream of eternal blessing, whereof all are invited to drink.

It is this that is the special subject of testimony in the gospel. It is this world-wide bearing of the death of Christ as a “ransom for all” that was “to be testified in due time.” There are other aspects of that same death. There is, for instance, the *substitutionary* aspect, in the sense that the believer can say, “He died instead of me, and bore all *my* sins upon the cross.” But this, properly speaking, is not the subject of testimony according to the passage before us.

The message which was to be heralded to the world was that, because of the “ransom,” God is enabled *righteously* to address men in terms of grace, and that there is forgiveness on that ground for all. It does not follow that all avail themselves of this gracious offer. Thousands, alas! refuse. But the fact remains, that Christ Jesus gave Himself a ransom for all, and that therefore the door of grace and salvation is open wide to “whosoever will.” It was in order to put *God* in a position to exercise His grace in this wide and limitless way that the blessed Saviour, in deepest devotion, “gave Himself.”

(2) "*The Son of God, who loved me, and GAVE HIMSELF for me*" (Gal. ii. 20).

Here we are travelling, not upon the broad gauge of the world-wide bearing of the death of Christ towards all men, but upon the narrower gauge of the meaning of that death to the individual believer. To each one of us it is the crowning expression of love, the love of Christ to His own.

The words "for me" in this passage do not mean simply "instead of me." They convey the further thought of "to obtain me." The Son of God has loved me well enough to give Himself in order to obtain me for His own pleasure, and for the eternal gratification of His supreme affection for me. That is the great, grand thought in the words.

How good to be able to say to oneself, "I am precious to Him. For love of me He has given Himself!" The thought of the personal, individual love of the Son of God to each one of His own is sweet beyond all telling. It is recorded of the days of old that "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." Each one was a special object of that true and tender love. It is the same with each one of us to-day. Take comfort from this, dear fellow-Christian, that though your friends on earth may be few, and there may not be many upon whose constant love you can depend, there is One whose heart is filled with the deepest, truest affection for you.

Not long ago some Christians were taking tea together. A lady expressed the opinion that the present day is one of much privilege, great intelligence, and widespread zeal, but that true affection for the Lord is at a very low ebb. "And it is only the power of affection that can keep us from the world," she added.

An elderly Christian gentleman heard the lady's speech, and uttered one word by way of reply :

"Whose?"

What did he mean? The lady had evidently meant that it was the power of our affection for Christ that would be our preservative. But the gentleman's short question was meant to suggest that it was the power of *Christ's unchanging affection for us*, rather than ours for Him, that is the means of shielding us from the world and its ways. And this is surely true. We cannot make too much of that love to which we owe our all.

(3) "*Our Lord Jesus Christ, who GAVE HIMSELF for our sins that He might deliver us from this present evil world [age], according to the will of God*" (Gal. i. 3, 4).

Here a third motive for the self-sacrifice of Christ appears. The will of God is that we should not only have our sins forgiven, but that our links with *this present evil age* should be severed.

Perhaps the question may be asked, Why is the present age spoken of as *evil*? Is it not the day of God's grace, "the day of salvation," the day of good tidings? Assuredly it is. It is a day of golden privilege and of great blessing. At the same time, as far as *the world* is concerned, it is an evil age.

There are various ages spoken of in Scripture. There was the first age in the world's history, "the world that then was," when men were left to their consciences and the light of the primeval revelation of God. Men filled the earth with corruption and violence, and that age, after lasting for sixteen centuries, was ended by the Flood.

Then came the age of the patriarchs and of Israel, when the law was given, and at the close of which Christ came in lowly grace. That age culminated in the rejection and crucifixion of the Son of God.

By and by another age will dawn, "the world to come" (Heb. ii. 5), or "the day of Christ," as it is variously called, when for a thousand years evil will be suppressed and Christ shall reign.

This, in its turn, will be succeeded by "the day of God" (2 Peter iii. 12), when the material earth shall be consumed, and the eternal state be ushered in, and God be "all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 28).

The present age is "evil" because it is especially under the dominion of Satan. Politically, he is its prince (John xiv. 30); religiously, he is its god (2 Cor. iv. 4). He has usurped the place that belongs by right to Christ, and the whole world lies in his grip (1 John v. 19). The great world-system, with all its complex activities, is the means by which he works his will. "The spirit of the age" is entirely contrary to Christ and to the will of God. He is the Stone, rejected by the builders of this world (Matt. xxi. 42).

Hence it is easy to understand that the will of God is for His people to be separate, heart and soul, from all that characterizes the age. What practical response are we making to the tremendous fact that Christ gave Himself for our sins *that He might deliver us from this present evil age?* How intensely sad to see Christians, for whom Christ died, floating along with "the current of the times," and breathing "the spirit of the age."

(4) "Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who GAVE HIMSELF for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus ii. 14).

When the Lord Jesus was on earth it might truly have been said of Him that He was "zealous of good works." With untiring zeal He "went about doing good" (Acts x. 38). According to this passage in Titus ii., He gave Himself not only to redeem us from all iniquity, but that He might have us, a people peculiarly His own, zealous for the very thing that He was so zealous for, marked by that which so strikingly marked Him.

We are left on earth to represent Him in the place where He has been

refused. His Spirit has been given to us that the beautiful traits of holiness and grace that shone to perfection in Him might also be seen in us.

This was a matter of great desire to the heart of Christ. He gave Himself that it might be brought to pass. A Christian who is not "zealous of good works" is therefore robbing his Saviour of something for which He gave Himself.

The "good works" to which we are called are not necessarily such as the world would applaud. Take two instances, quoted from the Old Testament in James ii. Abraham and Rahab are mentioned as having performed works which were pleasing to God.

What was Abraham's work? He bound his son upon a heap of stones and prepared to kill him. "Savage barbarity!" the world would exclaim. Yet behind the apparently cruel and unnatural deed was the *faith* that would obey God at all costs, and which trusted God to raise Isaac from the dead if He permitted his life to be taken.

Rahab's work was to deliberately help the enemies of her king and country. "Base treachery!" would be the world's comment. But faith in the purpose and power of God lay behind Rahab's action, and gave it value in the eyes of Him who reckons not as men do. So-called "good works" are valueless unless they are the outcome of faith. But "faith without works is dead." The Lord Jesus gave Himself that our faith might express itself in works that are good in God's sight, and thus bring glory to His name.

(5) "Christ also loved the church, and GAVE HIMSELF for it" (Eph. v. 25).

We have already spoken of the love of Christ to each individual believer. But here we learn that the church, as a whole, is an object of His deep affection, and that He gave Himself for it.

If we truly love the Lord we shall also love that which He loves. Let us test ourselves in this way. We profess (do we not?) to love our Lord Jesus Christ. Do we prove it by loving that which is so dear to Him—His church, His body, and His bride?

I need hardly say that I use the word "church" as Scripture uses it in this passage. No particular congregation or company is meant, but the aggregate of all true believers in Christ. These, and these alone, constitute the church which Christ so dearly loves, and for which He gave Himself.

I remember, a good many years ago, reading a letter from a missionary in Spain. He referred to some Bible readings that had been held on the Epistle to the Philippians. "I am so fond of that epistle," he wrote, "*because there is nothing about the church in it!!*"

This statement is hardly correct; but even if it were, what must be the state of a Christian's affections for Christ if he can find cause for special rejoicing in the absence of all mention of that which is a "pearl of great price" in His eyes?

Zeal for a particular denomination, party, or cause may exist where there is no real apprehension of the love of

Christ to the church. But when, in the silence of communion with God, one learns something of the preciousness of the church to the heart of Christ, party spirit, denominational zeal, and all such things become nauseous, and one is taught to embrace in one's affections all that belong to Christ—His church.

His love to His church finds expression in a wonderful threefold way, according to Ephesians v. 25-27:

In the past: He gave Himself for it. Like the merchantman in the parable, He sold all that He had in order to obtain the pearl of great price.

In the present: He lives to "sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word."

In the future: He will "present it to Himself, a glorious church." No spot, no trace of defilement will be seen upon her. No wrinkle, no mark of age, will disfigure the bride of Christ. Eternal youth will be her portion, and she shall, through eternal ages, be the joy and delight of Him whose bride she is.

Our story is told. Tell me, Christian reader, can you afford to be indifferent to any of these five great objects for which your Lord and Saviour "gave Himself"?

Thoughts on Service.

(E. E. CURTIS).

Soul-winning.

THE first essential in soul-winning is love. The "publicans and sinners" were irresistibly drawn to the Lord Jesus Christ, who was the great Evangelist; they were drawn to Him by the power of that divine love that filled His heart for them. The skill displayed in His dealings with individual souls, and the gracious words which fell from His lips upon the ears of listening multitudes were alike the outcome, and the revelation of the love that He had for sinful man.

"Come ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men" (Mark i. 17). The secret of soul-winning is found in this command of our Lord. How otherwise could this skill be obtained? Where else could this wisdom be found? Its price is "above rubies;" "neither shall it be valued with pure gold"! As we follow Him we shall catch the yearnings, the throbbings of His great heart of love, and shall as a result become a feeble reflex of Himself.

It has been rightly said that every

evangelist is some little reflection of Christ; but alas that we should reflect Him so little! Tears are not often found upon our cheeks, nor sighs in our spirits. If we felt more in secret, as we contemplated the state of the unconverted, there would surely be more tender pathos in our pleadings, and souls would feel, at least, that we loved them. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

What a journey the Lord took, prompted only by love, when He went to seek that abandoned woman at the well (John iv.). Do we ask that we may so love the drunkard and the harlot, the beggar and the cheat? With what consummate skill love wrought that day! He did not straightway reach her conscience. He must win her confidence first; this He did by asking a favour at her hands, and then, using that as a text, He unfolded to her wonderful things (vers. 7, 10). Bearing with her slowness of apprehension, but ever keeping the end in view, He pressed on until her desires were awakened; then her conscience was probed, but she was not repelled. The revelation was slowly made; but, in the end, she was overwhelmed by the transcendent greatness of it and could speak of naught beside. Blessed Master, we do well to come after Thee to learn such lessons in "soul-winning"!

"He spake as they were able to hear it." His public preaching, ever simple and replete with illustrations, was always adapted to the company before Him: stern rebuke at times for the Pharisees, *but not always*; for tender reasonings are found also—witness that wonderful parable, in three parts, of Luke xv. May we ever be under the Holy Spirit's control to have like discernment.

We may have found ourselves on an occasion led to speak a word which has proved to be the very word needed, whether to an individual or publicly, and by it souls have been cleared

straightway. Then has come the danger: we have been prone to say of that word, what David said of the sword of Goliath, "There is none like it," and have been surprised at not seeing results from the use of it again. But as the love of God to men is operative in our hearts we shall be quick to detect where the soul is in its exercise, and to discern that truth that is needed for its help.

The great question to-day is—How are we to win souls from the awful indifference which has settled upon them? It is comparatively easy to deal with the few anxious inquirers that are found; but how shall we win souls who will not come to hear the gospel preached, and even resent our private solicitations? Love will keep our hearts soft and tender towards them; it will give us to be persistent, and, as opportunities occur, will enable us to deal wisely, with winsome words, until their souls are won. "The Lord give thee understanding in all things." Letters, pleading with souls, have often been used when other means have failed, and who shall count the number of souls won through such tracts as "Safety, Certainty, and Enjoyment"?

We are hearing of more souls being won through open-air preaching of late than has been the case for many years. Its importance cannot be overestimated in these days when pews are empty, and societies are owning that they have lost their hold even on their "own people." The most gifted preachers should go out—after the example of their Master—and so the gospel commission is worded. There, under the Spirit's guidance, they will learn how to arrest the attention of the people in the streets.

We must never forget that our power *with men* is in proportion to our power *with God*. "We will give ourselves up to prayer and the ministry of the word" (Acts vi. 4, N.T.). The Lord graciously give us this wisdom in abundant measure, for "he that is *wise* winneth souls" (Prov. xi. 30, R.V.).

Backsliding.

(F. B. HOLE).

With a Word to Christian Workers.

A FRIEND lately remarked in my hearing that there are villages and hamlets in the British Isles where it is not so easy to find a sinner. The population seems to be composed of *true Christians* on the one hand and *backsliders* on the other.

This may have been a somewhat exaggerated, if picturesque, way of putting the case; that a serious fact was enshrined in the statement does not however admit of any doubt. There are immense multitudes who have at some time or other registered a profession of religion or even of definite conversion, and yet to-day they are far—*very* far many of them—from the kingdom of God.

Why is this? What does it all mean? Can we discern anything which accounts for it? How should we diagnose the case?

It is impossible, of course, to diagnose *every* individual case, or indeed to diagnose with infallible accuracy *any* individual case. There are subtleties and intricacies in the soul of man that defy all save God alone. A divine plumb-line is needed if we would fathom the heart, and we possess it not. "The Lord knoweth them that are His." Still, while avoiding the error of announcing even our judgments with an air of papal infallibility, let us not fail to observe the clear distinctions which Scripture makes in regard to this subject.

Taking the Bible into our hands we find that backsliders are divided into three classes:

- (1) The apostate backslider.
- (2) The ordinary unconverted backslider.
- (3) The believing backslider.

The First Class.

Hebrews vi. (vers. 4 to 8) describes the first class. Every Jew who had embraced Christianity had thereby found an entrance into a most privileged circle, and became a partaker of many striking benefits, irrespective of whether at the bottom he was really converted or not. It was possible that under stress of persecution and trouble some might wish to shake off allegiance to Christ and return to their Judaism, and in these verses the Spirit of God warns such of the consequences. In order to be properly reinstated amongst their former Jewish associates they would have to "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame."

This is to "fall away" indeed! To fall from the profession of Christianity right away until the depth of apostasy is reached. This is backsliding in its most aggravated form, so aggravated as to be possible only to an unconverted person and to be worthy of the most tremendous and unsparing judgment. It is IMPOSSIBLE to renew such to repentance. Their doom is irrevocably fixed.

Has this a present application? Is backsliding of this terrible character possible to-day? We certainly believe it is. When in South Africa some years ago a friend wished us to visit the Mohammedan mosque in a certain town. Permission could easily be obtained, he said, for an Englishman held a leading place in connection with it. On inquiry we were informed that he had definitely abandoned Christ for Mohammed, and the Bible for the Koran. The light, the heavenly gift, the Holy Ghost, the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come are found exclusively in the Christian circle. Out of that into the darkness he had plunged.

That such cases are rare we may earnestly hope and believe, nevertheless they are possible. Let us therefore hold aloft the warning beacon of Hebrews vi. as much as ever.

The Second Class.

In the parable of the sower (Luke viii. 6, 13) we find the second class, to which the great majority of backsliders belong. The gospel seed is sown on the rock covered with a fine layer of soil. There is *apparent* result almost immediately, but there being no depth there is no root, and hence nothing permanent is done.

Upon the surface of this the meaning lies. What untold thousands have at some time or other come beneath the sound of the gospel and its influences. They have been moved and have professed conversion. A little while and they have slidden back into the world, and their profession is seen to be empty and worthless. They fall away.

Do not confound this class with that first named. Those fall from the profession of *the Christian religion* to apostasy. These from profession of definite *conversion* to worldliness and indifference.

That this kind of backslider would inevitably appear in connection with the work of the gospel was recognized by our Lord Jesus Christ in this parable; but the terrible degree to which this kind of backsliding has prevailed in this our day should really *alarm* us, and lead to many heart-searchings as to what it all means. Its sorrowful effects are upon us on every hand. Such people are themselves doubly hard to win, and are the greatest possible stumbling-blocks to others.

Upon all Christian workers we would seriously and affectionately urge that there has been far too much slipshod and sometimes almost flippant evangelism. We have sought to influence people far too much by that which is merely human, by sentimental hymns,

charming singing, eloquent speaking, pathetic incidents, and the like; we have far too little relied upon that which is divine. We have thereby produced an unnecessarily large crop of "stony-ground hearers."

In the first century designing men, Pharisees and scribes, knew how to twist about the indifferent Jewish multitude until they all cried out as with one voice, "Not this Man, but Barabbas." If, in the twentieth century, we use the latest and most approved modern methods of evangelism to prevail upon the multitudes to signify their acceptance of Christ, what have we gained? Nothing, except there be those really "pricked in the heart" by the mighty convicting power of the Holy Spirit, as were the three thousand on the day of Pentecost. *Nothing*, and worse than nothing, for we have gained the harm and loss of poor souls, hurried into a false position which they soon fall from to their own discomfort and the discredit of the gospel.

Let us eschew everything that would lead to these disastrous results, regardless of the effect on our own reputation, for success in the work of the Lord. Never daub the wall with untempered mortar, saying, Peace! peace! when there is no peace. Never hurry a soul into confession. Never treat sin lightly. Preach truth as well as grace. Emphasize repentance. Neither count your chickens before they are hatched, nor break the shell to hatch them. If you do they will not be strong.

Backsliders of this class are not hopeless. They may be restored, but the only restoration possible is sound and thorough-going conversion to God.

The Third Class.

The third class of backslider is described in 2 Peter i. 8-10. Read the verses carefully and note that we do not here read of "falling *away*." It says, "If ye do these things ye shall never *fall*." The believer may *fall*, though he does not fall away. Fall from what? From

communion with God, from the pursuit of the excellent Christian graces described in verses 5, 6, and 7 of our chapter. Fall to what? To spiritual blindness, to insensibility and forgetfulness of the wonderful cleansing and forgiveness that grace has made his own. It does not say that such a backsliding believer is *no longer* purged from his sins, but that he has forgotten that *he was purged* from his old sins (ver. 9).

These lines will meet the eye of some fallen and distressed believer. Your cry is, What shall I do? Confess your sin and backsliding to God. Forgiveness and cleansing, according to 1 John i. 9, will be yours. The cure for you is confession, so that the obstruction may be removed, and then the diligent pursuit of that which is good (2 Peter i. 10).

Notice, in conclusion, that in the life of the Lord Jesus we are provided with an example and illustration of each class of backslider. The apostate backslider answering to Hebrews vi. was Judas Iscariot. He plunged in one reckless moment from his position of outward privilege and friendship to the depths

of apostate treachery; and as a hopeless wreck he passed into perdition.

The professed believers of John ii. 23, 24 illustrate the second class. There was no real work with them and Jesus knew it. A little later (John vi. 66) and they had gone back to the world where they had been before.

Peter himself is the example of the third. How fitting that he should allude to such backsliding in his epistle. By confession he was recovered and restored.

Are you a backslider, my reader? If so, return to the Lord, return by way of *conversion* or *confession*, just as suits your case, but RETURN!

Or are you a servant of the Lord Jesus—a worker in the harvest field? Then we beseech you to seriously and prayerfully set your face against unreality in the work of the Lord, to eschew all mere surface work, that there may be some recovery from the epidemic of backsliding which has become such a scandal in the church of God.

Every one who does not know Christ has either a disappointed heart or a heart seeking what will disappoint it.

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” . . . Human efforts shut this help out. . . . No human planning is ever right. In His own time and way God will come in. . . . Human efforts prove want of faith and restlessness, and planning is mere flesh.

“Rejoice in the Lord always”—there is the positive portion. “Be careful for nothing,” then, as to all that is down here; and in laying our burdens on His throne and heart, it is peace—for He is not troubled and knows the end from the beginning—the peace of God keeps our hearts. What a sanctuary to have in going through the world!

Love likes to be a servant, and selfishness likes to be served.

Christ was the display, at all cost to Himself, of divine love to man.

His sorrows must ever be a depth into which we look over on the edge with solemn awe. . . . It exalts His grace to the soul to look into that depth, and makes one feel that none but a divine Person (and one perfect in every way) could have been there.

In Christ all the blessedness of God was manifested to meet the need and wretchedness of men. And where sin abounded grace has much more abounded, for not only has propitiation been made by Christ, but grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Bible Study.—Galatians.

(EDWARD CROSS).

Galatians v. 11=26.

11 And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.

12 I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Verse 11.

IN chapter i. 7 Paul speaks of "some" that troubled them, but verse 10 of this chapter apparently contemplates one individual.

To this individual he possibly refers as falsely accusing him of preaching circumcision: probably by misinterpreting the circumcision of Timothy. But if he did preach it, "Why," he asks, "am I yet persecuted?" Were it so, then "the scandal of the cross would be done away:" for the scandal of the cross, from which Paul was suffering—Paul the proto-martyr of a long line—was not in circumcision but in the cross. Only accept the outward sign of circumcision, and the scandal of the cross ceases, with all its attendant persecution.

Verse 12.

On this verse Luther remarks: "Paul (as I suppose) alluded here to circumcision, as if he would say, 'They compel you to cut off the foreskin of your flesh: but I would that they themselves might be utterly cut off by the root.'" Rather, might cut them-

selves off, or mutilate themselves. A similar allusion is apparently made in Philippians iii. 2, 3; and Bishop Lightfoot remarks that such practices were not uncommon among the heathen, in the worship of Cybele.

Verse 13.

But while insisting on the liberty inculcated by the gospel, he warns them that it was not for licence in the flesh, but that by love they were to serve one another. If law they would have, then "love" is the law of Christ. This is "the royal law of liberty" (James ii.).

Verse 15.

"Mutual anger and mutual hate must result in mutual destruction" (Howson). Party spirit puts an end to all spiritual life.

Verse 16.

But without the bridle of the law will not the flesh run wild? How can holiness be produced without it? The answer is, "Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall in no way fulfil the lust of the flesh." This is the true corrective for

it, as it is also the power of a holy life. The Spirit and the flesh are opposed the one to the other; so that having the Spirit "ye should not do"—not, cannot do—"the things that ye would."

Verse 18.

The Spirit is the power of life, while the law is the principle of repression; and thus "if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law."

Verse 19.

Now the works of the law are manifested, as the list here given shows.

Verses 22, 23.

But, on the other hand, the fruit of the Spirit, in one beautiful bunch, like the grapes of Eshcol, is such that there is no law of repression against it. Weeds we repress, not fruit: and they are best repressed by the cultivation of fruit that will smother them. Is there here, in accordance with the exuberance of the Apostle's style, any idea of a triple triplet: love, joy, peace towards God; longsuffering, kindness, goodness towards man; faithfulness, meekness, self-control in circumstances? Certainly against such there is no law.

Verse 24.

But they that are of the Christ have crucified the flesh, with the passions and the lusts. Here we see the force

Faith appropriates what love has provided; and the more faith takes the greater is the delight of love.

You cannot touch pitch without being defiled, and there is a great deal of pitch in these days. Thinking with the world and talking like the world, the heart gets into the colour of the world. It is not Christ. But the heart that is set free lives in the things that Christ's heart delights in, and lives in the atmosphere where Christ's heart dwells, instead of being dragged after a thousand other things.

of the expression "of the Christ," to which Paul attaches such importance. In Romans viii. 9, setting forth the Christian state, he says: "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is not of Him." It is not there an unbeliever, a rejecter of Christ, but a contrast between the two states, "in the flesh" and "in the Spirit." The Jew under law was "in flesh," whether he was born anew or not. To have the Spirit of God, as the fruit of the redemptive work of Christ, was another thing, and such an one was no longer "in flesh" but "in Spirit:" he was "of the Christ;" if he had not the Spirit he was "not of Him." Now they who are of the Christ are in the state of having crucified (aorist) the flesh, with the passions and lusts. It is not here a baptismal sign, nor a merely past historical fact, but as having the Spirit dwelling in them, they are livingly and effectually "of Christ;" and as to their actual practical state, they "have crucified the flesh," etc.

Verse 25.

If therefore we live by the Spirit—and mark that he refers here to what is a vital reality—then let us studiously walk by the Spirit.

Verse 26.

Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking controversy, or resenting defeat.

Matthew Henry said: "The God who feeds His birds will not starve His babes."

Grace in the heart produces humility of mind, so that he who is proud of the grace that he thinks he possesses must therefore be a pretender.

We learn what God is to us, not by our own thoughts of Him, but by the way He has revealed Himself to us in Christ as the "God of all grace."

The flesh always pens itself in, because it is selfish. When we are in the Spirit there is always unity.

Converts and Witnesses.

No one was ever yet set for the glory of Christ and the extension of His name who did not rejoice in the conversion of souls, and without converts we could not have witnesses ; but there are many converts who are not witnesses, and it is witnesses that are wanted in this day. Every witness is a trophy of the power of Christ on the field of battle ; but here is our lack : we may know our heavenly calling and yet be without heavenly power, hence our failure as witnesses. It is when we plant the heavenly standard in the presence of the foe that we are witnesses for Christ.

It is a strange phenomenon that

when there is a revival, in the true sense, many Christians are more occupied with the winning of souls than with standing for Christ themselves. The former would not be deficient if the latter were paramount, for we see in Paul, the most faithful witness for Christ that the world has ever seen, the most earnest zeal in evangelization. May the grace and the strength of the Lord be ours in such abundant measure that with our heavenly calling there may be heavenly practice, and with our knowledge of truth there may be fervent love for the souls of men. This will be so if Christ is supreme with us.

The Power of Deliverance

If Christ is so precious to me that everything else is dung and dross, it will be no difficulty for me to throw it aside ; that is the secret—the power of an absorbing Object to deliver me from all else. It is to the extent my heart values an object that it is a temptation to me. Suppose I have

a very beautiful cloak on, and I am running a race ; if my heart is really occupied with the prize, I shall not mind the beauty of the cloak ; I shall only know it as a weight, and shall cast it off me, as we find in Hebrews, "Laying aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset."

Faith.

We are called to live by faith, and faith is seeing Him who is invisible. Let us set the Lord always before us, and while praying fervently and reading the Word diligently, let us not be satisfied unless our eyes are resting upon Him.

When a mariner, however tossed

about on the sea, can see the sun, he can take the bearings of his ship. Let us look to the Lord as the mariner looks for the sun in the hour of difficulty. Every hour is an hour of difficulty with us, and if we do not keep our eye on Him in the little difficulties, we shall not be able to find Him in the great ones.

The Flesh.

In South America there is a creeper which climbs, and enfolds, and hangs in pendent festoons about certain trees, poisoning as it goes ; it drinks the sap of the trees upon which it hangs, sheds its destructive seed, and multiplies its power of injury and death. It is called "the murderer" for its well-known and fatal qualities. How like unto this

is the evil flesh that clings so tenaciously to us, and how often we have had to prove that "the minding of the flesh is death" (Rom. viii. 6, marg.).

But we may rejoice in the blessed fact that the Holy Spirit dwells within us, and that through the Spirit we may mortify the deeds of the body and so live (Rom. viii. 13).

The Way of Love.

(J. WILSON SMITH).

In the Epistle to the Ephesians.

The Source.

AS the spring so the river; that which issues from the Fountain is that which fills the mighty depths beyond. Love is the source, as it is also the grand and final purpose of God for the blessing of His people. The motive that wrought in His heart shall yet express itself as the eternal portion and home of His redeemed. He will rest in His love. What a portion!

First, then, as to the Source, we read in Ephesians ii. 4, 5: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins." Clear it is that, as dead in sins, *we* could furnish no motive. Our state was one of the most complete alienation, not only in guilt, but in spiritual death and distance from God. If blessing should reach us it must therefore find its source in the Blesser. His heart, unsolicited by merit or motive on our side, must act according to its own nature, and find in itself the spring that could not be found in its object. Thank God! that very motive is found in Him. God, we read, is *rich in mercy*, and that quality, so divinely suitable to the state of guilty man, abounds in Him in living fulness; so that He, whilst infinitely holy, has, for His great love wherewith He loved us, proved Himself to be a Saviour-God! "Great love" and "rich mercy" mark the heart from which our blessings flow.

There is a river on whose banks is built the largest city, and on whose bosom is borne the greatest mercantile trade in the world. The source of that river is seven springs of clear and refreshing water, bursting as they do with vigour from their native hill-side. These form the beginning of a

stream that is so important to the life of millions of men. But God's "great love" is the Fountain-head of a river far more glorious, and one that is destined to carry a different and much greater wealth on its bosom, flowing, as it shall, through the wide universe, and pouring itself into the ocean of eternal glory.

God is its blessed Source!

Oh! how infinitely important it is that we should know His heart—His love—Himself!

How fearfully God has been misrepresented by the devil, and with what blinded willingness has man listened to the lie that He is austere, hard, careless of our good, exacting from us that which we should no doubt yield but cannot, punishing for trifling faults, and judging without mercy. So has Satan suggested, and so have our foolish hearts believed.

Nay, "God is Love." It is His nature; and abundantly has He proved it in the free gift of His only Son. When we were dead in sins He *loved us*. It is because He is not known that He is, alas, distrusted; but to know Him is, through grace, to love Him. This, then, is the certain source of all blessing, that God has loved us. That precious truth stands by itself. It shines, like yonder sun, independently of any favouring circumstances here below. God is not dependent on man, although He deigns to make Himself known to him.

The Channel.

But how, then, can this revelation be made, and how can man get to know God?

For this it was necessary, not only that the only-begotten Son should be-

come a Man, but that, sin being in the way, He should make atonement for the same.

Hence we find after this a double statement as to the death of our Lord Jesus Christ: first, that He "loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour" (Eph. v. 2); and, second, that He "loved the church and gave Himself for it . . . that He might . . . present it to Himself a glorious church not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." The first is His substitutionary self-sacrifice for us individually, and the second is the same self-surrender for the church as a whole. In it we have the accomplishment of all that work which alone could bring us to God. "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." "Now in Christ we who once were far off are made nigh by His blood."

His atoning death was a necessity in order that sin should be removed and the throne of God vindicated.

All this is, thank God! accomplished to His satisfaction and glory, because Christ has gone on high; but the spring of His self-surrender is His *love*.

What perfect rest of conscience flows from faith in the completeness of His work, and what joy of heart is found in the knowledge of a love that surrendered His all: His glory, life, everything, for the good of poor unworthy objects! It is inconceivable! Moreover, it is a love that not only proved itself in death, but it shines in His life on high as brightly as ever—a dying love and a living love dwell in the same tender heart. That charity abides.

Present Effects.

Now what is the result for us of this gracious work? It is that we are "accepted in the Beloved" (chap. i. 6). This is our present and marvellous portion—*accepted!* Could any place

be better? Impossible! And, notice, we are "accepted in the Beloved," not "in Christ," but "in the Beloved"! In Christ is our standing—in the Beloved is our measure of acceptance, and of divine and perfect favour. No doubt Christ is the Beloved, but the object of the Spirit of God is to intimate to us our present place in the favour of God and our Father.

A thousand spiritual difficulties vanish and a thousand affections rise when the soul apprehends, in faith, the rich meaning of such an acceptance! But let us ever remember that so high and favoured a place results from the value of the atoning work of Christ, and not from attainment or progress on our part. It is the present portion of all who believe in Jesus. God has placed us there, and has given us to know and enjoy in sweet communion the wondrous fruits of the soul-agony of His dear Son. Well may each say:

*"That Thou shouldst be so good to me,
Shouldst be the God Thou art,
'Tis darkness to the intellect,
But it's sunshine to the heart."*

The Flowing Stream.

Well, now, what is the consequence of all this in our practical ways here below?

If "accepted in the Beloved," we are now exhorted to "*walk in love*" (chap. v. 2). To walk corresponding to our exalted place is surely incumbent on us. Responsibility flows from relationship, and Christianity as contrasted with law places us in present, gracious, and happy relation with God as Father. That is settled for us in grace. We are to imitate God as "dear children" and to "walk in love" (chap. v. 1, 2). But in order to imitate any one we must know that one. Now we are made acquainted with God—are placed in His presence, and put in possession of His mind. We can therefore imitate God as His children, and just as He has dealt with us in ways of divine and perfect love so in

like manner we are to walk in and exhibit love in our own ways.

Love is the essence of all true morality. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10). Grant love, and law is superfluous. But, alas, sin exists! It was intensified by law; and now, sin being in us, we are told to walk in love. Love is the practical remedy. Secure love and prohibitive legislation is unnecessary; and it is just because we fail in love that we give evidence, alas, of the evil that dwells within.

True love is essentially holy. It worketh no ill to his neighbour, and whosoever does work ill does not walk in love! Love and rectitude of conduct always go together. Hence we who once "walked according to the course of this world" (chap. ii. 2) are now to walk in love; and I may say, in passing, that a worse character could not be given to a man than that he walks according to the world. The world is, in every principle, opposed to the Father. It crucified the Son, and it cannot receive the Spirit; and therefore "if any man will be the friend of the world he is the enemy of God" (James iv. 4). On the other hand, no better character can attach to the Christian than that he walks in love. For this we have the power of the indwelling Spirit of God; and so we may say that, just as love was the source of the beautiful stream, so now love is seen in its current, its every ripple is love!

Its Depths.

But, again, the injunction to walk in love is not all. Love, as a responsibility, is difficult of accomplishment. It needs nutriment, stimulus, and power. Hence we read "that ye being rooted and grounded in love" (chap. iii. 17). Love is thus the soil into the fertile depths of which the roots of faith enter, as it is the solid foundation on which it builds its superstructure. It is the element in which faith lives

and the atmosphere it breathes. Its outcome is according to its income, its expression to its impression. It inhales love and exhales its fragrance. But what, whose is the love it thus feeds upon? Is it our love to God? Is it the fruit of the work of the Spirit in us? Are we called on to glory in aught that we might call our own? Nay, it is the love of Christ. "To know the love of Christ" is the expression (chap. iii. 19). His own eternal love! What a study! How exhaustless!

Three times does the Apostle Paul mention in terms that love. First, in Romans viii. 35: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" There our *security* abides for ever. Second, in 2 Corinthians v. 14, "The love of Christ constraineth us." There we learn the mighty *motive* of all Christian devotedness. And, lastly, in our passage, "To know the love of Christ." There we have the link of *communion*. Security, devotedness, and communion are all bound up with the love of Christ.

Yet this love "passeth knowledge." Like all else in Christianity, it is infinite. Definitions are beggared in such immensities. The soul, though made divinely capable of enjoyment, finds itself happily lost amid such glorious worlds! It knows and enjoys alone that which, though most enjoyable, is yet far beyond its ken. There are depths and breadths in this river that no fathom can reach or eye distinguish. Still, the river rolls in its ineffable sweetness and beauty. We are ever invited to drink—to slake our thirst—to prove the richness of that living water, and to know the love of Christ. Blessed portion!

Its Ocean Fulness.

But now we reach the ocean into which the river flows. "He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (chap. i. 4). Here we find the purpose and object of this glorious love as to

our everlasting place—it is that we should be “before Him in love”! That is the end! What a thought! How rich a theme! That we should be “holy and without blame”—that is marvellous! Adam in Eden was innocent. We shall be holy! Adam fell, and carried his seed into sin and blame, all being guilty; yet we shall be (thanks eternal to redeeming love and atoning blood) without blame, completely justified! And, mark, “it is God that justifieth” (Rom. viii. 33). We shall be all that. And, further, before Him in love! We shall share His home and enjoy its native air. Yes, “God is Love;” and all His surroundings in those sacred abodes shall partake of His nature. The once unworthy objects of His love shall find their eternal joy in His unclouded presence, placed, as they are, before Him in love.

Nor let us overlook the holiness that

shall be theirs as well. Love is always apart from sin. It is pure, for “God is light;” neither sin nor impurity can be tolerated in His presence. Sin is judged. The impenitent are condemned for ever. “He that is unjust shall be unjust still . . . he that is holy shall be holy still” (Rev. xxii. 11). But grace has reached the believer, and has marked him out for such unspeakable bliss. Oh, for a tongue to adore and worship such a God as ours! Well may this precious epistle burst forth in its magnificent introduction, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ.”

He the Blesser—we the blessed! His the eternal praise—ours an everlasting portion before Him in love!

*Called to share the Rest of God,
In the Father's blest abode;
God of love, and God of light,
In Thy praises we unite.*

Eternal Punishment (VIII).

(JAMES BOYD)

Is it in the Bible?

THAT is the whole question. Whether it be a blot upon the name of God, or whether it be not, if it be in the Bible it is there to be believed—that is, if the Bible is to be accepted as a revelation from God. If the doctrine be a stain upon His reputation, and if it be found in the Bible, then let the Bible be discarded as slander and blasphemy, and let the world be purified from its baleful presence.

But with what character does the state of this world invest its Creator? To say that eternal punishment is a blot upon His name is to assume that in this world where the Bible is His reputation is at variance with such a doctrine. Is it so, then, that among men the wide world over God is famous for His goodness, grace, kindness, tenderness, compassion, and love?

Is His name dearer to men than any other, and is it pronounced by every lip with all the holy reverence and warmth of affection which one would expect to hear from a creature in the blessed enjoyment of the knowledge of a beneficent Creator? What name has He in this world upon which this hell-doctrine casts such aspersions? Have I been dreaming when I thought I heard the murmurings, the mutterings of discontent, and the blasphemies, which rise on the right hand and on the left, and fill the ear of Heaven? Has the corruption, the violence, the cruelty, the deceit, of which I have thought myself the witness, been but a horrible nightmare, a sort of delirium tremens, the result of a heated feverish imagination, to which I alone of all the creatures in the universe have been subject?

“An aspersion upon His character” indeed! A nice character the world gives Him! Who has any confidence in God? Who of all the sons of men does not think that, if he had the power, he would be able to do a great deal better for himself than God is doing? Who would give himself over into the hand of God that He might do with him just as it pleased Him? Is not the thought of the Creator more a terror to the creature than anything else? Is not the state of the world, as it is, a greater blot upon the name of the Creator than anything else? Here His creature is in continual misery, and here He Himself is rebelled against and dishonoured. And He has borne with it for almost six thousand years (some millions, if we were to believe the scientists), and how do we know it will not go on thus for ever? We are told it is improving, and that man is working out his own salvation. I fail to see the improvement, even in a purely moral sense. We have better laws in this country than we had two centuries ago. Yes, but better laws do not mean better men. But this subject I will not pursue at present.

We are told that this doctrine makes God to appear cruel and vindictive, and therefore men turn with loathing from the gospel. But as far as my knowledge of man goes, such a being would be very much after man's own heart, and would with him be exceedingly popular. I do not believe that any human being was ever influenced in his rejection of the gospel by the notion of eternal torment. I have heard men often speak of their coming to Christ, and of the power which led them to Him, and almost invariably was it the terror of wrath which first woke them up from the deadly stupor which held captive their souls. There are two things which are always present to a soul when he turns to Christ: one is his own lost condition, and the other a sense of the grace of God in Christ. The blessed Lord in Luke xv. presents the return of the prodigal as the result

of two great principles at work in his soul: his own perishing condition, and the grace of the heart of God. Take away the notion of eternal punishment from the gospel and you take away the sense of the necessity of salvation out of the soul of the hearer. If there is such a thing as annihilation, the terror of endless torment is gone; and as he has no desire after such a place as heaven, he has no need of salvation; therefore he will let it be a short life and a merry one. Again, if there is opportunity for salvation in the world to come, he will leave it off till then: why should he miss the present enjoyment of the world and the gratification of his fleshly desires? Who cannot recognize in either of these substitutes for the truth of God the lie of the old serpent, who said to our first parents in the garden, *Thou shalt not surely die.*

The fact is, men know enough about what is involved in being followers of Christ to convince them that they could not pursue the pleasures in which they take delight if they believed the gospel; there is also the shame of the cross; and thirdly, there is the pride of heart that forbids the sinner to take his place as a good-for-nothing creature and submit himself to the grace of God. Men are snared by their lusts, hindered by their guilty pride and innate hatred of all that is of God, and ashamed to submit, in the face of the world, to the lowly Saviour of the lost. All these things unite together to keep man away from God, but not the doctrine of eternal punishment, which has in every case a large part in determining the soul to turn to the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are told that it presents God in the character of a cruel, merciless, and vindictive Being, who cares nothing for the welfare of His creatures. Now it was the One who was on earth the witness of the grace and love of God to man who was the first to testify fully and clearly the endless duration of the suffering of the lost. In the Old Testament wrath was largely presented as governmental, and the Spirit

of God did not usually carry it beyond the death of the body; but in the testimony by Christ infinite and eternal things are brought to light: the heart of God, the heart of man, the lake of fire, the glory of God. In the light which radiates from the manifestation of the Son of God everything is revealed. This is why we have eternal torment brought prominently before the souls of men. Everything is out, and there is nothing more to be revealed. In the Old Testament we had neither the love of God nor the judgment of the impenitent, as we have them in the New. Did Jesus present God as cruel and vindictive? It is in Him God has come to light: "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." It is by Him we know that God is love. Yet it is He who speaks of the undying worm and the quenchless fire. And it is against God manifest in the flesh that the men of this world have to stand up to do battle for the character of their Creator! We are to take our ideas of God from the philosophers of the world and reject the revelation God has given of Himself by His beloved Son, for both He and His apostles taught the doctrine of everlasting punishment. *In the Bible* the doctrine is, and I defy any one of those men who deny it to put such a doctrine before us in other and plainer words than it is put before us in the Scriptures. Let them try it by Greek, English, or by any other language they choose to take up as a vehicle by which to convey their thoughts to men. No words could be stronger, clearer, or more explicit than the words used by the Holy Spirit of God when describing the eternal consequences of rejecting Christ.

But if this doctrine presents God as a vengeful and vindictive Being, what must be the characteristics of those who have imbibed it, and have been therefore morally formed by it? What unmerciful man-haters they must have been! But have we found them so?

Have they not rather been characterized by love, even to their enemies, by doing good to them that hated them and praying for them who spitefully used them and persecuted them? And has it not been where the Bible was hated, and hidden away from the people, and unread by the priests, that hatred, cruelty, violence, and murder have luxuriated? Love to God and to His people, and desire for the salvation of sinners, have ever marked those born of God, and yet the eternal punishment of the wicked has ever been a prominent article in the faith of such. I need not mention names. Every man who has been worth anything as a servant of God, a defender of the faith, or a herald of the gospel, has seen in the Bible the eternal torment of the impenitent, and has gone down before God in the confession that to this awful judgment his sins had made him liable. And not only have these good and true men seen this in the Bible, but every other man who has read therein has seen it also; for it is there in as plain language as is the eternal salvation of the believer, though some prefer to close their eyes to these solemn truths, and try to make, not only themselves, but others also, believe that this doctrine is not there. It may be that some have failed clearly to apprehend the sacred manner in which this truth is set before us in the Word, and have allowed their natural minds a licence to revel in a region which they no sooner entered than they lost their way; but that did not alter the fact that the doctrine was there, and that they saw it there, and that their anxiety for the deliverance of others from such a judgment, as well as their gratitude to God for their own personal deliverance, was boundless. According to these non-eternity-of-punishment advocates it was a demon, and not God, who was worshipped by such men as Luther, Rutherford, Bunyan, McCheyne, and Spurgeon; but from which of the demons did these missionaries and men of God get their meekness and gentleness, the breadth

and depth and strength of their super-human affections for the souls of their fellow-men? From what cruel and vindictive being did they derive the holy zeal that lifted them above all that was of mere human nature, and led them to such lives of self-sacrifice, and inspired them to supplications for the blessing of their persecutors? It was from the lips of Jesus they gathered that which made them what they were, and what He told them as to the doom of the wicked was received by them with the same simple faith as was

that which He said regarding the blessing of the believer. It is by the revelation God has made of Himself that the believer is formed morally; indeed, it is by that revelation men are born again: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God" (1 Peter i. 23), and His Word is the expression of Himself. That being so, and if what these men tell us is true, what wretches believers must ever have been! The son must bear the impress of the parent.

"In Him was Life."

(H. D. R. JAMESON).

Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth (Ps. cx. 3).

THERE is a marvellous power of LIFE in the blessed Lord—exhaustless, eternal, and fadeless LIFE. This passage in Psalm cx. looks back to the very womb of the morning, to the inconceivable distance of eternity whence our Lord emerges to our view, and then passes on to the yet future millennial day of His power when indeed His people (Israel) shall be "willing;" and what is said of Him is that in that coming day, even as in the long-past "womb of the morning," He has "the dew of His youth." He comes thus before prophetic vision in all the freshness and beauty of *eternal youth*.

In Daniel vii. we see Him as the "Ancient of days," and in connection with that expression (so as to present to the mind some conception of the ages on ages past whence He proceeds) we read of the whiteness of the hairs of His head being as "the pure wool." Even so, presented as the Son of Man, who is not only "the Last" but also "the First," His head and His hairs were "white like wool, as white as snow" (Rev. i. 14). But when we come to the Song of Solomon (in which, like Daniel and Revelation, symbolic language is employed in order

the more simply to convey varied aspects of the truth to finite minds) we find the blessed Lord presented as He appears in the eyes of His earthly bride in the millennial day, and read her description of Him in the words, "His locks are bushy and black as a raven"—no sign of decay, no mark of age, He ever abides in the eternal freshness of fadeless life.

Of Him it is said (Ps. i.), "His leaf also shall not wither," and again (Ps. cii. 25-27), "Of old hast Thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed. But Thou art *the same*, and Thy years shall have no end." To use the words of another, *He never grows old*. On Him time leaves no trace of its passage, for He ever abides in the most absolute sense of the word "the Same," the changeless One, eternally possessing "the dew of His youth."

But the power of life in Him is exercised in respect of others, so that in Psalm cii., immediately after the statement "Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end," it is

added, "The children of Thy servants shall *continue*, and their seed shall be *established* before Thee." Then in the New Testament we find the same power of life evidenced in connection with the assembly, which is Christ's body and His bride. Built by "the Son of the living God," that which He calls "My assembly" subsists, as He Himself declares, in an energy of life against which "the gates of hades shall not prevail" (Matt. xvi. 17). On those who through eternal ages are to form the bride of Christ time will leave no marks of change or decay, for when presented to Himself as a glorious church we read (Eph. v. 27) that not only shall no "spot" disfigure her beauteous perfection, but also that no "wrinkle" shall mar that ageless brow; nor, indeed, shall there be "any such thing," for no trace of the wilderness journey shall remain. And if we pass

on more than a thousand years to the outset of the eternal state itself we find (Rev. xxi. 2) the church viewed as "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a *bride adorned for her husband*"—yet, and evermore, in all the brightness and freshness of the bridal day!

How truly we can say "the path of the just is as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day"—there is no retrogression with the saints of God; no growing old, as regards what they themselves are; no diminution ever in the joys they enter into, and their brightest day is yet to come!

"O day of wondrous promise,
The Bridegroom and the bride
Are seen in glory ever,
And love is satisfied."

The Missionary Problem (No. 2).

(COLONEL JACOB).

The Missionary's Message and Life.

IN former time all who had not heard of Christ were consigned (in the opinion of most) to the lake of fire. This was undoubtedly wrong. All blessing is surely through Christ alone, and on the ground of His sacrifice, yet we do not think that our children who die in infancy will be in the lake of fire because they have not heard of or believed on Christ; on the contrary, we believe they will be saved through Him, so also will those who die in infancy among the heathen; and even as to those who grow up and die without having heard of Christ we know that God is no respecter of persons and "in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him" (Acts x. 3, 5; see also Heb. xi. 6). Such would turn to God alone, own their sinfulness, and cry to Him for

mercy. This would be the work of the Spirit acting in the conscience and through the light and knowledge of God as shown in His works of creation, and they would never cry in vain. The new idea is, however, quite different from this. The above would turn them away from their religion to the living God, and blessing would result. The new idea is that there is something in every religion which meets the need of the soul. It was stated in connection with the great Missionary Conference in Edinburgh that what the modern missionary now says to the heathen is, "Your religion has the root of the matter in it; you, too, feel the hunger for the Eternal as we do; you have the half-truth—we bring you the whole truth."

If this be correct, woe betide the

heathen, and woe to Christendom whose teachers teach them. It is true that in heathendom there are those who feel the hunger for the Eternal, but not through their religion. The hunger comes from the breath of God inbreathed into Adam, so that in man, marred as he is by sin, it still comes out in longings which the true God alone can satisfy. Romans i. 18-23 gives a description of the condition of the heathen in Paul's time. Has anything happened since then to improve things? Nothing. Can their religion lift them? Not one bit. While as for the Mohammedanism, coming as it did after Christ, it is apostasy. An enemy of the Christ of God, it is intense in that enmity which will continue until destroyed by the coming of Christ.

Codes of morals, of course, exist, more or less good, in every religion, also beautiful expressions here and there amidst piles of rubbish, but no knowledge of the ruin of man, nor of incarnation or sacrifice or atonement,* nor of God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, still less of the resurrection and the coming glory. These religions are therefore hindrances to the knowledge of God in Christ, and while the missionary must ever be cautious and keep from abusing such systems, he must make it quite clear that Christ will owe nothing to them. Did He not say, "All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them"? (John x. 8).

Woe, woe to us, if we abandon the line marked out in the beginning by the Apostle Paul, who preached Christ crucified, unto the Jews (the religious man) a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks (the philosophers) foolishness (see 1 Cor. i. 17-31), and take up in its stead the modern idea as put forth by

* The ten incarnations of Vishnu believed on by the Hindu are only the devil's blind and have nothing in common with the incarnation of Christ, but the reverse. The sacrifices of the heathen are either meaningless, or are offered to demons (1 Cor. x. 20). Similarly with all such things.

many to-day, and expressed as follows: "The task of Christianity under these conditions is not the preaching of the gospel merely—it is the bringing of education, of letters, of agriculture, of all the elementary parts of civilization. The stupendous work to which the church is called is not so much the teaching of a creed as the laying of the foundations of civilization." God forbid indeed we should teach a creed, we must preach Christ, a living Christ, but the true missionary will utterly refuse the above programme, and will be content to present Christ only, and bear reproach in consequence.

What is the missionary's message? Let Scripture answer. "*If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel [or rather, the light of the gospel of the glory] of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake*" (2 Cor. iv. 3-5).

What is his life?

"*According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ*" (Phil. i. 20, 21).

Whether at Antioch, Thessalonica, Corinth, or Rome, or wherever he was, Paul, the pattern missionary, preached Christ Jesus our Lord. Whether he made tents, worked with his hands, encouraged his fellow-passengers in the ship, or picked up sticks for the fire at Melita, Christ was ever before him as his life. He had this object only before him for himself, and his only object for others was that Christ should be formed in them. Let the true missionary see to it that he follows this pattern. If he care for orphans, teach, instruct, build a house, or cultivate ground, let Christ the Lord be the sole object of his life and subject

of his preaching. All else is worthless.

It is true that at Athens he mentioned the altar with the inscription "To the unknown God," in order to preach the Lord to them. It is true he quoted from one of their poets, "For we are also His offspring," as a reason that we should not think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver or stone, graven by art and man's device, but he certainly never used their religion as a stepping-stone to the knowledge of Christ. At Lystra he spoke of the Creator and the witness of creation, but he never mentioned their gods as helps to reach the living God; on the contrary, he preached that they should turn from these vanities unto the living God, the Creator. Alas, how different is it now! Not many years ago the writer came across a learned American who was sent out by a Trust to preach to the educated heathen about Christianity (not to preach Christ). No name is mentioned, and he is now gone to render his account to God, but at Calcutta, Madras, and other places his lectures were crowded with educated Indians, missionaries, etc., and were most popular. He praised the Hindu religion, he linked the Vedas with the Bible as a sacred treasure from God, he talked of the sublimity of the Oriental consciousness, and said if the Hindu ac-

cepted Christianity he would lift up Christ to a higher level than before. The writer read the addresses as published by him; there was no chance of mistaking the meaning. The language was magnificent, the eloquence was great, but Christ was not presented as the essential to the glory of God and the blessing of man. The sad thing was that while some missionaries grieved, many applauded. An educated Hindu said to the writer, "The addresses were beautiful, we loved them, they offended no one." Has, then, the offence of the cross ceased, or is not another Jesus often preached who is not the Christ of God. Is it thus the Apostle Paul preached? Ten thousand times, No. May every beloved servant of God, at home or abroad, study on his knees 2 Corinthians i.-vi., the chapters which bring out so vividly the character of the Christian ministry and the example which goes with it: Christ filling the whole vision; Christ in glory the passion of the soul; the dying of Jesus always borne about in the body that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in the body; Christ the whole theme, excluding every other name and every other object. Those who teach any other way will certainly not meet with Christ's approval, though men may applaud.

(To be continued.)

Three Great Facts.

Three great events have occurred, and our faithfulness is proved as we are affected by them. (1) Christ has come, has died for our sins, and has risen again. (2) He has gone into heaven. (3) The Holy Ghost has come down to be with us and in us.

There is also a fourth which has not yet occurred, but which is our certain prospect—the Lord is coming again for us.

Every believer knows the first, there could be no salvation otherwise; the

second and third test our faithfulness. Christ is in heaven; do we seek the things which are above where He sitteth at the right hand of God? The Holy Ghost is with us and in us; does He lead and control our hearts absolutely during the absence of our Lord?

All knowledge of truth is ineffectual when we are not in correspondence with these great unconditional facts, which remain true even when we are not true to them; but when we are true to them, all truth is in its place in our hearts.

The Feasts of the Lord.—No. 5.

(H. NUNN-LEVEY).

The Day of Atonement.

It is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God (Lev. xxiii. 28).

THE great day of atonement has a double aspect—one manward, the other Godward. The blood sprinkled on the mercy-seat has respect to the holy claims of God, whilst the sins laid on the scapegoat set forth the substitutionary work of Christ for sinners. A bullock was slain for Aaron and his sons—figure of Christ and the church—and its blood carried into the holiest. Then one goat was sacrificed and its blood sprinkled in the holy place on behalf of the nation of Israel. Aaron's hands were laid on the head of the other goat, and the sins and iniquities of the whole nation symbolically transferred to it. It was then sent by "a man of opportunity" into the wilderness, to a land not inhabited, teaching typically that Israel's sins and iniquities were carried away out of God's sight. The atoning sacrifice, at one and the same time, bore away their guilt and glorified God in every attribute of His being. *We* know this *now*, Israel will learn it in the day of their redemption.

Whilst the sacrificial blood was being carried inside, and the high priest hidden from view, the people outside were anxiously waiting, in affliction of soul, for him to come forth. Having come out of the holy place and sent away the scapegoat, the people had a visible token outside that the work *inside* had removed their guilt; they *saw* and believed. It was not until the high priest came forth and the goat was sent away that their "affliction" was at an end, their burden removed; then, not before, the silver trumpet proclaimed the Jubilee.

We Christians do not wait to *see* before we believe; ours is the blessed-

ness of which our Lord spake to Thomas when He said: "Blessed are they that have *not seen* and yet have believed" (John xx.). We *pre-trust* in Christ, believe the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation, and are sealed by the Holy Ghost until the day of redemption whilst Christ is still hidden in the heavens (see Eph. i. 13).

Israel, on the contrary, will believe when Christ comes forth from the 'inner shrine.' "They shall look upon Him whom they pierced;" they will say: "This is our God, we have waited for Him."

Whilst they wait they mourn; aroused by the call of God—awakened by the silver trumpets on the first day of the month—they spend the intervening days, between the feast of the trumpets and the day of atonement, in sorrow and repentance.

It is their repentance which is specially prominent in Leviticus xxiii. We have no account here of what took place inside the veil, for that we must turn to chapter xvi. Here is shadowed a guilty people, sitting in darkness but looking for light, sighing in bitterness, perplexed and sorrowful, cast down and disquieted, but calling upon their soul to "hope in God."

The modern Jews term this feast the *black fast*, and however careless they may be as to observing the others, there are few who do not observe the day of atonement! Vain is their fasting now, for until the church is taken out of the world, and Christ appears a second time without sin unto salvation, no high priest shall appear.

What is set before us here is the burdened conscience of repentant Israel

in a future day divinely awakened to their awful sin.

“Ye shall *afflict* your souls” (ver. 27).

“Whatsoever soul it be that shall not be *afflicted* in that same day, I will destroy from among his people” (ver. 29).

“Ye shall *afflict* your souls” (ver. 32).

This threefold call to Israel to bow their souls in deep heart-searchings points to the day when the enormity of Israel's sin in rejecting and crucifying Jesus, their true Messiah, shall be brought home to them; then they shall indeed mourn and afflict their souls. Egypt once wailed a bitter wail over the firstborn; from the prison to the palace an anguished cry arose. Now it is Israel's turn to weep; they are in bitterness as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. Like Joseph's brethren of old they cry, “We are verily guilty;” but their sorrow is personal as well as national, individual as well as collective, for though the “land” is said to “mourn,” it is also added that it is “every family *apart*.”

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

“In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the valley of Megiddon.

“And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart;

“The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart;

“All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.”

(Zech. xii. 10-14.)

The families named are typical and descriptive. *David*, head of the royal house, the occupant of a palace, “mourned apart.” Alone with God, in the secret of His presence, he reviewed his guilty past, and learnt the enormity of his sins as in *His sight*. Down he went and in deep self-adorrence cried, “Deliver me from

blood guiltiness, O God!” This will be the cry of the elect remnant of the Jewish nation, as they estimate in the light of the presence of God the true nature of their sin in crucifying Jesus. “His blood be on us and our children,” they had once cried; now those children are burdened with the weight of their crime; the sorrows through which they will pass under Antichrist will wring from them those “lamentations” Jeremiah so graphically describes.

Nathan represents those raised up of God in a day of national declension to summon Israel to repentance. He was God's messenger to David and convinced the king of his guilt, saying, “Thou art the man!” Now he is convicted himself, discovers his own sinfulness, and learns that whilst reproving others he needed reproving himself. Retreating into the privacy of his chamber, he cries with a fellow-prophet, “Woe is me! for *I* am undone; because *I* am a man of unclean lips, and *I* dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for *mine eyes* have seen the King, the Lord of hosts” (Isa. vi. 5).

Levi was the representative of the priestly house. Once the law of truth was in his mouth and iniquity was not found in his lips; now he remembers that it was the priests' lips which framed the most diabolical lie ever propagated. It was the priests that gave large money to the soldiers, bribing them to circulate their wicked falsehood concerning the resurrection of Jesus, saying, “Say ye His disciples came by night and stole Him away whilst we slept.”

It was the priests who plotted and planned the murder of Jesus, and suborned false witnesses in order to accomplish their purpose; it was the priests who instigated the people to choose an anarchist and crucify their Messiah. But *their* guilt will be brought home to their consciences, and the “family of the house of Levi *apart*, and their wives *apart*,” will have the spirit of grace and suppli-

cation poured on them, and they will mourn and weep sore in the night, pour out their confession before the face of the Lord, as they remember that it was the "*iniquities of the priests*" which shed the blood of the just (see Lam. iv. 13).

Thus potentate, prophet, and priest will individually own their sin, and repent with deep and bitter contrition.

But the *people* were also involved. They had joined hands with the doctors of the law, the priests and the elders, and chose Barabbas in place of Jesus. *Simeon* very fitly represents the common people. Jacob puts the name of Levi and Simeon together as companions in a compact of blood. His dying father had no good word for him.

"Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united" (Gen. xlix. 5, 6).

Why? As we read the answer, let us remember these words were prophetic, an announcement of what should happen in the "last days;" their crime was this: "IN THEIR ANGER THEY SLEW A MAN"!

How truly this took place at the cross when the priests secured the condemnation of Jesus, and the *people* ratified their act, crying, "Away with this Man, we will not have this Man to rule over us."

It is significant that the tribe of Simeon is not included in the blessing of Moses—the man of God—they got no separate portion, but shared that of Judah in the land, and after the separation of the tribes under Rehoboam, isolated from the other nine, no more is heard of them; they were indeed "divided in Jacob and scattered in Israel," just as all the tribes are now scattered in every country under heaven.

But where sin abounded grace did much more abound, and Simeon finds a place in those sealed for blessing in Revelation vii., and gets a share in the land during the millennial age, according to Ezekiel xlvi. 24.

Previous to this, each must have to do with God for himself, and face the matter apart from human relationships. The husband cannot repent for the wife; the priest cannot repent for the people; the king cannot repent for his subjects; nor the prophet for his hearers. David and Simeon, Nathan and Levi must repent alone—no one must come between them and God.

How truly this is God's way to-day. We may band together to do wrong, and even make a general confession of that wrong, and may cry in concert with others, "Lord, have mercy on us," but all this falls far short of the lesson taught here. True repentance, true confession of sin is *intensely individual*, and is only real when the soul becomes conscious, like David—"Against Thee, *Thee only*, have I sinned and done this evil in *Thy sight*." We trust each of our readers has thus had to do with God, and "afflicted" their souls "apart" from their fellows.

It is Christ wounded for their iniquities which produces repentance in the remnant of Israel by and by. They shall "look upon Him whom they have pierced," they shall "wail because of Him." They learn His sorrows were on their account, and as one after another of the ten offerings—in addition to the bullock and two goats—were placed on the brazen altar, every aspect of His cross is portrayed before their eyes (see Num. xxix.), producing true contrition and self-judgment. Neither we, nor they, can rightly estimate sin, except as seen at the cross. Israel will take up the language of Isaiah liii. :

"He was wounded for *our* transgressions, He was bruised for *our* iniquities; the chastisement of *our* peace was upon Him."

Then they shall confess:

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every *one* to his *own* way."

They will realize that Jesus was the true scapegoat and learn that on Him the Lord hath laid their iniquity. They will see Him as High Priest come

forth and declare His sacrifice has been accepted on their behalf, and, on the ground of the *new covenant*, God will again gather them under His sheltering wings, and place underneath them the everlasting arms, assuring them that their *sins and iniquities are remembered no more*.

All this will be on the ground of sovereign grace and in answer to Christ's intercessory prayer on the cross, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." They will learn that it is altogether apart from labour or merit on their part. Not a finger was to be lifted, not a fire lighted, not the smallest movement on the part of the people. "Ye shall afflict your souls," and do "*no work*" on that day.

How truly this is the way of blessing for us, as for them. We are called upon to repent, but not to labour; to own our guilt, but not to atone for that guilt; to sit in the dust, and find out that it is when in the dust God can stoop in grace to bless us. To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Israel, having repented in dust and ashes, not only learn that their personal salvation but the enjoyment of their inheritance is wholly due to the atoning work of Christ.

On every recurrence of the seventh sabbath of years a trumpet, loud of

sound, announced on the tenth day of the seventh month, on the day of atonement, that the morning of liberty had dawned, the day of release come. The captive was freed, and each man could return to the land of his possession, the inheritance unconditionally given to Abraham.

In the faith of this Joseph had his body transferred from Egypt to Canaan. In the faith of this Jeremiah bought the field of Hanameel, and placed the evidence of the purchase in an earthen vessel, for the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, has declared that "houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land" (Jer. xxxii. 15). These words shall be literally fulfilled; Israel shall dwell safely in their land; but, in the interval between our ascension to the Father's house, and our coming forth to reign with Christ, sorrows many and deep will befall the godly remnant under the rule of Antichrist. This will be the time of Jacob's trouble, and of the events recorded from Revelation iv. to xix. These having been accomplished, the Lord will appear for their deliverance. His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives, and they who pierced Him shall see Him, and all the tribes of the land shall wail because of Him. Then will come to pass the day of atonement in its application to repentant Israel, and they will afflict their souls, and thus fulfil this type in its moral bearings.

Christian, let your heart not murmur,
 Nor your spirit droop;
 Tread the path with footstep firmer,
 And with brighter hope.
 Though the darkness seems to thicken,
 And the wild winds play,
 Midnight only brings the morning
 Of returning day.
 And a day of glorious gladness,
 Brighter than the sun;
 Joy shall take the place of sadness;
 Tears for ever done.
 Hushed, forgotten, all the sorrow,
 Faith can hear Him say:
 There remains a bright to-morrow,
 Glorious Sabbath day! *Anon.*

We cannot all be original, but as Christians we can all be fresh. No one is original who tries to be so. Originality comes without effort, it is not peculiarity. The former is agreeable, the latter a burden to people. We would on no account ask any one to try to be original, but we do ask all to seek to be fresh. If in communion with Christ we are fresh. . . . Some Christians are spring-water Christians and some are pond-water Christians. Some are in living intercourse with Christ and are ever bright and sparkling; others, though they seem to be very deep, are very dull.

The School of God in the Book of Daniel.—No. 6.

(M. C. GAHAN).

Daniel vi. 19-23.

19 Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.

20 And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

21 Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever.

22 My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

23 Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

SUCCESSIVE kings had recognized the value of Daniel's wisdom and experience in matters of state; and prosperity to an unusual extent had followed his steps. He had proved himself when put to the test to be not only a wise statesman, but also a faithful servant of Jehovah. His origin as an Israelite and his capacities as an imperial legislator doubtless created a spirit of jealousy amongst Chaldean statesmen, which culminated in a combined effort to discredit him in the eyes of the king, as the only means of successfully disposing of the hated foreigner. A conspiracy was accordingly set on foot against Daniel, in the first instance *concerning matters relative to the kingdom*, which signally failed, but which was more successful when directed against him *in matters concerning the law of his God*.

By a decree that no petition was to be made, for a period of thirty days, of any god or man, save Darius the king himself, which the king, unwittingly as to its object, signed, Daniel was committed to one of two alternatives, viz. a violent death, or to the dishonouring of his God. And God permitted His faithful servant to pass through these deep waters, placing no obstacles in the way of the success of the conspiracy. We may ask the question, How was it that one so highly favoured of God, and so faithful, was

not exempted from so terrible an ordeal as now awaited Daniel? Primarily Israel's God was to be further glorified amongst the heathen Gentile nations: but further, in the ways of God with His servants, sorrows and disciplinings are necessary to the progressive development of spiritual character. Out of faithfulness itself arise fresh circumstances for profitable discipline for the man of God. Truth is unpalatable, the claim of God intolerable, and the consistency of the servant abhorrent to the natural man, and so Daniel himself is passed through an ordeal such as had already befallen the three children, but without the consolation of each other's company which the latter had enjoyed.

But Jehovah so completely occupied the citadel of Daniel's heart that the effect of otherwise desolating and destructive surprises was wholly annulled. Nothing could, according to human estimate, constitute a more immediate or violent revolution of circumstances than the transition within a few hours from being one of the chief rulers of a world-empire to a den of lions.

But these were apparently, in the spiritually balanced mind of Daniel, but altered circumstances, in neither of which he could be sustained apart from the presence and power of Jehovah, his God. In the faith of his soul

the jaws of lions were just as much under the control of the living God as were the jealousies of princes and presidents of the realm. With the Psalmist he could say, "My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire" (Ps. lvii.; compare carefully). From human "lions" or from brute beasts the God of Israel could alone deliver him.

But though the decree was signed, with Daniel there was no hesitation: with windows open towards Jerusalem, "He kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, *as he did aforetime.*" The effect of his uncompromising act and attitude was to put himself directly and immediately into the power of his enemies, so far at least as their malignant *intention* went. The king, stirred by very different feelings, and filled with remorse, yet bound by a decree that was unalterable, even by himself, "laboured until the going down of the sun to deliver him," his distress intensified by having, under the pressure of princes and presidents, to issue the specific command that Daniel should be cast into the lions' den.

But Darius was not without some measure of confidence in Daniel's God, as expressed in his words, "*Thy* God, whom thou servest continually, will deliver thee." From the king's deeds and words it is evident that he had come under the influence of Daniel's consistent course and faithful testimony,

which was to be yet deepened by the events to follow.

A night of agony was succeeded by a morning of relief, when the king, personally visiting the den of lions, discovered to his extreme joy that the living God had shut the mouths of the lions. By the command of the king Daniel was taken up, and by the same decree his accusers cast in, to their instantaneous destruction.

But Darius' apprehension of the greatness and glory of the God of Israel does not appear to have reached to the measure of that of Nebuchadnezzar, seeing that his proclamation only emphasizes the *fear* with which Daniel's God is to be acknowledged; the stability of His being; the duration of His kingdom as existing "unto the end;" and His mighty power in heaven and earth, as manifested by the deliverance of Daniel. But enough was engraven on the conscience of this imperial head of the Medo-Persian kingdom to establish individually and nationally the supremacy of the God by whom dominion and authority had been transferred to the second empire, according to His will.

As for Daniel the glory of Jehovah had been safeguarded in his hand by his uncompromising faithfulness, and he emerged from the time of trial to yet further prosperity in his circumstances. "So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

Your practice is the measure of the truth you have received in the Holy Ghost.

You are an exponent of that by which you are controlled.

You are to exhibit in your body the colour and beauty of the truth committed to you.

The truth must not merely be in your heart, but its effect must be seen in your body.

But you must *possess* the truth in order to *express* it, and the attempt at expression without possession is affectation.

Trifling with sin is no trifling sin.

While guile remains, guilt is not removed.

Mary of Bethany was not commended for sitting still and doing nothing, but for sitting at the feet of Jesus to hear His word.

Answers to Correspondents.

(THE EDITOR).

The Temptation in the Wilderness.

Z.Y.X. writes :

“While we know that Satan had great wisdom, have we any scriptural proof that he knew at the time of Christ’s temptation in the wilderness what manner of suffering and death He (Christ) would die ?”

We cannot say, with certainty, to what extent the devil understood the significance of the Lord’s presence on earth, though we do know that he knew who He was. But the temptation in the wilderness was directed against the perfect dependence upon God in which the Lord Jesus *lived*. We should not think that the thought of the death of the Lord entered into the conflict at all, it was His life of unquestioning confidence and absolute obedience and dependence upon God that Satan sought to spoil. This, we think, is confirmed by the fact that the Lord met the attacks of Satan by quoting exclusively from the first part of Deuteronomy, which section insists upon Israel’s obedience to God and goes on to show that their blessing rested upon this condition. Where Israel failed the Lord stood firm, and Satan was repulsed.

The Divine Nature.

A.N.C. writes asking

“When and how we are made partakers of the divine nature.”

In replying to this inquiry we would point out that, firstly, as to the *time*, we are not said in Scripture to *have been* made partakers of the divine nature. We read of “exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we *might be* [or may become] partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

The divine nature is not looked at here exactly as referring to a concrete something communicated to us at some

fixed moment of time, but rather characteristically—somewhat as if we say that if one voluntarily associates with another (whether good or bad) one must inevitably as a result of such companionship come to partake of his character and spirit.

God has called us by glory and virtue, and in connection with that call there are given to us exceeding great and precious promises ; all these centre in the Lord Jesus Christ, they are the unfoldings of the love of God to us ; He is the source of them, they come from His heart, and they fill ours, so that in result instead of partaking of the corrupt things that spring up from a world of lust, we find our life and joy in these things which spring from the heart of God—we come thus in effect to partake of the divine nature. On similar “kingdom” lines to Peter’s epistle is the instruction given in Matthew v. ; and note in the forty-fifth verse the words, “Ye *may be* the children,” in very similar sense to the passage we have looked at in Peter, *i.e.* characteristically.

Sin or Trespass ?

T.B. asks the following question :

“Is it correct to say that when a believer does wrong it is not sin but *trespass* ; and that this is the explanation of such scriptures as 1 John iii. 6-9 ?”

The statement is quite contrary to Scripture and betrays a weak conception of the nature of sin. Let such an one ponder the inspired statement, “Whatsoever is not of *faith* is sin ;” every act in a believer’s life which does not spring from *faith* is *sin*.

Both words are used in connection with the believer’s course : “fault” or “trespass” in Galatians vi. 2 ; and “*sin*” in 1 John ii. 2, “If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father”

—note the *we*, the Christian “we;” the Advocate has to do with those already in relationship with the *Father*.

As to the meaning of the scriptures to which you refer, “whosoever is born of God” contemplates a person *as so born*, and *as such* “he cannot sin;” but on this we wrote more fully in our reply to H. C. K. in the December 1909 issue, to which kindly refer. In 1 John iii. 6 both “abideth” and “sinneth not” are characteristic statements.

The Inheritance.

One in search of truth inquires :

“Does a believer in Jesus inherit the kingdom, or only those who bring forth the fruits thereof?”

All true believers on the Lord Jesus Christ are children of God, “and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ” (Rom. viii. 17). This will cover the glory of the kingdom as well as every other glory given to the Lord (John xvii. 22). Every true believer will bring forth fruit: if there is no fruit the professed faith is dead (James ii. 26).

The Beast and the False Prophet.

H.H.H. asks reply to the following questions :

“Who is the Beast, and who is the False Prophet spoken of in Scripture? Are they one and the same? It would not seem so by Revelation xix. 20, and yet it seems to suggest that they are by other scriptures.

“Who is meant here in Daniel viii. 24, 25; 2 Thessalonians ii. 3-9; Revelation xiii. 4; and most particularly Revelation xiii. 11, *viz.* “‘another Beast’?”

The beast and the false prophet of Revelation xix. 20 are clearly the same two persons as are brought before us in Revelation xiii. The beast of verse 1 in that chapter is, from the symbolic description given of him, evidently the head of the future civil power which will be adverse to the saints of that day; whilst the second beast brought before us in verse 11 is the head of the great false religion, now fast developing,

which, exalting man and usurping for him God’s place, will deceive all that dwell on the earth. He is the “false prophet” of Revelation xix. 20 and the “Antichrist” of 1 John ii. 23. Energized by Satan, as bewrayed by his speech, which is that of a “dragon,” he exalts and makes much of the civil power in order to the furtherance of his own ends and the destruction of the saints.

But the trinity of evil in Revelation xiii.—the dragon, the first beast, and the second beast—are, like the blessed Trinity whom they counterfeit, most intimately connected the one with the other, so that it is not always easy dogmatically to define which is most directly contemplated in the various scriptures which refer to their yet future activities. The dragon, however (the devil), is the *real* though hidden object of worship (ver. 4); the visible object of worship is the first beast (vers. 4, 8, and 12); and the visible instigator of it all—the false prophet teaching this false religion—is the second beast (vers. 11-17).

Now the man of sin in 2 Thessalonians ii. claims exclusive worship—he shows himself as *God*; he would appear, therefore, to answer most clearly to the first beast—not, however, *simply* as the civil power, but the supreme head of the civil power *invested* with the religious character given him by the false prophet.

It is thought by others, however, that the man of sin in 2 Thessalonians ii. answers rather to the second beast, seeing that he is spoken of as showing himself “in the temple of God,” which, if the literal temple be meant, would refer rather to the activities of the false Messiah, and identify him with the false prophet and the second beast. This may be so, as Satan always counterfeits the truth; and we have to remember that He who was Messiah indeed, whilst taking a subordinate place here on earth, and ever presenting the *Father* as the object of worship,

yet Himself was, and claimed to be, the eternal "I AM" (John viii. 58; cf. John ix. 35-38; and contrast Rev. xix. 10).

In the great trinity of evil in Revelation xiii. we should find thus: (1) the first beast as assuming the honours due to the Father; (2) the second beast counterfeiting the Messiah, the Son of God; and (3) the dragon as the hidden spiritual power working behind the scenes—he who even to-day is "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."

Much of the detail of that which is symbolically presented in the book of Revelation will doubtless become much clearer to the persecuted remnant of the faithful in the day which forms the subject of the prophecy from chapter iv. onwards to chapter xix., and which commences after the saints of this dispensation have been raptured to be with Christ; but the broad outlines of the truth are, as we might expect in a message specially sent to the churches, not at all difficult of discernment. A simple outline of the book of Revelation in pamphlet form was written by the late Charles Stanley, and if still in print could be got through our publishers, and would, we are sure, be helpful to you.

The "king" of Daniel viii. 23-25 belongs to the same period of time yet future, "the time of the end," and he too will persecute the faithful; but he appears to be distinct from the two beasts mentioned in Revelation xiii., the exercise of his power being manifested in connection with the *East* and not the *West*. It is thought that he will be some desolater whom God will raise up from the *East* in governmental chastisement of the Jews.

Parents and Children.

J.P. inquires as to whether the statement

"'For the children ought not to lay up for the parents but the parents for the children' (2 Cor. xii. 14) refers to money."

The Apostle here uses the responsibility of parents to care for and rear their children, and see them established in life, which of course cannot be done without money, as an illustration of his care for the Corinthian believers, who were his children in the faith; he devoted himself entirely to their good, and had not been in any way chargeable to them, while they owed all their blessing, under God, to him.

But this statement as to the parents does not relieve children from the responsibility of caring for their parents, as is made plain in 1 Timothy v. 4: "But if any widow have children or nephews, let them first learn to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable in the sight of God."

Thus the Scriptures keep us from being one-sided.

The Daily Occupation.

J.P. asks also whether the scripture

"'Let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God' (1 Cor. vii. 24) refers to daily occupation."

Yes, clearly. There seems to have been amongst the Corinthians much of the restlessness of the flesh, and desire for change, and they were probably arguing that they would be able to serve the Lord better in other circumstances. The Apostle shows the fallacy of this. Some of these Christians were slaves, and the Apostle encourages them to serve the Lord in that relationship, for they were His free-men.

If a man cannot serve the Lord as a joiner, or grocer, or servant, he cannot serve Him as a missionary; it is in the ordinary relationships and business of life that the reality of the divine life manifests itself. Of course, there are some callings in which a man could not "abide with God."

The Incarnation.

(JAMES BOYD).

. . . None

Its depths can fathom, no man knows the Son.

God Man become : Most High, yet brought so low :
 Incarnate wisdom, nothing given to know
 But what the Father spoke into His ear :
 Lawgiver, yet Himself made law to hear :
 Despot, yet Slave : Omnipotent, yet made
 Weakness to feel : Leader of life, yet laid
 In death : Upholder of the worlds, yet hung
 Upon a cross of shame : Creator stung
 Deep to the soul with His own creature's scorn :
 Of kings the King, yet mocked with crown of thorn :
 Judge placed before His judge : Sinless made sin :
 The faithful One forsaken : Light within
 Devouring darkness : Love o'erwhelmed with hate :
 Heaven stormed by hell : Deliverance strong and great
 Needing deliverance. Oh, the breadth, and length,
 And height, and depth : the weakness and the strength :
 The mourning and the mirth : pleasure and pain :
 The joy, the sorrow : and the loss, and gain
 Which meet in the incarnate Son of God,
 No mortal mind can know. With feet unshod
 We may draw near, and as we gaze adore,
 As all His varied glories shine before
 Our ravished hearts. . . .

(Extract from poem, *Talks by the Way.*)

“Low Thoughts of Self.”

IT is Matthew who records those precious words of our Lord, “Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart : and ye shall find rest to your souls ;” and it would seem that he had learnt this lesson of lowliness. For in the list of apostles given by him he designates himself “the publican,” and so magnifies the grace that had called him from his reproachful occupation to the high dignity of an apostle of the Lord.

The missionary Carey manifested something of the same spirit : when asked tauntingly by one of the East India Company's officials if he had not

been a shoemaker, he gave the lowly answer, “*No, only a cobbler.*”

Moreover, at his call to follow the Lord, Matthew does not tell us that “he left all” in order to do it, or that he made a “great feast” for the Lord, or that it was in *his* house that Jesus sat with “many publicans and sinners,” though these facts are placed on record for us by Luke.

This lowly spirit is not natural to us, we love to gain and maintain a reputation, but if we learn of Him who made Himself of “no reputation,” we too shall have

“Low thoughts of self, befitting
 Proclaimers of His praise.”

Practical Godliness.—V.

(W. BRAMWELL DICK).

Conclusion.

Godliness is profitable unto all things (1 Tim. iv. 8).

HERE we lay down our pen we must once more emphasize the immense importance of this subject, and we invite our readers to consider with us the CALL to, the COST of, and the COMPENSATION for the practice of personal godliness.

The Call.

That there is a loud call there can be no doubt. *God* has called us to it—for, as we have already noticed, He has saved us out of, and has sent us back into the world for this express purpose that we should “*live godly*” (Titus ii. 11–12). *The World* calls for it. It expects rightly that men who turn to God will “*live godly*,” and where a revolution in the life is not in evidence they—the men of the world—find therein an excuse for their alienation from God. We are convinced that the rise of infidelity, the spread of socialism, and the increase of what we call “the lapsed masses” are—to a very considerable extent—due to the absence of godliness on the part of those who profess to be children of God. If the ungodly pronounce Christianity to be “a gigantic fraud” we have to inquire how far this may be due to the unchristlike lives of those who take the place of being Christians. Might not the wail of the Psalmist be heard to-day, “Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth”? (Ps. xii. 1).

The beloved Apostle Paul saw such a state of matters threatening ere he finished his course. Now as the end of the dispensation looms in view, apostasy increases, and departure from God becomes more pronounced, there comes ringing down from our ascended Lord, and there burns into our souls as we behold the clamant need of our fellow-men, the call for the exhibition by us of LIVING CHRISTIANITY.

It has been said that the demand of the

moment is for a new translation of the Bible: not another printed page, nor an improved text, but the precious precepts of the sacred writings written in the hearts and translated in the power of the Holy Ghost into practice in the lives of the people of God. The theory has been advanced that the spiritual life and the practical everyday life are distinct, and an attempt has been made to divorce the one from the other, e.g. men who interest themselves in Christian work have stated that they could not seek God’s guidance in, nor invoke His blessing upon their business, because if they did so they would be obliged to conduct it upon different lines. How far this may be responsible for questionable practices in business we cannot say, but we think the serious results of such God-dishonouring ideas must be apparent.

The true grace of God touches every point of the course that we pursue, and the Lord Jesus Christ assumes exclusive command of every department of the life that is surrendered to Him.

The Cost.

This, however, will cost something; and the all-important question is, Are we prepared to pay the price? The words of the Apostle in 2 Timothy iii. 12 are very touching.

“*All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*”

As the context indicates, he had received much of it at the world’s hands; this did not astonish him, nor should it surprise us. Our blessed Lord said:

“*If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. . . . Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you*” (John xv. 18–20).

This is true to-day. Near relations may be estranged, links of long years' friendship may be snapped, worldly position may have to be sacrificed, all because of the innate hatred of God that fills the heart of the natural man; while by the world generally the godly man will be reckoned a person of no account. While the Apostle experienced this to the full, we doubt not he—like his compeers of earlier days (Acts v. 41)—rejoiced in it. We believe, however, that beyond the persecution in which he rejoiced there was that which made his heart bleed—and herein lies the pathos of his words just quoted—there were those who had heard the gospel from his lips, and who had professed conversion, but who had turned away from him because they were not prepared for the consequences of walking apart from the course of things with which they had been formerly associated, who, in short, were not willing to pay the price of practical godliness, hence they forsook Paul (2 Tim. i. 15). They may have gone on with an order of religious routine, but God demands reality, not the form without the power (2 Tim. iii. 5).

Separation has a prominent place in the epistles, but we submit that it is used in a *moral* sense. Perhaps the tendency has been to view it as entirely ecclesiastical; thus many have been rightly careful to separate from religious organizations where things obtained which the Word of God did not sanction, yet to the same persons it has appeared in no way incongruous to be mixed up with huge combines, trading associations, and other kindred institutions whose methods of business are doubtful, and which are run by men who are the enemies of Christ. Unholy alliances for temporal gain have been the ruin of many dear saints of God. Alas! how often the principles of the Book of books have been sacrificed at the shrine of mammon.

“For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they

have been seduced [margin] from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (1 Tim. vi. 10).

The cost is therefore likely to be persecution by the world, opposition from those designated as “having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof” (2 Tim. iii. 5), and, it may be, diminution in this world's goods, but “godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Tim. vi. 6).

The Compensation.

That there is abundant compensation is not surprising: this is just like our gracious God, and all the sufferings, the privation and the ups and downs of the pathway are made sweet and smooth thereby. In the first place we have the assurance of our God as to His present care for us. In 2 Corinthians vi. 14–18 there is a clarion call to separation, and external separation is valueless unless it springs from heart-separation. When Christ was here His path was one of separation from the world. As the heavenly Man He trod the earth, and His whole resource was in God. We are called to the same path, and to us is given the great privilege to walk as heavenly men down here. God has taken into account what this will cost, and therefore gives the assurance to which He pledges the very honour of His name.

“I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor. vi. 17–18).

This does not—we apprehend—refer to the relationship of children, which is true of every believer and which nothing can ever touch, but it sets forth the fatherly care which God exercises towards those who, having counted the cost, have responded to the divine call, and who, if suffering be their lot, rejoice in the fact that they are fathered, and provided for by none less than the Lord Almighty. Such are the objects of His special interest, and “God is not ashamed to be called their God” (Heb. xi. 16). Oh, dear fellow-

Christians, let us ask ourselves—Is God ashamed of us, or does He delight to be called our God?

As shewing further how God values this, we have the precious word in Psalm iv. 3 :

“But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself.”

He esteems as His own peculiar treasure those who have so learned Him that they seek only to be His imitators, as dear children : those who are so supremely satisfied with His Christ that they refuse the world in every shape and form, and who seek to maintain their heavenly character in their earthly circumstances.

There is also present compensation in the knowledge that we are pleasing our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the ambition of the “good soldier” in 2 Timothy ii. 4. Can we imagine how He watches us to see how far we—on the one hand—seek to be preserved from being entangled with the affairs of this life, and—on the other hand—seek to reproduce His life in the world that has cast Him out? He seeks to free us from every hindrance, and He offers us a complete equipment in order that we may be found here pleasing to Him. Is anything more calculated to touch a chord in our hearts? Could we desire greater compensation than this? Despised and disowned, to patiently pursue our way, happy in the knowledge that *we please Him*.

Lastly, there will be future compensation :

“The God of all grace . . . hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while” (1 Peter v. 10).

Glory is on before — Hallelujah ! What that will be no heart can conceive. When the Apostle Paul measured his suffering in the light of it, he wrote :

“Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Cor. iv. 17).

To be with our adorable Lord, to gaze upon His face, to behold in His person the marks that will ever remind

us of His suffering for us—in comparison with which our little suffering for Him will pale into insignificance—that will be compensation indeed ! Then to have our life history as individuals reviewed by Him, to hear His approval of that which has been pleasing to Him, and to receive at His hand the mark of His satisfaction will be reward indeed.

*“How will recompense His smile
The sufferings of this little while !”*

The past will be forgotten unless it be to recount His ways of grace with us, and as our souls are entranced with Himself, shall we not cast our crowns at His pierced feet and exclaim :

“’Tis Thou who art worthy ; Lord Jesus, ’tis Thou !”

View it in any way you please, how magnificent is the compensation !

Thus our path is to be like His : He had the glory before Him ; He has covered the course. He has reached the goal (Heb. xii. 2), and from His throne in glory He says to us, “Follow Me !” To-day He would have us accept His path, presently He will share with us His glory.

May our meditation be blest to writer and readers alike. We are persuaded that what God wants, what Christ yearns for, what the Holy Spirit seeks, what the world needs, and what Satan dreads, is men and women who shall be **LIVING WITNESSES**.

We will not reach this by any finely arranged process, nor will we attain to it by any number of resolutions—self-introspection will prove an effective hindrance. In one way and one way only can that of which we have written become true in us and of us : and that is by our constant occupation with our Lord Jesus Christ where He now sits at God’s right hand.

May we have our eyes fixed steadfastly upon Him, and our feet more firmly set to follow Him till that glorious moment when we shall see Him face to face, for His precious name’s sake.

Effective Ministry.

(AN ALL-ROUND MINISTRY).

TO be effective, the ministry of the servants of the Lord must be fresh; we must have *daily* bread, new supplies continually wherewith to feed our hearers. Away with the musty stores of worm-breeding manna; we must look up daily for fresh supplies.

Let us not imagine that if we depend upon God the need will find us lacking, for He is all-sufficient, and the loaves and fishes will multiply above all the need. Consequently, we do not need to lay by in store, to have much goods laid up for many years, but may confidently and hopefully deal out all we have.

In Rome there is a fountain, which represents a man holding a barrel, out of which a copious stream of water is perpetually flowing. There never was much at any one time in that marble barrel, and yet it has continued to yield a stream for four or five hundred years. So let us pour forth from our very souls all that the Lord imparts to us, and so shall be fulfilled the word, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John vii. 37-38).

Dependence upon God for Service.

DEPENDENCE upon God is the flowing fountain of success; the most of us are far too great for God to use us. We think we can do the work of God as well as anybody, and so we fail. Take care, brethren, for if we think we can do anything of ourselves, all we shall get from God will be the opportunity to try. He will thus prove us, and let us see our inability. A certain alchemist, who waited upon Pope Leo X, declared that he had discovered how to transmute the baser metals into gold. He expected to receive a sum of money for his discovery, but Leo was no such simple-

ton; he merely gave him a huge purse in which to keep the gold he would make. There was wisdom as well as sarcasm in the present.

That is precisely what God does with proud men; He lets them have the opportunity to do what they imagined they were able to do. I never heard that so much as a solitary gold piece was dropped into Leo's purse, and I am sure you will never be spiritually rich by what you can do in your own strength. Be stripped, and then God may be pleased to clothe you with honour, but not till then.

Our Expectation.

"AS the farmer expects to reap a harvest and the fisherman to take fish, so should the gospel preacher expect results from his work." We need more faith in God in the form of *expectancy*. "Open thy mouth wide," saith the Lord, "and I will fill it." So pray and so preach that, if there are no conversions, you will be astonished, amazed, and broken-hearted. Look

for the salvation of your hearers as much as the angel who will sound the last trump will look for the waking of the dead.

Believe the gospel that you preach! Believe your own Saviour! Believe in the power of the Holy Ghost! "For thus shall you see your heart's desire, and God shall be glorified."

The Feasts of the Lord.—No. 6.

(H. NUNNERLEY).

The Tabernacles.—Leviticus xxiii.

The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days (ver. 34).

Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord (ver. 36).

When ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath (ver. 39).

THOSE holy convocations, prefiguring the ways of God, reach their climax in the feast of tabernacles. Beginning with the Lamb of God they culminate in the rest of God; they tell us a rest undisturbed by sin shall be established on the unchangeable basis of righteousness. This rest has two parts—one in *time*, the other in *eternity*. The first is the rest of Israel in Canaan and the emancipation of the creature from the bondage of corruption (Rom. viii. 21), when the curse now resting on this sin-stained earth will be removed. The second is after this earth has passed away, when righteousness will dwell in new heavens and a new earth. An "eighth" day—added to the seven which properly constitute this feast—indicates an eternal sabbath to follow a temporal one.

We will first turn to scriptures as to this feast which point to glorious days of rest and joy on earth connected with Israel. Prophets announce them, the Psalmist sang of them, this feast exemplifies them.

Celebrated in the *seventh* month, lasting *seven* days, this *seventh* and last feast has *seven* different references to it in the Old Testament. It derives its name from the command in verse 42, "Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths." The Hebrew word *sukkah* here translated "booths" is rendered twelve times "tabernacles." These tabernacles, formed of branches of pine, myrtle, palm, olive, and willow, were intended as a reminder of their wilderness journey. "That your

generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt" (ver. 43). The palm and willow mentioned in verse 40 vividly recall incidents connected with Israel's later as well as earlier wanderings.

Once only do we read of this injunction being literally carried out, after Israel first entered Canaan. Ezra (see Neh. viii.), having read our chapter in the ears of the assembled people, beheld them sally forth, gather leafy branches, and building booths on roofs, in courts and streets, dwell therein and keep the feast. Never had feast been kept since Joshua's day as that celebrated by these returned captives. Never, we may surely say, will this feast be celebrated as in a coming day, when, their toilsome journey ended, the sandy desert passed, their harps no longer on the willows, their long captivity over, Israel recalls all the way the Lord hath led them, the "goodness" which had "guided" and at length "gathered" them to their own land.

The earliest mention of this feast is as "a feast of *ingathering* in the end of the year" (Exod. xxiii. 16). It looks forward to scattered Israel restored to their own land, enjoying the fruits of the field and the vineyard, after labour and sorrow are over. The downtrodden grapes, the crushed olives, and the beaten corn tell of their sorrows as a persecuted people, and aptly represent the *close* of God's dealings with them when, oppressed by Antichrist, they will reap to the full that harvest of

sorrow, sown by their murder and rejection of Jesus ; and pass through the darkest hour of that long night during which the governmental hand of God has been upon them.

For nineteen centuries their house has been desolate, their country devastated, their feast days marred ; they wander in the desert of the nations, having no city of their own to dwell in. Their degradation is sculptured on the triumphal arch erected by Titus at Rome, in celebration of his victory over them. The table of shewbread is spoiled of its loaves, the golden candlestick sheds no light, the two silver trumpets, which once sounded liberty and freedom, are silent. Despised by most, tolerated by few, mingled with every nation under the sun yet incorporated with none, Israel is under the Gentile's heel. Thus in darkness and the shadow of death, bound in affliction, forsaken of God, hated of men, they reap the fruit of their evil ways.

But their dark night will end in a cloudless morning ; their weariness and toil will be succeeded by such rest as can only be known by a happy and delivered people in a reconciled creation, purged and purified by blood with neither enemy nor evil occurrent. With gladness of heart, at home and at peace, they will celebrate the goodness of the Lord.

This will be the true jubilee. In Deuteronomy xxxi. 10 our feast is linked with it : in the solemnity of the year of release in the "feast of tabernacles."

"Judah is now in captivity and affliction, because of great servitude," but this feast bespeaks fetters broken, chains snapped, slaves liberated, oppression at an end ; oliveyards and vineyards, harvest fields and pasture lands, possessed once more by their rightful owners. They will be the Lord's freedmen, both purchased and redeemed ; pardoned and forgiven ; their debts cancelled, their liabilities discharged.

Not only will the foreign yoke be removed, but family strifes will end in a feast of fraternal love. Israel alone of all the nations is bound together by ties of kindred, they are a family as well as a nation, a household as well as a people. Alas ! they have sadly fallen out by the way. Ephraim has envied Judah, and Judah has vexed Ephraim. But all this will end. Emancipated slaves will enjoy with their masters community of goods, the unsown land will produce food for all, thus fulfilling the promise of Messiah to supply her poor with bread. There will be no complaining in their streets, for a commonwealth, truly worthy of its name, shall exist in Israel.

That which reforms, elevating environments, art, music, science, and education are now signally failing to produce will then be a perfect reality.

How ?

By an inward, spiritual work bringing about unselfish mutual love.

Every Israelite who shall keep this feast in its glorious millennial accomplishment will be "born again," and with purified affections will love his brethren as himself. He will act toward others as God has graciously acted toward him. Five hundred pence debtors as are the Jews, God has said, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more" (Heb. viii. 12). The law will then be written in their hearts.

Turning to Nehemiah viii. we see Ezra carrying out Deuteronomy xxxi. 7, "Thou shalt read *this law* before all Israel in their hearing." Elevated above the people, he not only reads, but the listeners are caused to enter into its true sense and meaning, are made to understand the words declared to them. Picture that vast company of worshippers, with uplifted hands, bowed heads, and attentive ears, and you have Israel portrayed celebrating this feast in a coming day, when the Lord shall put His laws into their-

mind and write them in their heart. Then there shall be no need to teach every one his neighbour, and every one his brother, for all shall know Him, from the least to the greatest. Purified from their uncleanness, a new heart and a new spirit within them, they will be morally fitted to walk in God's statutes, and keep His judgments. Their stony hearts exchanged for those of flesh, they will love the Lord with all their hearts and their neighbour as themselves (see Heb. viii. 10-13; Ezek. xxxvi. 25-33).

The first mention of this feast reminds us that scattered Israel will be gathered, the last declares they will then be a holy nation, the very bells of the horses will be engraven with HOLINESS TO THE LORD (see Zech. xiv.). Every pot in Jerusalem shall witness that happiness cannot be divorced from holiness, nor peace from righteousness. Day after day a pure offering will ascend, sacrifices far outnumbering those offered at all the other feasts will be slain, and as bullocks, rams, and lambs are laid on the brazen altar, Christ, in the excellence of His work, shall detain the eye and engage the heart. Nor shall the goat for a sin-offering be lacking as a reminder that all blessing has for its foundation the Sinless One made sin.

Need we add, these sacrifices will be commemorative, much as we drink wine and break bread, shewing forth the death of the Lord, and thus recall Him?

But we must turn to the celebration of this feast when Solomon dedicated the temple, in order to view its glorious accomplishment. It will be truly

inaugurated when Christ—the true Solomon—takes to Himself His great power and reigns (see 1 Kings viii. 2, 65). Then the nation will be not only a holy nation but a kingdom of priests, with Christ as High Priest. He will bless the people as the true Melchisedec, and unite in His person kingly dignities and priestly functions. After having descended from heaven in royal state, in the glory of His Father, accompanied by the holy angels, He will first remove from His kingdom all things that offend, consign the beast and the false prophet to the lake of fire, bind Satan in the pit, then take His rightful place in the temple and on the throne, and unite the civil and religious in Israel, for this feast is in the month Ethanim, the *last* of the religious and the *first* of the civil year.

Behold Solomon with his face turned to the people as he blesses the whole congregation of Israel. View him royally apparelled, surrounded by white-robed Levites; gaze upon those sacrifices which could not be numbered for multitude; listen to that burst of melody as a hundred and twenty priests send forth *one sound of praise* from the silver trumpets, whilst Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthan, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, fill the air with music, and a mighty pæan bursts from the assembled host! As their glad thanksgivings unitedly ascend, the glory of the Lord descends, the temple is filled, and the days of glory on earth begin: and in Solomon you see, in type, Christ blessing Israel out of Mount Zion!

(To be continued.)

From vintages of sorrow are deepest joys distilled,
 And the cup outstretched for healing is oft at Marah filled;
 God leads to joy thro' weeping, to quietness thro' strife,
 Through yielding unto conquest, through death to endless life.
 Be still! He hath enrolled thee for the kingdom and the crown.
 Be silent! let Him mould thee who calleth thee His own,—*Luther*,

“He that Overcometh.”

(J. A. TRENCH).

Revelation xxi. 1-7.

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth : for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away ; and there was no more sea.

2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor

crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away.

5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write for these words are true and faithful.

6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things ; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

IT is to the last of these verses that I desire to call attention. They are the fullest setting forth in Scripture of the blessedness of the new heaven and new earth, wherein all things are made new. It is the eternal state, where God rests in the blessing of His redeemed people according to the perfection of His *nature*. The scene of His ways in government in time has closed. The earth and the heaven that now are have fled away from before Him who sat on the throne, “and there was found no place for them” (chap. xx. 11). The first eight verses of this chapter lift the veil from eternity. But there is this one link taken up with the things that are passed away, of such wonderful grace : “he that overcometh shall inherit *these things*” (margin, see N.T.)—*i.e.* the things that have been brought out in the preceding verses—“and I will be his God and he shall be My son.” In the eternal state there will be no more overcoming ; there will be nothing to overcome. Such a note of triumph carries us back to the battlefield of the past, and the part that His own have taken individually in those battles upon which God thus put His seal. Who but He could have so recalled them ? Far different would have been their account of themselves, and their experience in the conflict, even on the part of the most faithful of His servants. We might have thought the record would have been of nothing but failure and defeat. But in sovereign

grace this is the character He gives them : all else is remembered no more. Could anything affect our hearts more deeply, or be more calculated to nerve us up for the conflict that remains, and in which ever increasingly we find ourselves in these last days ? If rightly apprehended, shall not the precious grace of such a God, beyond all our thoughts, be the strongest incentive to seek to answer to the character He gives, and to be overcomers indeed ?

If it be asked what are the circumstances to which the overcoming refers, let it be observed how general it is. No particular conflict is specified, as if the whole Christian life had to partake of this character. But in turning to Scripture to seek light as to it, a precious clue is found in another passage in this book (chap. iii. 21). “To him that overcometh will I give to sit with Me in My throne, *even as I also overcame* and am set down with My Father in His throne” (chap. iii. 21). Nor can this refer to the special character of the conflict or overcoming in the epistles to the seven assemblies of Asia. At each phase in the history of the responsible vessel of Christ’s testimony in the world, as given us prophetically in such a remarkable way in these addresses, all who were really Christ’s were so characterized and encouraged by promises suited to the state of things in which they had to overcome. But

nothing of this entered into the conflicts through which the blessed Lord passed when here : for the assembly was not then formed until He was glorified and the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost. Yet that little clause may well arrest the attention : it has a peculiar sweetness, "*Even as I also overcame.*" For it recalls to us the Lord Jesus in His pathway here, and occupies us with the perfection in which He passed through conflict, and how He overcame ; and as the pattern for us, to our great strengthening of faith in following Him. Can we, then, learn from the Gospels anything of the opposing forces, and the character of the conflict and the manner in which He overcame ?

But before we turn directly to them there is a little word in the Epistle to the Romans which, though it is not exactly applied to Him, can be only understood as we see in Him the perfect expression of it : "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (chap. xii. 21). Could anything be more characteristic of the path of the blessed Lord ? In a world of evil He who was the revelation of the perfect goodness of God, in the power of that good rose above all the evil—was never overcome by it. We have to go through the same world, and are tested in our experience every day. Shall I be overcome of evil, or has the revelation of the infinite good I know in Christ so taken possession of my heart that in the power of it I can overcome ? And that instead of the thought of avenging myself I fulfil the word, "If thine enemy hunger feed him, if he thirst give him drink," and so on. What can be more humbling in our relations with one another than the ease with which we are affected by some fancied slight or insult ? Taken off our guard in an instant we flare up, bitter feelings are engendered, telling the sad tale of how we have been overcome, when by greater dependence and nearness to the Lord there might have been but the triumph of His grace.

Twice in the Gospels the Lord

speaks to us of His overcoming, first in the Gospel of Luke xi. 21, 22. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace : but when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." How well we know the truly awful peace in which we, once the strong man's goods, were firmly held, until the advent of the stronger than he who overcame him : and we are spoils of that victory, now at the disposal of the Victor.

But we are taken back to the arena of the conflict of which no other eye but God's was witness, and learn who He was that proved Himself to be the stronger, and how He overcame. He was "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." *We* have to be led of the Spirit to be with God : *He*, who was ever with God as His normal state, had to be led ("driven," Mark says) of the Spirit to be with Satan. "And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights He was afterward an hungred"—in what utter contrast to the circumstances of the first man who, surrounded by every token of God's providential care, so easily succumbed to the serpent ! The tempter came to Him and said, "If Thou be the Son of God command that these stones be made bread." What subtlety ! for had He not divine power and title as the Son of God to exercise it ? But He had become Man, and man's place was to obey. He answered and said, "It is written : man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He might have said : "I am God," and then no rebel creature would have stood up against Him, *but* there would have been no example for us. He overcame by keeping the place He had taken as man, and that was to obey. Blessed, perfect obedience ! He would not help Himself to bread when in view of it without the word out of God's mouth, by which man was to live, and not by bread alone. So it was *written* : that

was enough for Him. And Satan had to change his ground.

“Then the devil taketh Him up into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God cast Thyself down, for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee . . . lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone.” He could quote Scripture too, and even apply a Messianic psalm to the Messiah Himself, if only to falsify its truth, but he omitted the cardinal condition of such care, “In all Thy ways” (Ps. xci. 11). To cast Himself down from a pinnacle of the temple was no part of God’s ways, for Him, or for any man. *In those ways* He knew God too well to need to test Him to see if He would be as good as His word. And so His simple answer was, “It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.” Thus too we learn what tempting God means. Men say that we tempt Him if we do not the best we can for ourselves, but this is the absolute opposite of the truth: *we tempt God when we do not trust Him entirely in everything.* The dependence of the Lord was as perfect as His obedience; He confided in God, and would not depart from the appointed path of His will: and in all this He is the perfect example for us.

Thus if John (1 John ii. 13, 14) writes to the young men because they have overcome the wicked one, we learn the source of their strength: it was that the word of God abode in them—again the “It is written”—“even as I also overcame.” How we need to seek to be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that we may ever have the word ready in suited application to meet the varied wiles of the enemy.

But there was another weapon in the armoury of the strong man and wherein he trusted, still to be tried against the Lord. “The devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and shewed Him all the kingdoms

of the world and the glory of them; and saith unto Him, All these things will I give Thee” (and in Luke he adds, “for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it”) “if Thou wilt fall down and worship me.” Nor was this an altogether vain pretension of the devil. There is a measure of truth in the power he assumes, which makes it so serious for us. It is not that he can put any one in the satisfied possession of anything. All he wants is gained when he has set our hearts on the pursuit of any object in the world of which he is prince and god. “If Thou therefore wilt worship me all shall be Thine.” Here he fully declared himself, and was met by the ever-faithful Lord with, “Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve.” The Lord God filled His heart for worship and service, and there was no attraction in anything of the world’s glory, or room within His heart for what Satan would present to Him. Do we know anything of a heart so preoccupied and absorbed with God Himself as its object as to be proof against everything that would attract or distract us from Him, so that Satan can gain no foothold? “*Even as I also overcame.*” Note, too, the perfection of the blessed Lord in taking His stand, in His conflict with Satan, on the book of Deuteronomy. It was the revelation of God’s mind for an Israelite in the land. The Lord had come into that place in grace, and when everything as to God’s glory and the accomplishment of His purposes of blessing depended on the issue of that conflict, He staked all on the “It is written” of Deuteronomy.

Now nothing can be of more solemn significance for us than that the order of the enemy’s tactics with the Lord is the same that the young men have to be warned against in 1 John ii. They have overcome the wicked one, coming openly against them as such, by the word of God abiding in them. The world is the danger now: “love

not the world," and, because of the treachery of our hearts that would construe "the world" as something which is outside the horizon of our own hopes and ambitions, it is added, "neither the things that are in it." For it is not possession that is in question, though we know from the Lord the danger of anything a man possesses here as tending to link him up with the world under God's judgment—"with what difficulty shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God:" but here it is what a man hopes to possess, what the heart is set upon: "*Love not.*" All God's objects for us are centred in Christ, and found where He is. He can present nothing to the heart that is of, or in, a world that has cast out His Son. If there is anything here that has attracted us so as to become the object of our pursuit, it is the wily tempter, who, turned away from the front door, has, as it were, come round by the back door, and gained an entrance by what we have desired for ourselves or our families. As another has said: A bit of ribbon in a shop window may do his work; but it is well to know that if it will not he can enlarge the bait up to all the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them—not, however, one thing outside the world. *Yet what a vast cheat of the enemy we see the world to be when we learn that, in God's estimate, there is nothing in it morally but lust and pride—the miserable lust of what we have not, or the contemptible pride of what we have.*

We belong to another world—the world of the Father—and there is nothing in common between it and Satan's world. There is no possible point of contact between these spheres. "All that is *in* the world is not of the Father but is of the world: and the world passeth away and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

But how are we to overcome the devil's snare of the world? Chapter v. of the epistle brings us to the

resources to enable us to do so. And first (chap. v. 4), "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world:" by the very life and nature we have received from God we have a principle of victory over the world. "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, our faith:" that is, by the object presented to faith. "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" If it be a question of who is my brother that I am to love (chap. iv. 21), the answer is, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (chap. v. 1)—the Spirit goes down to the feeblest apprehension of this glory, even as a few might believe on Him as the Messiah. This suffices to mark one begotten of God. But more was needed for victory over the world. Nothing short of the full glory of His person as the Son of God sufficed for that: we need the full shining before the opened eyes of our faith of His infinite glory as Son of God to give us victory over the poor unreal tinsel of this world and its shams. Then shall we know something of a heart so filled with Him for worship and service that, as with the Lord when He was here, there shall be no room for any object of Satan's world.

And now once more the Lord Himself as an overcomer is brought before us in His closing words with His disciples in John xvi. 33: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." We can easily see that this is another side of the world. It is not the seductive aspect of it by which Satan hoped to overthrow the Lord, and which is the danger of the young men, but the persecuting aspect of it—a world where much tribulation was to be encountered on the way to the glory. It is our appointed portion here, and the danger is of yielding before the pressure of it and becoming unfaithful. If Satan can-

not seduce the Christian by the world he will persecute by it, as in Smyrna. "Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days:" (there is a limit to his power) "be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. ii. 10).

This aspect of the world may not be so insidious, but it is very real; and our only safety is in keeping the eye upon Him who tells us of it with words of cheer as a world in which He has been tried, and been ever faithful: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." And thus, again, "even as I also overcame" has its full bearing upon our path. It was given to the Philippians "in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake; having the same conflict" which they saw in Paul and now heard to be in him (chap. i. 29-30). It was not God's will that they or we should be discouraged—"in nothing terrified by your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God."

But if we have to meet the power of Satan in the world it is in a very different way from that in which the Lord met him, flushed as he was with the success of forty centuries. Never had he met a man able to stand against him, always and absolutely, before. But now he is completely discomfited. "When the devil had ended all the temptation he departed from Him for a season," and Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit, the same power

in which He had gone to meet him, into Galilee (Luke iv. 13, 14). And if that season was spent by Satan in gathering up all his resources for the last onslaught on the Lord Jesus, it was only to meet with his final overthrow. For through death He has brought to nought him that had the power of death, to deliver them who through fear of death had, as in Old Testament times, been all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb. ii. 14, 15); so that he is a vanquished foe, to faith; and it can be said, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James iv. 10). He cannot stand before the weakest saint that will but lift the little finger of resistance to him. And shortly the God of peace shall bruise Satan under our feet. The world, too, shall have passed away and the lust thereof; and in a new heaven and a new earth we shall hear of war no more. He that overcometh will have eternity to enjoy in peace the inheritance of these things. "I will be his God, and he shall be My son," the sum of all the blessedness. Yet that little word, become characteristic of those thus blessed, tells of how God had not forgotten the conflicts of the past, though only recalled by the grace that made them overcomers, and, as it is said in another place, "more than conquerors" (for the word is the same, though with a strengthened force) "through Him that loved us."

The Lord, by the wonderful grace of the example He has set up, stir up all our hearts to more earnest and devoted faithfulness in the conflict that yet remains. "*Even as I also overcame.*"

The Down-Grade.

If a man whose aim was "none of self and all of God" grows downward till he craves for "some of self and some of God," he is in a sad condition. If he who once lived to win souls now lives to win silver and gold, his money shall perish with him; if he who once was famous for devotion to his Master

becomes his own master, he shall be infamous; for I trow that, even if we do nothing wrong in the eyes of men, it is wrong enough to have declined from whole-hearted service for God. It is this that demons laugh at and that angels marvel at—a man of God living like a man of the world.

The Indwelling of the Holy Ghost.—No. 4. (J. T. MAWSON).

His Intercession.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God (Rom. viii. 26, 27).

SINCE our eyes have been opened to behold the love of God toward us in the giving of His Only-begotten, nothing that He gives or does should henceforward surprise us. Yet the more we contemplate the fact that He has sent the Holy Ghost to be with us, and to dwell in us, the more we feel that here we are face to face with that which is overwhelming in its greatness. The angel of the Lord accompanied Israel as they journeyed to the promised land; and Michael, the first prince of celestial hosts, watched over them during their exile in Babylon. But here is something infinitely greater: the Third Person in the Godhead has come forth from the Father to *dwell* in us. How little we have realized the supreme greatness and grace of this!

The contemplation of the coming of the Holy Ghost carries us to the conclusion that God must have purposed some mighty destiny for us, impossible of accomplishment by any less a person. When of old the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters (Gen. i.) a great work was to be done: light, at the word of God, was to overthrow the citadel of darkness; order was to spring, at His bidding, out of universal chaos; and a planet was to bound into exuberant and joyous life, the fitting home of a creature well designed by the wisdom of God.

But since the same Holy Spirit has come forth, not to move upon us merely, but to dwell in, and never relinquish the possession of us, a fuller purpose must be in view, and a higher design brought to fruition. This design is

unveiled for us in one of its chiefest parts in our chapter:

“For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren” (ver. 29).

To bear the image of the One who gives boundless and eternal satisfaction to God, to be like Him, not all glorious in body only, but in the deep springs of our being; to absorb and reflect for ever what He is as the Man of God's eternal delight, the Firstborn among many brethren: this is our high destiny! To this God has called us, and though our hearts are sore pained as we feel our unlikeness to Christ now, to this He will bring us, for the Holy Spirit of God cannot fail.

Now as Israel, in the ways of God, had to traverse the wilderness, in which were no resources, to reach their inheritance, so now a trackless desert intervenes between the sons of God and their destiny; but as the angel of the Lord accompanied those wandering tribes and was afflicted in all their affliction, so the sons of God have been committed to the care of the Spirit of God, and, amazing fact! He groans for and with them in their weaknesses and trials.

We have no adequate conception of our need, or the will of God concerning us, but the Spirit of God knows both to perfection, and He takes upon Himself the burden of our necessities. He sounds the depth of the need and maketh intercession for us with *groanings which cannot be uttered*. We groan

sometimes when our feelings are too intense for human speech, and articulation fails us ; but this is not *our* groaning, it is the groaning of the Spirit of God ; and the groans are of such a sort that no utterance can be found for them.

We could never have conceived this, nor would we have believed it, had it not been written, but, thank God, it is written, and should fill our souls with adoring worship to God.

As we consider it, its greatness grows upon us. We have an Intercessor on earth ; He knows the high destiny to which we are called ; He knows the whole way to that destiny, and every difficulty before us, and every weakness within us ; He occupies Himself continually on our behalf, and He does this with groanings that cannot be uttered. Do we grasp the meaning of this ? Look at that mother on her knees before God : she is making intercession for her boy, who is surrounded by the sins of city life. As she thinks of his danger and need words fail her, and she can only groan out her heart's desire for him in the ear of God ; and the stronger her love the deeper the groan will be : *it is love that causes the groaning.*

It is infinite love that lies behind the Spirit's groaning, the love of God, full

of compassion and tender pity ; love that was first manifested in the death of Christ for us ; love that will continue to serve us unceasingly for ever, for the love of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is a threefold cord that shall never be broken.

And the incessant and mighty intercession of the Holy Ghost shall not fail ; it shall receive an answer from heaven—full, final, and complete—an answer according to the glorious power of God ; and the multitude of God's sons, for whom He pleads, shall stand at last within their Father's house beyond the reach of harm for ever. In that final and eternal triumph the glory of the work of redemption, wrought out by Christ amid the hours of agony on the cross, will be fully displayed ; and the work of the Spirit within the saints, making good within them every thought of God about them, will be brought to its issue, so that, fashioned after the glorious image of His Son, they shall find their joy for ever in the Father's presence, who is the source of all.

What confidence of heart and quietness of spirit, what joy and adoration should these things produce within us ! May we by the grace of God be more alive to and under the power of them.

The School of God in the Book of Daniel.—No. 7.

(M. C. GAHAN).

Chapter vii.

DANIEL had hitherto been the interpreter of visions and dreams which God had given to others, but now divine communications are given directly to himself, revealing in a fuller and more detailed character the general outline communicated to Nebuchadnezzar.

Part of these revelations were vouchsafed to Daniel by vision, as in chapters vii. and viii., others in more minute

detail in actual verbal communication, as in chapter xi.

The solidarity and unity of Nebuchadnezzar's great image foreshadowed simply *Gentile supremacy* in succession to that of Israel, while indicating its composition as that of four successive empires.

This having been already announced, this chapter shews in vision to Daniel the separate monarchies under the

special characteristic symbols of four wild beasts: a lion, a bear, and a leopard; while the fourth, though still retaining the character of a beast, develops at the end into that which is symbolized by intelligence and defiance, rather than brute force and ferocity, viz. "eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things" (vers. 1-7). Successive kingdoms are still in view, rising to their zenith according to Jehovah's controlling will, only to dash themselves to pieces in ungovernable fury against the victorious forces of the next determined successional monarchy.

But the vision also revealed in further prophetic announcements the final judgment to be vested in "the Son of Man," Himself "the Ancient of days," by Another, also "the Ancient of days," thus establishing the identity of the Son of Man with Deity from everlasting (vers. 9-14).

This vision announces the reversion of dominion from the Gentiles to Israel again, the Jews especially being in view, "the saints of the Most High" being distinguished from "the people of the saints of the Most High" (vers. 22 and 27).*

The effect upon Daniel of these marvellous revelations is again noteworthy, producing in the intensity of soul exercise physical results which the Spirit of God considered worthy of being recorded.

"I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me." "As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart" (vers. 15, 28).

Like Paul (2 Cor. xii.), physical effects accompanied unprecedented divine revelations to the privileged earthen vessel. For the vessels taken up to be the repositories of the revealed

mind of God are no mere automatons, mechanically receiving and reiterating that which they have heard. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter i. 21).

Chapter viii.

While the vision of chapter vii. was given to Daniel in the first year of Belshazzar's reign, this of the eighth took place in the third year of his reign, and confines itself to the Medo-Persian and Grecian successional monarchies, answering to the two beasts, like to a bear and a leopard, of the vision of chapter vii. The latter represented as having four heads is reproduced in the rough goat, that is, the king of Grecia (chap. vii. 21), the breaking of the great horn, i.e. the death of Alexander the Great, resulting in four notable ones coming up, representing the subdivision of his vast empire into four large territories under four of his generals to whom he bequeathed his dominion. Out of the remnant or revival of the north-western kingdom, "*in the latter time when the transgressors are come to the full,*" a king of fierce countenance is to "stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand." This vision is specially declared to refer to a period not then immediate, but to have its fulfilment "after many days," and evidently when the Prince of princes is revealed.

The servant of God is again deeply moved and physically affected by the vision, the mortal body being but a frail vessel to receive such stupendous communications, carrying home to Daniel's mind the impress of overwhelming conviction as to their divine origin. "And I [Daniel] fainted and was sick certain days: afterwards I rose up and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it."

Chapter ix.

Hitherto the inspirations with which Daniel was endowed by God stood in connection with dreams and visions,

* See remarks on this subject in *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible*, by J. N. Darby, Daniel, chapter vii.; also on chapter viii.

the earlier ones directly communicated to Nebuchadnezzar, the interpretations of which were committed to Daniel by *spiritual communications*. Then followed direct visions to Daniel himself, the interpretations of these being conveyed by *heavenly agents*, in direct converse with Daniel.

Chapter ix. brings to light another medium of inspiration, the subject matter of which was the circumstances and condition of the Jews at that very time of captivity and their restoration to their own land again. Here it is *the Scriptures* containing the prophetic and governmental pronouncements of Jehovah that are presented as a third medium of inspiration governing in an absolute way the mind of Daniel. Though the channels of inspiration might vary, the source was one and the same, viz. Jehovah Himself, condescending in grace to acquaint the creature beforehand with His mind and will; Daniel's heart perfectly responding to that revelation by whatever means it might be communicated to him.

Moses, the Psalms, and the prophets, so far as their writings were completed, must have furnished to such an one as Daniel, inexhaustible material for meditation, and no small encouragement in the dark day of Israel's dispersion. But Jeremiah had written of that very captivity which Judah was then undergoing, and by means of Daniel's researches amongst the Jewish Scriptures, the prophetic word bearing upon that captivity was either discovered or revived in the mind of Daniel, in the remarkable ways of God, at the most opportune moment.

For that period of seventy years' limitation was fast drawing to a close, probably within five or six years. LIBERTY and RESTORATION were its two great and transporting themes. How the natural heart would have revelled in the thought of the fast-approaching accomplishment of these glorious events, expressing itself according to its first impulses in jubilant rejoicings.

Instead, however, of this apparently justifiable outbreak of inexpressible delight, Daniel's heart is sad. "I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplication, *with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes*" (ver. 3).

In truth, this true-hearted servant of Jehovah was overwhelmed by the consciousness of Israel's *moral condition* that had brought about all their discipline and dispersion.

Opening with the recognition of Jehovah's covenant-keeping character the prophet pours out his heart in confession of Israel's sin, wickedness, and rebellion, by means of which all blessings contingent upon obedience had been forfeited at the hands of a righteous God, identifying himself, however individually innocent, with the national shame; for the precepts, statutes, and judgments of Moses had been departed from. Not only this, but a deaf ear had been turned to the unremitting appeals of the prophets. Righteousness through all the past history of Israel had characterized Jehovah; confusion of face belonged to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel. In short, Daniel's confession was a national one, kings, princes, and fathers being alike guilty. Nothing remained but a national cry for mercy and forgiveness: for had not all the righteous denunciations of God written in the law of Moses been actualized in judgment upon the guilty nation, without as yet turning their hearts in repentance and confession to Jehovah? Therefore had He, instead of watching over them protectively for blessing, "watched upon the evil and brought it upon them."

But the delivering power of Israel's God in redeeming them from Egyptian bondage furnishes Daniel with ground for supplication on His people's behalf in the midst of the desolations of the sanctuary and of the nation. He pours out the feelings of his heart in penitential grief, pleading only Jehovah's faithfulness to Himself: "O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and

do; defer not *for Thine own sake*, O my God; for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name."

It is noteworthy how Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms are interwoven in Daniel's remarkable appeal to God on behalf of His people. From the inspired writings of the prophets his information as to the period of the Captivity was gathered. The Psalms furnished language suitable to the circumstances and the moment (compare ver. 5 with Ps. cvi. 6), while "Moses" (ver. 13) had detailed the solemn governmental consequences of departure from the living God, as well as His mighty works on their behalf.

But this devoted representative man reaps without delay some measured blessing as the fruit of his soul exercise in Jehovah's answering communication to Him, which embraced what was essentially individual, as well as further prophetic revelations concerning the future history of the nation.

To an appeal so fervent and so appropriate Jehovah's response is immediate: "Whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel . . . touched me . . . and he informed me, and talked with me." "*At the beginning of thy supplication* the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee, *for thou art greatly beloved*" (vers. 21, 23). Thus graciously and promptly God meets His oppressed servant with deeds and words of infinite comfort and consolation. For the instantaneous response, the dignity of the heavenly messenger, and the assurance of the place he held in Jehovah's heart, could not fail of their object in strengthening the heart of Daniel and deepening the foundations of his confidence in the dealings of Israel's God with His people, whatever they might issue in.

Words of approval had been uttered by Jehovah oftentimes with reference to His servants previously. Of Noah it is written that he "found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Of Abraham, that he was "the friend of God." Of

Moses, "My servant Moses . . . is faithful in all My house: with him will I speak face to face." While David is designated "the man after God's own heart." For Daniel was reserved a peculiar expression of divine approval in the communication made by the heavenly messenger. "Thou art greatly beloved." Such words are the nearest approach that Scripture furnishes to those which fell from the lips of the Father, through opened heavens, concerning the Son of His love, "Thou art My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

What depths of compensating grace were veiled in such a message for the man whose heart was overwhelmed with sorrows: in his measure, too, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

But Jehovah held in reserve another solace for Daniel's sorrows in making him the repository of His mind as to the future of the nation embracing a definite time, viz. seventy weeks. This period was subdivided into three distinct sections of time, consisting of seven, sixty-two, and one week, the beginning of the entire period being that of "the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" (see Neh. iii. 3-8).

The seven weeks evidently referred to the period of the building of the city, which was to be "in troublous times," i.e. forty-nine years, allowing a year for a day in the calculation; sixty-two weeks or four hundred and thirty-four years should then elapse before the Messiah the Prince should be cut off, fulfilled in the crucifixion of Christ. An odd week remains, i.e. a period of seven years, which, as completely detached from the previous period, admits of the present intervening church dispensation, ere the fulfilment of the seventy weeks "determined . . . to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy."

(To be concluded.)

Bible Study.—Galatians.

(EDWARD CROSS)

Galatians vi. 1=11.

1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap

8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

11 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.

IN this concluding chapter we have principally exhortation founded on the subject matter in the previous part of the epistle.

Verse 1.

The Apostle addresses them as "Brethren," seeking in this conciliatory manner to win their sympathy with his desires on their behalf.

Mercy is not in the province of the law. It is not in its nature to exercise it. It does not propose to raise the fallen, or to help the helpless; whilst those who fail to fulfil it are under a curse. Moreover, those who are schooled in it naturally drink in of its spirit; and as it ministers to their pride and self-righteousness, so, where a fault has been committed, they too readily judge harshly, where grace would seek to restore.

Were any amongst them spiritual? Let them shew it by a spirit of grace and meekness, which would be only consistent with the sense of personal infirmity on their part, and a liability to fall into a similar or greater temptation. A legal spirit is a great bane; and as the law brings no blessing but a curse, so neither can the minister of it carry a blessing to him who needs it. The Priest and the Levite "passed by on the other side," and left the wounded traveller, "stript and half dead," to find

mercy and compassion from a stranger with a tender heart. It is hopeless to look for compassion from the law: it is hopeless to look for it from a legalist.

Verse 2.

"Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Exod. xxiii. 9). You have passed by that road and you know what is to be found in it; and the more deeply you are indebted to mercy, the more freely will you act towards others in the same spirit. Indeed, the measure in which you act in it towards others will shew the measure in which you have learned it for yourself.

The order of the words here is noteworthy. "One another's burdens bear ye, and thus fulfil the law of the Christ," or "have it so fulfilled" (*aorist*). The emphasis is laid on the fact that we are called to care for one another; not, every man for himself alone; and, seeing that they wanted law, in this way they would "fill up completely" the law of Christ—law in its fullest measure and highest character.

Verse 3.

For a man to think of himself as being something when he is nothing is but self-deception. He who says, "The heaven is My throne and the earth is

My footstool," says also, "To this man will I look, even to him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word" (Isa. lxvi. 12). The Pharisee said, "God, I thank Thee . . . I am not as this publican." Yet the publican went down to his house justified rather than he (Luke xviii.). He who sets himself thus up in his appeal to God knows neither himself nor the God to whom he appeals.

Verse 4.

Rather let each prove his own work. Let him see what he has to shew of his own, and thus will he have solid ground of boasting in respect of himself, and not by comparison with another : for, while we have each to bear the common burdens of humanity in a kindly spirit, and thus to seek to help each other, yet, as regards our personal responsibilities, each must bear his own.

Verse 6.

Moreover, the catechumen, who receives the teaching of the Word, is to communicate with the catechist, who gives that teaching, in all temporal good things, in return for the spiritual good he has received from him.

Two evils are corrected here. (1) The conduct of those who, in too many instances, have turned their office into a scandal : as has been said, "In their greed they seek not the sheep but the shekels : " and (2) the misery of those who have no sense of their indebtedness for the spiritual profit they have received from the servants of the Lord, who devote their time and labour in the ministry of the gospel and the help of the saints. They forget that these too need food and raiment ; and because they are not *compelled* to give what it is their privilege to give, as "God has prospered them," they keep back what is due to those from whose services they profit.

Verse 7.

But the eye of God is on that as on all else. Let no man deceive himself.

He may "keep back part of the price," as did Ananias and Sapphira ; but the government of God is inflexible, and "as a man sows, so also shall he reap." To sow to the flesh is to reap corruption ; to sow to the Spirit is to reap life everlasting.

This is a most important principle, and must not be enfeebled by a false idea of grace. Whatever grace may do, the principles of government are never infringed thereby. Grace is indeed the corroboration of those principles, which are necessarily unalterable. Grace may forgive David's sin ; but in the government of God the child must die (2 Sam. xii. 13, 14). Grace and government cannot be divorced from each other. God's nature is shewn in grace ; His character is shewn in government. These are correlative, and not contradictory, even though at first sight it may sometimes seem to be so.

Verse 9.

Moreover, the establishment of the kingdom of God, which is the display of His government, will be the universal blessing of all who have part therein (Ps. lxxii. 17) : "Therefore let us not lose heart in well doing : for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Verse 10.

And "now" is the season for sowing and doing good to all men, whoever they may be, not staying to inquire "Who is my neighbour ? ", for every man is your neighbour if you are neighbour to him ; therefore let us do good to all. At the same time the household of faith has naturally a special claim on our interest.

Verse 11.

We have now a sort of postscript and peroration, in which the Apostle sums up the burden of his previous thoughts and emphasizes them.

"See how long a letter," or perhaps, "in what large letters I have written to

you with my own hand." Some have connected "the large characters" with bad eyesight, from which the Apostle possibly suffered (*cf.* chap. iv. 14, 15); but it may be that he means that the magnitude of the characters, or the length of the letter which he wrote with his own hand, was an index of the constraint of his spirit and the emphasis he meant to lay on his expostulations to them. Possibly, too, it may be taken symbolically as indicating the solemn warning forcibly and unmistakably given in the prophetic foresight of the Spirit, and a loud cry to a senseless people, by whom it would be utterly unheeded, as it has been to this day.

If it be thought that the distress of the Apostle's soul at this early attempt to wreck the gospel: to shatter it upon the rocks before his eyes, was the phantom of an overwrought brain, or that the interpretation put by others on his language is either exaggerated or needless, let but a synoptical picture of the history of the church carry the mind's eye from the Apostle's time to the present day; and when judgment is passed on this Epistle to the Galatians, it will be rather in the sense that the strength of the language is, if possible, not strong enough, and that the vehemence of denunciation falls short of the thing denounced; while again it will be plain that the Apostle's foresight has been vindicated to the letter by the subsequent course of events from then till now. And should any again think that such language might be applicable to the "dark ages," but is out of place to-day, the following extracts will shew how vain is such a conceit.

Giving an account of the consecration service of the Roman Catholic cathedral at Westminster, June 12, 1910, a writer in a London paper says:

"The cathedral at Westminster has been consecrated: the crown has been placed on Catholic zeal and piety; the moving scenes of a ceremonial replete

with the grandeur of a thousand years have been presented with a dignity befitting so sacred an occasion, and the memory of them will henceforth remain with the Catholics of this country as one of the most cherished recollections associated with their faith. . . .

ENCLOSING THE RELICS.

"The stately procession passes up the church, and on reaching the altar, wherein the relics are to be deposited, the bier is to be set down and lighted tapers are placed beside it. The cavity is anointed, the relics are reverently placed therein, the covering stone is also treated with holy oil, and the slab closes the aperture, masons completing the work. That which follows would appear to be but a repetition of what has gone before, for altars are again and again treated with incense whilst other circuits are made. Each of the twelve crosses painted on the walls is still to be anointed, and as this is done suitable prayers are offered. Once more the altar is sprinkled with holy water, and putting on his mitre, the archbishop forms with his own hands five crosses of incense, each consisting of five grains, on the five places of the altar table where previously he made crosses with water, oil, and chrism.

"Large crowds of worshippers have been admitted to the cathedral to the latter part of the service, but larger crowds without fail to secure admission. Pontifical mass of the Dedication follows, to which those present listen with reverent piety. It has been a great event for them. . . ."

Here is a concourse of superstition, degradation, and puerility as gross as the old pagan idolatry to which the Apostle had warned them they were "again anew" returning (chap. iv. 9). Nay, into grosser darkness still and blasphemous, for an idol of wood is an object of veneration in itself not so revolting as dead men's bones—and this is all done professedly in the name of God and of Christ.

How terrible is the "authority of darkness" (Col. i. 13) that casts its bewitching spell over the mind of man, emasculating his rationality, corrupting his understanding, and leading him on hilariously to his ruin.

Giving an account of the Eucharistic Congress in Montreal, September, 1910, the writer says:

"The twenty-first International Eucharistic Congress, which after a week's series of ceremonies, conferences, and public celebrations, will conclude with the procession of the host on Sunday next, has taken complete possession of the city. The formal opening occurs to-morrow afternoon. One hundred and twenty bishops of the Roman Catholic Church are here, with two thousand priests and an overwhelming concourse of visitors from other parts of this country and the United States. . . .

"Montreal has been preparing for the congress for over a year. Lavish expenditure, estimated at over £200,000, on the ornamentation of streets, churches, and residences, has been made by Protestants and Catholics

alike. Although the population of Montreal of nearly half a million is two-thirds French Canadian and Catholic, the eagerness of the English Protestant residents to extend hospitality has made the civic welcome truly unanimous and free from outward signs of religious division or antipathy.

"The church of St. Aloysius was thronged yesterday on the occasion of the blessing of a new bell by Cardinal Logue. The scene was one of splendid solemnity as the gorgeously robed priests made their way to the sanctuary. . . . The majority of the higher clergy are entertained by English and French residents, while two thousand priests are lodged at Roman Catholic institutions."

Processions of the host and the "consecrations of bells" may not have been before the mind of the Apostle in his letter to the Galatians, but when he wrote to them, "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing," his solemn warning covered the whole ground of the apostasy from that day until now.

We are only strong as our consecration is perfect.

Communion with God is the right arm of our strength; if this be broken, we are weak as water.

Unless we live wholly for God, our strength will suffer serious leakage,

and our weakness will be of that kind which degrades the believer until the ungodly scornfully inquire, "Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?"

Without God, we can do nothing, and in proportion as we attempt to live without Him, we ruin ourselves.

Come, Morning Star! Bid stubborn night be gone,
Come in the midst of all the sons of light.
Command the everlasting day to dawn,
With God's love strong and bright.

O come! Creation groans in deep distress.
Come, heavenly Healer of its thousand woes.
Then the wild waste and barren wilderness
Shall blossom as the rose.

J. Boyd.

An Echo of the Missionary Conference.

(H. P. BARKER).

A MISSIONARY from India, who was present at the Conference, writes in the August-September number of *Regions Beyond*, as follows :

"Edinburgh was more than a masterly survey of a great situation; it was a historic confession of helplessness, an urgent plea for revival. All that human wisdom, tempered by unequalled experience, could do to perfect existing machinery and formulate a sorely needed science of Missions was done; but at the close of the day the best brains in the church were constrained to ask, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' and, like a nail driven in a sure place, the old conviction came to stay in the hearts of the delegates, 'Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it;' or, as some one at Edinburgh put it, 'Only a Revival can save the situation.' GOD must return in power to His church ere the task that now confronts her can be adequately carried through."

I quote these words as giving yet another proof of the feeling that is so widespread in the hearts of many Christians, that something is terribly wrong in the church, and that something is urgently needed which we seem unable to obtain.

Of "human wisdom" and "unequalled experience" there is assuredly no lack. Religious "machinery," too, there is in abundance, with repeated attempts to perfect it.

But what can "machinery" do, even with plenty of earnest men to work it, and plenty of money to keep it going, in the service of Christ? Where in the Scriptures do we find so much as a hint of the need of this complex machinery, this highly developed organization?

So the necessity of Revival is acknowledged; and very heartily does the writer agree. Who amongst us, with any spiritual discernment, does not mourn over the lack of power both for holy living and for effectual service that is everywhere apparent? Who does not long for a real revival of godliness and piety, of devotedness to Christ and whole-hearted separation from the world?

And what hinders? We shall all agree that the hindrance is not on God's side. There is no unwillingness to bless with Him. The obstacles are all on our part. What are they?

The usual answers given are correct enough: lack of earnestness, lack of believing prayer, lack of personal consecration.

But is there no further cause? *What of the tolerance, in the ranks of missionaries themselves, of men who are unsound as to the fundamentals of Christianity? Is not the Spirit of God grieved thereby?*

How can the blessing of God be expected upon the labours of men who lend an ear to the unchristian dogmas of "Higher Criticism," and who cast aspersions upon the integrity of the Holy Scriptures? It is notorious that men of this stamp exist, and are tolerated in quarters where those who are not "in the know" would little expect to find them.

We hear of men going as "missionaries" to China, who evidently need missionaries themselves, so utterly unsound are they as to the Christian faith. We hear of "missionaries" in other lands teaching in their schools that the narratives in Genesis are mere allegories, not by any means to be understood literally.

If this sort of thing spreads, we shall have to number the "missionaries" of some societies among those that *need* the light rather than amongst those that are carrying it to the nations that sit in darkness.

"Sometimes," says an American magazine, "the blunders of children contain more truth than the books of divines, and we venture to say that few preachers in our day have stated a great need more truthfully, and indirectly administered a rebuke more richly deserved, than did two children in one of our Sunday Schools here in this city some time ago.

"The memory verse for that day happened

to be Mark xvi. 15, and the first little boy repeating it said, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every teacher.' The boy next to him, however, thought that he could improve on that, and said 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every preacher.'

I have written "If this sort of thing spreads;" but will it not for a certainty spread? "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump," applies not only to moral wickedness, as in 1 Corinthians v. 6, but also to doctrinal error, as in Galatians v. 9.

Leaven always spreads. Missionaries who work in harness with those who are leavened with false doctrine *will themselves in time be leavened*. Christians who continue in association with men who are disloyal to the Scriptures and unsound in the faith *will themselves in time be tainted*.

Do we long for Revival? Then must we not first clear ourselves of all complicity in this great evil? If the leaven has spread too far for us to *purge it out* of the church (as in 1 Cor. v. 7), must we not at all costs *purge ourselves out* (2 Tim. ii. 21)? If we are not prepared to do this, what right have we to expect a Revival? Are we not continuing in disobedience?

Is there not a need for questions of this kind? A Wesleyan minister was calling on me recently. He spoke first of things in general. Millions of money had been collected and spent in the erection of chapels and halls, yet the number of adherents was on the decrease. Then he touched on local matters. He was in charge of several stations, and he mourned over the prevalent dearth of spiritual life. Strife amongst the "members" in one or two places; the "cause" in a third village left without a single supporter. He bewailed the too customary reliance on "machinery" and money, instead of on the Spirit of God.

"The church needs a thorough awakening to the fact that only the power of the Holy Ghost can accomplish what we want," he said.

By and by the conversation turned upon a visit to London that the minister had recently paid, and he casually mentioned that he had gone to hear a preacher who had made himself notorious by his attacks upon the faith once delivered to the saints, and that he "rather liked him"! He had gone to hear, and "rather liked," a man whom he knew as one who ridicules the truth of the vicarious death of Christ, the inspiration of the Scriptures, and many other vital and fundamental verities.

Was not this an unwitting confession of disloyalty to Christ? How can we expect Revival while we are so flagrantly disobedient to the expressed mind of God?

"Separation" must surely be the watchword of those who would be on the Lord's side to-day; separation not only from *the world*, but from all who entertain or condone disloyal thoughts of Christ, and of the Holy Scriptures.

It is as true in the twentieth century as in the first, that to have fellowship with those that are unsound in the faith is to be *particeps criminis*. It is complicity with evil. Do not the Scriptures so teach us? "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 9, 10).

God grant grace to His servants that amongst other hindrances to Revival this most serious one may be put aside. Better to be few in number, better to be called bigoted and uncharitable, than march shoulder to shoulder with traitors.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, for the sake of the Master we serve, the Lord who has loved us and bled for us; for the sake of His church; for the sake of His work in the world's great harvest-field; for the sake of the ardently-longed-for Revival, let us "in all things approve ourselves to be clear in this matter."

Eternal Punishment (IX).

(JAMES BOYD).

The Scriptural Meaning of "For Ever."

THE propagators of this non-eternity of punishment doctrine, whether they be Annihilationists or Universalists, trade upon people's ignorance of Scripture, and on the desire found in every unregenerate heart that the judgment which their sins merit should not be inflicted. We are told that no one would desire to see a fellow mortal undergo such a judgment. This is perfectly true; but neither would any one desire to see his fellow creature break his leg, be condemned to a term of imprisonment, or suffer the extreme penalty of the law; yet people do sometimes break their legs, undergo terms of imprisonment, and we have known instances of people ending their lives on the gallows. We would rather it were otherwise, and we would perhaps do a great deal to prevent such things taking place, but they do take place, in spite of our desires to the contrary. It is no argument against the idea of eternal punishment to say that the contemplation of it is appalling; for that is just what Scripture says it is. We are told, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. x. 31).

But it is not only *man* that has no pleasure in the contemplation of such a judgment. We have seen that *God* has no pleasure in the executing of wrath. Sin has compelled Him to act as a righteous and holy Judge, and He must let the creature see how He regards that hideous thing which has wrought such havoc in His creation. He is love in His nature. But that does not mean that He loves *everything*. It is from Himself we must get the true account of Himself, for no one by searching can discover Him. If He has given no account of Himself we are in hopeless darkness. The cross

is the declaration of His love, for it is His Son who has suffered there for our transgressions; but it is also the place where we learn the reality of sin and His abhorrence of it, for there the Sin-bearer was forsaken of God. Hatred of sin and the judgment of the sinner are not inconsistent with the fact that God is love; for the almighty blow which fell on the Victim made sin for us, was the blow which rent the vail and brought His unspeakable love to light.

We have seen that neither the first nor the second death is annihilation. The first death is not, for the dead live to God in their spirits. It is the body only that is killed and dies. Therefore, "If I make my bed in hell [sheol], Thou art there" (Ps. cxxxix. 8). Also we have the beast and false prophet cast alive into the lake of fire at the commencement of the thousand years, and at the end of that time they are said to be still there (Rev. xx. 10). Then in the eternal state the wicked are said to have their part in the lake of fire (chap. xxi. 8). Therefore the second death is no more annihilation than is the first. And to those who contend for a presentation of the gospel in the Millennium or in hades I would only say the judgment of the living is just as final as is the judgment of the dead (2 Thess. i. 7-9; Matt. xxv. 46). Therefore the state in which either death or the coming of the Lord finds a man, in that state he shall abide for ever.

But we are informed by some of these men (they are not all of one mind on the subject) that the Greek word translated *for ever* does not mean for ever, but denotes a period or periods of *limited* duration. The simple meaning of that is that the notion of eternity is not in the Bible at all. They tell us

the meaning of the word is *age-long*. Now, to know whether this statement is true or false I assure the reader that he does not require to know the Greek language in the least. All he requires is a concordance to enable him to trace the word through the New Testament, and to see how the Spirit of God uses it.

In chapter iv. of the Gospel of John the blessed Lord, speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well of Sychar, draws a contrast between the value of the water drawn from Jacob's well and the water which He was ready to give to those who asked Him. He says, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall *never thirst*" (lit. in no wise thirst for ever). Now, could anything be plainer than that the Lord here is speaking of the water which He gives as that which should satisfy for *eternity*, in contrast with the creature streams of earth, which give but a *momentary* satisfaction to the soul? Does any one imagine that the Lord is simply assuring the woman that, though earthly joys may satisfy for a *day*, He can give that which will satisfy for an *age*; that is to say, that though His gift has no eternal value it is better than the creature springs of earth? If this gift of Christ's is not of eternal value, we have been woefully over-estimating the blessings of the gospel.

We have had the same thought also as to the Lord's saying to the Jews that he who ate His flesh and drank His blood had eternal life, and having this life would never die—and I am inclined to think the Jews also thought so; but if what some of these teachers tell us be true, we have been greatly mistaken, for He meant no more than that they would live possibly a little longer than Methuselah. He lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years, but the possessors of the life which Christ gives would live a thousand years; for this is the length of the *age* with which Christ associates eternal life in the three synoptic

Gospels (Matt. xix. 29; Mark x. 30; Luke xviii. 30).

The Jews tell the Lord, "We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth *for ever* [*all through the age*]: and how sayest thou, The Son of Man must be lifted up?" (John xii. 34). Why should they ask such a question if *eis tôn aïōna* did not convey to their minds the thought of eternal immunity from death? If the word meant no more than that Christ should live throughout an age, which might be for the length of a thousand years, or might not be for so long, where was the inconsistency in His assertion that they would crucify Him? Evidently the Jews attached the idea of eternity to this word as it is found in the Greek translation of the Old Testament.

Peter tells us that "the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth *for ever*" (1 Peter i. 24–25). This is in contrast with perishable flesh, which in the Antediluvian age came very nearly being *age-long*. But does the Holy Spirit of God mean to give us the impression that the word of God is to be limited in its duration to an age? A reply to the question is unnecessary.

John tells us, "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth *for ever*" (1 John ii. 17). The world has now lasted somewhere near six thousand years. If *age-long* life only is promised to the overcomer, the world has the best of it: it abides longer than he.

Paul says, "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are *eternal*" (2 Cor. iv. 18). Here we have the word placed in contrast with that which is expressive of a limited period. Things temporal are things which exist for a time; it may be for a thousand or for six thousand years, but not for ever. If we accepted the meaning

which some of our teachers would attach to words there would be no contrast here at all. If the adjective here, *aïōnia*, does not give the qualification of *eternal* to the things unseen, then the passage should read: "The things which are seen are for a time, but the things that are not seen are for a time." And what sense is there in that?

Again, we have Paul telling Philemon that Onesimus had perhaps from him "departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him *for ever*." If the meaning of the word translated *for ever* is *for a time*, then there is no contrast at all in the passage, nor is there any meaning in it either. It is really eternity which is placed in contrast with time. And though it may be replied that you cannot import the idea of eternity into the relationship subsisting between master and servant in this world, yet is the meaning of the phrase simple enough: it simply means that Onesimus returned, never to run away again. He came back to abide for ever. He might be removed by death, or Philemon might set him free; but that would not be the same thing as his running away, which was never to take place again. To say he returned to be with his master *all through the age*, or to translate it in that way, would make nonsense of the passage.

That the word *aïōn* does not in every instance bear the signification of *eternal* is not in dispute. What is affirmed is this, that in a great number of cases in Scripture it does signify that which is eternal, and in such passages to attach any limited meaning to it would make nonsense of the scripture. In every passage to which I have referred no other meaning can be rightly attached to the word; and I could quote a vast number of passages in addition to those to which I have referred the reader.

No one can reasonably question the significance of the word in the following passages of Scripture:—

"The Creator, who is ble-ssed *for ever*" (Rom. i. 25).

"God blessed *for ever*" (Rom. ix. 5).

"Christ, which is blessed *for evermore*" (2 Cor. xi. 31).

"Behold, I am alive *for evermore*" (Rev. i. 18).

"Him who sits upon the throne, who liveth *for ever and ever*" (Rev. iv. 9).

"Him that liveth *for ever and ever*" (Rev. v. 14).

"The smoke of their torment ascendeth up *for ever and ever*" (Rev. xiv. 11).

"God, who liveth *for ever and ever*" (Rev. xv. 7).

"And shall be tormented day and night *for ever and ever*" (Rev. xx. 10).

"They shall reign *for ever and ever*" (Rev. xxii. 5).

"These shall go away into *everlasting* punishment" (Matt. xxv. 46).

"The righteous into life *eternal*" (Matt. xxv. 46).

"The commandment of the *everlasting* God" (Rom. xvi. 26).

"Punished with *everlasting* destruction" (2 Thess. i. 9).

"*Eternal* redemption" (Heb. ix. 12).

"The *eternal* Spirit" (Heb. ix. 14).

"*Eternal* inheritance" (Heb. ix. 15).

"*Eternal* glory" (1 Peter v. 10).

"The vengeance of *eternal* fire" (Jude 7).

"The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are unseen are *eternal*" (2 Cor. iv. 18).

The very same word which is used to describe the life of God and His blessedness, the life of Christ and His blessedness, the life of the Holy Spirit, the life of believers and their blessedness, is that which is used to describe the eternal nature of the judgment which shall be visited upon the impenitent on account of their sins. Nor could any words be used which would more clearly and emphatically describe the awfulness of that judgment than the words that are used.

(To be concluded.)

Christ our Sun.

AS from the sun all light comes, so from Christ every grace comes to us. With the sun the light is gone from us as soon as the sun disappears ; but Christ never disappears, and the light and the grace we have received from Him is never withdrawn from us, because it is ever true for us in Him, even though we have not and do not enjoy it.

The sun has lost none of its light, though it has shone for many a century ; so Christ—blessed be His name !—loses none of His grace by bestowing it upon millions. The world gives, and loses what it gives ; He shares, and ever retains His fulness to still share on for ever.

But we are not mere spectators or guests, great as that would be ; we are participators, members of His body, assimilated to the image of the glory, as we behold His unveiled face in glory. When we see Him we see our resource. It is not looking in, but looking up.

As the mariner at sea looks out for the sun, so we should look up to Christ. If in the storm He was so quiet that He lay asleep on the pillow in the hinder part of the ship, we may receive of His grace, and in the storm be quiet too. Again, if we see Him walking on the crest of the wave, superior to the most adverse circumstances, we may walk there too, for we are His, and His power is ours.

The Work of the Lord amongst the Young. (EDITORS).

Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God (Mark x. 14).

WE have been asked to publish some papers on the Lord's work amongst the young, which we gladly undertake, for we know of no labour for the Lord Jesus of greater importance.

It is difficult to imagine that any one who knows the Lord could be indifferent to this service, and yet there are those who not only look with coldness upon it, but are in actual antagonism to it. Such an attitude surely discloses ignorance of the heart of Him who was *much displeased* when His disciples would have driven the children from Him ; and who took those children up in His arms, whom they would have driven away, put His hands upon them, and blessed them (Mark x. 13-16). What a soul-affecting study for us is our Lord and Master on this occasion ! May we sit so constantly at His feet as to become more like

Him, and to do His work in His spirit and way.

Some authentic accounts have come to our hands from living witnesses to the reality of the work in Sunday-schools, and services for children ; and we publish these in the hope that they may encourage those who are engaged in this service to the Lord.

In a Yorkshire Sunday-school there was a band of lads whose early training and environment were not such as would tend to turn their feet in right ways. For six long years the labour and prayers of teachers seemed to go for nothing with the lads, yet all the while the word of God was working its way down the very roots of their souls.

On a certain Sunday the teacher of this class invited the boys to his home to tea, and afterwards took them to a

gospel service; there one of them was reached and saved, and this proved the beginning of a general work.

But what followed we will tell as nearly as possible in the words of some of those to whom the blessing came. The brother of the lad already mentioned writes:

“It was a Sunday in the year 1905. . . . At ten o’clock my brother came home, and as he entered the house he cried, ‘I’ve been converted.’ We slept together, and that night I saw him bow his knees to God for the first time. A few nights afterwards I went to spend an evening in the house of a friend; there were several of us sitting round the fire when my brother walked in. We began to laugh and jeer at him, and he seemed to fear our ridicule, but only for a moment, for with a heart evidently overflowing with joy he began to sing:

‘Oh! the peace my Saviour gives,
Peace I never knew before;
All my way has brighter grown,
Since I learnt to trust Him more.’

“If anything shattered my false peace that did. I left for home, and my friend accompanied me. We inquired of my brother as to how true peace could be obtained; he answered, by faith in Christ Jesus. We determined also to be converted, but in our ignorance we thought it would be by some form or ceremony, and we got a little girl to teach us the Lord’s Prayer and “Grace before meals,” as we were sure that these would both be needed after our conversion. The following Sunday afternoon at the class I decided for the Lord. Praise God!”

It has been said that if you get a lad truly saved you have saved a multiplication-table. That this saying contains much truth was proved in this case, as a note from another youth may shew:

“I was sitting with others round the fire at home one cold night in October, 1905, when a friend who had been converted a few days before came in; he was fine sport for us for a while, but we soon stopped our laughter, for he commenced singing:

‘Oh! the peace my Saviour gives.’

“This brought to me a longing for peace too. A deep concern about my sins sprang up in my soul, and this went on until the following Sunday.

“At the close of the afternoon class a servant of the Lord drew me aside, and, like the woman of the seventh of Luke, my tears of repentance fell fast. Then I saw that God had accepted the finished work of Christ as necessary and sufficient for my salvation, and a peace and joy filled my heart as must have filled the woman’s when Jesus said to her, ‘Thy sins are forgiven.’

“That is five years ago, and I can sing with truth:

‘All my life has brighter grown,
Since I learnt to trust HIM more.’

“And I delight to tell others who are young the story of the Saviour’s love.”

(To be continued.)

The Generations of the Heavens and the Earth.—Conclusion.

(S. L. JACOB).

Genesis iv.

ADAM unfallen had no children, but after the fall Eve bare him a son, who she apparently thought was the promised seed from the Lord. Afterwards Eve bare Abel, who became a keeper of sheep, while Cain was a tiller of the ground. Both occupations were right and proper, but Abel’s spirit was different from

Cain’s, so that it came to pass that Abel was manifested to be *morally* of the woman’s seed, and Cain of the seed of the serpent. It seemed a harmless and natural thing that Cain, being a tiller of the ground, should bring of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord, but we have to learn that our natural thoughts will not

do in our relations with God ; we must have divine instruction, else we go sadly astray.

We are not told that God gave any direct commands on the subject of approach to Him, but presumably Abel, who brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof, understood from what had previously happened, as narrated in Genesis iii., that man was fallen, alienated from God, and could only approach to God through the death of one who had not sinned. It was by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and in it he being dead yet speaketh (Heb. xi. 4). This is beautiful ; he obtained witness that he was righteous, *i.e.* counted righteous through another, and for wellnigh six thousand years he, though dead, has witnessed to the fact that the way to God is only upon the ground of sacrifice.

Cain, on the contrary, was proud and unbroken, and the Lord respected not his offering ; and Cain, instead of humbling himself and asking the reason, was very wroth, and his countenance fell. But the Lord dealt very graciously with him, and shewed him the way of blessing, and offered him the place of rule ; but nothing will teach the proud. Cain's heart was full of hatred ; he talked with Abel, his brother, and eventually slew him. Because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous (1 John iii. 12).

Then Cain was cursed from the earth which received his brother's blood ; it would no longer yield to him her fruit, and he was to be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth ; but a mark was set upon him by the Lord to prevent his being killed.

Cain went out from the presence of the Lord and dwelt in the land of Nod. There a son was born to him called Enoch, long before the well-known Enoch who walked with God appeared.

He built a city, and one descendant of his took two wives, and others became the fathers of modern civilization ; they reduced the keeping of cattle to a science, invented musical instruments, learnt to work in brass and iron, and thus anticipated the ways of Babylon, and sought to make the world a pleasant place in which to live without God. It is most significant that from the beginning it is the evil and not the righteous seed that takes the lead in the arts and sciences. It is easy to understand this ; the righteous have always walked by faith ; they have always looked forward to the world to come ; they do not want their portion in this world ; they have not therefore the incentive to civilization which those have who have this world and no more. One of the accusations levelled against believers is that being contented with little they do little for the world's progress ; while it is the restless, the discontented, and the ambitious who, wanting more and ever more, are the real benefactors, for they ransack the earth and the sea, they are ever on the look out to invent new things, and undoubtedly the material progress of the world is due to them, and not to believers. If this is what is wanted, then they are welcome to all the credit of it, and we believers are willing to bear the reproach of not contributing to this progress. Satan is the prince and god of this world (Luke iv. 6 ; John xiv. 30 ; 2 Cor. iv. 4), and his great object is undoubtedly to make the world happier *without Christ*. His enmity is against Christ, and is only against man as far as he can injure Christ through man, and no more. The devil fills the world as set forth in Babylon with the delights of the flesh (Rev. xviii. 12-14) and glosses over the whole with religion, for Babylon is nothing if not religious, but Christ will be hated there. Even the name of Christ will be tolerated and apparently praised, if only the real Christ of God be hidden. It is written that that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God (Luke xvi. 15). Let the meaning

of this be thought out carefully, and we shall see that a decent, polished, cultivated, religious world in which the real Christ of God is excluded is far the worst thing. The gross sins of the world in a way prevent the world from being even a greater snare to men than it is already, for many men revolt from the world's grossness who yet would be entrapped by its pleasantness.

God's people were ever strangers and pilgrims in the earth. This is why God was willing to identify Himself with the fathers (Heb. xi. 13-16); and even David, in spite of all his glory in the earth, takes that place (1 Chron. xxix. 15). Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth (Isa. xlv. 9), but let us be a separate people, seeking no portion here, but most anxious to do all the good we can to saint and sinner, while at the same time we share the reproach of Christ, and count it all honour so to do.

Cain was bad enough in regard to the murder he committed, but Lamech, the bigamist and murderer, exceeded in wickedness, for he boasts of his crime. At the same time they are both typical: Cain doubtless typifying the Jew the murderer of the prophets, and Lamech the Jew who added to the previous crimes the murder of God's Son. With Lamech Cain's seed passed out of view, and, as we know, the whole of that line was blotted out by the flood, and existed no more to pollute the earth. They took the lead while here, but judgment overtook them, and they are silenced for ever.

As to Adam's life (apart from Cain), Seth is born instead of Abel, and when his son Enos was born, then began

men to call on the name of the Lord. No more is told us here, but this was salvation, for from the beginning (for God is morally the same in every dispensation) whosoever called on the name of the Lord found salvation (Joel ii. 32; Acts ii. 21; Rom. x. 13).

This completes this particular portion of the generations of the heavens and of the earth, though in the higher sense these generations continue through the whole period embraced by Scripture till the complete triumph of God.

The great point seems to be that the heavens must precede the earth, *i.e.* the earth must take character from the heavens, or else all will be wrong. The order may seem a trifling thing, but it is all-important. Some might think it a little thing for God to give the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth (Jacob's blessing, Gen. xxvii. 28), instead of the fatness of the earth and of the dew of heaven (Esau's blessing, Gen. xxvii. 39), but no, the difference is tremendous. To speak of God and man is right, but to speak of man and God is wrong.

All men must learn eventually that the heavens do rule (Dan. iv. 26), even as proud Nebuchadnezzar had to learn, but blessed are they who become like little children and learn it now. These are they who enter the kingdom of the heavens (Matt. xviii. 3, 4). For these the heavens have their right place, their eyes are opened, and with them it is well. God and the Lamb form their portion, and they shall have their part in the heavenly city.

Lord, I am Thine : in mercy Thou hast broken
The fetters strong that bound me to my sin ;
Thy blood was shed—of love the mighty token—
From ways of death my guilty soul to win.

Lord, I am Thine : yet sinful, weak and fearing,
I need Thy grace to keep me day by day,
Hold Thou my hand, and keep my feet from falling,
Then shall I tread with joy my pilgrim way.

Answers to Correspondents.

(THE EDITORS).

The Gift of Tongues.

"A Babe in Christ" writes inquiring whether, when the Holy Ghost came upon the apostles (Acts ii.), He gave them different tongues, or whether they spoke in one tongue and the Spirit conveyed the meaning to each of the listeners of different nationalities.

Clearly the former, and not the latter: else the direct action of the Spirit had been on the listeners instead of, as was the case, on the speakers, whom He then and thereafter indwelt. The scripture carefully read can convey no other conception.

Did the Lord harden Pharaoh's Heart?

R.W. Yes; the Scripture says He did (Exod. vii. 3, 7); but we are given to understand also the reason why, lest we get wrong thoughts as to the justice of God.

The Egyptians had inflicted sore hardships upon the Israelites (see Exod. i., ii.). This had not escaped the notice of God. He heard the groanings of these afflicted people and remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. He spoke to Moses of their affliction, sorrows, and oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppressed them, and sent him to deliver them.

But the guilt of the Egyptians in this matter could not be passed by; they had filled their cup to the brim, and the time of retribution had come. But as always, before pouring out His wrath, God gave to Pharaoh the opportunity for repentance; this we find in chapter v. If Pharaoh had obeyed the voice of the Lord and let Israel go, he would have proved the mercy of God, but instead of doing this he defiantly cried, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go" (ver. 2); and at

once greatly increased the burdens of the people of God.

From that time his doom was settled by his own rebellion, no further space for repentance was given him, and he had to prove, and from his history we may learn, the folly of fighting against God.

Judicial hardening *follows* on rejection of God's testimony: it does not precede it; and this 2 Thess. ii. 11 shews us will take place presently on a great scale in Christendom, where the truth is being given up on every hand to-day.

The Resurrection of the Body.

A Reader. They have fallen into grave error who teach that the bodies of those who sleep in Jesus will not be raised again. The whole subject of 1 Corinthians xv. is the resurrection of the *body*, and of it we read, "*It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption . . . it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body*" (vers. 42-44). The link of identity is thus maintained.

As to the "building of God . . . eternal in the heavens . . . our house which is from heaven" (2 Cor. v. 1, 2), the power that will raise up the bodies of the sleeping saints at the coming of the Lord comes from heaven; but there is more: every distinctive feature of those resurrection bodies is also from thence: incorruptibility, glory, power, immortality, etc. (1 Cor. xv. 42-54). These things belong not here: though "put on" here, they themselves are "from heaven;" and bearing this in mind we can understand the "building of God" being spoken of as "eternal in the heavens." The resurrection body is spiritual and entirely heavenly in character.

It is folly to reason on the subject from a natural standpoint, for resurrection is by the mighty power of God.

Other answers held over through lack of space.

Doctrine and Manner of Life.

LET not thy works shame thy doctrine.

The tongue, the heart, the hand, and the foot of the Christian should be in happy and constant agreement.

The priest in Israel had to have "a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate upon the hem of his garment *round about*;" so the Christian must give a full and clear testimony of sound doctrine; but there must also be the fruitful living in equal proportion to the teaching, and that also in the whole circle of life "*round about*."

Very quaint is the language of Thomas Playfere in his "Say well, do well." "There was a ridiculous actor in the city of Smyrna, who, pronouncing '*O calum!* O heaven!' pointed with his finger towards the ground; which when Polemo, the chiefest man in the place, saw, he could abide to stay no longer, but went from the company in a great chafe, saying, 'This fool hath made a solecism with his hand, he has spoken false Latin with his finger.'" And such are they who teach well and do ill, who, however they have *heaven* at their tongue's end, yet the earth is at their fingers' ends; such as live not according to their preaching speak false divinity with their hands.

The Church of the Living God.

(W. H. WESTCOTT,
Inkongo, Central Africa).

The pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. iii. 15).

THE house of God is the church of the living God, "the pillar and ground of the truth." The idea of the house being God's house and the church being God's church or assembly makes plain that its *inception* and *form* and *administration*, as well as its *destiny*, can only be rightly appreciated as we listen to what God has to say about it, and can only be properly responded to as we are subject to what He says.

Then what He says through the Apostle in this verse is that it is the pillar and base of the truth. With both of these ideas there is a necessary suggestion of solidity and immutability. A pillar—whether forming part of a habitable structure or standing like a triumphal column detached—conveys less than anything else the idea that it can be moved at will. A base, a foundation is equally suggestive of unalterable stability, for if the foundation

be shifting and changeable, what structure can be reared on it?

Here we have an answer to such as state that the Christianity of the New Testament is to be "liberally" understood, and is to be adapted to the environment of succeeding centuries. The fact is that there is nothing more unbending than a pillar nor more unshifting than a foundation; and in whatever age the church is set for Christ it is the witness for God against any and every innovation from the thoughts of men. Of Christ it is said—or rather He Himself says—"I am the way, the TRUTH, and the life." Our thoughts of Him may be narrow or circumscribed, but, let others advocate what person or system they will, the truth is contained alone in Jesus of all that God is—the *truth*, the *whole* truth, and *nothing but the truth*. In Him resides all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. It was pleased to dwell there;

and none can gainsay it without denying Christianity. How restful to the heart it is to know Jesus. There is nothing false in Him, nothing of disappointment, nothing of change. It is a reduction to absurdity to say that when the human mind can enlarge itself to find something greater than God, then will Jesus cease to suffice.

But if God be God, then Jesus is the manifestation of Him. The very next verse in Timothy states this. "*Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.*" Of whom is that premised? Of none other than Jesus. And *this* is the mystery of godliness, the mystery that produces likeness to God. There is an outline of the *Truth* there, and its ethical result. It is a mystery, because all do not see it, nor can they without divine blessing; but it is not mystical, for it produces practical piety, and shows how one ought to behave oneself in the house of God—in the assembly of the living God, which is the pillar and base of the truth.

But this truth of the person of Christ, God manifest in the flesh, is stamped upon the church for her testimony and for her own internal stability. Perhaps the pillar gives the notion of testimony, *i.e.* it is made to be seen of men. Samson, when the sport of at least 3000 spectators, was put near the *pillar*. Two *pillars* were conspicuous before the eyes of every worshipper who went to Solomon's temple. Often there were inscriptions written on pillars, hieroglyphics and the like. And the church is here for positive testimony, to possess the writing of Christ, to stand erect and unbending in uncompromising witness of the truth as it is in Jesus, neither softly absorbing any notions which are not of Christ, nor consenting to part with the least detail of the truth as to Him—His deity, His incarnation, His atoning death, His glorious resurrection, His

priesthood, His advocacy, His lordship, His eternal sonship, and all the co-related truths of His glory, His church, and His kingdom.

But these truths of Christ have an internal relation to the church—a relation of faith and hope and love. If it be true—and it *is* true—that God was manifested in Christ, it is no less true that Christ is seen in His church. The assembly formed by the descent of the Holy Ghost, and being completed for the day of glory, is the vessel in which Christ will be hereafter displayed to the world. But it is even here the transcript (in its normal state) of His nature as the risen Man, and of His character as the Christ; enjoying relationship even as He does with His Father and His God.

None knew this so well, perhaps, as the saints at Ephesus, where Timothy was. Every feature, every trait of Christ, every delineation of the truth as it is in Jesus is projected into the saints who form the house of God, the church of the living God. This is true *if we view them as God's workmanship*, created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God has before ordained that we should walk in them. This solid, perfect, permanent work of Christ's delineation in the saints seems to me to represent the idea of the church being the base of the truth. To get a true idea of it we have to abstract them from their present external and really misleading condition: to see them apart from the flesh in them, which is actually condemned in the death of Christ, and apart from their position in this present world, which is, so to say, accidental (for it falls out so, and is no part of their heavenly calling). and to view them in all their purity—justified before God, having been blessed in Christ, sealed by the Holy Ghost, and brought to God. They are possessed of life after Christ's order; the graces of Jesus are all in them in germ, by the Holy Spirit's work, and need ministry and pastoring and use to

draw them out. They are unknown in the world, but are shortly to be displayed in glory; they are now sons of God, and are predestinated to be conformed fully to Christ's image, holy and without blame in love. In them faith, love, and hope abide, these three; and by their means Christ is responded to in all His love and glory. What is there, then, of Christ outside of them, so viewed, on earth? The church being the base of truth, all that does not tally with the truth of God intended to be set forth and wrought out in her is off the foundation, and is only at best some human structure not destined to remain.

Such, for instance, are all designs of empire that do not head up in Christ supreme; and all thoughts of ecclesiastical organization or reformation which are not begun, continued, and ended in Christ. Yes, and all systems of ethical teaching, too, which start not with the new birth and the exclusion of all footing for the will of unregenerate man. "Christ in me" is the secret of moral change, and "I live by the faith

of the Son of God" is the secret of moral superiority to every diversion here.

It seems to me that if we understand that the church of the living God is thus the pillar and base of the truth, we can humbly but firmly reject all idea that Christianity is to absorb a little from Buddhism and a little from Mohammed and a little from Darwin, etc., to become a perfect religion for all mankind. It comes to dictate, not to listen; and rightly so, for *the living God*, to whom all ages are ever present, has marked out the lines of the foundation on which everything true and answering to Himself is to be constructed for time and eternity. "*WITHOUT CONTROVERSY*, great is the mystery of godliness." What can evolution do after *God* manifest in flesh? It is not the working up into some state higher by any means, whether survival of the fittest or the striving of the whole race after its grandest ideal, but it is the coming down of the mighty God to us in Christ that is to be the true lever for man's recovery to God.

Be assured that God does more in us than we do for Him; and that what we do is only for Him in proportion as it is He Himself who works it in us.

The practical maintenance of holiness is the true effort of a heart that grace has mastered. But yet, as with the prisoner who struggles to his window and wipes out every stain, making it shine again, with a zeal no sense of duty could arouse, his thought is only of the sunlight he is yearning for, so it is with the soul that is alive to God. All true life leads to Him, and holiness is eagerly pursued, only to be forgotten in the enjoyment of its end and aim. Hence the exhortation, "Follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

Whilst the stream keeps running it keeps clear, but if it comes once to standing water it becomes the breed-

ing-place for every kind of filth. The keys that men keep in their pockets and use every day wax brighter and brighter, but if they be laid aside they soon grow rusty. To be always abounding in the work of the Lord is a necessity if we are to be kept from spiritual stagnation and the corruptions of the world.

The shoals that are met with in our Christian voyage may perhaps be safely crossed at high tide; but at low tide skilful pilotage is needed to avoid them, and to float always in the full current of the grace of God in the channel it has made for itself. But there is a sure and steadfast Pilot; and we are safe if we are content to follow Him. God has given us what we need for this. Perhaps we must be satisfied with a very little boat: the unerring Pilot will be in it.

On Preaching.

(“AN ALL-ROUND MINISTRY”).

THE famous Bernard on one occasion preached to a congregation with marvellous eloquence and poetic diction: he charmed them all; but when the sermon was done he was observed to walk away disquieted. He wandered into the wilderness and spent the night alone fasting because of his sadness.

The next day, at the time for the preaching, he was ready, and delivered himself of a commonplace discourse, of which the great gentlemen who had listened to him the day before thought nothing; but the poor of the people understood his words and drank them in; and though he heard the censures of the critics, he was observed to walk away with a smile upon his face, and to eat his bread with a merry heart. When one asked the reason, he said, “*Heri Bernardum; hodie Jesum Christum*” (“Yesterday, I preached Bernard; but to-day Jesus Christ”).

O servant of God, so preach Christ Jesus, and your sleep will be sweet unto you, for, whoever frowns, you will have your Master’s approval.

Keep to the gospel more and more. Give the people Christ, and nothing but Christ. Satisfy them, even though some should say that you nauseate them with the gospel. If they do not like it, give them more of it, for this is according to your Lord’s mind.

Preach *to* men, not *before* them. Preach *at* them, if you will. It is of no use to fire your rifle into the sky when your object is to pierce men’s hearts.

To flourish your sabre finely is a thing which has been done so often that you need not repeat it. Your work is to charge home at the heart and conscience.

The School of God in the Book of Daniel. (M. C. GAIHAN).

Conclusion.

Chapter x.

THE consolations administered by Jehovah to Daniel had the effect of quickening his spiritual susceptibilities as to the general moral state of his people.

‘No selfish satisfaction marked this model servant, or dissipated the sorrows of his heart because of the condition of Israel, though he found strength and courage in Jehovah’s grace and goodness.

It was thus that the “Man of sorrows,” well assured of the Father’s love, found in that love strength and sustainment for a heart oppressed with an overwhelming sense of the moral depths of degradation and distance into which man universally had fallen,

in the midst of which His tears and groans were seen and heard.

Outwardly expressed, this pressure on Daniel’s spirit took the form of fasting and mourning. “In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.”

Strange was the issue indeed of those days of fasting and mourning on Daniel’s part, closing as it did with a vision no longer bearing upon times and seasons, empires and dynasties; for the vision now beheld was that of a Being the likeness of whose glory and the dignity of whose person Daniel

had never before beheld. A heavenly personality, but accompanied by impressive characteristics of holiness and majesty, the very vividness of which awakened in him a consciousness, not yet experienced, of personal unsuitability and inherent unfitness for the presence of One whose holiness searched out and exposed, as never before, every thing within him, and withered at the very roots all sense of worthiness, whilst producing a consciousness of *personal unholiness* to which Daniel had hitherto been a stranger.

In prayer and confession he had already identified himself with the national condition without having gauged its full moral character. The light that now shone into his inmost soul revealed unsuspected depths of corruption in himself, even though he could not outwardly charge himself with any overt violation of Jehovah's statutes. But the vision of this Holy One revolutionized Daniel's estimate of himself, transferring soul exercises from the question of *deeds* to that of their source, namely, what he *was* in the presence of holiness that fully exposed him to himself. Sinful *nature* as distinct from sinful *acts*.

It is evident that Daniel had credited himself with some measure of strength and comeliness, which the light, now focussed upon him for the first time, withered up, leaving nothing but the consciousness of strengthlessness and corruption: "My comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength."

But all this was not only divinely educational as to Daniel personally, but also intensified in him the sense of the moral condition of the heart of the nation, as represented by the individuals composing it, which has been described by Jeremiah as "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (chap. xvii. 9). Daniel had been confessing *deeds*; he now saw deep down into the national *heart*, perfectly

reflected in his own, as revealed to him by the immediate presence of a Holy One.

But grace was there as well as holiness, or the vision had been intolerable and productive of despair. A touch and a voice conveyed to Daniel an immediate sense of relief. The hand that touched him set him, from prostration, upon his knees and the palms of his hands. The words were familiar ones, *i.e.* those in which Daniel had already been addressed, banishing fear and establishing confidence: "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved." The effect was a deep and abiding sense of unworthiness that fitted him all the more to be Jehovah's privileged vessel. Effectually stripped of all hindering natural qualifications and self-reliance, Daniel found himself sustained by a special sense of grace, and, as he himself later confesses, by strength communicated from above.

It is somewhat remarkable that Daniel should have been serving Jehovah in faithfulness and devotion for some sixty-five years ere this lesson of personal and inward corruption should have been learned; but Scripture presents frequent illustrations of cases in which the knowledge of God in grace, and responsible service, preceded self-knowledge.

The period of Job's prosperity in which he was approved of God (Job i. 1, 8, ii. 3) was succeeded by a period of adversity, in which he learnt to abhor himself.

Isaiah, who had pronounced, as authorized of God, six woes upon Israel (chap. v.), is found pronouncing the seventh woe upon himself (chap. vi.): "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips."

Peter learnt what it was to be "a sinful man" some time after he had been companying with the Lord on the ground of well-known grace (Luke v. 8, with John i. 40-42).

Experiences such as these are, in fact, though in modified form, similar to those of Romans vi. and vii., where self-knowledge is being acquired, but unrelieved by the great truths there brought to light, viz. the death and resurrection of Christ. The knowledge of self is, however, acquired, and the greater suitability of the vessel for the service of the Lord, in all humility, self-judgment, and obedience, ensured.

Three times the voice of a heavenly one addressed words of unspeakable comfort to Daniel, confirming to him on each occasion the love of Jehovah.

The first in response to his confession of national sins, and his supplications on behalf of himself and Israel as a whole. "Thou art greatly beloved."

The second on the occasion of deep soul exercises on the discovery of hitherto hidden sources of corruption within. "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved."

The third and last stablishing his soul in confidence and peace in the presence of God, who had chosen him as the repository of His mind as to the future of the nation, and the completion of the times of the Gentiles, the final great tribulation, and the resurrection. "O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when He had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my Lord speak; for Thou hast strengthened me."

It was thus that soul exercises and physical effects deepened as Daniel passed through the school of God until the climax was reached in the vision of the Holy One. Thus in sorrows, in soul exercises, and in service Jehovah's love furnished Daniel with much-needed support.

For believers of this dispensation, that support is found in the known "love of Christ:" "Who shall separate us from *the love of Christ*? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution?" etc.;

and the love of God revealed in Christ: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life . . . shall be able to separate us from *the love of God*, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 35-39).

Three times, too, it is recorded that a touch and a voice ministered relief to Daniel in his prostrate soul condition (vers. 10, 11, 16, 18, 19). It was likewise the touch and the voice of Jesus that revived the disciples when overwhelmed with fear at the supernatural manifestation of the bright cloud and the voice from heaven (Matt. xvii. 7). Again, when John fell as dead at the feet of "One like unto the Son of Man," the reviving influence was a hand laid upon him, and a voice that said, "Fear not; I am the First and the Last; I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore" (Rev. i. 17, 18).

For the saint of this day the knowledge of being one with Christ by the indwelling Spirit is *more* than the touch of His hand, and in the administered sympathy of His heart through the word His voice is heard, uplifting in moments of deepest exercise, and thus giving such to know what it is to be made more than conquerors *in* all these things (Rom. viii. 37).

NOTE.—Chapter xi. having to do wholly with somewhat complicated detail of prophecy, interesting and profitable no doubt, but not within the intention of these notes, is passed over.

Chapter xii.

The scene in this chapter is evidently laid at the very close of the national history, when the "great tribulation," referred to by the Lord in Matthew xxiv. 21, should envelop the nation, "such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, nor ever shall be;" for Daniel is informed of "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time." Yet should there be those who, their names being written in the book, should be delivered. The closing event of that day of wrath should be that "many of them that

sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting shame and contempt." The *fact* of resurrection is the important point here, without involving identity as to time of the two classes mentioned, other scriptures making it clear that a thousand years intervene between the two events, as Revelation xx. 5, 6, 11, 12. In John v. 29 two resurrections are clearly indicated, viz. "the resurrection of life" and the "resurrection of damnation" ("judgment" N.T.).

Special blessings, however, await those who are wise, and those who turn many to righteousness.

The book of prophecy here closes, and is sealed to the time of the end.

The question is then raised, "*How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?*" The answer, "It shall be for a time, times, and an half," *the fulfilment* synchronizing with the scattering of the power of the holy people (see Zech. xiv. 1-4; comp. Isa. vi. 11-13).

Daniel, not understanding these things, asks, "*What shall be the end of these things?*" But his mission as the mouthpiece of Jehovah has closed. "Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." In the midst of wickedness that should abound "many shall be purified and made white and tried." Understanding, refused to the wicked, should be with the wise.

Yet another period extending time by 30 days is named, viz. 1290 days: special and complete blessing being the portion of him that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 days.

Meantime Daniel should rest and stand in his lot in the end of the days.

The thesis of the book of Daniel, viz. that "the heavens do rule," works out in a variety of ways.

First, the supremacy of the rule of the heavens is demonstrated over Je-

hovah's own people, viewed typically as in relationship with Him on the ground of redemption. Very early, as already seen, He announced His claim to implicit obedience on the part of His people, attaching national blessing or disaster to its observance or defiance of His statutes and judgments. The captivity established the fact of this governmental rule.

The Gentile powers then appear upon the scene, dominion and power being transferred to them according to the will of Him that ruleth in the heavens, successive monarchies following one another in pre-determined order.

Individual monarchs either owned the sway of the God of heaven who ruled, or came under His judgments on account of their defiant opposition to His will.

On the other hand, the rule of the heavens was established in the fulfilment of purposes of grace towards the nation of God's choice, at the exact expiration of the period of time allotted for their captivity.

Again, individuals amongst the captives learnt practically how complete was the rule of the heavens over despotism, on their behalf, in delivering power, frequently interposed between them and their oppressors and persecutors.

Finally, the rule of the heavens is in this book more fully detailed as to events yet to befall the nation and the world at large, which even now await their fulfilment, and shall be accomplished as surely as history records the past accomplishment of prophecies whose scope lay more immediately in the near future.

Thus nations and individuals are ever passing through the school of God. Though man owns it not, all is being evolved after the will of Him who ruleth in the heavens, and that in spite of man *apparently* working his own

will.* National and individual chastisements bear witness to the authority of the heavens over the earth.

This authority is now invested in the hands of *the Son*, "on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. i. 3), who is "set at His [the Father's] right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. i. 20, 21. See also Ps. ii. 1-9; 1 Cor. xv. 23-28; Matt. xi. 27).

* For a full exposition of this principle, see the relations between the Assyrian and God in Isaiah x. 5-17.

On behalf of His people, eternal love and omnipotent power are now in ceaseless activity, the last demonstration of these, so far as concerns their earthly history, being the rapture of His own, as recorded in 1 Thessalonians iv. 13-17.

Meantime His people are called to follow in the path marked out by the young Thessalonian converts, viz. that of serving "the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us [or is our Deliverer] from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. i. 9-10).

Bible Study.—Galatians.

(EDWARD CROSS).

Galatians vi. 12-18.

12 As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ.

13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

17 From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

Verse 12.

THE object on the part of those who were pressing circumcision was plain, viz. to "make a fair shew in the flesh." This was his own private judgment of the motive actuating these men. Hitherto in the epistle he had dealt with principles, and treated the various questions raised in a judicial manner and in the light of Scripture. It was not yet time to call on others to form a judgment on what had not been brought to the bar of revealed truth. But now he is free to expose the secret motives that were at work—motives that were patent to him from the beginning, but which now he is in a position to expose to others. Had he thrust his personal views on them at the start, he would have failed to present the case with the

authority of judicial proof; but now he gives expression to his own perceptions, and he clinches, with the exposure of hidden motives, the conclusions to which he had already invited their judgment to subscribe—as does a word at the conclusion of a discussion, which illuminates the previous argument from the beginning.

It was to "make a fair shew in the flesh," and to avoid persecution for the cross of Christ. The essence of it all was carnality, whatever its religious pretence, and the love of applause in this present evil world. It might be said of them as was said of others like them, "they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John xii. 43). The cross was a scandal to the Jew, the judgment of the flesh; to be

circumcised was to recognize the flesh, to make a fair show in it, and thus to escape the persecution of the Jew by Judaizing the Christian converts.

Verse 13.

All this going back to the law was not that they might keep the law, but that they might boast in the flesh, which would not keep it, while still boasting in it. Foolish people! bereft of sense (Rom. vii.). Alas! what poor things we are! and in what need of mercy every day.

Verse 14.

Far different is the ground of the Apostle's boast. "The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" stains the pride of all flesh. It is the cross of shame, the witness of the utter and irreversible ruin of man. It is the climax in the revolt of man of all the ways of God in seeking to recover him from the fatal error of Eden. Driven out from thence by the judgment of God because of sin, when the Son of God came in grace to seek and save him, he drove Him out, saying, "Away with Him, crucify Him." And all were implicated in this fateful deed. "For of a truth against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together." Where, then, was there ground to boast in man, under law or without law, before the Flood or after? The true circumcision there is; but, says the Apostle, "we are it, who worship by the Spirit of God, and boast in Christ Jesus, and do not trust in flesh." He does not here dwell on the atoning value of the blood of Jesus, nor on the mere fact of the death of Christ, which, as death, is the end of man's history here in the flesh; but on the cross, to which is attached, on the part of man, ignominy and shame; on the part of God, curse (Deut. xxi. 23).

In chapter i. 3 he speaks of this present evil age (*aion*); here he speaks of the world (*kosmos*), a term of vastly wider range, as being the ordered frame-

work of creation, in which man lives and moves, and in which he is destined to play a very wonderful part, when all things are reconciled to God and become the habitation of His glory. In that system of ordered excellence, in so far as it is brought within his compass, there is much to-day in which man would boast, forgetting that it is, so far as he has to say to it, and in its present state, subject to vanity and defiled by sin (Romans viii. 20-22). But, for the Apostle, the light of another scene filled his soul, and he gives expression to it in these characteristic words, "Far be it from me to boast, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom [or, through which] the world is crucified to me, and I to the world."

Verse 15.

And in unison with this is the statement following and explanatory, that circumcision does not here enter into count in any wise, but only a "new creation." Three times he uses this formula, whereby he discards circumcision as worthless, viz. in 1 Corinthians vii. 19, where the great thing is "keeping the commandments of God;" in Galatians v. 6, where what is important is "faith that worketh by love;" and here, where it is a "new creation." Thus the thing which the flesh sets such store by is accounted by the Spirit not only worthless, but a positive hindrance.

Verse 16.

"As many as walk by this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." This is very exclusive. He wishes no such blessings on those who pervert the gospel of Christ. There was no one more large-hearted than he; while also no one more conservative of the truth. He was the Apostle of the Gentiles; he would magnify his office; but he was also "set for the defence of the gospel" (Phil. i. 17). To him was given the maintenance of the truth as regards

the work of Christ and the vast scope of the purposes of God as connected therewith. The ministry of John is concerned rather with the glory of His person—He who “was in the beginning” and abides “the same”—“the true God and eternal life.”

Verse 17.

Others might mutilate their bodies in a fleshly way, and boast in that which was purely carnal, as in their zeal they sought to gain over others to the same rite, that they might boast in them likewise. There is something very attractive in making proselytes—it is inherent in the mind of man. But, says the Apostle, let no one trouble me with their mutilations, for *I* bear in my body the veritable brands of Jesus: by stripes and stones, by stocks and iron fetters, which left their marks for Christ deeper in his soul than did their

circumcision leave its mark on them. These were the marks in which Paul would boast; not in the external rites of a sensuous formalism.

Verse 18.

The Apostle closes his letter with “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.” He could not do otherwise. But the tone and structure of the sentence leave the impression of a deep and hopeless disappointment lying as a burden on his spirit, as he sees his counsel disregarded, his warnings refused, his influence undermined, and all that he had so earnestly laboured to build up in them of Christ dissipated by the insidious working of an evil spirit that had succeeded in corrupting the minds of many that they should not obey the truth.

Now that the year has closed for us
These “studies” of Thy Word,
Grant us, O Lord, to profit by
What we have read and heard.

May the rich gospel of Thy grace
Our steadfast souls maintain;
And as we cannot keep ourselves,
Do Thou our faith sustain.

We are no more trustworthy than
The saints of whom we’ve read;
Keep Thou our feet upon the path
Thy grace would have us tread.

And as the night rolls quickly by,
And morning lights appear,
May the bright hope of Thy return
Our waiting spirits cheer.

Meanwhile with firm and steady tread
May we our path pursue;
And for the journey still ahead
Do Thou our strength renew. Amen.

Opened Eyes.

(J. T. MAWSON).

“A MISSIONARY-PHYSICIAN in one of China’s hospitals cured a man of cataract. A few weeks later forty-eight blind men came to him from one of China’s wilds, each holding a rope held in the hand of the man who had been cured. He had led them in this way, walking in a chain, 250 miles to the hospital, where nearly all were cured.” What a moving sight must have been the great-souled and unselfish gratitude of the man who had been made to see, and the pathetic eagerness of those who were blind!

Are we amongst those who can say “Once I was blind, but now I see”? It were well for us to be rightly affected by this priceless boon. The multitudes may appear indifferent to their condition, but let not this discourage us, for many are fumbling blindly after light. It is our happy mission to tenderly and tirelessly seek them out.

The Chinaman, himself a witness to the skill of the physician, and full of gratitude for sight restored, would doubtless seek out his forty-eight

friends *one by one*; and it is here that the test comes to us. Many would address the crowds if they could, who have neither heart nor energy to seek out the individual.

We have a striking example of the keenness and character of divinely given spiritual sight in the early chapters of the Acts. In chapter i. Peter and the disciples beheld their victorious Lord ascend in a cloud of glory to His Father's throne.

In chapter ii. they lifted up their eyes upon the multitude and saw them fall, under the power of the truth, at the feet of Jesus, as the full ripe grain falls at the swing of the autumn sickle.

But the eyes that gazed with rapture upon the ascending Christ, and with glad triumph upon the first great victory of the gospel, were just as quick to see the poor lame beggar at the gate of the temple in chapter iii. And they were as ready to stop and proclaim the power of Jesus' name to this needy individual as they would have been to a thousand.

How well repaid were they for this care for the unit, for "he leaping up

stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. *And all the people saw him walking and praising God*" (vers. 8, 9).

And not only so: they were brought in consequence before the rulers, who, "when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. *And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it*" (chap. iv. 13, 14).

Yes, they had been with Jesus: it was in His presence that they had learnt the value of one soul; from Him they had received the tender compassion and the quick sight that looked out for the poor and needy. They followed Him, and, true to His word, they became skilful in the art of catching men.

God give to us fuller and clearer visions of His glory who has gone to the top, that our eyes may be more ready to see, and our hearts to meet, the need at the bottom.

Thine Only.

(JAMES BOYD).

LORD, I am Thine! My heart must now
No longer 'gainst Thee closed remain:
Thy love has conquered, henceforth Thou
Must here without a rival reign.
Let every rebel thought be slain.
Lo, subject at Thy feet I bow.

Long to Thy heavenly voice mine ear
Was deaf: love's whispers sweet were drowned
By this world's clamour: I would hear
Henceforward now no other sound.
Speak, Lord, for Thou art Sovereign crowned,
Thy voice my subject soul shall cheer.

(From the author's poem "Thine Only.")

Light obeyed increaseth light;
Light rejected bringeth night.

Eager impatience does not become
those who trust in God.

Eternal Punishment (X).

(JAMES BOYD).

Conclusion.

WE are asked if we believe that God was in Christ reconciling the *world* to Himself (2 Cor. v. 19). I unhesitatingly answer "yes." But I have more to say on the subject than this. The *world would not have the reconciliation*. Hence it was necessary that a foundation of righteousness should be laid in the cross, on the ground of which God could bring man to Himself in *new creation relationships*, for man according to the old order would have neither God nor His reconciliation.

We are asked, again, if God sent His Son "that *the world* through Him might be saved" (John iii. 17). Most certainly, but "this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and *men loved darkness rather than light*, because their deeds were evil" (John iii. 19). The Lord says, "They have both seen and hated both Me and My Father" (John xv. 24). As to the disciples, He says, "I have given them Thy word, and the world hath hated them" (John xvii. 14). And God "hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness," by Him whom He has raised from the dead (Acts xvii. 31).

Do we believe the passage, "God our Saviour, who willeth that *all men* should be saved" (1 Tim. ii. 3, 4, R.V.)? Surely we do, but we also believe the passage which says, "*Ye will not come to Me* that ye might have life" (John v. 40). Surely God's desire is the salvation of *all*, and the great proof of this is the fact that the Mediator gave Himself a ransom for *all*. This has made the salvation of all possible, and the gospel goes out to all on this ground, but if men will not have it they must perish without it.

But what of the passage, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all

men unto Me" (John xii. 32)? The meaning of it is simply this: it is to a *rejected Christ* that all men are drawn for salvation. As sent into the world in flesh and blood, and as thus presented to the responsibility of man, He confined His ministry to the Jewish nation, even telling His disciples not to go to the Gentiles, nor to enter into any city of the Samaritans, but to confine their ministrations to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. ix). But now the Greeks were seeking Him, which was an indication that a work of grace was going on in the hearts of the Gentiles, hence His atoning sacrifice, on the ground of which salvation could be proclaimed freely to all, rises up before His mind. He asks His Father to save Him from that hour, but adds immediately, "But for this cause came I unto this hour" (John xii. 27). Had that *Corn of wheat* not fallen into the ground and died, there could have been no fruit from it, but having died, fruit would be found in abundance. Grace would now go out freely to the whole world, *all men* would be drawn to Him, Gentile as well as Jew. It would no longer be confined to one nation, for the whole world was to rise up before God for blessing. It is not a statement regarding every individual soul, but all men generally.

A great deal is made by Universalists of Peter's reference to "the times of restitution of all things," but they leave out the words "which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts iii. 21). This is quoted to prove the ultimate salvation of every fallen being, whereas the restitution spoken of is qualified by that which was *spoken by the prophets*. The extent of redeemed creation is limited by the prophetic word.

I have perhaps paid more attention to the book entitled "*Our Life after Death*" than is warranted by the merits of the book itself. But when one is brought to face the fact that it has run through one hundred and six editions, and that it is sent forth with a host of favourable press notices, however stupid the book may be, it cannot well be ignored. The whole doctrine of the *Hades-lif*, as it is called, is based upon the Spirit of Christ preaching to the antediluvians, but with the presumption that the gospel was carried to these people in hades by the Spirit of Christ during the time in which His holy body lay in the grave.

I think we have seen very clearly that the state of those antediluvians is introduced as an instance of how He is able to "reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished." He is keeping them, as He is keeping all the rest of the ungodly, against that day in which He will render to every man according to his works. Also, as I have said, because there was a strong analogy between the antediluvian period and the time in which Peter wrote his epistle. This is the day of God's long-suffering. In the ark Noah rode triumphantly above the waters which engulfed the world. The baptism of the Jew was his submission to the judgment which lay on the godless nation, but his salvation was in Christ. When the ark rested upon Ararat Noah and his house entered into a new world, which never again would be destroyed by a flood of waters; so Peter tells the Christians to whom he writes, to "be sober, and hope to the end for the grace which is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter i. 13). The believing Jewish remnant were being taunted with the smallness of their number, but Peter reminds them that only eight souls were saved through the flood. They had not Christ corporeally present with them, but they had His Spirit, the same Spirit by whom He had offered Himself without

spot to God (Heb. ix. 14), and in whose power He rose from the dead (1 Peter iii. 18), and it was by this same Spirit that Christ, without being corporeally present in the antediluvian world, had preached through Noah to those who are now in safe keeping, awaiting the day of judgment. The passage is simplicity itself.

I have little more to add. It is the lie of the devil which is palatable, not the truth of God. The Lord says to the Jews, "I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (John v. 43). If, with the truth of God ringing in their ears, people turn away from it and prefer the lie of the destroyer, they cannot complain if they are given over by God to believe the lie which they have loved (2 Thess. ii. 11, 12). The old serpent began his work of destruction by denying that the judgment pronounced by God against sin would ever be executed, and his tactics were so successful that he has continued them ever since. But those who give their ear to his soul-destroying falsehoods are sure to discover, when it is too late for mercy, that this has been no vain threat on the part of God, but that all He has said He meant to perform.

Perhaps I should briefly refer to another word, which is said to have been "juggled with," in order to give support to this "awful doctrine" of eternal punishment. I refer to the word *krínō* = to judge. By Mr. C. it is supposed to have always the same meaning, and should have been translated *to judge* in every place. This assertion is made in order to get rid of the idea of *damnation*. Whatever it might have been translated, it does not always carry with it the same signification. I will refer to a few passages, and only a few, not to weary the reader. We read in Matthew vii. 1: "*Judge not, that ye be not judged.*" "Whoremongers and adulterers God

will *judge*" (Heb. xiii. 4). "Thinkest thou this, O man, that *judgest* them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the *judgment* of God?" (Rom. ii. 3). "A certain fearful looking for of *judgment*" (Heb. x. 27). "Enter not into *judgment* with Thy servant" (Ps. cxliii. 2). In these places *judgment* is viewed as a very evil thing, and to be, if possible, avoided. But "*judge* the fatherless" (Isa. i. 17); "a *judge* of the widows, is God in His holy habitation" (Ps. lxxviii. 5): "one man *esteemeth* [*judgeth*] one day above another: another *esteemeth* [*judgeth*] every day alike" (Rom. xiv. 5)—how could the same idea be attached to all these passages? Again, we have "the Father *judgeth* no man" (John v. 22), where it is a question of condemnation; but where it is a question of rule in the family of God we have, "if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons *judgeth*" (1 Peter i. 17).

Now, for a sinner to be brought into judgment for his works, it would be eternal condemnation to him. There could be no hope for him at all. Hence the Lord tells us that he who heareth His words, and believeth on Him who sent Him, shall not come into judgment (John v. 24). And where they are all judged according to their works there is no escape for any from the lake of fire (Rev. xx.). And this judgment is committed to the Son, because He is the Son of Man.

I would warn the reader that the teaching on this solemn subject does not hang *merely* upon words and their meaning. Apart from the sacrifice of Christ there would have been no salvation for any one. "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me" (Matt. xxvi. 39) settles that question for ever. The cup did not pass from Him; He had to drink it. If man could have been saved in any other way, even through millions of years of untold suffering, the Son of God had no need to bear the judgment due to our sins. But the fact is, the sacri-

fice of Christ has little or no place in any of those writings which are put forth for the ruin of mankind.

The lie at the beginning was that God was not as good as He professed to be, for He was keeping back from man the best tree in the garden. Now the lie is that He is more loving than He professes to be, and that the threat of the lake of fire will never be executed. But too loving to condemn His creatures to eternal suffering only means that He thinks as little of sin as the sinner does, and that it is not so obnoxious to Him as He pretends.

Woe be to the poor soul who listens to this hell-hatched delusion! The truth is, no one would listen to it were it not that people desire to go on with their sins and their sinful pleasures. Their hearts are snared by the vanities of earth, heaven has no attractions for them, for the Father and the Son who dwell there are by them utterly unknown, and they will not believe the gospel that they might know these divine Persons. Earth is the best place they know, and their only sorrow is that they cannot remain in it for ever. They are willing to do battle for their own lives with its sicknesses, its evils of every description, and the death that stalks unseen throughout its vast expanse, if God will only let them alone. Their best Friend is accounted by them their greatest enemy, and the glad tidings of His grace, intended by Him to be to them a sweet savour of life unto life, is nothing but a savour of death unto death.

This is a day in which every truth of God is being attacked by the enemy, and the solemn judgment of a righteous and holy God cannot be excepted. The gospel sets before us the way of life, and the way of death it does not hide from those to whom it comes; but if people think that His warnings of wrath are but idle threats, they will learn, to their eternal sorrow, that though heaven and earth pass away, His word shall stand.

John's Testimony to Jesus.

(J. H. HOLDSWORTH).

*John seeth Jesus coming (John i. 29).
Looking upon Jesus as he walked (i. 36)*

THE two-fold character of the Baptist's testimony to the Lord Jesus in the first chapter of John is very interesting, particularly as it follows the confession of his own nothingness.

He had not come to speak of himself; he was but a voice to speak of Christ, to bear witness of the Light; and in verse 29 we read, "John seeth Jesus coming." His heart had waxed warm and his tongue eloquent as he had spoken of that moment; but now it had arrived, for he sees "*Jesus coming*"—coming in all the fullness of the grace of God to remove from the eye of God, according to eternal truth, that which was so hateful to Him—"to take away the sin of the world."

He saw Him coming, the only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, to declare Him, in all the glory and lowliness of divine grace.

John had realized, as taught of God, somewhat of the sinfulness of the world, and it was this that made his insistent and clarion call to repentance so effectual; but who could grapple with the

situation and meet the glory of God and the deep need of man? He "*sceth Jesus coming.*" There is the answer.

God, who is rich in mercy, *amongst* men, bringing to them in His great love wherewith He loved them the grace by which they could be saved; this is involved in the first part of John's testimony.

But again the next day, as John stood, his eyes beheld Him, and "looking upon *Jesus as He walked*, he saith, Behold, the Lamb of God!" Here it is not the greatness of His work, but the blessedness of His Person; not His coming to us with the grace that saves, but Himself as the One who, taking the heart captive, would lead us from the depths in which He found us to the very bosom of the Father, His own dwelling-place. "And the two disciples heard Him speak, *and they followed Jesus.*" We must see Him *coming* to us before we can arise to *follow* Him; but this latter is the purpose behind the former, and that following Him we might abide with Him in His Father's love for ever.

The Lord's Work amongst the Young.—No. 2. (EDITORS).

IT is not for us to say how soon a child may truly bow in heart to the Lord Jesus, and receive in intelligent and living faith the gospel of our salvation, though we know that it is to the babes, rather than to the wise and prudent, that the blessed things of God are revealed; and out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God perfects praise. But how shall praise come from their mouths if the truth is not in their hearts? and how shall the

truth be in their hearts if the word of truth is not taught them?

It is ours to teach them the Word of God, knowing full well that the adversary is waiting to fill their minds with his lies. If you would prevent a sack from being filled with chaff, fill it first with wheat; and if the children are to be preserved from pernicious doctrines, let them be early taught the Word of God. Many can bear witness

to the fact that in youth and early manhood their feet were kept from the ways of sin and destruction by the scripture learnt in childhood; and how many of the Lord's servants have proved the knowledge of the Bible gained in their childhood to be a most valuable asset in after years!

It is in connection with the fact that evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse that Paul rejoiced that Timothy had known the Scriptures from a child, for they—the Scriptures—were able to make him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Let us never, as do some, speak of the Scriptures as the dead letter, for the very words of divine utterance are "spirit and life," and of the Word of God as a whole it is written that it is both quick and powerful. They are the one light for the feet in a dark day, and the only preservative from error when evil abounds, and by them are we furnished unto all good works.

But as it is only by faith in Christ Jesus that the Scriptures can make wise unto salvation, there must, in teaching the Word to the young, be the fixed intention of bringing the child to a personal knowledge of the Christ. He is the subject of all Scripture, and whether the Word is taught to the young or preached to the old, the knowledge of Christ is rightly the supreme purpose in view, for it is He *Himself* who meets the need of the

soul. Thank God, this sense of need is early manifested in some lives.

But how often one word of God in the mouth of a child has been God's message to hardened sinners who have refused to listen to the proclamation of the gospel! A correspondent sends us such an instance:

"B— was a miner, and in the village where he lived God had wrought in a striking way. He had become troubled, and did his best to drown his soul-exercise in drink. His little boy attended a Sunday afternoon service, at which the preacher spoke about *mercy*; mercy in time, but none in eternity—quoting from Psalm lxxvii. 8: 'Is His mercy clean gone for ever?'

"On reaching home the father asked the boy what the preaching was about. 'It was about *mercy*, father,' replied the lad. Ah! that was what he wanted; for he felt that nothing but mercy would do for him, a poor drunken collier. He wanted to know the text. This the lad could not remember, but said, 'I think it was in the sixth Psalm.'

"The Bible was brought, and in that Psalm the troubled sinner found these words: 'Oh! save me for Thy mercies' sake.' That became his cry, and reading on to the ninth verse he also was able to say, 'The Lord heard my supplication, the Lord will receive my prayer.' For this had really become his soul's experience, and on his knees in his own home he, before his wife and children, at once confessed the Lord.

"He attended a prayer meeting on Monday evening, and when the Christians expressed surprise at his conversion, as he had not attended the preaching, his answer was: 'I was not there, but my boy was, and he told me what the preacher had said. I turned to the Scripture, and believed that the word was for me'" (*F. N. S.*).

"And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone." The vision all gone—the cloud, the voice, the glory, Moses and Elias—but Jesus was left; and they were left to go on their way with Jesus, knowing Him now in the light of those scenes of glory which they had beheld. And this is the use to us of those vivid apprehensions of spiritual things which we may sometimes realize. It is not that we can be always enjoying them, and nothing else. But when for the season they have

passed away, like this vision on the holy mount, they leave us alone with Jesus, to pursue the path of our pilgrimage with Him in spirit now, and with Him in the light and power of that deepened acquaintance with Him, and fellowship of the Father's joy in Him, that we have got on the mount; and thus to wait for the moment of His return, when all this, and more than our hearts can think of, shall be fulfilled to us for ever (*F. N. Darby*).

The Feasts of the Lord.—No. 7.

(H. NUNNERLEY).

The Tabernacles (*continued*).

On the *eighth* day shall be an holy convocation unto you ; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord : it is a solemn assembly [day of restraint—margin] ; and ye shall do no servile work therein (Lev. xxiii. 36).

In the *fifteenth* day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days : on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the *eighth* day shall be a sabbath (Lev. xxiii. 39).

ISRAEL'S restored tribes, purchased by blood, redeemed by power, and at rest in their promised inheritance, walking in holiness and righteousness, with the law written on their heart, will celebrate their millennial tabernacle feast under Messiah their Prince. They will be the earthly centre of blessing ; but we should dimly grasp the full significance of this feast were we to confine it to Israel. The last chapter of Zechariah links up the heathen nations also therewith.

“It shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, *and to keep the feast of tabernacles*” (Zech. xiv. 16).

Leviticus xxiii. 22 intimates that the Gentiles are to participate in the bounties of that day ; the “poor and the stranger” to have the gleanings of the harvest. The beneficent rays of the Sun of Righteousness shall irradiate the dark lands of the heathen as well as the fair land of Israel. Romans xv. 9 to 12 tells us they shall rejoice with Abraham's seed, and glorify God for mercy, praise the Lord, laud the glorious King who shall *reign over the Gentiles*. The knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea ; men shall be blessed in Him ; all *nations* shall call Him blessed.

The brute creation shall also participate in the blessings of that day. Century after century they have groaned and suffered, involved in the ruin and misery of fallen man ; but when the second Man—the Lord out of heaven

—is revealed as the true Head over all things, “sheep and oxen, yea . . . the beasts of the field” (Ps. viii. 7), put under His feet, then their groans shall be hushed. The wild beasts shall lose their ferocity, lion and lamb, wolf and ox feed and repose together.

The material universe itself will then be reconciled. “*All things*”—not all persons—“whether *things* on earth or *things* in heaven” (Col. i. 20), will be purged and purified in virtue of the blood of the Lamb. Sin has fouled and corrupted the dwelling-place of man, as well as the man who dwells there, but the sacrificial work of Christ extends in its effect to things inanimate, and the effect will be “the restitution of *all things*.” The trees of the wood shall rejoice, the wilderness blossom as the rose. The curse removed, instead of the *thorn* shall be the fir, instead of the *brier*, the myrtle ; this earth shall witness the cleansing typified by the sprinkling of the tabernacle and its vessels. The heavenly things are not clean in God's sight, the earthly things are soiled by sin, but the virtues of the blood which cleanses will in that day be extended to creation itself.

Human life will lengthen out as the days of a tree. Jerusalem will be the metropolis of the earth ; its temple the centre of worship, its throne marked by righteousness, its princes administering justice to the oppressed and the needy. The hungry will be fed, the poor sheltered. Blessing will be poured forth like a river, widening as it flows ; trees, with fadeless leaves and fruit ever new and never failing, lining its banks.

Weary men and women shall at length find refreshment and rest. The roar of battle over, swords turned into ploughshares; the nations blessed, the groans of creation hushed—what a scene of blessing this earth will witness for a thousand years!

How will it all be brought about? Carlyle used to say, "What the world wants is a man!" Men have echoed that cry, but have forgotten there is a Man competent to resolve every problem. He has been raised up already, and "behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him!" The Man is appointed and the day is fixed for His advent. He will shortly appear in excellent majesty, invested with supreme authority, gloriously attended by myriads of saints—heaven's white-robed armies and angelic hosts swelling His train. Uniting the glories of Solomon with the greatness of Melchisedec, He will sit a priest on His throne.

His first act will be swift, certain destruction on Antichrist and the gathered nations under his banner. His next, on those who have *heard* but not obeyed the gospel. Those among the highly favoured nations which make up Christendom, and which are left behind when Christ catches up the saints, are doomed to eternal exclusion from His presence and the glorious manifestation of His power (Rev. xx. ; 2 Thess. ii.).

The whole world will then be ruled by an absolute Monarch. The once lowly Jesus, "Son of Man," shall declare in that day who is the "*only Potentate.*" The once despised Nazarene shall remove from His kingdom all things that offend; the nail-pierced hand shall grasp the rod of iron, nor shall the sceptre be laid aside until every opposer is vanquished, every foe under His feet, even *death* itself conquered and consigned to the lake of fire.

Rendered powerless, no more to blot the universe of God with corruption, death is doomed—"O death, I will be thy

plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction" (Hos. xiii. 14). At the beginning of Christ's kingdom the arch-deceiver will be bound, Israel gathered, Gentiles blessed, creation relieved, the world suffused with unparalleled blessing, and, at the end death destroyed!

But this is connected with the "manifestation of the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 19). Who are these sons of God? To answer this question, we must leave the region of type and shadow, and travel into the fuller revelation of the New Testament. There we learn that all believers are "sons of God." Their glorious destiny is to share in the heavenly and earthly dominions of the "Firstborn of every creature." It is the declared purpose of God that they shall reign with Christ; these "many sons" now being conducted to glory are heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ.

During the millennium they are viewed under the figure of a glorious city—a holy, heavenly Jerusalem. Descending out of heaven from God, this city is presented as divine in origin, heavenly in character, righteous and holy in nature; its golden street transparent as glass, showing there is nothing to conceal; every part radiant with divine glory as a jasper stone. Men gazing upwards will see those perfections which once shone in the breast-plate now sparkling in ever-varying glories in its foundations. As they gaze they will admire Christ, for it is His beauty that adorns every part of that city of pearly gates and perfect purity. Lighted directly from the only source of light—God and the Lamb—it will shed its radiance, which knows no night, on *Jerusalem below*, the earthly city of the great King. Her light will then have come, and at evening time it shall be light.

Willing kings bring their homage, the Gentiles, their glory and honour. From pole to pole the heavens rule, and the heavenly kingdom is the acknowledged source of all blessing. Its

river and tree will refresh and feed its celestial inhabitants, and from it blessing and healing go forth to the nations.

These two cities represent the double glory of Christ. The earthly one is emblematic of righteous rule. Every nation not subject to it must perish, and those nations neglecting to keep the feast of the tabernacles shall be tormented with drought and judged with the plague (see Zech. xiv. 18). The iron rod will break every rebellious arm, and judgment shall overtake the law-breaker who sets aside the edicts of the earthly Zion. *Righteousness will reign there.*

On the other hand, the heavenly city will be the *exponent of grace*. The happy ministry of those who serve in that day will be to diffuse healing and blessing, comfort and succour, wherever needed. Angelic ministers—the present servants of God in connection with man—will then give place to the glorified inhabitants of the heavenly city, and one will be sent here, another there, on some gracious service. They will be ministers of, and invested with, the “powers of the world to come.” Christ, in grace, displayed in them, whilst Christ, in His dignities as King of kings and Lord of lords, will be seen in Israel; and thus for a thousand years heaven and earth will be united, and our feast consummated in its application to Jew, Gentile, and the church of God.

But our chapter (after six times naming seven days as the duration of this feast) twice speaks of an added day—“AN EIGHTH.” This is said to be a “great day.” It is a type of a new period, an eternal day, an unbroken sabbath, heavenly and enduring, the real rest of God when every disturbing element is removed for ever. Solomon dismissed Israel on the “eighth day,” and Christ will dismiss a rest possible of disturbance to introduce an abiding at the end of the millennium.

Every advantage that unfallen Adam

had as to environment man will have during the millennium. He will live where the law of love to God and his neighbour is carried out, where equity reigns, righteousness rules, and will be blessed with all creature good.

With what result? The end of earth's best day will prove that man in the best outward circumstances cannot hold blessing or fulfil responsibility apart from new birth and the sovereign grace of God. During the “world to come,” the long-looked-for “age of Messiah,” the earth that was decimated by judgment at its commencement will be re-peopled. Satan, loosed out of his prison at its close, will act upon many of those born during this time—natural men, not those born again—and will gather them from all quarters in open rebellion against the earthly Jerusalem, the seat of Christ's royal authority. It will be his last act—swift, certain judgment will overtake him; both he and his followers will be consigned to the lake of fire.

The earth will melt with fervent heat, the heavens pass away with a great noise, the dead be judged, and the day of the Lord close—as it began—with judgment.

This proves the “world to come” is not a perfect rest; its seven days will give place to the day when God shall be all in all. In the new heavens and new earth righteousness shall *dwell* and the true rest of God begin—a rest undisturbed evermore. It is to this time our “eighth day” points. Eight is the well-known figure of resurrection, the one sabbath which shall never be disturbed. Man's first sin disturbed God's rest; that long millennial sabbath will also be disturbed; but God shall surely establish in a resurrection world a rest nevermore to be disturbed. Nothing follows this eighth day.

Gradually the bullocks offered *during the seven days* had decreased in number from thirteen to seven, indicating appreciation of Christ decreasing on the part of man; but, in that new world,

the excellence of His person and the perfections of His work shall call forth ever-increasing adoration. Unceasing praise will be His during that one eternal day.

Then no tear to dim the eye, no pain to rack the frame, no death to break the links, no sorrow and no crying, for the former things are passed away.

This is the glorious "eighth day" to which we look forward. Then indeed will be the true feast of tabernacles, for the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and God shall rest, and the saints shall rest, and Christ shall rest. Enemies conquered, sin confined where it never can break out, Satan in his eternal

abode of misery, every disturbing element gone, then shall we truly adore the matchless ways of God, and be the subjects of "kindness" never ending (Eph. ii. 7).

We may well exclaim as we contemplate it :

"Lord, haste that day of cloudless ray,
That prospect bright, unfailing."

Thus our feasts end. What an unfolding they are of God's ways! How they tell us that "known unto the Lord are all His works from the beginning." We know not which most to admire—the wisdom that devised them, the love which carries them out, or the grace which confides them to us!

Tired of Christ.

(H. P. BARKER).

Who shall give us flesh to eat?

We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick:

But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes (Num. xi. 4-6).

Our soul loatheth this light bread (Num. xxi. 5).

TRANSLATE this old-time complaint into the language of the twentieth century.

"Who will provide some entertainment for us?"

"We remember the good times we used to have at ——. There were whist drives and dramatic performances, and all sorts of things to help us to enjoy ourselves.

"We can't go to a place where there is nothing but 'the gospel,' and where they are always talking about Christ and that kind of thing.

"We loathe all that. We want something to amuse us and make us merry."

It is sad enough to hear such language from the lips of a thorough-going worldling, one who makes no profession of religion whatever; but how unspeakably sad when those who profess to believe in Christianity—"church members"—make such a demand.

Yet the demand, even by professed Christians, is a widespread one. We live in a superficial age, and the masses are becoming increasingly "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

Saddest of all is the spectacle of so-called Christian leaders, ministers, and others deliberately laying themselves out to supply the demand, and cater for the entertainment of their congregations. Yet no one can deny that this is being done on every hand.

Take a walk through a fair-sized English town. Observe the placards on the notice-boards of the various "places of worship." In the lecture-hall of the parish church a well-known comedian is going to give his celebrated "farical sketch," and "roars of laughter" are anticipated. The proceeds are to go to the fund that is being raised to pay for the new organ. At the big chapel round the corner a "social tea" is to be held, followed by

a whist drive. At another chapel in the same street an amateur dramatic performance is to be given by the members of the choir. At a third chapel, the other side of the town, a musical evening is to be held, when Miss — will sing one of her famous "coon songs."

And so on, *ad nauseam*. One turns away sick at heart from the contemplation of all this. No doubt we shall be told that "it is all for a good cause," and that "it is to keep our young people from leaving the church." But what is the real root from which arises all this hankering after amusement on the part of some, and the pandering to the desire on the part of others?

I believe it is because people, even though bearing the Christian name, are getting *tired of Christ*.

The manna, given by God for the sustenance of the hosts of Israel in the desert, was a type of Christ.

It was *small* (Exod. xvi. 14). And Christ humbled Himself, and made Himself of no reputation.

It was *round*. And there were no inequalities of character in Christ. Every heavenly grace was perfectly blended in Him. No lovely trait stood out in greater prominence than other traits. All was perfection.

It was *white* (ver. 31). And the purity of Christ, in thought, and word, and deed, was absolute. If His garments on one memorable occasion were "white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can whiten them," He Himself surpassed them in whiteness. He was spotless in His unsullied purity.

It was *sweet*. Its taste was "like wafers made with honey." And the sweetness of divine love was never so manifest as when expressed in Christ. In Him was balm for every woe, sympathy for every troubled heart, compassion for every needy soul, love for all mankind.

Moreover, before it was eaten, it was *ground, or beaten in a mortar,*

and baked in pans (Num. xi. 8). And before Christ could become the food of His people, He had to be bruised and be subjected to the fiery judgment of God, when bearing our sins upon the tree.

Thus in many ways the manna speaks to us of *Christ*. And yet *that* was what the people loathed.

"Angels' food" it was (Ps. lxxviii. 25), yet they grew tired of it.

Christ is the delight of the angels, whom His hand created. They rejoiced and praised God when He came to earth as a lowly babe. They will join for ever in proclaiming His worthiness (Rev. v. 11, 12). Yet men despise Him whom angels adore! Those who are called by His name grow weary of hearing that name mentioned!

Even "ministers," the professed servants of Christ (and they are to be greatly blamed), are to be found joining in the outcry against what they call "the cant of other-worldliness." They would have us think less of "the other world," upon which the Christian is exhorted to set his affections, and where *Christ* is the perpetual theme of every tongue; and they would have us more occupied with this present world, whose god and prince is Satan (2 Cor. iv. 4; John xiv. 30). They would make this world such a pleasant place for people that they should have no desire for anything better.

But if Christ be less and less appreciated in Christendom, it is a real joy to remember that there is One who knows His worth and appreciates Him perfectly. We are reminded of this by the story of "the golden pot that had manna" (Heb. ix. 4).

God commanded Moses to preserve an omer of manna. Moses accordingly directed that this quantity should be placed in a pot, to be laid up "before the Lord" perpetually.

If the people loathed the manna, God signified His appreciation of it in this way. The pot containing it was

to be continually under His eye. And in view of man's increasing contempt of Christ, how good it is to remember that *God* has expressed His delight in Him by raising Him from the dead, setting Him at His own right hand in glory, and giving Him a name that is above every name.

Truly we may speak of Him as the earth-rejected, heaven-accepted One! And is it not a joy to us to dissociate ourselves emphatically from the verdict that the world has passed upon Him, and to find ourselves in sweet harmony with *God's* estimate of Him?

But this can only be by the operation of the Spirit of God. According to Numbers xi. 7, the manna did not fall directly upon the ground, but upon the dew. There was first the dew, then the manna.

The dew is evidently typical of the work of the Holy Spirit in our souls, producing freshness and heavenly moisture. And it is only as we are thus freshened and prepared by the operation of the Spirit that we shall appreciate the manna, Christ. It is the blessed work of the Holy Spirit to make *Him* precious to our souls, and it is a sure mark of His work when one appreciates Christ, and makes much of Him.

Of this, alas! but little is known in Christendom. Thank God, there are thousands of loyal souls upon whom the heavenly dew has fallen, and who value Christ and appreciate His love, His work, and His glory! But the multitude seems to find its enjoyment in anything and everything but Christ.

We need not be surprised at this. It has been foretold upon the inspired page. And Christendom's *end* has also been portrayed. Boasting in its great-

ness and increase, it little realizes its wretchedness, and poverty, and nakedness. It is *lukewarm towards Christ*, and is therefore nauseous to Him, and will be spewed out of His mouth (Rev. iii. 16, 17).

Meanwhile the path for the loyal-hearted Christian to pursue is clearly marked out. "In the last days," we are told, "men shall be lovers of their own selves, . . . boasters, proud, . . . despisers of those that are good; traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

Who can deny that this is an accurate description of the state of things in Christendom to-day?

Then notice the exhortation that follows—"FROM SUCH TURN AWAY."

There is to be not only the distinct refusal of these un-Christian qualities, but also a definite turning away, on the part of the faithful Christian, from the people who pursue and practise them (2 Tim. iii. 5). Improvement is not to be expected—"Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse;" and persecution, of one sort or another, will be the portion of "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus." But at all costs we are to hold fast the Holy Scriptures, given by inspiration of God. Therein shall be found thorough equipment for the man of God, and they are they which testify of *Christ*.

While many are getting "tired of Christ," let us, dear Christian readers, be more constantly at His feet, studying Him, cleaving to Him, and seeking to be true and loyal to Him in the face of the widely prevalent apostasy of the present day.

PRAISE.

How far do we live in an atmosphere of praise? There is nothing like the inspiring power of praise to set the heart free from all the shackles and bands of the world. If you once begin

upon it you will find a thousand things to call it forth that never struck you before in connection with the person and offices of the Lord Jesus.

Mercy.

(EDWARD CROSS).

"MERCY" is not connected with "sin" only. "His mercy is over all His works:" it is "from everlasting to everlasting." Bengel says, "*Gratia tollit culpam, misericordia miseriam*"—"Grace removes guilt, mercy misery." Yet this is not altogether true either; at least is not all the truth, is not sufficient as a definition. Grace is rather the joy or gladness inherent in making others glad; therefore it ranges from the deliverance from guilt and condemnation to the introduction into the riches of blessing and of glory (cf. Eph. ii.). Mercy, on the other hand, or pity, is the feeling of the strong for the weak; of the well-to-do for the ill-to-do; of the self-sufficient and independent for the wretched and the helpless—in fine, of the Creator for the creature. It must be always so. It is not prominent in certain circumstances—it would not do to make it so: it would spoil the setting of the circumstances to overshadow the joy of relationship with the pronounced sense of pity; but it is there all the same, of necessity. In addressing the church as such it is left out of the salutation, and grace and peace alone are recorded; but never-

theless, it lies at the root of all relationship with God, from the mercy-seat in Romans iii. 25 to Ephesians ii. 4, "God, who is *rich in mercy*, for His great love wherewith He loved us . . . hath quickened us . . . raised us up together, and seated us in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might shew the *exceeding riches of His grace* in His kindness," etc.

Accordingly we always need to have mercy ministered to us. He is a faithful and merciful High Priest, and we can come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and grace for seasonable help. Moreover, it is written, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness." He will pity them in the condition to which they have reduced themselves. As the poor blind beggar-man cried, 'Jesus, Son of David, pity me in my distress,' and the publican prayed, 'Pity me, the sinner.' This brings out another element than justification, founded on righteousness and the character of God. Mercy is more inherent in His nature.

Correspondence.

To the Editors of *Scripture Truth*.

DEAR SIRs,—I should be obliged if, as you have space in your correspondence columns, you will give an explanation of the following passages:

Firstly, in connection with Mr. Boyd's articles on Eternal Punishment, I understand that he does not think (1 Peter iii. 19-21) Christ preached *in* hades, but by His Spirit through Noah. Will he kindly explain 1 Peter iv. 6—"for unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead" (R.V.)?

Secondly, 1 Corinthians xv. 29, "baptized for the dead."

Thirdly, What became of the saints who arose at Christ's resurrection?

The Editors sent the above letter to Mr. Boyd and append his reply:

Three questions arise out of the first of these passages of Scripture.

Firstly, Who are the dead? Secondly, What gospel is it to which Peter refers? Thirdly, Why was it preached to these people?

There are two ways in which a person who has passed away from this world can be viewed: in *hades* or in the *grave*. Now if you speak of a man as dead, it is the grave that comes before the mind: "The dead know not anything" (Eccles. ix. 5); "Is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts ii. 34). These things could not be said of the dead if you speak of them in connection with their spirits, for it is the body without the spirit

E. F. B.

that is dead, the spirit does not die at all (Luke xx 38, Rom xiv 8) Hence we must conclude the dead here are those who are in their graves, that is to say, looked at in that way, not as in hades. Therefore the gospel could only have been preached to them while they were alive. Had it been in hades the gospel was preached to them, it could not have said "to them that are dead, for dead those in hades are not."

The next thing we have to consider is, What gospel is it to which Peter refers? Now we must keep in mind that any testimony which comes to men from God is really glad tidings, and for his good. It might not appear so at the first glance, but though there does not appear to have been much gospel in that which Jonah preached to the Ninevites, yet it was to the salvation of that city. Even the testimony of the heavens is declared to be gospel in Romans x 18, and this leaves the heathen without excuse (Rom 1). But I do not doubt that Peter has still something more definite in his mind, and that his reference is to the promises in the Old Testament Scriptures.

The third question is, Why was it preached to these people? The answer is found in the passage itself. The word addressed to them would have been found by them, had they heard it with the hearing of faith, a word which would have quickened their souls with divine life and in that life they would have lived to God, not in their fleshly nature but in their spirits but rejecting it they would remain in their natural, unregenerate state to be judged according to the responsibility of all such. That word would be either a life-giving word to them, placing them beyond the reach of judgment (John v 24), or it would be a word that would judge them in the last day (John xii 48).

Most people in the present day are more accustomed to think of the judgment of the dead than that of the living, though there is more about the judgment of the living in the New Testament than there is about the judgment of the dead. But it was just the reverse with the Jews. The judgment of the dead had very little place with them, if it had any at all. Hence Peter is very careful to let all know that Jesus is the One who is ordained to execute both judgments (Acts x 42), and that He is ready to do it (1 Peter iv 5), and then he adds, 'For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.'

As to "baptized for the dead" (1 Cor xv 29), the subject of the chapter must be

taken into account if we are to understand the meaning of the passage. Christianity did not release its adherents from the article of death but it opened up into view another world and a heavenly in the power of resurrection. To deny the resurrection was to invalidate the value of the sacrifice, and to assert that that world was but a chimerical of the feverish imagination of foolish men. It was, indeed, to nullify the whole truth of the gospel. Now baptism meant to those who submitted to it the surrender of the status of living men here in this world. Every person baptized to Christ is baptized to His death—'buried with Him by baptism into death' (Rom vi 4, Col ii 12). Just as the Red Sea, when the children of Israel reached the wilderness banks, closed behind them Egypt with its flesh pots and pleasures, as well as its hard bondage, so does baptism sever from the world, its pleasures and its elements, as well as the domination of sin, those who are true to that ordinance. But in the power of the resurrection world, and in view of the blessedness of that scene, though Christ has died and saints have died, and to embrace Christianity means to be compelled to stand in jeopardy every hour, there were always those who gladly received the Word and were baptized. But this would be a very foolish proceeding to close the door against this world with no other prospect in view. In that case wisdom would have been to 'eat and drink, for to-morrow we die' but the person who submits to baptism dies before his time—he dies *to-day*, and not *to-morrow*.

Perhaps it may be said that I am making verse 29 practically equivalent to *baptized unto death* (Col ii 12). This is just what I am doing. Take from the beginning of verse 20 to the end of verse 28 as a parenthesis and, as has been indicated by another, you will find that verse 18 refers to verse 29 and verses 19 to verses 30-32. Baptism places the baptized person, as to his status upon earth, along with the dead. Christ in the first place and in the second place the saints who have passed away from this scene, some of them by a violent death. Christianity is the most senseless religion on earth if there is no resurrection of the dead, for it offers nothing for the present life, but death to every thing here.

As to what became of the saints who rose after Christ's resurrection I am unable to say anything definite, for on the question Scripture is silent. I should suppose they went to heaven. This is much more natural to suppose than that they went back again to their graves. I suppose they form part of the first resurrection. Where the Word is silent it becomes us to be silent also.

Four features of true love. It thinks of its object. It seeks the company of its object. It is ready to suffer for its object, and it exalts its object.

If thou wouldst bless, be sure of thine own ground,
Make right the centre first then draw thy circles round.

The Missionary Problem (No. 3).

(COLONEL JACOB)

Sectarianism.

GREAT injury has been done in the mission field by the spirit of sectarianism, and it is a matter for thankfulness that this is felt, and that many, as at the Edinburgh Conference, are asking how to be clear of this evil.

If the missionary knows the love of Christ for himself, and with a single eye seeks to preach Christ, he will abhor sectarianism; but it is only as controlled by that love, and the Holy Spirit, who makes it a reality, that any can abide true to the fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, for party spirit is natural to the flesh.

But unity according to God can only be in the truth; and every faithful man will long—

(1) In loyalty to Christ to be entirely subject to the Scriptures, and to hold to the truth, *as far as he knows it, with intense tenacity*. He would rather lose his life than be unfaithful to Christ.

(2) To have no thought of self, and esteeming others better than himself, to walk in self-judgment rather than to constitute himself a judge of other believers.

(3) To have spiritual discernment to recognize everything that is of God; and to delight in it, wherever it be, and whomsoever God may use, irrespective of any thought of party, or of the particular interest of any section of the professing church as opposed to any other section; and

(4) To obey *the* commandment of Christ, to love one another as He has loved us, and to be willing to lay down his life for those begotten of God, whoever they are.

In order thus to be true to the fellowship of God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the servant of Christ must learn the truth of the cross of Christ, and of the Spirit of God according to

1 Corinthians i. and ii. The former is that which will deliver from worldly wisdom, and dependence on money, or men, or things visible. The latter is the agency by which God effects all His work, and without which every effort is utterly vain.

Then follows the blessed yet solemn fact that he is of the temple of God (1 Cor. iii.); a partaker of the fellowship of the blood and body of Christ (1 Cor. x.); and a member of the body of Christ, to show forth Christ in this world in all the activities of love and grace (1 Cor. xii.).

If these things grip the soul, he will refuse all compromise and unholy alliances at the expense of truth, while seeking to acknowledge and go on with all that is of God; being very strict with himself, and full of grace to others.

He will understand that, if he is to seek to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, he must not only know the truth of the oneness of God's church (note the four *ones* in Eph. ii. 14, 15, 16, and 18, and the seven *ones* in Eph. iv. 4-6); but he will need to be strengthened by God's Spirit in the inner man for Christ to dwell in his heart by faith, and to be rooted and grounded in love (Eph. iii. 16, 17), and also to have the Christlike qualities of lowliness, meekness, long-suffering, forbearance, and love (Eph. iv. 1-3). Without these latter the truth will only puff him up, for, alas! it is quite possible to be full of truth in head-knowledge and yet to grossly violate the Spirit of Christ in harsh action towards our fellow Christians. With this hasty glance at a great hindrance and the way of its removal according to truth, let us pass on to consider—

The Goal.

The goal before the Apostle Paul (our pattern missionary) is given in Philippians iii., and should be carefully

studied by every Christian, especially by every worker, for the epistle gives us the experience of the man wholly set for the gospel of Christ according to the true aspect of it, viz. according to the glory of Christ. He tells us, "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God [rather "the calling on high of God"] in Christ Jesus" (Phil. iii. 13, 14). The true servant can only have Christ in glory before his eyes. He will be a slave for the welfare of all saints; he will be a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; but Christ in glory will always be the controlling object of his soul.

Christ is coming. His servants wait for Him, expecting at any time to hear the shout which will cause them (whether living or sleeping) to rise in glorified bodies to meet the Lord in the air, to be for ever with Him. After this will be the manifestation before the judgment seat of Christ, where the results of all service on earth will be made manifest: the marriage of the Lamb, and the return with Christ to the earth to reign with Him throughout one blessed millennium.

But, beyond all this, believers are the church, which is the body of Christ; He is the Head of it, and unto God will be glory in the church in Christ Jesus unto all generations of the ages. This is our goal.

But, say some, what of the present? Cannot we do some great thing now? Until this glorious consummation, all we have to do is the will of God.

The apostles frequently contended as to who should be the greatest. Christ replied, 'Humble yourselves like a little child' (Matt. xviii. 1-4). We must learn that there is nothing more blessed, nothing higher, nothing greater, nothing sweeter than the will of God. It enhances every blessing; there is nothing beyond it. We are

to originate nothing, to invent nothing, to create nothing, but are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them (Eph. ii. 10). The highest possible life is to walk in what He has marked out for us. All beside it, all beyond it, all differing from it, is wrong; the will of the fallen creature is to be relentlessly judged as sin. Christ did neither less nor more than the will of God, and He is perfection. All good is in God's will. All our desire, all our efforts, should therefore be (1) to know that will, (2) to do that will, and (3) to refuse all that is not according to it. To ascertain that will we have the teaching of the Godhead.

The Father teaches, for every one "therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me [*i.e.* the Son]" (John vi. 45).

The Son teaches, for He said, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (Matt. xi. 29, 30).

The Holy Spirit teaches, for "He [the Holy Spirit] shall teach you all things" (John xiv. 26); "He will guide you into all truth [or rather, "all *the* truth"]" (John xvi. 13).

It is also most important to see that God has given us our text-book, for "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17).

From how many sorrows should we have been saved, how many heart-burnings we should have escaped if we had been more subject to the written Word!

Again, many are expecting the conversion of the world before Christ comes to reign, but the Scriptures make it plain that the reverse will

occur, that the last days are very evil days (see Matt. xxiv. 36-39 ; 2 Tim. iii. 1-5, iv. 3, 4 ; James v. 1-8 ; 2 Peter ii. 1, 2 ; Jude 3, 4, 14-18 ; Rev. iii. 16). There is every blessing promised "to him that overcometh," but Christendom ends in apostasy, and, generally speaking, the present heathen nations will be still heathen when the Lord comes. The Lord by His coming will reduce all to order and put everything right. He alone is great enough for this.

Is this a hardship? A thousand times no. Are we to grieve because there is no room for our own will but only for the will of God? No, a thousand times no. Let us say, as a friend of ours, Mr. Sen, of Allahabad (who thirty years ago lost wife, children, and property for Christ's sake), often says, "O how inexpressibly sweet is the will of God. It may seem bitter, but press it to your heart and it is sweet indeed."

The compensations are great. To be true to Christ in a world like this, which lies in the wicked one, entails suffering, but He makes it up a hundred-fold in this present time. The Spirit dwelling within us sheds abroad God's love in our hearts (Rom. v. 5) ; to the obedient one the Lord Jesus manifests Himself, and Father and Son make their abode with him (John xiv. 21-23) ; our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory (2 Cor. iv. 17). Have we not every reason to rejoice? We have all the comfort of Christ's secret approval now every moment, and the assurance of sharing in His public triumph in a little while ; therefore, let us be steadfast, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord (1 Cor. xv. 58).

We know that those who sow in tears will reap in joy ; we know that God is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love ; we know that if God uses us in blessing to others these will be our joy and crown of re-

joicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming (1 Thess. ii. 19). But let us remember that "if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully" (2 Tim. ii. 4) ; and let us therefore set aside the opinions of man and all that makes a fair show in the flesh, and set ourselves to learn humbly and meekly both the will and the ways of God, and adopt these unflinchingly, when known, whatever is entailed thereby, adhering strictly to the written Word, for whatever men may say and think (and reproach is certain), God will never fail the man who thus trusts in Him.

The Outlook.

Watchman, what of the night? Let us get on the watch-tower and see. Almost all spiritual men are agreed that we are come very near to the end of the present dispensation, though the proofs cannot be gone into here. The visible history of the church is sad indeed—failure is written upon it throughout as regards the mass.

But are we not wiser than our fathers? Are not we going to do great things now? Have we not learnt by the past? Have we not sufficient enthusiasm to evangelize the world in the present generation? Are there not glorious anticipations of what we are now going to effect by the efforts about to be put forth?

Yes, says fleshly enthusiasm. No, certainly not, says spiritual judgment ; for all things are heading up for the final apostasy (2 Thess. ii. 3-12).

We shall be told that we are pessimists of the deepest dye, as we were after addressing one hundred missionaries in Calcutta six months ago.

But we are not pessimists, we are optimists of the most pronounced type, for our optimism is not based upon poor failing men, but upon the living God, and upon the sure Word which cannot be broken. None of the glories spoken of in Hebrews xii. 22-24 can fail ; only the things that can be shaken

will be shaken, "that those things which cannot be shaken may remain" (Heb. xii. 27). The heavenly Jerusalem will come out resplendent in beauty; the church must be worthy of Christ; Israel, the nations, the angelic hosts, heaven and earth must be full of the glory of God; and the results must be infinitely beyond the wildest dreams of men, as far beyond the things that eye hath seen, ear heard, or that have entered into the heart of man, as God is beyond man.

What a day of great surprises will that be which is soon to dawn! The wisest will have to own his ignorance, the blunders of his judgments,

as he sees how worthless were his great schemes, but sees too, from a thousand hidden places, the work of God brought to light, and the meek, the (apparently) base, the despised, yea, and those who were naught, honoured of the Lord, exalted, and rewarded. Then will the work of the Lord be manifestly most glorious and magnificent, but in quite a different fashion from what now obtains credit in the Christian world.

How blessed to fall back on an infallible Christ, who will accomplish all the will of God, so that the whole earth will be filled with the glory of God.

Hallelujah!

(J. T. MAWSON).

"*LET every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord:*" so ends the last psalm, and therein is presented to us the result, as far as the earth is concerned, of the coming of the Lord into it. He is the blessed Man of the first psalm who walked not in the counsel of the ungodly, but delighted in the law of the Lord, and meditated in it both day and night. Every breath that He drew was a "hallelujah!"—a praise ye the Lord; every pulse of His devoted heart was for God; in His every word and act the Father was glorified. Every moral excellence shone in unmeasured perfection in Him. Men said, "When shall He die and His name perish?" (Ps. xli. 5); but His fruit shall appear in its season, His leaf shall never wither, and whatsoever He doeth shall prosper. Men thought that His light was quenched for ever when unresistingly He was led to the Cross, but He is coming again, He shall arise—the Sun of Righteousness; and then shall break that morning for which the saints of God have ever sighed, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain (2 Sam. xxiii. 4).

He will stamp His blessed character

upon His kingdom; it will reflect the glory which is effulgent in Him; every groan, and murmur, and cry of anguish will be hushed, the darkness will fly before the shining of His presence, and the whole earth shall be full of the glory of the Lord; and as His every breath was a *hallelujah* when He was here, so everything that hath breath will say "Hallelujah!" then.

The rise and fall of kingdoms; the accumulation of grave questions; the clashing of conflicting interests, which is growing fiercer as the years roll on, and which prove the instability of things in this world, and fill the hearts of men with misgiving, do not disturb the one who with eye of faith sees "Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for *everything*" (Heb. ii. 9. N.T.). The Morning Star, bright harbinger of day, shines in the heavens and fills his heart with hope, so that he can cry, Hallelujah! now. **THE LORD IS COMING.**

... We lift the head
In joyful expectation,
For He will bring salvation.

Answers to Correspondents.

(THE EDITORS).

The Sheep-fold.

A.W.F. The sheep-fold of John x. is the Jewish nation; out of this fold the Lord led His sheep, *i.e.* those Jews that believed on Him, according to the third verse. But in verse 16 He says: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold," referring to Gentile believers; and then adds, "them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd" (N.T.).

The word in this sixteenth verse should be *flock* and not *fold*. There is a great difference between the two. In the figure of a fold there was presented the thought of the separating wall of legal ordinances: in this way the Jews were separate from the Gentile nations. In the "one flock, one Shepherd," there is the thought rather of the attractive power of the Shepherd: He being the object of each sheep, "they follow Him;" and they are formed thus (Jew and Gentile) into one flock. They need no strong protecting wall about them, for they are held securely for ever in His omnipotent hand, and in His Father's (vers. 28, 29). They have one common knowledge (ver. 14), and one common life (ver. 28). It is the one Shepherd who makes them one, and He is all they need.

1 Corinthians vi. 9, 10.

J.S. The evil-doers spoken of in these verses are such by practice: they are characteristically "the unrighteous;" and these things are descriptive of them, so that they prove by their character and ways that they are not heirs of the kingdom, for the kingdom is *God's* kingdom, and none can enter in but those born of water and of the Spirit.

The Corinthians had lived in these things in former times, but the grace of God had reached them, and they were washed, sanctified, and justified in the

name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

But it was *possible* for them, and is for us, to fall into some of these former sins. Would the result of such a fall be that the true child of God lost his inheritance? No; he would be plunged into sorrow and repentance, as in the case of the brother of whom Paul writes in this epistle (1 Cor. v.; 2 Cor. ii. 5-11). If one who had professed the name of the Lord *continued* these evil practices and repented not, we could only conclude that his profession had been a false one, for by their fruits ye shall know them. We need to walk in carefulness and the fear of God; so shall our feet be kept in right paths.

"Therein Abide with God."

"Doubtful situation."

Arising out of our reply in October issue to J. P. on the "Daily Occupation," a correspondent inquires what the callings are "in which a man could not abide with God," and also "what true abiding with God is."

The Christian is called to a life of practical godliness, to bear the impress and reflect the character of God; to be, as Ephesians v. 1 puts it, "followers ["imitators," N.T.] of God, as dear children." Any calling in which a child of God is compelled to act dishonestly, or to the injury of his fellows, would be one in which he could not abide with God.

A good test to apply to your "doubtful situation" would be—"Can I kneel before God and seek His blessing upon my work this day? Is there anything that I shall be compelled to do which will compromise His name and displease Him? Can I expect the peace of His presence to keep my mind in the midst of my toil?" To act according to such a test would be to abide with God.

But if in your situation there are methods in *detail* which you are required to practise, but which you feel

are not righteous, while at the same time the business itself is a perfectly legitimate one, do not at once relinquish it, but bring the matter to the notice of your employer; state that it is a question between your conscience and God, and that you cannot do these things. If he then insists upon your doing as formerly, you must take the path of rectitude, and leave the consequences with God, whom you seek to honour.

Infants and the Church.

J.R.J. inquires

"Whether children who die in infancy form part of the church at the second coming."

In answer to this question we suggest that as the one body is composed of those who are baptized into it by the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. xii. 13), only those who have received the Spirit of God, consequent upon believing the gospel (Eph. i. 13), are in the church, which is the body of Christ. We do not think that these things could be said of infants.

They are with the Lord, as who can doubt who reads such passages as Matthew xviii. 10-14? They are of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. xix. 14), and no doubt intelligently of it. They will be raised in the glory of the Lord at His coming, as will all save the wicked dead (Rev. xx. 5), and must form one of the families in heaven; for of these there will be more than one, as we learn from Ephesians iii. 15: "Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named" (N.T.).

Fruit-bearing.

S.J.H. writes, quoting our words on page 319:

"Every true believer will bring forth fruit: if there is no fruit the professed faith is dead" (James ii. 26), and inquires if this statement comprehends all believers in Christ."

Yes, undoubtedly; for "every good tree bringeth forth good fruit" (Matt. vii. 17), and "by their fruits ye shall know them" (ver. 20). Where there

is no fruit there is no life according to God, whatever the profession may be. James ii. 26 settles this.

He further inquires if there are not degrees of fruit-bearing, and whether this will not affect the believer's place in the millennial kingdom of our Lord.

That there are degrees in fruit-bearing is evident, for we read of "some thirty, some sixty, and some a hundred-fold." There are also varying degrees of faithfulness in service for the Lord, as Luke xix. 12-27 makes clear, and it is in connection with this faithfulness that the servant's place in the kingdom is accordingly determined.

But S.J.H. also suggests that there will be true believers who will have no place at all in the reign of Christ, because of disobedience to the Lord's commands.

We cannot admit that a true believer will have no place at all in the kingdom, for in the parable of the pounds already referred to the servant who did no business for his lord certainly represents the unconverted professor: he knew not his lord (ver. 21); he is called a "wicked servant" (ver. 22); and not only is he given no place in the kingdom, but even that which he held in his place of responsibility as a servant is taken from him.

He quotes several scriptures, amongst them 1 Corinthians vi. 9; Galatians v. 19-21; Ephesians v. 5, and thinks that these passages lose all their point if they refer only to unbelievers.

Space will not permit us to go into all these passages; they are truly solemn warnings to ALL who have taken up the profession of Christianity; and if any, having taken up that place, continued in or returned to these practices they would but demonstrate the unreality of the profession they had made, and, of course, they could have no inheritance in the kingdom of God, into which none enter save those born of water and of the Spirit (John iii. 5). These sinful doings are practised only by "the children of disobedience" (Eph. v. 6; and carefully compare, as to who is meant, Eph. ii. 2). See also our reply to J.S. in this issue.

Inquiry as to Paragraph in September Issue.

John D. In the paragraph, "*In the measure in which the Lord Jesus knew what it was to be holy, He felt what it was to be made sin before God. In the measure in which He knew the love of God, He felt what it was to be forsaken of God,*" there was no thought of limiting the Lord's holiness or His knowledge of the love of God, for these are infinite and beyond all creature comprehension; but what cannot be measured is not beyond One who is infinite in His being, and He who knew the measureless heights also fathomed the infinite depths when He was made sin for us.

Death in the Millennium.

"A Babe in Christ" asks:

"Will there be death in the reign of Christ upon the earth, or what is the meaning of Isaiah lxx. 20? If the child there means the child of God, and they die, when will they be raised?"

It is quite evident from the scripture you quote that death will take place in the millennium, though in an exceptional kind of way, as the direct result of sin. All who share in the blessings of the millennium will not be "born again." Apart even from those living at the outset of that age multitudes will be born during its course; and that there will be very many who are subject to the rule of Christ only *outwardly* is evident from the fact that when Satan is loosed from his prison at the close of the thousand years (see Rev. xx.) he will at once succeed in gathering the nations together to battle against the saints and the beloved city.

From Isaiah lxx. 20 we gather that such will be the length of life in the millennial age that, should one die at one hundred years old, he will be regarded as a mere child; whilst the *cause* of any so dying is stated as lying in the fact that such an one is a sinner (*i.e.* in open rebellion against the manifested rule of Christ), and so "accursed of God."

The *first* resurrection is completed prior to the beginning of the millennium, and those dying during that age under the curse of God will be raised with the rest of the wicked dead when the heaven and earth have fled away, and will appear for judgment at the great white throne (Rev. xx.).

Adam.

S.C.G. writes inquiring whether he is correctly informed that the presence of the definite article *ha* before the Hebrew word *Ahdahm* restricts the meaning of the word to Adam *himself*.

The context determines the meaning without difficulty. In Genesis ii. 8, *ah ahdahm*, it is clearly Adam personally. In Genesis vi. 3, "My spirit shall not always strive with man," it is *ha ahdahm*, where equally clearly Adam personally is not in view, but the race as a whole (Adam himself having died some hundreds of years before); so too in the verse on which you write, Genesis vi. 1.

There has been some controversy as to the most literal reading of the early verses in that chapter. The question is fully examined in Delitzsch's and other commentaries. Verse 4 reads in J. N. Darby's New Translation, "In those days were the giants on the earth."

Cain.

S.C.G. writes further:

"I will be glad of some light on Genesis iv. 7: 'If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.'"

The Hebrew word for sin is identical with that for sin-offering, and this being so the scripture may equally accurately be read, "And if thou doest not well, a *sin-offering* lieth at the door." This was God's gracious intimation to Cain that for him too the same acceptable way of approach was open, *i.e.* he could, like Abel, draw near on the ground of the death of a substitutionary

victim. The last part of the verse does not refer either to sin or a sin-offering. The pronoun is masculine, and the reference is evidently to Abel: that is to say, that if Cain were to act upon the gracious intimation made to him he would not find Abel preferred above himself, but, retaining his rights of primogeniture, he would rule over Abel his brother.

“The Body of Christ.”

N.S. asks the question :

“What is the meaning of 1 Corinthians xii. 27?”

The scripture runs, “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” Here the saints of God are addressed as such. They were Christ's body; and, though the truth is not developed here, they were such as being derived from and united to Him. His body is that by means of which He expresses Himself: the saints are to be here as the expression of Christ. Looked at in a corporate aspect they were Christ's body, whilst looked at individually each was a member of it. That is what saints ARE, and it were well for us were we content always just to be what God has made us.

Just a word may be added to guard against the thought sometimes advanced that the saints at Corinth were, as a distinct company, themselves the body of Christ in an absolute sense. That is not the force of the scripture.

The definite article is wanting in the Greek: it reads literally, “Ye are body of Christ.” That is to say, these saints were such: not that they were the whole of it, but simply that they were *such*; and therefore the members were to have the same care one for another; for each of those believers in particular was a member of that body *to which every Spirit-indwelt person belongs*. One was not to be puffed up as though not needing the other—all the parts were necessary. The article is similarly wanting in chapter iii., where we have the statement, “Ye are temple of God.”

Moreover, it is significant that the epistle where this statement occurs is not addressed simply “to the assembly of God which is at Corinth,” but to them “*with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.*” This preserves from that ecclesiasticism which lays undue emphasis on that which is local and tangible, and so both misses the moral force of the scripture and fails practically of the divine thought “that there should be no division in the body.”

The Young Man of Mark xiv. 51, 52.

H.H.H. We do not know who this was, and prefer not to suppose where Scripture is silent. No doubt all that is for our spiritual profit is the simple record of the incident itself as given us by the Holy Ghost.

I stand upon the threshold of two years,
And backward look, and forward strain my eyes;
Upon the blotted record fall my tears;
While, brushing them aside, a sweet surprise
Breaks like a day-dawn on my upturned face,
As I remember all Thy daily grace.

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” Ps. xxiii. 6.