

# SCRIPTURE TRUTH

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VOLUME

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*“Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of  
Thy righteous judgments endureth for ever*

Psalm 119. 160.

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# EDITORIAL

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By the grace of the Lord we are able to present to our friends the 25th volume of our monthly magazine. Our desire from its beginning has been to have an unobtrusive and unadvertised part in putting portions of meat in due season upon the table of the Lord's household. Knowing that He loves His own which are in the world and will love them to the end, and that

*"He richly feeds their souls  
With blessings from above"*

when He finds willing channels for His blessing, encourages us to continue its monthly publication in subjection to Him, who is our one Lord. We look to Him afresh to give a continual ministry that will refresh the weary, comfort the sorrowing, encourage the disheartened, and build up all the saints in the truth in so far as we are able to reach them.

Since we know that He has no smaller circle of interest than the one flock, the one family of God, we earnestly pray that we may be preserved from thinking of any smaller circle and from all party bias; but that as hitherto our outlook may be "all the saints," with whom, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be! We believe that in this desire we shall continue to have the sympathy and the help of all who are near enough to the Lord to love all His own because they are dear to Him—dear to Him because the Father has given them to Him (John 10. 29) and because He has redeemed them to Himself by His own blood.

We have no need to press upon our friends that the need for ministry grows exceedingly; the devil was never more active, evil men and seducers are waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, and the Lord's coming is near; thence the exhortation, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." By circulating the truth, as by such a magazine as this, they may be "fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God" and may be assured that their "labour is not in vain in the Lord" to whom be glory now and for ever. Amen.

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## GOODLY TREES, PALM BRANCHES, THICK-LEAVED TREES, AND WILLOWS OF THE BROOK. J. T. Mawson.

WE will begin the year with a consideration of God's words to us and His ways with us. Here we shall find cause for thanksgiving for the past, and great encouragement as we face the future. Retrospection and anticipation, memory and hope shall yield from their treasures what should surely produce within us grateful and trustful hearts. We are recalling an ancient command given to the sons of Jacob. God told them that when they had taken possession of the promised land they were to keep, year after year, the Feast of Tabernacles. It was to be a joyous feast. They had to go forth and gather the branches of goodly trees and palm trees and thick-leaved trees and willows of the brook, and weave them together into booths and dwell in them for seven days, and remembering all God's goodness to them, they had to rejoice before Him (Leviticus 23). We are well aware that many people do not believe that these instructions given long ago to a people who no longer possess that land have any present value, but we take our stand upon the Word, and we say without fear, "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, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." These things were written for our learning, yes for ours in this year 1933, and we look to

God that He will teach us His mind in them.

The picture is as vivid as it is clear. The palm branches speak of victory and joy, the willows of the brook of trial and sorrow, and these had to be woven together upon the strong frame of goodly trees and thick-leaved trees, which shall speak to us of the infallible Word of the God that cannot lie. We must not leave these goodly trees and thick-leaved trees out as we build our booths of the palm and the willow, for no experience can yield us lasting profit if the Word of God has not its place in it.

There are some who seem ever able to wave the palm branches; they walk with a light step upon their high places. But with the majority it is different; they have their days of triumph, but sometimes, aye often, they are in heaviness through manifold temptations; their harps sometimes hang upon the willow trees and they have no song, for no chastening for the present seemeth joyous but grievous. Then there are some who tread with leaden foot the deep valley where the willows hang their mournful boughs and where day is turned to gloom and the heart trembles at the desolation until assured of the company of the Lord. We want even these to gather palm branches and be more than conquerors through Him that loves them. I stood near

to an aged Christian at the open grave of his beloved wife the other day, and I said to him, "How are you?" He replied, "I have a wonderful Saviour." He had gathered his palm branch in his sorrow and was a triumphant man.

It is only as we have confidence in God and His love and the wisdom of His ways that we can raise a palm branch in a time of sorrow, and we only gain this confidence from the Word of God as it is unfolded to us by His Spirit. From His sure Word we learn that He is good and doeth good. But many view God in a different way; they imagine that He does not wish them to be too happy, that He finds pleasure in taking from them things they love and in darkening their lives with trials. They do not know Him. He may, and often does, send trials and sorrow, but His end is blessing, and the willow boughs are as necessary as the palm branches in His wise plan. In one of the greatest poems in our language, the poet asks

"Is my gloom, after all,  
Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?"

What food for thought lies in that question, sorrowing and doubting heart! Has a cloud come between you and some bright sun, in the rays of which you basked? What if it be the hand of God stretched forth to draw you near to His heart! The brightest earthly light will set in darkness, but if you know God, your night will be enlightened by a never fading light. In the heavenly city, to which every one whose name is written in the Lamb's book of life is going, they will have no need of the sun or the moon to shine in it for the glory of God will lighten it, and the Lamb is the lamp thereof. And as it will be

then so it may be now; the glory of God—His great love—may fill your heart, and how you will thank Him then, for the shadow of His hand.

But is it possible to thank Him for sorrow and trial? Hear these words, "My God, I have never thanked Thee for my thorn. I have thanked Thee a thousand times for my roses, but not once for my thorn. I have been looking forward to a world where I shall get compensation for my cross; but I have never thought of my cross as a present glory. Teach me the glory of my cross, teach me the value of my thorn. Shew me that I have climbed to Thee by the path of pain. Shew me that my tears have made my rainbow." Those words came from the mouth of a blind poet, who had been refused by the woman he loved because he had lost his sight. How well he wove his palm branch and willow bough together when he sang,

"O Love, that wilt not let me go,  
I rest my weary soul on Thee;  
I give Thee back the life I owe,  
That in Thine ocean depths its flow  
May richer, fuller be.

"O Light, that followest all my way,  
I yield my flickering torch to Thee,  
My heart restores its borrowed ray,  
That in Thy sunshine's blaze its day  
May brighter, fairer be."

Need I quote those better and more triumphant words of the great apostle? They are well known, but so full of encouragement. "There was given to me," he says, "a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me [mark the grace of that], My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. MOST GLADLY THERE

FORE WILL I RATHER GLORY  
IN MY INFIRMITIES, THAT THE  
POWER OF CHRIST MAY REST  
UPON ME."

Even Paul needed the willows of the brook Devoted servant of Christ though he was, he would have been exalted above measure if he had only had the palm branches in his hands: he would have waved those branches over his own head and laid them down for his own feet, but the thorn helped him, the tribulation and the infirmity blessed him, and his palm branches shall be laid where he will cast his crown, at the nail-pierced feet of his Saviour and Lord

Look back, dear reader Remember the way the Lord has led you. Look up, dear reader, and hear Him saying to you, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" Take any of the great promises that shine on the sacred page, take those you know best, for they will yield you the greatest blessing, and say on this opening of a new year, Has one good word that God has spoken failed you? I would take up the words of Joshua, uttered in his farewell speech to Israel, "Ye know in all your heart, and in all your soul, that not one thing hath failed of all the good words that the Lord your God hath spoken concerning you. all are come to pass unto you—not one thing hath failed"

Take then the pleasant things and the painful, the "downs" as well as the "ups" in your life, and give thanks for both God is weaving them together for your good and glory, for is it not written, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose," and if we know that, then may we indeed weave "all things" together in confidence and gratitude, and rejoice before our Lord

But have we not to feel things? Yes It is no sign of spirituality to be unmoved by sorrow; when the boughs of the willows of the brook are put into our hands we cannot be indifferent to them If we are, we miss the sympathy of the One who is touched with the feeling of our infirmity

"He tells me that His loving heart  
Can feel my deepest woe  
And in each sorrow bears a part,  
As none can bear below

"Touched with a sympathy above  
He knows our feeble frame,  
He knows what sorest trials mean,  
For He has felt the same"

But no sorrow can separate us from His love, and as we realize this our hearts begin to sing and we can say, "Thanks be unto God, that giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" And thus upon the strong frame of the Word of God we weave together our joys and sorrows, and see His love in all and bless His holy Name.

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*' Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace '*

Why should we do that? Not only because our need makes it imperative that we should, but because our best Friend sits upon that throne, Jesus, our high Priest, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities and ever liveth to make intercession for us He died and rose again that we might be justified from all things, He lives and intercedes for us that we might live as those who are justified

# ALL THINGS NEW.

David Ross.

*A New Year Meditation on 2 Cor. 5.*

WITH the coming of each New Year how many echo the sentiment of the poet as he sings,

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow;  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

But only the man who is in Christ knows what it is to have rung out the old and rung in the new, for he knows "new creation," and for him "the old things have passed away, behold *all things have become new.*" Saul of Tarsus, now become Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ, confesses that nothing, not even the things in which he had formerly boasted, matters except new creation. (Gal. 6. 16). Quite recently an eminent statesman, now dead, stated in a public meeting that, in his long life of political and social service, he knew of nothing that approached in importance to the regeneration of an individual soul. Neither politics, nor learning, nor birth, nor religion have anything to offer in comparison with this new creating in Christ.

Let us meditate for a little on some of the new things which this quondam Pharisee had found since he knew himself as a "man in Christ."

## *A New Assurance.*

First of all note the grand new note of *assurance* with which he faces all the vicissitudes of life and death. Not in circumstances did he find this certainty, for his conditions of life were such that he had "despaired even of life, been troubled on every side, perplexed, persecuted and cast down." Yet he boldly affirms, "We know that if our earthly house were dissolved, we have a

building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Again he asserts, "we are confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." In the face of death the most that any human religion can give us is a "hope." How different are the Christian epitaphs from those found in heathen cemeteries. "To be with Christ, far better." "Cursed be the gods that robbed me of my child." "So shall we ever be with the Lord, wherefore comfort one another." "After death no meeting, after grave no greeting." The light of life and immortality brought by the gospel have robbed death of its sting, the grave of its victory and supplied the Christian with the new triumph shout, "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

## *A New House.*

What a distressing thing, not at all uncommon in our troublous times, to be under notice to quit without any other habitation to go to. But we are all under this notice, for it is appointed unto men once to die. Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. The man in Christ knows that when he is finished with the earthly house in which he groans under the ravages of time and disease, a *new house* awaits him which is eternal in the heavens. And the Christian hope is not that this exchange of houses may take place through death, but rather that, at the coming of Christ for His saints, we may be clothed

with the body of glory like unto His glorious body.

### *The New Worker.*

And who is the Worker who shall bring all this to pass? Is it to be accomplished by prayers and fastings, by penance and purifications, by accumulation of merit through good works? No! the Pharisee has awakened up from the weary round of religious observances to realise that a *new Worker* has taken him in hand, a new Potter to make of him a new vessel, for He that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God. It is God that worketh in us and He that hath begun in us the good work will complete it unto the day of Jesus Christ.

### *A New Power.*

Then God has put within us a *new power* in that He has given us the earnest of the Spirit. This wonderful power has been bestowed upon us not merely to carry us through the wilderness to the heavenly land, but as the earnest to bring Heaven with its fadeless joy to us even here and now. Eshcol's grapes the story tell of where the path doth lead. Would we have a really Happy New Year, then let us yield ourselves more unreservedly to the Holy Spirit, so that He may carry out His functions of taking of the things of Christ and showing them unto us and engaging us with the things which are above.

### *A New Ambition.*

No one gets far in this life without ambition, and Paul tells what his new ambition has become. "Wherefore we labour (are ambitious) that, whether present or absent, we may be acceptable or well pleasing to Him." Our English word comes from the Latin word "ambitio" (going round) used of

the candidates for public office in Rome, as they shewed the scars on their bodies acquired in the service of the Fatherland. They were willing to do anything to render themselves acceptable to the humble voters whom they heartily despised. Paul had in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus, and in these he gloried because they indicated that he was absolute property, the slave of the Son of God who had loved him and given Himself for him. He realized that, if he sought to please men, he would not be the true servant of Christ. The word he uses in Col. 1. 10, "all pleasing," denoted in classical Greek the cringing and subservient habit, ready to do or say anything to please a patron; not only to meet but to anticipate his most trivial wishes. He now transfers its use to denote the joyful anticipation of the wishes of Him who has bought us with His blood and captivated us by His love. One is reminded here of the retort of the ticket-collector who earned unpopularity by obeying instructions to make all season ticket-holders show their tickets. "I don't care whether I am popular here or not, so long as I am popular with headquarters."

### *A New Standard.*

And how shall we judge what is right and wrong? Not by the standards and conventions of our age and environment, but in the light of the judgment seat of Christ before which "we must all appear to receive the things done in the body, whether they be good or bad." Here then is a *new standard* by which to measure our action.

Dare to do right! dare to be true!  
Keep the great judgment seat always in  
view,  
Look at your work as you'll look at  
it then,  
Scanned by Jehovah, and angels and men.

Thank God, for those who are in Christ, there is no condemnation (Rom. 8. 1). Believers shall not come into condemnation, but are passed from death unto life (John 5. 24). For them Christ has endured the fire of God's judgment at Calvary, and those who stand where the fire has been will be safe when the fire of judgment falls on this guilty world. But if we merely accept the judgment of Calvary with regard to our past sins, and fail to apply it to our daily life and service by exercising a self-judgment that would free us from unworthy motives and actions, it may be that we shall be ashamed and suffer loss in that day when we see our works burned up, even though we ourselves may be saved, yet so as by fire.

#### *A New Motive.*

What a revolution indeed is effected by the *new motive* which new creation brings. Man almost from his creation has been governed by fear. Think of man in his savage state, living in terror of evil spirits, subject to taboos and fetishes, suspicious of witchcraft and evil designs on the part of his neighbours. Think of civilised man, piling up his armaments, which may lead some day to a dreadful Armageddon. What constrains him? Fear, ghastly fear. The white man lives in fear of the "rising tide of colour," the Yellow Peril, the Black Menace, while the mutual fear of masters and servants brings ever nearer the dreaded Class War. And religious man? How often is his attitude that of the servant who said, "I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and I was afraid." Surely a libel on the character of God who has been revealed as Love by Calvary's supreme sac-

rifice. And now the motive which prompted that sacrifice, the love of Christ constrains us in our attitude both to God and men.

#### *A New Object.*

By His death the man in Christ has now obtained a wonderful *new Object*, for we learn that He died that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again. Formerly our lives were ego-centric and therefore miserably unsatisfying, but now the Christian lives unto Him and experiences that a Christo-centric life is full of joy. Occupation with and manifestation of self can only wring from us the cry, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Occupation with Christ and manifestation of Him produces the triumphant shout, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"O teach us so the power to know  
Of risen life with Thee;  
Not we may live while here below,  
But Christ our life may be."

#### *A New Ministry.*

To Saul of Tarsus was once committed at his own urgent request a ministry of destruction, when he received letters from the high priest in Jerusalem to bring to prison and death those who loved the name against which he thought to do so many contrary things. Now an entirely *new ministry* has been committed to him, the ministry of reconciliation. The apostle of hate has become the proclaimer of love, and the mouth whose every breath had been threatening and slaughter now beseeches men, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Truly "old things have passed away, all things are become new."

### *A New Righteousness*

This man had been one who ardently sought to establish his own righteousness and now he has learned of a *new righteousness*, God's. Here he gives expression to one of the profoundest and most soul-moving utterances in Holy Writ "God hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" What it meant for our Lord to be made sin is beyond our comprehension, but we can and will rejoice that, because He, the Holy and Righteous, was made sin for us, we are now righteousness in Him

### *All Things New*

For this groaning creation it may

be a long time, before it shall be said, "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 when He that sits upon the throne shall say, "Behold, I make *all things new*" But we who are in Christ can now know and enjoy the new things, a glad assurance of a home above, the mighty power of God working in us by His Holy Spirit, creating in us a new ambition, motive, standard and object, giving us a new service to perform and establishing us in a righteousness which can never be marred, because being of God it is eternal.

## Some Features of the Life of Faith.

*Hebrews 13 1-6.*

Verse 1. Brotherly love.

Verse 2. Hospitality.

Verse 3. Sympathy

Verse 4. Purity of life

Verse 5. Contentment

Verse 6. Confidence in the Lord.

In these things we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear

## Power, Preservation, Permanence.

Of all the sons of Jacob, Joseph alone was faithful to God, and this faithfulness was seen in his resistance of evil. He became in consequence the object of the malice and the attacks of the enemy. But God was his strength and he did not fail, so we read, "The arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob" Here was POWER. But not only so, but it is added as a parenthesis, "From thence is the Shepherd," Here was PRESERVATION. He was cared for all the while. And further, "The stone of Israel." Here was PERMANENCE. He did not build on the shifting sand. He was identified with the Rock of Israel, and "that Rock was Christ" And these things were written for our learning.

## THERE AND HERE.

Inglis Fleming.

**IT WAS** the saying of an old preacher, "I came *here* because I was wanted *there*."

His meaning was this, he was born into the world because he was required to swell the praise of the Saviour in the Father's house.

"*Wanted there.*" The gracious purpose of our God and Father is to fill the courts of glory with many sons rejoicing before His face.

"*Wanted there.*" The Son of the Father's love was to have many companions upon whom His eye could rest with delight for ever. And because "all of one" with Him He would not be ashamed to call them brethren.

"*Wanted there.*" So a chain of five links in Romans 8 stretches from eternity to eternity. The called ones according to God's purpose were

1. *Foreknown* in the thoughts of God before the world began to be, it was planned and purposed.
2. *Predestinated*—marked out beforehand for a special place of nearness and relationship—to be conformed to the image of God's Son so that "He might be first from among many brethren."
3. *Called*. Here the chain touches time. By the gospel message God has called them to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.
4. *Justified*. Believing the good news they are now cleared from every charge in the sight of God—they are justified from all things. And in the purpose of God they are

5. *Glorified*. A long link now reaches on into the future of eternity where they will be with and like the Son of God, that where He is they may be also.

"*Wanted there.*" And so it was that they came into their responsible life here—part of the ruined race. But now redeemed by the precious blood of Christ every question has been settled for ever. They can joy in God as they await His glory. And God is righteous in having them in His presence "holy and without blame" (Eph. 1. 3).

I like to add to the preacher's remark—and say, "I am left *here* now because I am needed *here*."

*Needed here* to be a witness for Christ to testify to His personal glory and to the value of His atoning sacrifice. "The Lord hath need of him" was the reply the two disciples were to make when asked, why they loosed the ass at the place where two ways met. And we may take to ourselves the words and each may say, "The Lord hath need of me, while He keeps me on earth."

*Needed here*. Not to lead a selfish life seeking our own honour or ease or wealth, but to be on the part of a rejected Christ while awaiting His return. Alas! we may lose our opportunity for this and be like those of whom Paul said, "All seek their own—not the things of Jesus Christ." If we are thus foolish and sinful others will be employed. The flag must be upheld, and some are needed for this.

*Needed here*. To war not at our own charges but at His. To be strong in the Lord and in the might

of His strength and so to fight the good fight, to tell the sweet story of salvation, and to comfort His loved ones as they tread their homeward way.

*Wanted there but Needed here.*

May we "fill as an hireling his day," employing what is left of our days in happy service for the praise of His holy name. Let us remember Bonar's words,

"One little life! 'twill soon be past,  
Only what's done for Christ will last."

What shame will be ours if we miss our way and live for ourselves instead of unto Him who died for us and rose again.

And soon it is that we shall be "there" where our Lord has gone, according to His desire "That where I am there ye may be also."

## SOUL WINNING.

**TO SPEAK** to one man about the Saviour calls for higher courage than to speak to a crowd. To direct your remarks to one heart and press your urgent appeal upon one individual conscience, as one man to another, as a friend to a friend, that is a test indeed. But that is the way in this wonderful Gospel of John. It is the Gospel of individual work, and we need more of that sort of work.

For this work a man needs first of all a **DIRECT MESSAGE**; he must carry a fact to his friend. This Andrew did when he found his brother Simon and said, "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." The next thing is **A PERSONAL RELATION TO THE FACT**. "*We have found,*" said Andrew. He had a personal experience. It was not hearsay with him, or a fact of which he had no personal knowledge that he spoke. Then he had **A DETERMINED PURPOSE**. He brought him to Jesus; nothing less than that would have satisfied Andrew or His Master. It was not an interesting bit of gossip he carried to his brother.

He had made a discovery, he carried a message, he had a purpose in view and he achieved his end. He brought him to Jesus.

He had no opposition, but let no one imagine that it is always as easy as Andrew found it. Philip, for instance, found Nathanael a different proposition. He was opposed and prejudiced, and prejudice is a terrible thing, there is nothing that blinds a man like it. What could Philip do when Nathanael said, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth"? There was one thing he could do and that he did. He did not argue, he did not invite him to a long discussion. He gave a short and effectual answer to an awkward question: "Come and see." So the one who deals with souls must have **A PRACTICAL ANSWER** for the awkward question. He must be so in the joy of the knowledge of the Saviour, to be able to say, "*I have found Him,*" that he can with the utmost confidence say, You have only to taste and see, to come and see; that will be more effectual than any words of mine, Come and see.

## FIDELITY.

T Oliver.

"I sought Him whom my soul loveth: I sought Him but I found Him not... Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth? But a little that I passed from them, I found Him whom my soul loveth; I held Him and would not let Him go." (Song of Songs, 3. 1-4.)

THE above passage describes the affection and concern of the bride for her absent Bridegroom. Nothing could satisfy her heart in His absence. But when she found Him, she would allow nothing to separate her from Him. The church is the bride of Christ, but He is absent, and the Bridegroom's absence becomes a test of the fidelity of the bride. She would consider no interest tending to withdraw her allegiance from Him. She would cherish all that concerns Him. The hearts of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus burned within them while the Lord showed them things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. Nothing will be allowed in the heart to conflict with His claims.

In this way the Bridegroom is reflected in the bride. She is a witness to Him in His absence.

John the Baptist saw in souls being attracted to Christ that the Bridegroom was there. So the bride was virtually in the remnant being gathered to Him. John rejoiced in being the friend of the Bridegroom. The same character of exercise and measure of devotedness were not exhibited by each member of that little company attracted to Himself. But in His gracious review of the company, all the features of the bride were visible (John 17). All will yet be in accord for His joy and abiding satisfaction. In answer to the last message from the glory, the Spirit and the bride say, "Come." These are outside the sphere of

responsibility. But the responsible individual in hearing the message is exhorted to put himself in accord with that response by saying "Come" also (Rev. 22. 17).

In view of this we understand in some measure the trend of the prayer of the Apostle in Ephesians chapter 3. His earnest desire was that the Spirit of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ would strengthen us with all might in the inner man, in order that the Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, so that we may be rooted and grounded in love.

Love resides in the "inner" man. Our being strengthened therein is by the development of spiritual affections, wherein lies the secret of all real spiritual intelligence. The enlargement of the heart is the avenue to the opening of the understanding. Then we have the vast panorama of blessing opened to our gaze. We are enabled in measure to comprehend the dimensions of the sphere of promise and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge. This may seem an inexplicable paradox. But nevertheless it is a reality and a wonderful subject for contemplation. That vast expanse will be filled with the glory of God. Therein will be experienced liberty and blessing of God, and the love of Christ will be the warmth filling the sphere. The result is that we are filled to all the fulness of God. This is analogous to the principle of hydraulics, that a liquid contained in

pipes will gradually rise to the level of the fountainhead

The church is now admitted to the knowledge of these things, so that they are no longer a mystery to her and that knowledge qualifies her to express or display the wisdom and love of God while she waits as the bride for her absent Bridegroom. We need to be shaken up from

drowsy slumber in these last moments of His absence, so that we may be in tune with the expectancy of the bride. So also will there be given a moral answer to the challenge of infidelity all around us. Moreover, we shall be found in support of the testimony of the gospel which is still God's power unto salvation to every believer.

## “Be still and let God mould Thee.”

(*A Meditation*)

HIS lesson art thou learning, oh tried and weary soul?

His ways art thou discerning, who works to make thee whole?

In the haven of submission, art thou satisfied and still?

Art thou clinging to the Father, neath the shadow of His will?

Now while His arms enfold thee, think well He loveth best:

Be still, and He shall mould thee for His heritage of rest.

The vessel must be shapen for the joys of Paradise

The soul must have her training for the service of the skies,

And if the great Refiner, in furnaces of pain,

Would do His work more truly, count all His dealings gain;

For He Himself hath told thee of tribulation here;

Be still, and let Him mould thee for the changeless glory there

From vintages of sorrow are deepest joys distilled,

And the cups outstretched for healing are oft at Marah filled,

God leads to joy through sorrow, to quietness through strife;

Through yielding into 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.

Such silence is communion, such stillness is a shrine;

The fellowship of suffering an ordinance divine,

And the secrets of 'abiding' most fully are declared

To those who with the Master deep sufferings have shared,

Then trust Him to uphold thee 'mid the shadows of the gloom;

Be still, and He shall mould thee for His presence and for home

For resurrection stillness there is resurrection power,

And the prayer and praise of trusting may glorify each hour;

And common days are holy, and years a flowing tide

To those who with the risen Lord in risen life abide,

Then let His true love fold thee, keep silence at His word;

Be still, and He shall mould thee,—O rest thou in the LORD.

## THE GRACE OF THE FATHER'S HEART.

James Boyd.

I BLESS Thee, Father, for Thy bounteous grace,  
 Which reached me when I wandered in my night  
 Of God-forgetfulness, and in my race  
 For happiness which from me was in flight.

I knew not where to find it; I was lost.  
 No satisfaction in this world I found;  
 In bitterness of spirit I was tossed  
 By powers of darkness, and was captive bound.

Hadst Thou not drawn me I had yet remained  
 In that lone land of guilt and death and gloom,  
 A captive by the base deceiver chained,  
 And nought awaiting but the sinner's doom.

Thine intervention in my woeful state  
 I had not hoped for, neither had I sought;  
 My dread deserts I felt I must await,  
 For sold I had been, and by tyrant bought.

But oh, Thine infinite and tender love  
 That could compassionate one so undone,  
 Smote thro' my gloom with brightness from above  
 And, living Father, drew me to Thy Son.

The welcome Thou didst give me far transcends  
 The highest thoughts I had of grace divine,  
 And all Thy joy expressed so sweetly blends  
 With Thy embrace which won this heart of mine.

The best Thy house could furnish Thou hast given  
 To clothe my nakedness, shoes brought and ring,  
 To robe him as a prince whom men had driven  
 From hence to wander as a scatterling.

Brought near to Thee with mirth; no aching void;  
 To stand before Thee with Thy well-Beloved,  
 And by Thy wondrous kindness overjoyed—  
 What soul could enter such a scene unmoved?

Father supreme! How infinitely good  
 To know Thee in Thy grace and love divine!  
 And with Thy Son and sons in Brotherhood,  
 Knowing that we are His redeemed and Thine.

Oh, to be with Thee in Thy home above!  
 Forever with Thee where Thy glories beam;  
 To bask beneath the sunshine of Thy love  
 And His, who died our spirits to redeem!

This is the prospect great to which we haste,  
 Ever to be with Thee and with Thy Son;  
 And tho' we wander in this tiresome waste  
 Our home is there, for Christ and we are one.  
 And in this world my soul is daily learning  
 What Thou art in Thy love in which I dwell  
 Filled with Thy favour, yet with blissful yearning  
 Thy Son to see, whom we have known so well.  
 And also in this weary waste I've found  
 What I so long had sought and sought in vain,  
 A happiness that all my joys hath crowned,  
 And that hath all my grief forever slain.

## THE HOLY SCRIPTURE. No. 5.

W. M. Rule.

Acts 18. 24-28.

**A** POLLOS is said to be an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures. Eloquence is a natural talent, and can be used by natural men to sway a multitude, but powerful or capable in the Scriptures is outside the natural altogether. Still, the two are a fine combination for the servant of the Lord, but if it came to a choice between the two, the latter, in preference to the former, would be the better one. The Apostle Paul's thorn in the flesh, evidently made him somewhat contemptible in the eyes of men, but he was mighty in the Scriptures, as the Epistle to the Hebrews testifies. In Apollos you find the two in combination, and yet not much spiritual intelligence, for he only knew John's baptism. The Lord uses His servants Aquila and Priscilla to instruct him in the way of God more perfectly. This was God's divinity school for Apollos, and the tuition was very effective, for you find him "Mightily convincing the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ" (v. 28). Ah, the secret of His power is that he had found Christ in the Scriptures, and he proclaimed HIM. We

may not all be like Apollos, either eloquent, or mighty in the Scriptures, but if spiritually intelligent in the Scriptures, we may imitate Aquila and Priscilla in their quiet teaching of this powerful evangelist.

The Scriptures, we have already said, are the servants' text book, and he will find there all he needs to fit him for his service in instructing others. The Apostle Paul in seeking to help the Jews at Thessalonica "reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead, and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ" (Acts 17. 2-3). His preaching was effectual, for some of them believed, and a great multitude of devout Greeks and women.

The one who is mighty in the Scriptures will not only have a perfect knowledge of them by study and meditation, but in seeking to help souls he will be sure to apply the right Scripture to meet the needs of those with whom he is dealing. He will not use a Scripture intended

for the help of a Christian (as is sometimes done), to a sinner troubled with a guilty conscience. Every truth of Scripture received in faith, has its own particular effect on the soul, just as peace with God is the result of being justified by faith.

The Passover Lamb and the Brazen Serpent both speak of the death of Christ, but how different the lessons learnt by the children of Israel in each case. To present the truth set forth in the Brazen Serpent to a soul feeling itself under the judgment of God, may give it rest of conscience, but when the truth of deliverance is needed, the edge of the word has been practically taken off, and the soul is hindered in its apprehension of the truth. You can drive a screw with a chisel and do it beautifully, but the edge will be taken off the chisel. Had you used a screwdriver, which is made for the purpose of driving screws, the chisel would have been unimpaired to do its work later on. Every servant must be left free of course to do the Lord's work in the way that seems best to him, but better service would be rendered to souls did we use the right Scripture for the present need of the soul.

Apollos was able to water the plants in God's garden (1 Cor 3 6). This is very important and refreshing work, for "he that watereth shall be watered also himself" (Prov 11 25). Its success depends on his keeping in close touch with his Master. The power to expound and apply the Word effectually lies in the Spirit. So it is recorded of him that he "helped them much which had believed through grace." Nor was he lacking in moral courage or zeal, for he spake boldly to his former co-religionists, of the truth he had learnt from the Scriptures. What a happy service was his.

We have these things recorded for us in the Scriptures, so that as the Lord's servants we may profit by them. He was a free labourer raised up by the Lord, a capable, courageous man, and yet willing to be taught by a humble brother and sister, like Aquila and his wife. We should seek to catch his spirit and at all events emulate his zeal, especially in searching the Scriptures, so that it may also be said of us, "*We through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope*" (Rom 15 4).

## Nevertheless Afterward!

**WHAT** a message of hope and comfort this 11th verse of the 12th chapter of Hebrews brings to those of us who at the present time may be, perhaps, labouring under a heavy load. Whether the sore strokes of chastisement come to us in the form of physical ill, sore privation or in other ways which affect us closely, it is well to remember that 'while the chastening appears grievous to us now, nevertheless

afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

Wherefore, let us, as we are exhorted—'lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.' Go forth afresh, looking forward to that blessed day when our "peaceable fruit" shall be ripe for us in the paradise of God.

## HOLDING THE HEAD.

(A Reprint)

UNLESS I am true to God and in keeping with His mind at any given time, I cannot be supported by the Holy Ghost. Every true saint from Abel down, had to learn that his strength and power to be for God was in proportion as he was in keeping with the mind and purposes of God at the time; otherwise he was not in the current of divine power. There might be holy desires in his heart, but in order to partake of the power and support of God, he must go in His way. Now, however truthful or laborious in service any saint may be, there is immense loss and glaring defect, where there is lack in HOLDING THE HEAD. Holding the Head is the cardinal truth for the church, and it is the vital point as to power and walk. I do not deny that there is some power and some attempt to walk with God where this great truth is unknown or overlooked, but I hope to shew in this paper, that there can be no vital energy or practice, but in proportion as this cardinal truth is held and enjoyed.

It is a truth entirely belonging to the time of Christ's rejection, it was never revealed until Paul's conversion. Many and various were the energies of divine grace in souls in great power and zeal before this truth, and the virtues it confers, were made known, but those energies, though great and excellent, never did rise up to, or participate in, union with Christ, which holding the Head implies; and which therefore confers a greater privilege and order of power than could have been known by any saint previous to the ascension of Christ. If saints would admit and maintain that hold-

ing the Head is the main point, the heart and seat of life for all personal and relative action in the church of God, there would be a given centre for all saints; and according as it was insisted on, and preserved with integrity, the refusal and extirpation of everything contrary would be simple and easy. I am very far from making little of the faith or zeal of any of the saints of God before the resurrection of the Lord, but I do say that no saint before that grand event could know the privilege and virtue of being united to Him who is the Son of God. But unless souls see the magnitude of this grace they cannot be exercised as to the gain of accepting it or the loss of overlooking it. Almost every kind of divine virtue is displayed in the line of witnesses from Abel downwards, but in none of them, I need hardly say, was there perfection. This perfection was in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Now a saint might be equal to Abel, or Enoch, or Moses, or Samuel, or David, or Elijah, as to his particular grace or faithfulness; yet he is called to a higher grace and walk than any of them because united to the perfect One, the Son of the Father in heaven. The witnesses who went before do indeed provoke us by their faith and zeal; but great and wonderful as was their course, none of them is our example or our model: our example is the Author and Finisher of faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. And even if I acted as well or better in any given thing than one of the former

witnesses in that in which he was most distinguished, yet if that were all, I should be below my calling; because I am called not to do it as he did it, but as Christ did, and I should do so, were I holding the Head. Let this be admitted, and then the gravity of our responsibility, and the greatness of our privilege will be evident enough. Many a saint is like a branch of a tree which you try to keep alive by placing it in water; there is life in it, but being detached from the root of the parent tree, it soon fails to give any evidence of it.

Saints present to themselves a lower standard than Christ. They seek one that their power will be able to reach up to; and many have no sense of acceptance higher or fuller than Abel's, and do not aim at any higher walk than Enoch's. Our acceptance *is in the Beloved*, and we have no lower standard than to walk even as He walked. The contrast is immense between an individual saint, even the greatest, in whom the Spirit of God merely acted, and one in He dwells, uniting him to the Head in heaven.

The saints in the former dispensation were individual; their power was not derivative from the Lord in heaven, though it was conferred by Him. The Spirit of God acted in them but not in concert one with another. Each stood alone. Now, it is immensely different. There is one Head, the Lord in heaven, and each saint, holding Him, derives from Him, "from whom all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and united together, increaseth with the increase of God."

If the Head be not held, there must be a degenerating to the order of saintship previous, and inferior to the present calling and order.

Nothing could be higher than the present, nor could there be one which ensured greater gain. If it be a question of acceptance it is "in the Beloved," as He is, so are we in this world." If it be walk, "we are to walk even as He walked." If it be a witness, it is "looking unto Jesus." If it be a servant, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." If it be as to place "We are raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ." If it be glory, "The glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them." If it be love, it is "that the love wherewith Thou lovest Me, may be in them, and I in them." Now if the Head be not held, there will be a degenerate apprehension of every one of these virtues or privileges.

It is most important to see that at no former period could the same manner or measure of grace be imparted to a saint as there is now to everyone true to his calling. When the disciples accompanied our Lord on the earth they were undoubtedly made familiar *par excellence* with what was most blessed. But though they were with Him and enjoyed the charm and blessing of His presence, yet they were not in moral company with Him. He was alone. To have enjoyed His company as a man, and to have participated in the wondrous shelter and love which His wing afforded them, was indeed their unique privilege, but they were in no wise like Him; they were at home with Him but they were not united to Him. He was not their known Head though He was their support, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. But now we are united to Him above, and we feed on Him as He was here on earth; the life of Jesus

is manifested in the body. Again, on the holy mount though some of them saw Him transfigured and heard the voice from the excellent glory and were eyewitnesses of His majesty, yet were they only spectators; they were not partaking of what He was partaking of, as joined to Him; and therefore one spirit with Him. Every one holding the Head, now beholds with unveiled face the glory of the Lord, and is transformed into the same likeness, but this did not in any degree happen to Peter, James and John.

Again, when the Lord was risen from the dead, and when He shewed Himself to His disciples in this new and transcendent way, they were quite conscious of His wondrous state. They had the peculiar and unspeakable gladness of seeing Him triumphant over all the ruin brought in by man, but though they were in a degree conscious of the new and bright day now inaugurated for them through Him, they really did not partake of it, as in it with Him, because the Holy Ghost had not as yet descended to unite them to Him the Head. They saw the Head, they heard what He would confer on them, but not yet were they one spirit with the Lord, nor could they enjoy resurrection as He enjoyed it, though they could rejoice in the risen Lord. Thus neither in His walk, nor in His transfiguration, nor after His resurrection, were His disciples, though most highly favoured, made acquainted similarly in any degree with His state at the time; because they were

not united to Him. And therefore the weakest saint united to Him now tastes, as to degree, a greater thing than any of the disciples in any period of His life upon earth.

When holding the Head is actually known, there is always a "seeking the things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." Stephen declares the efficacy of union when he "looked steadfastly into heaven," Paul, when he says, "not I but Christ liveth in me." But it is not merely individual as all grace has been hitherto, in every dispensation; but now, as one member is honoured all the members rejoice with it. And this is the only true way of learning or understanding the unity of the body. In a variety of ways of late years, the unity of the body has been accepted as a doctrine without any power flowing from it; and simply because it is with the effect of union with the Head Christians are occupied, and not with that which produces the effect. They speak and dwell on the unity of the body, without insisting on holding the Head, as the only way to arrive at or secure this unity. The consequence is that one will regard the unity of the body as a club of Christians, and another will contend that a congregation which takes the place and form of worshippers is the body of Christ. All and every shade of inaccuracy on the subject is simply traceable to not holding the Head, this greatest and most wondrous of privileges and benefits.

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Remember that Christ nourishes and cherishes the church as a man his own flesh; if you are in communion with Him you may be privileged to have some part in this service of love.

## “I WILL OPEN UP THE WAY BEFORE THEE.”

W. Bramwell Dick.

THE question may be in many minds, and, perhaps, on not a few lips, What does the New Year hold out for us if the Lord leaves us here? The year 1932 has been one in which many beloved children of God have been under much pressure owing to unemployment, poor business, and other causes. Thank God they have been maintained in quiet, simple confidence in Himself and He has not failed them. At the time of writing it does not seem as if 1933 will open under brighter skies, humanly speaking. Difficult circumstances may continue; “cuts” may remain, and faith may be tried. In the midst of it all, our trust is in “the living God who is the Saviour (Preserver) of all men, specially of those that believe;” and “Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy” (1 Timothy 4. 10; 6. 17).

Sometime ago a card was given to us containing what was said to be the Hebrew translation of Proverbs 4. 12. Here it is:—

*“As thou goest step by step,  
I will open up the way before  
thee.”*

God is addressing an individual. The writer desires to put himself in that individual's place, and he believes each one of his fellow-believers who reads these lines desires to do the same. We note therefore in the first place that it is

### GOD and ME.

God who is so great, so high, so holy, Who has such a multitude of interests calling for His attention. I, an infinitesimal speck in His great universe. God, the living God; the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; my God and Father in

Christ. I, His poor failing, faltering, sometimes faithless child. He graciously speaks to me. He knows all about me; He is deeply interested in every detail of my little life; He loves me dearly; and He gives me this marvellous assurance.

(1) “*As thou goest.*” There has to be motion on our part. Not fleshly restlessness, but the ready answer to His call. “By faith Abraham when he was called to go out . . . obeyed; and he went out” (Hebrews 11. 8). Great though the pressure may be, and tempting though some offer may be, we do not want to change our circumstances unless God changes them for us.

(2) “*As thou goest step by step.*” The shrewd man of the world if he considers some important proposition wants to work the whole thing out, to know how it will progress, and how it will end. Our path is “step by step.” The next step may be into glory; Hallelujah! till then it is one step at a time. Abraham “went out, not knowing whither he went.” Had someone asked him, “Where are you going, Abraham?” he must have replied, “I do not know.” The world might call him a foolish man; God called him, “My friend” (Isaiah 41. 8). His path was “step by step” and every step he took he learned more of God.

(3) “*As thou goest step by step, I WILL.*” Who says so? The only Person in the universe Who can say so and that is God. We recall the sevenfold “I WILL” in Exodus 6. 6, 7, 8, prefixed and sealed with the statement, “I am Jehovah”; and we know how every one was fulfilled to the letter. He who says

"I will" is the One who will do it, and there is no doubt about it.

(4) "*As thou goest step by step, I will open up the way before thee.*" But the way seems dark—yes. It is like a cul-de-sac—yes. I feel that I should not go back, but if I go forward I see only a stone wall. Venture another step dear, tried child of God, and see how He will open up the way before thee. The children of Israel were in a tight corner, literally hemmed in. The Egyptians behind, a mountain on either side, and the sea in front. What were they to do? What could they do? Nothing? Yes. They could cry to God. Alas! they cried against God, but Moses cried to God, and the answer came, "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward" (Exodus 12. 15). What! Go forward to certain death? "Go forward!" and "As thou goest step by step, I will open up the way before thee."

Faith triumphed, and "By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land" (Hebrews 11. 29). It is not surprising, is it, that when they reached the other side, and witnessed the power of God; the defeat of their enemies, and the answer to their faith, they sang and sang again. The brief records of Hebrews 11 of adventures of faith on the part of men and women, named and unnamed, is simply thrilling. How much by our want of faith do we grieve the heart of our God; and, alas! how often we miss the luxury of experiencing what He is ready

to do for us. We start out on January 1st, 1933, many enjoying the privileges peculiar to the Lord's Day of being gathered around our precious Lord to remember Him; then, later, to engage in His service. Others are shut-in-ones, confined to home and, in some cases, to bed. Some in much isolation, cut off from the enjoyment of Christian fellowship. Still others with the dark cloud of unemployment hanging over them, and their financial resources growing less. To all such, as well as to those in more prosperous circumstances, and who also seek to move only as He guides, and who are content to go one step at a time, there comes His Word, "As thou goest step by step, I will open up the way before thee." What more do we want? Our next step may be into His presence. If one of old had to say, "There is but a step between me and death" (1 Samuel 20. 3), may not we say, there is but a step between ourselves and our being "for ever with the Lord"? "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Corinthians 15. 52), we shall find ourselves one day at home with Himself; having been changed into His likeness; and unhinderedly praising His Name.

Shall we then, encouraging ourselves in the Lord our God (1 Samuel 30. 6), start out upon the New Year with our hand in His hand? As we recall all the way that He has led us; and as we hear Him saying to us, "As thou goest step by step, I will open up the way before thee."

We must walk and serve as if we were before the judgment seat of Christ as to ourselves, and in love to others, seeking what they need from Christ, not thinking of party or sect.

# THE SON AND LIFE.

H. J. Vine.

“**GOD cannot lie.**” Every promise of His shall be fulfilled, not a word of His shall fail. And He has promised eternal life and He did it before the ages of time. The promise was made before time began, but it had to be brought into and manifested in time, and when the ages of time have passed away and ceased, full blessedness will abide in glory and love for ever. But this fulfilment of the promise depended entirely upon the coming of the Son out of eternity into time.

The Son has come. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him” (1 John 4. 9). In a rejoicing and reconciled creation the Son of the Father’s love will be pre-eminent in all things. He will annul “all rule and all authority and power,” and in Him the good pleasure of the Fulness will dwell and find unalloyed satisfaction in the glorious result. And resting on the immoveable foundation of the peace made by the blood of His cross, all the reconciled shall rejoice and glory in the great Reconciler, by whom and for whom all things were created. The Son, the Revealer of the Father will be, as He is now, the everlasting delight of His holy love; and the eternal Spirit will blessedly pervade all that living realm of glad reconciliation; and unfading beauty, order, liberty, light and joy, holiness and glory, life and love will display the wise designs of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in their vital wealth in full fruition.

What was created by the Son of the Father’s love will be reconciled

by Him eventually in full, glorious splendour! He has, however, already reconciled the assembly in the body of His flesh through *death*. He is now the exalted Head of that assembly, and the promise of *life* in the Son is finally secured. We have good reason to rejoice and to respond to the word, “Giving thanks to the Father, who has made us fit for sharing the portion of the saints in light, who has delivered us from the authority of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of THE SON OF HIS LOVE” (Col. 1. 12, 13). The sovereign sway of divine love in light and life has prevailed, and freedom from *the authority* of darkness has been made ours by the Father. Thanks-giving and praise be His.

The Holy Spirit shows that eternal life is connected with the Father and the Son. The assembly, called out from the nations, partakes in the before-time promise. For Israel, the favoured nation, the outlook is the earthly and the promises have to do with time. The Son of God spoke to Nicodemus, a teacher in Israel, of both the earthly and the heavenly. He could do so, for in His “wonderful” Person both are secured. He said, “If I have said the *earthly* things to you, and ye believe not, how, if I say the *heavenly* things to you, will ye believe?” Life eternal in divine blessedness was involved in the latter. And the Son from heaven is the bringer of it. Therefore those golden words graced His holy lips, “God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son; that whosoever believes on Him may not perish, but have life eternal.” Also we read, “He that believes on the

Son has life eternal." Life eternal was brought here by the Son; He became Man and gave His flesh for the life of the world, and those who are taught of God believe on Him, and have life. It was His Father's will, as He said, "Everyone who sees the Son, and believes on Him, should have life eternal." "He that hath the Son hath life."

When Israel repent of their rejection of Him, and are received according to promise, it will be "life from among the dead." From their sleep in earth's dust such will awake to life; and then those in earthly Zion will be specially favoured with the blessing, which is characterized by "life for evermore." They will be in priestly nearness before Jehovah, and from that good and pleasant unity, of which Psalm 133 speaks, will flow exceptional blessing, while great earthly benefits will spread. All Israel will be saved. The Lord shall be King over all the earth. All the nations shall call Him blessed. Tribes, tongues and peoples shall be blessed in Him. He will fill "the throne of His father David"; and the glorious throne on which He sits will spread far its glad benefits. Those who  *dwell* with Him above in His Father's house, will reap the ineffable fulness of life eternal in the adorable presence of the Father and the Son.

His loved ones shall also  *reign* with Him, for this is His promise, but they shall  *dwell* with Him too! His royal glory in "the earthly things" is of momentous and deep interest to them, but His eternal glory in the dwelling of eternal love,—the dwelling of the Father and the Son,—surpasses all else, and the eternal Spirit even now guides those

who share "the heavenly things" to anticipate in faith, affection and deepening understanding, the things that belong to that glory, as His coming draws nigh (John 16). It was as the Son of the Father, He said, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." With Himself in His Father's dwelling of many mansions and of living splendour and love! What more can be desired by those who know the Father's eternal love through the Son by the Comforter's teaching?

He is THE ETERNAL WORD also, and the Holy Spirit tells us, "All things received being through Him" (John 1. 3). By and for the Son of the Father's love all were created (Col. 1. 16). "By me kings reign, and rulers make just decrees; by me princes rule, and nobles, all the judges of the earth," says WISDOM regarding her administration of glory and power; while in pleading grace her voice is heard without in "the chief place of concourse"; and within is the house-building. The glorious Speaker in whom Jehovah delighted (Prov. 8. 30), says, "*I was set up (anointed) from eternity!*" before creation and kings appeared. The same Person is afterwards set (or *anointed*: same as Psa. 2. 6) in Zion; and Jehovah decrees, "Thou art My Son; I this day have begotten Thee." The anointed Speaker in Proverbs 8 says, "*Whoso findeth Me findeth life*" (35); and, "He that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul" (36). Anointed from eternity! Anointed as "begotten" of Jehovah in time! He "came forth from the Father" to bring life eternal to perishing sinners. "*He that hath THE SON hath life.*"

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

## The Servants in the Father's House: Luke 15.

Robertson's Translation shows that three different words were used in the Parable of the Prodigal for "servants" There were the hired servants who had abundance of food while the son starved as the hired servant of the "citizen" Then there were the house-slaves (word frequently applied by Paul to himself) who brought forth the best robe ring and shoes Finally there were the young men, one of whom interpreted the actings of grace to the elder son Can you throw any light on the significance of these three terms?—'LADY SOPHIA'

WHILE this great parable was not spoken to interest us in the servants in the house, but in the Father's love for his son and the welcome that he gave him, illustrating God's amazing love to sinners and His joy when they repent and return to Him, yet there are these details that are beautiful in their place.

The *hired servants* would not be attached to the house, their only interest in it would be their pay, but this was most generous, they had 'enough to spare,' which shews that the father in that house was not a hard master The son is the only one who speaks of these, he wished to be in their place, for as he arose to return to his father, his only thought was his hungry belly, it does not seem to have entered his head that his father loved him So he would have said, "Make me as one of thy hired servants" What a surprise he got when his father met him We may consider the contrast between a hired servant with his daily pay, having no part in the joys of the house, and a son, received and robed and rejoicing in the father's love: the one was the best we had hoped for though we had no right even to that, the other is the fruit of the Father's love

The *house slaves* stood in a different relationship to the house, they were part of it, and since the father

was so gracious a man, they would share the sorrows as well as the joys of the house We are sure that the "let us be merry" included them They were intelligent too, and trustworthy and sympathetic, for to them was entrusted the clothing of the son, and they knew where the best robe and the ring and the sandals were kept "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" And while these servants cannot represent the angels, for we are not told that angels have anything to do with the blessing of sinners, may we not think of the Holy Spirit in this connection? Just as Abraham's servant adorned Rebecca with silver and gold and precious stones, e'er he led her to Isaac, so the Spirit of God sets the repentant believing sinner in Christ and adorns him with the beauties of redemption, and witnesses with his spirit that he is one of God's children, and God's many attributes all combine in confirming this work

The servant who went out to the elder son was really a *servant boy*, but he, probably the least in all that house, had caught the spirit and the joy of it and can proclaim the cause of it in telling phrases

We do not care for fanciful interpretations of Scripture, and we would content ourselves by saying that these references to these various grades of servants in the house give complete

ness to a picture painted by the Divine Artist, which shew us the grace and abundance of God's house and that in whatever capacity any one may be in as serving God, they

are blest indeed, and their joy and portion serves to shew up the unspeakable folly of the elder son, whose pride kept him outside that circle of blessing.

## “In the Beginning.”

“If it be maintained that you cannot speak of the beginning with reference to Eternity, and that therefore John 1. 1. necessarily implies a step out of Eternity into Time, and that “the beginning” must mean the beginning of God's revelation in Christ, i.e. the Incarnation: How would you meet it?”—B.W.I.

**WE SHOULD** answer that the Scripture in question disproves such a contention. The “In the beginning” of John 1. 1 carries us further back than Genesis 1. 1. That was the beginning of creation and would coincide in the third verse of John 1. But this statement declares that the Word was there when the beginning of anything that could begin began. We give an interesting quotation from W. Kelly that brings out the difference between the opening words of the Gospel and those of the Epistle.

“In the beginning” (vers. 1, 2) means before creation. This is clearly proved by verse 3, which attributes to the Word the existence of all the universe. He gave all things their existence so absolutely that none existed apart from Him. But go back as far as you may in thought, He was in being with God, yet having His personal subsistence as God, in contrast with every creature. There is no point of duration that could be taken in eternity before the work of creation began, but there He was “in [the] beginning.” The absence of the article in Greek is a nicety for conveying the truth

which our own tongue fails here to express. If inserted in Greek, it would have fixed attention on a known point; whereas the very aim is to exclude such a thought and to characterise His uncreated being by a phrase which admits the illimitable. “In the beginning God created,” etc., begins time; “In the beginning the Word was,” leaves the door open for the eternal. It is therefore well said that John 1. 1 is before Genesis 1. 1. But if we are told that “In [the] beginning was the Word,” verse 14 tells us that “the Word became flesh” in time. The First Epistle starts with the fact so wondrous on God's part, so rich in blessing for saints, and for sinners, too, as all once were. Not only the Word eternally was, but in due time the Word became flesh. Consequently in the Epistle it is not, “In the beginning,” but “From the beginning.”

We should like to have added an interesting and instructive quotation from the writings of the late Edward Cross on the opening of John's Epistle in this connection, but as space will not permit of this in this issue we reserve it for our next.

## HE LOVED THEM TO THE END.

JESUS knew that all things had been given into His hands by the Father, and that the hour had come when He should depart out of the world unto the Father from whom He had come. How did He conduct Himself? The glories of the Father's house, which He knew so well, were not far away now. He had almost reached the end of His path of sorrow and was about to enter into that glory which He had had with the Father before the world was. What will He say and do? To our thinking, how vast, how glorious, how greatly to be desired was all that into which He was going—the Father's presence, those mighty beings whose power was only limited by the will of God, and His eternal home; and how insignificant were the disciples, how weak and foolish, how fickle; not a noble or wise man amongst them as men would judge. Does He draw away

from them, gradually breaking the links that had bound them to Him? And will He in those joys that await Him forget them? No. He says two things to them, that shines out with a wonderful lustre among all His other sayings. He says: "Remember Me," and "I will come again." "I do not want you to forget Me, and I will not forget you."

Consider these two sayings, consider them afresh in the circumstances in which they were uttered. No words that could be said about them could be as impressive as they are in their divine simplicity, the simplicity and yet the intensity of love—of the love of Christ that passeth knowledge. Ponder them until your soul glows with the warmth of them. "Remember Me . . . "I will come again and receive you unto Myself."

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## For those who preach the Gospel

You must know the gospel if you would teach it, but if you would teach it triumphantly and with blessed effect you must love it. Truly no man knows it who does not love it. It is not enough to give it the assent of the mind, you must give it the loving and undivided homage of the heart.

Remember that in preaching the gospel you have not only the hardness of men's hearts to meet, but the direct opposition of Satan. The gospel is never preached but he will endeavour to neutralise it. If he cannot adulterate it and spoil it in the heart and on the lips of the preacher, he will snatch it away from the heart of the hearer, lest he believe and is saved. You must make up your mind to this. Consider it in the presence of the Lord who sends you to preach, and decide how to meet it. This is warfare, a subtle tactician is opposed to the gospel, and you will need Divine tactics with which to meet him. What dependence on the Lord this calls for, and the recognition of His Holy Spirit.

## CONTEMPLATION, ADORATION, &amp; DESIRE.

J. T. Mawson.

“For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.” (Mark 10. 43.)

WE BLESS and thank the Lord for these words that came out of His mouth. They reveal His heart to us, and declare that amazing love that must serve and suffer. No human words could describe His glory, the glory which He had with the Father before the world began, and no human thought could soar up to that unapproachable light in which He dwelt in those distant ages, but this we know that He was there when time began. It was His hand that set the pendulum of time in motion, and by His word all things were made. His works declare His power and wisdom, but creation, even in its infinite and illimitable variety, could not satisfy His nature. His love was set upon the sons of men, and He became the Son of Man to serve them and to save them. He did not wait until they asked Him to come to their aid. His own love, love that surpasses all our comprehension, moved Him to leave His throne in glory to be the servant of man's need, and their need did not arise from any earnest desire in their hearts to do the will of God, but from wilfulness and disobedience and sin. It was to minister to *sinful men* that He came.

Far off from God we had wandered, but He followed us; He sought us and came alongside us to win us, when He was born in Bethlehem. We wonder at His lowly birth, and great humility. He did not come to the Imperial palace, nor to the homes of the proud and great, but to the manger=cradle. The

world had no place for Him at His advent but a stable, and He accepted this cold and indifferent reception without resentment, for He had come not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.

We follow Him with wonder in that life of service amidst the sin and moral putrefaction of the world. His surroundings made Him the Man of sorrows; He could not be other in the world where sin reigned unto death. And He looked beneath the surface and knew well the root from whence the world's misery sprang and grew. This root bore bitter fruit when He was here, for when men saw Him they hated Him, but that did not turn Him from His service of love. Their sorrows and their woes moved Him to compassion. Their neglect of Him, and their scorn of Him, and their reviling, and their blindness to their own need and blessing, broke His heart, indeed, but only served to reveal the deeper love and fuller grace that were in Him. There divine goodness was un baffled and undeterred by evil, even when that evil rose up to slay Him. Then goodness triumphed with a great triumph for the slaying of Him was the saving of them.

He came to seek the lost, and none who sought Him were spurned by Him; the lepers, the outcast and sin's broken drudges were welcomed; they came to His feet and He made them feel that He was glad to have

them there, and their needs made Him their servant. And yet how scant was their gratitude. One here and another there, chiefly women, returned to give thanks and to weep in silent adoration at His feet, but the men went everyone of them to their own homes. Men, beasts and birds were all housed and sheltered when the night storms raged, but He had no home on earth; the Son of Man had nowhere to lay His head.

' O Lord; Thy wondrous story  
Our inmost souls doth move,  
We ponder o'er Thy glory  
Thy lonely path of love."

That lonely path, uncheered by the smiles of men, and made hard by their hatred, led onward to the cross, for there were deeper needs and more terrible foes, and greater claims to be met than ever man knew or dreamt of, and to meet these He had to go to deeper depths. It was an amazing descent from the throne of His eternal glory to the manger of Bethlehem, and from the home of the Father's everlasting love to homeless strangership in a world of sorrow and sin, but what mind of man or angel can understand the deeper descent into judgment and death. Yet He did not hold back from that. He humbled Himself, even in His Manhood, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He travelled the distance—immeasurable to everything but the love of God—from the everlasting throne, in its intrinsic and unapproachable holiness and light, to the depths of man's degradation and judgment and death. Not only the malice of the powers of darkness, formidable and ruthless, and man's hatred, unreasonable and without a cause, were there at the cross, to make it terrible, but He was made

sin for us. He came to give His life a ransom for many, and that mission involved Him in the unparalleled woe of the sin-bearer. God's face was hidden from Him as He drank the bitter draught of judgment for sin for the sake of men. "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." He did not save Himself, He could not save Himself. His love and His Father's will made that impossible. He had come to save us, upon this His love was bent, and this was His Father's will. His Father who ever loved Him had a fresh reason for loving Him, when He gave His life a ransom for all.

Great and holy Saviour . . . we rejoice to know that Thou art crowned with glory at Thy Father's right hand, but it is not that that bows us in deepest gratitude and adoration at Thy feet.

Not because the crowns of glory  
Shine upon Thy sacred brow,  
Not because all heaven adores Thee  
Do Thy people bless Thee now:  
But because midst shame and sorrow  
Thou didst suffer on the tree—  
This the cause of their thanksgiving  
Why they raise their song to Thee.

We bless Thee for what Thy soul endured when Thou for us didst bleed. We bless Thee because Thou didst come, not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give Thy life a ransom for many. Saviour, we owe all to Thee, and, spirit, soul and body, we belong to Thee. This now is our chiefest boast.

"Bought with Thy blood most precious,  
Whose can we be but Thine."

Thou art our Lord. To Thee we bow the knee. We desire to do Thy will, O living Lord, and to be like Thee now, as we shall be like Thee in Thy glory.

"Like Thee in faith, in meekness, love  
In every beauteous grace."

We desire to tread in Thy footsteps, and not seek to be ministered unto, but to minister. We pray that we may be delivered from all our selfishness, and constrained by Thy love not to live unto ourselves but unto Thee, who died for us and rose again. We cannot give our lives a ransom for others. Thou only, upon whom death had no claim, couldst give Thy life a ransom for others, but we can be chief among our brethren by being the servants of all, and so we may be like Thee for Thou wert amongst Thy disciples as He that served. Thou wert

the bonds slave of man's necessities. Overshadow us, Lord, with Thy presence, teach us Thy way, move us by Thy love. Throughout these coming days, be they many or few, mould us and fashion us according to Thy holy will. May we be all that Thy grace has purposed for us. Thou hast given us an example, that we should do to others as Thou hast done to us, and we would know the happiness of those who love Thy word and keep it. We would be pleasurable unto Thee, conscious of Thy smile, and have the deep joy of Thy company unto the end. We ask it for Thy dear Name's sake. Amen.

## MANIFOLD MORE. Luke 18. 30.

SACRIFICE and loss would be unendurable if there were no present compensation, but there is "manifold more." The sufferings of this present time might well try our spirits and depress us, if for every loss there were not a greater gain. We ought to pass through no trial or sorrow without finding a distinct relative compensation with Christ, a compensation in keeping with and surpassing the suffering. It is a great loss and an evidence of insubjection to Christ, when the misery of the loss is before one's eyes every day, haunting one like a spectre, and continual fretting and disturbing one's spirit. Surely the compensation should engage one's heart, and then if the trials be many and sore, the compensations will be many and great. The successful miner of gold speaks not so much of his toil as of his success. The nugget is the trophy, and the toil in obtaining it is forgotten in the joy of possessing. I met a prospector in Australia who told me that in his search for gold he had sometimes been compelled to feed on snakes and grass, but he laughed at the hardship for he had found gold.

"As a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Timothy 2).

"I have fought the good fight" (2 Timothy 4).

You are enlisted, you do wear the uniform, you ought to fight; victory is certain, the honours are everlasting; and only think of Him who is your "Leader and Commander." You will have no such opportunity of distinguishing yourselves for Christ in Heaven. Lose no time, then, in waking up to the consciousness that you are soldiers, and that you must learn to fight. There is no discharge in this war, and no truce with the enemy.

# A CHRISTIAN'S BIOGRAPHY, IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

Inglis Fleming.

## Chapter 1.

### *Chosen in Christ.*

"ACCORDING as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Eph. 1. 4).

Here is the Christian's most ancient history. The first volume of his biography. People boast of their lineage from this one or that one of earth's nobility. They go back for hundreds of years without a break in their genealogical line and glory in their family history. But how the boasted honour of this pales before the Christian's descent. He was in the purpose of God, before the world began to be. The Son of God was in the bosom of the Father and thoughts and purposes as to believers being linked with Him, were in that bosom also.

Thus our blessing was no afterthought with God. Adam was a figure of Christ, the coming One. And it was pre-determined that Christ having come and having suffered should be "the Last Adam,"—the head of a new race and that He should have companions with and like Himself.

## Chapter 2.

### *Created in Christ.*

"We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2. 10).

Solidity and strength of heart are imparted to the believer who enters upon the truth of this verse. We

are not the result of our works, lest we should boast. We are the outcome of the gracious work of God. Part of "a new creation in Christ" (2 Cor. v. 17). Of God we are "in Christ Jesus" (1 Cor. 1. 30). It is altogether of Himself and for His glory and for the good of others.

Thus we glory in Him and not in ourselves. We trace all we have and are, and shall have and shall be as in Christ, to God. It is His handiwork alone and all is perfect.

Good works have their place—an important place. Those who have believed God are exhorted to maintain them. But that place is subsequent to our new creation in Christ Jesus. Notice the three things

Salvation is "not of works."

We are "God's workmanship."

We are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works."

It is only as God's workmanship as being part of a new creation, that we can fulfil His good pleasure in the good works which He has before ordained that we should walk in them.

## Chapter 3.

### *Cleared in Christ.*

"There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

Out of Christ we were exposed to condemnation. "In Christ" condemnation can never reach us. Christ has borne the judgment. He has endured the condemnation. In Him, as the sacrifice at the cross of Calvary, God "condemned sin in the flesh."

Now for us who believe upon Him, there is no possibility of condemnation. We are "in ' Him who is beyond all the waves and billows of judgment. All these passed over Him at the dread hour of His woe at Golgotha. There the bitter waters entered into His soul. All that we had done was charged to Him,— "He was delivered for our offences."

And all that we were in our sinful state was charged to Him also—He who knew no sin was "made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

But as we have shown, this is past. Christ is risen and we are seen of God IN Him. He was for us at Calvary. We are in Him in resurrection. He was counted to be as we were at the Cross. We are counted to be as He is in resurrection. We are completely cleared—justified—in Him.

One has said, "In Christ is as Christ. Another has said, 'Christ's place is our place.'" Ponder these truths, dear believer. It will be for your joy and blessing.

## Chapter 4

### *Complete in Christ*

'And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power" (Col 2 10)

To that which is complete nothing can be added rightly. Any attempt to put something to a finished work is but to deny its perfectness and to mar its beauty.

Wonderful is the association of the two verses 9 and 10—All "the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Him bodily," and "Ye are complete in Him."

And all is of God for us. We could not bring this to pass. We

could not effect it but we can enjoy it and give to God our Father our hearts' praises on account of it.

Foolish indeed should we be to allow angels or men or any other beings between ourselves and Him, to pray or intercede for us. We are in Him—in Him who is above angels and all other power.

Being placed in such a position of favour and blessedness we are called to "Beware lest any spoil us" (lead us away as captives), by philosophy or vain deceit after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ."

All rationalism and ritualism would engage our thoughts with self and with that which is after man, and that which is in accordance with his thoughts. The truth engages us with Christ, with His glorious work and with its glorious results.

Blessed indeed our portion, "Complete in Christ."

## Chapter 5

### *Conformed to Christ*

This is our great ultimate.

It is in view of this goal that we have been called and justified by God. He marked us out beforehand to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be first-born among many brethren (Rom 8 29).

Happy prospect this! We are to be like Christ. He is coming for us. As yet we have not seen what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is (1 John 3 3).

As we are consciously unlike Him now in so much of our walk and ways, we rejoice that the day is soon to dawn when everything not in accordance with His thought will

be a thing of the past. This and all others of "the former things" will have "passed away."

The truth of our conformity to Christ then is shown to be in order "that He may be firstborn among many brethren." Does it not add to our joy that we are going into the Father's house for the glory and happiness of the Son of God our Saviour? It will be for our glory and happiness also of course. But

supreme delight will be ours that we minister in some little way to His pleasure.

Chosen in Christ.

Created in Christ.

Cleared in Christ.

Complete in Christ.

Conformed to Christ.

What a history is ours! Our past, present and future are bound up with Christ.

## SALVATION.

DO NOT let us rest in the cold consciousness of being saved, but let us live in the great things into which salvation has brought us.

Salvation for Israel had three parts; they were saved out of Egypt; they were saved through the wilderness; their salvation was complete when they were brought to Canaan. And here is typified our salvation: it also has a threefold character; we are saved, we are being saved, and we shall be saved. In another sense we may rejoice in this our salvation as a threefold present reality. We can give thanks, and sing "Happy day!" as we think of deliverance from Satan's power and what our sins deserved, and we do rightly rejoice throughout our

pilgrim way, for even the difficulties are there that we might prove what a great Saviour we have, ever living for us. But more, God will not keep us waiting until we reach our heavenly Canaan to enjoy it. Eshcol's grapes tells us of that land of rest; the Spirit has been given to us that we might enjoy heaven now.

We have the support and sympathy of our Lord in our wilderness circumstances, and this means salvation for us, for He is able to save us to the uttermost, but the comforts of Home are brought to us by the Spirit, that we might long for Home more, and the Spirit is the power by which we may even now reach home in spirit, for we may have communion with our Lord who is there.

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My soul, press on! press on with speed,  
The time is short! pause not, nor stay;  
If aught thy progress would impede,  
Cast it behind thee! Haste away!

Hasten to meet Him—watch each hour,  
Redeem each moment of delay;  
Full soon with resurrection power  
Thou shalt adore Him! Haste away.

## WANDERINGS AND TEARS.

T. Oliver.

*"Thou tellest my wanderings: put Thou my tears into Thy bottle: are they not in Thy book?" (Psalm 56. 8).*

**M**AN has been a wanderer, ever since Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod (lit. the land of "wanderings") (Gen. 4. 16). So one of the most interesting of secular studies is presented in the problem of the "Migrations of Peoples." Ethnologists tell us that the main factors causing a migration are expulsive and attractive. As to the former it may be caused by a dearth of food supply or lack of water or from overpopulation. The attraction of better conditions elsewhere is averred to be a less potent cause than the expulsion of necessity, as people are naturally inert and will cling to their fatherland. Yet cupidity has determined many human "drifts." The control of a migration once started is said to be mainly due to geographical conditions. Streams of men, like those of liquids, take the line of least resistance being deflected by various barriers.

We do not seek to belittle the investigations of students of the subject. But we do well to observe that they ignore the testimony of Scripture as to the initiation of the process. Because it is well-known that the seed contains all the principles and features which later become manifest in the fruit. So whatever may be the features and controlling influences of human migration, they are contained in embryo form in the inception of the matter. Anterior to all the material causes is the deep-seated moral cause that Cain slew his brother through envy, and went out from the presence of the Lord

to follow a path of self-will described in the last epistle of the New Testament as "the way of Cain" (Jude 11). Moreover, we should take note of the precision of Scripture, Cain went out from the presence "of the Lord." The term "Lord" implies complete domination. So that the person who remains in the presence of the Lord becomes subject to the Lord's will. Henceforth His prayer becomes, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" On the other hand, man in the "way of Cain" has rejected all idea of the control of the Lord and consequently he has become the plaything of forces, over which he has no control and into the nature of which he has little insight.

But the primary purpose of this article is not to dilate on the features of man's wanderings away from the Lord. But to show that the Christian, although not immune from the fruits of the world movements, has a resource in the sense that he is essentially in the control of the Lord's will. Nothing happens to him by chance. Indeed all things work together for good to those who love God (Rom. 8. 28).

The passage of Scripture forming our text is an extract from the first of a group of five psalms described as "golden" because esteemed as such in God's assessment. The Psalmist wrote the lines in the sense of the unfailing mercy of God which had preserved him through countless jeopardies. So the Christian, although having his real interests in

heaven, is a man on earth. But these interests lead to his being involved in a heavenly calling which causes him to differ from the mere worldling whose interests are earth-bound. Hence the Christian is supported by Divine power which is available to faith. The life of faith, marked out by the footsteps of the Lord Himself while He was on earth, is a path characterised by submission to and dependence on the will of God. The apostle Peter speaks of the trial of our faith as being more precious than of gold that perishes (1 Peter 1. 7).

The Psalmist records his sense of God's perfect accountancy. "Thou tellest (lit. countest) my wanderings" (Hebrew word, "Nod."). So the man of God may not differ in appearance from those around him. He has to work for his living. In times of industrial stress such as the present period, he may come to be out of work, and may have to move to another sphere of action. In that new set of conditions, he may still remain unemployed and he may be tempted to view the conditions as constituting an enigma. He may feel akin with the common expression at the close of the Old Testament times, "It is vain to serve God!" (Mal. 3. 14). Does God really care for His people? That there were many similar mysteries indicated in the Old Testament is evident, in spite of the fact that then the people of God had only an earthly calling, and hence all their blessings were earth-centred.

However, there need be no dubiety on that point in this dispensation, because the blessings of the people of God are not now earthly. Every condition obtaining for the Christian has a distinct orientation.

The apostle James exhorted his brethren to be patient in view of the coming of the Lord (Jas. 5. 7). That is the purpose of all the discipline through which God's people are caused to pass. Jacob stated before Pharaoh that the days of the years of his life had been few and evil. His is a striking instance of God's dealing in mercy. In spite of all Jacob's wanderings to little evident result, he undoubtedly profited by the process, because his life had a golden sunset, as witnessed by his prophetic words in the 49th chapter of Genesis. The Christian's pathway may seem to be as much a maze or "tangled skein" as that of the worldling. But the manifestation of the end on which this apparent maze debouches at the judgment seat of Christ will explain everything.

God's merciful dealings with us in our wanderings produce results. These are described by the Psalmist as "tears." The alternative reading is "My tears have been put in Thy bottle." It is very striking that there should be a resemblance in this verse which linguists describe as a paronomasia, between *Nod* 'wandering' and *Nod* 'bottle' (i.e., a skin or leather sack). God has taken perfect cognizance of our devious way and has so arranged matters that there are precious results from the spiritual exercises stimulated therein in the form of minute drops. Moreover, he has provided the receptacle for their collection, so that not one of them may be lost. He counts the tear-drops as well as the wanderings which are antecedent. There are said to be 60 drops of water in a teaspoonful. (Of course, the number will depend on the size of the drops which in turn depends on certain physical conditions.) The

apothecary is very careful in gauging potions by the number of drops. Moreover, he enters up the details of every prescription in a book which he preserves with great care. Shall we not join in the Psalmist's beautiful concession to God's care. The result of our spiritual exercise due to discipline may be very small, but it is preserved safely in God's bottle, and the record is entered in His book. How encouraging to know that the process and results are immune from all the evaporating influences of time!

From the word "tears" being used to describe the results of exercises incident to our secular affairs, we would learn that they are definite entities and not continuous streams, i.e., there is a definite result or "tear" for each exercise. A tear-drop is a perfect sphere. But when it is dropped into His bottle, it becomes merged with the results of previous exercises. But its identity is preserved by the entry in His book. By these statements, we are not seeking to gainsay the very wonderful correlation of exercises which undoubtedly exists. This correlation is one of the features of the Holy Spirit's business. So that there is a repetition of what occurred at the

close of Old Testament times. Those were times very much like our own. External evidences belied the real state of affairs. The proud were acclaimed as happy; the wicked were set up; the tempters of God blaspheming His name were prospered. What a riddle was presented by such features, and how these features are reduplicated in our own day!

However, it is well to see the other side of the picture. Those who feared the Lord spoke often one to another. They could derive no comfort elsewhere. Consequently, there was at once established a correlation of exercises. So it has always been in the fellowship of God's people. This process is perfectly recognised by the Lord, "and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who feared the Lord and who thought upon His name" (Mal. 3. 16). May we then not be found amongst the doubters as to God's care who are cast down by the apparent success of the opposition! But that like the Psalmist and those obscure people in his lineal descent in post-captivity days, we are found walking in the fear of the Lord and enjoying the preciousness of His name.

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Paul walked well because he had no confidence in the flesh.

It is not enough to steer clear of evil things, you must walk in the Spirit if you would be a vessel meet for the Master's use.

The Word of God is not only the light for your way, but if subject to it, it will fashion you after Christ's image and then you will walk in the way that it points out.

The child of God may have a thicket of difficulties to go through, then all the more need for reliance upon God, and the greater the opportunity for God's power. If God brings a child of His into any difficult path He will be with Him in it.

# GOD'S SEARCHINGS

James Boyd.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psalm 139).

THIS psalm sets before us the ways of God in leading us into the knowledge of Himself, so that He secures the confidence of our hearts, and fills us with a joy of which that knowledge is the spring and fountain. How very strange to us that a Being so infinite in wisdom, power, and love, and unto whose happiness nothing external to Himself could minister, should set His heart upon such worms of the dust as we! And what a wonder that He who is enough for Himself, and we may add for the whole creation, should take His whole delight in surrounding Himself with such apparently worthless things, whom He has brought into eternal relationship with Himself as His children, and put the cry of FATHER on our lips, a cry which He loves to hear from those He has begotten again by the word of truth.

And what a marvellous place He has purposed to bring us into, and to have us in for ever, even His own house, for what other place would do as a home for the sons He is bringing to glory, who, when there, shall all be in the likeness of His own Son, who is leading those many sons to that place designed for them before the world was! And what an amount of training He has spent on the education, which He deemed necessary to fit us for a place in that abode of love, joy, and unspeakable happiness! What wonderful interest He has taken in us! What infinite patience He has shown in His dealings with us! and how pro-

voking we have shown ourselves to be! Are we not often very angry with ourselves on account of our wanderings? Do we not sometimes feel ourselves wicked and cruel by the way in which we treat unfathomable love? And to think that we can never find anything in Him but perfect goodness, while we feel that apart from His grace that saved us, He never can find anything in us but perfect evil. What a God we have to do with! Blessed for ever be His holy name!

But He has taken us in hand for His glory, and He will bring us there, and we shall be there perfectly fit for the place. We shall be there as His workmanship, “Holy and blameless before Him in love.” But He had to begin with us as sinners, and sinners who did not want Him to begin with us at all. But He is not to be hindered in His blessed work. He begins by wakening up the conscience. When Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman about the living water she could have from Him for the asking, she says, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. He says to her, Go, call thy husband, and come here. This was a very direct word to her conscience, and she had not to leave the well until she knew Him as the Christ. The conscience has to be reached first.

It is so here in this psalm. The psalmist says, O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me. We have the awakening of the soul here. There are two momentous occasions in the history of every soul who is

brought out of darkness into light, and from the power of Satan unto God. One is when he wakes up to find himself a sinner, and under the eye of God, who is taking account of him, and who will see that he takes his place as a sinner without the least hope of betterment. The other is when he abandons his own thoughts for the thoughts of God. If the sinner does not see himself as he really is in this life, what he is must be taken up at the great white throne, where he finds he is for ever lost.

*"O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me."*

He is become unhappily self-conscious. But it is not a feeling that other human beings are reading his secret thoughts, but that God is taking account of his inward being, and that from Him nothing can be hidden. He speaks of God knowing his downsitting and uprising, and being acquainted with all his ways, for, he says, "There is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether." And he says, "Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid Thine hand upon me." It is not only that his movements are all observed, but his thought afar off is understood.

This man is like most of his fellows, he does not desire his whole state as a sinner gone into by God; and the reason of that is that he is well aware it would not bear the holy investigation of his Maker. He realizes that he is in the hands of One who is omniscient. Not only did God see the people when they had made the golden calf, sitting down to eat and drink, and rising up to play, but He saw how thoroughly they had given Him up. And He was no less observant in

this poor sinner's case, for God is the Observer of men (Job 7. 20). He winnows His creature's path, and all connected with it. He has beset him behind and before, and laid His hand upon him. The path, if it is the path of life, cannot be left to man to discover. The Man of God's counsels says to God: "Thou wilt show me the path of life"; and that path led into the presence of God where there is fulness of joy, and pleasures everlasting (Psa. 16). Nothing is lost by waiting upon God, but to take our own way is eternal loss.

*"Thou hast beset me behind and before, and hast laid Thy hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it."*

It is all so different to the ways of men, who take vengeance against those who are their enemies. But God is kind to the unthankful and the unholy; for He would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2. 4). But this the Psalmist says is high, I cannot attain unto it. And this being so, he seems to think he had better leave God to do His own work, he could not act after His precedent. He must therefore get away from His presence.

*"Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? and whither flee from Thy presence?"*

This is the puzzle with many a soul who desires to get away from God. The first attempt was made by the first man and his wife. They hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amid the trees of the garden. It was a vain and fruitless effort. They had to come out of their miserable hiding-place, and own their terrible disobedience.

*"If I ascend into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, Thou art there."*

In neither of these two extremes is there any refuge for him, for God was found in both places. "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee, but the light shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee."

But He has possessed our reins. He has made us for Himself. We are His, we belong to Him. He has covered me in my mother's womb, He has exercised over me a beneficent Creator's care. Therefore I will praise Thee for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. Astronomers set their telescopes to the heavens to see the marvellous works of God, while the most marvellous works are to be witnessed in the person of the astronomer himself. I am fearfully and wonderfully made. But do our souls know this *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."*

Down in the depths, the lowest parts of the earth, in the womb of the creature. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

*"O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me."*

Evidently not for His own information. Why then were we searched? We were searched that we might know *ourselves*. This is what we have to learn in the beginning of God's dealings with us. We naturally do not desire to be searched, for nothing good morally is found in us. Our Lord says to His disciples: "*If ye then, being evil*" (Luke 11. 13). What shall God learn by His searchings? Nothing from us. But we may learn a great deal, and we shall learn very much if we answer to His searchings, and we are glad that we are searched. At the first we do not like it, but when we see a little of the good of it we are glad to be searched.

But I come to the next great moment in our history, and that moment is when the thoughts of God become precious to us. And what a glorious privilege it is to sit and listen to the thoughts of God. To what infinite wisdom we are called to listen! Certainly not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world that come to nought; but through the servants of Christ we have been hearkening to the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world to our glory, the things that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him (1 Cor. 1. 12). In this mystery of God are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2. 2).

Well may we with the psalmist exclaim—"How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand."

How cheerfully people sit down to ponder over the great thoughts of men, which in most cases are absolutely valueless, and forgetting that the great thoughts of God are near at hand! But to appreciate the thoughts of God one must have a nature very different from the nature of the first and fallen Adam, who in his effort to get wisdom did nothing but play the fool. "The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." The apostle asks the Corinthians, "Where is the wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God; it pleased God by the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe." The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God. He says: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."

He does this by the gospel of His grace. He wakes up the conscience of the sinner, gives him to feel his need of a Saviour, in the gospel makes known to him Jesus as that Saviour; his need brings him to the feet of that Saviour, and he receives the salvation that is in Him which carries with it eternal glory (2 Tim. 2. 10). He is justified by faith, stands in grace, and rejoices in hope of the glory of God (Rom. 5. 1, 2). The love of God is also shed abroad in His heart

by the Holy Spirit who is given to him

Now he may learn something of the great thoughts of God. God is love, and all the thoughts of God spring from the great love of His heart. No wonder the psalmist says, "How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand." Eternity alone shall be required to tell out all these great thoughts of love. Let us get our hearts and minds well stored with them. They were all purposed and thought out before the world's foundation, and in view of their being brought to pass has all the work of God been in operation, and it must go on until the new heavens and the new earth arise in the glory of God. And this day we confidently await, while we tread the path to those scenes of everlasting pleasure.

And while we are on the way we know that all things work together for our good, for the end of all the operations of God must result in good to all who love God, to all who are the called according to His purpose. 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. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified. We are the objects of His eternal thoughts. He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. His counsels were the counsels of His love. Now that the psalmist has learned the object of all the searching of God, and that by this means he has become conscious of the love that prompted the God's

given exercises that were so detrimental to his peace of mind that he could come to no other conclusion than that God was against him, but now has learned that it was infinite love on the part of God, so that he might get rid of his own thoughts by becoming acquainted with the precious thoughts of God, and that instead of being troubled by those divine searchings, his earnest prayer might be: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; prove me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any grievous way in me; and lead me in the way everlasting."

"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14. 12). The searchings of God showed him the evil course he was pursu-

ing, a path of his own inclining, but contrary to the guidance of God; it is the way of a fool which is right in his own eyes. But now he desires to be led in the way everlasting. The path that has no death in it is the path for which he cries out. Is there then a way that has no end, no death in it? Yes there is indeed: "In the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is no death." And what is that pathway? It is the pathway of the will of God to which no end can be put. We shall have our delight in that path for ever. So it is a prayer very needful for us, and it is acceptable to God. A prayer that is never without an answer. With us may it be often in use.

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## THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS.

*A Bible Study.*

J. T. Mawson.

**IT** WOULD not be right to say that the coming again of the Lord Jesus will be two comings, yet it is clear from Scripture that it will be in two stages. The first will be His coming FOR His saints, the second His coming WITH them. The first is spoken of as THE RAPTURE, i.e., the catching up to the glory of those that are His; the second, as THE APPEARING, i.e., His manifestation to the world.

*Ques.: Which of these two stages of the coming ought we to preach to the world?*

The appearing is our testimony to the world; the truth of the rapture does not seem to have been given for public preaching to the world, but for the comfort of the hearts of the Lord's own in the world, as we

shall see; but the appearing of the Lord in glory has been the testimony of His witnesses from the beginning. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, the first of all the prophets, prophesied saying, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all" (Jude 14, 15). From his day to the first coming of the Lord all the prophets bore witness to the certainty of this same appearance in glory, and He Himself took it up, for all His words as to His coming in the Synoptic Gospels have His coming in glory in view. In John's Gospel only is the coming FOR His saints alluding to and that was to comfort their hearts. When they sorrowed at the thought of His departure, He said, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that

where I am, there ye may be also" (ch. 14). The Acts of the Apostles presents the Appearing and not the Rapture. It is the burden of the angelic message in chapter 1., which was the first message sent to earth from the Glory after the Lord had entered there. "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Peter takes up the same witness in speaking to the Jews in chapter 3, and very specially in speaking to Gentiles in chapter 10. "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 the quick and dead" (v. 42). And Paul also addressing Gentiles in ch. 17, says, "God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained: whereof He hath given assurance to all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." It is extremely interesting and instructive that in these two great sermons to Gentiles recorded for us in the Acts, the coming of the Lord as the Judge is so prominent. Gospel preachers should make a note of that.

*Ques.: You think that the angel's message in ch. 1 has in view the appearing of the Lord in glory?*

I do not think there can be any doubt about that. It will be the fulfilment of Zechariah 14. 4. "His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives," for it was from thence that He went up; and if we link up these two Scriptures with Matthew 24. 16, "Then let him that is in Judea flee into the mountains," we shall see the reason for that instruction, and be impressed

with the way that Scripture interprets itself.

*Ques.: What place then has the Rapture?*

When the Lord appears in His glory, we are to appear with Him (Colossians 3. 4), and it is by the Rapture that we shall be with Him first, in order to come with Him when He appears. To instruct the saints at Thessalonica as to this was the object of the Apostle in writing his first Epistle to them. They had turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to **WAIT FOR HIS SON FROM HEAVEN**, i.e., they were looking for the appearing of the Lord in glory, and knew nothing as yet of the Rapture. Meanwhile their friends were dying, some of them suffering martyrdom for their faith, and they were sorrowing for them, for they evidently thought that being dead they would miss the glory of the coming of the Lord. To comfort them in this sorrow and to remove it, the Apostle wrote, "I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not as others that 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," i.e., when God brings in Jesus in all His glory as the King of kings, and the Judge of quick and dead, those who have fallen asleep through Jesus are to come also, and appear with Him. God will bring them with Him; His word is pledged here as to that. But how will it come about? How glorious is the answer to that question! "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 [shall not have any pre-

cedence of] them which are asleep For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and 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 "

*Ques That is a very wonderful word if we are to take it literally Must we do that ?*

How else can we take it ? It is the word of the Lord It is such an astounding thing that in making it known the Lord has met the incredulity that would naturally arise in our minds as to it, by giving a special revelation from Himself as to it, so that in the passage we have more than inspiration by the Holy Ghost, we have that certainly, but what Paul was here inspired by the Holy Ghost to write he had first of all received from the Lord, and it is the Lord's own word that has been passed on to us to be received by us in simple faith

*Ques But it is said that such a thing is both unreasonable and impossible and some who would not deny the resurrection from the dead cannot accept the catching up of the living It is said that the law of gravitation would prevent such an event How would you meet that ?*

I should say first of all that even though we could not explain this word at all, yet since the Lord has spoken it we should believe it, for what is impossible with man is possible with God and the word of the Lord is greater than the law of gravitation But the law of gravitation presents no difficulty to faith or to the one who humbly reads and studies the Word of God It

is a *natural* law, and operates according to the design and decree of the great Creator, but it operates in the physical world and controls natural bodies It is a natural law for natural bodies but the Word of God tells us that our natural bodies are to be changed into spiritual bodies Let us look at the passages that speak of this Philippians 3 20 21, For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ who shall change our vile body (body of humiliation), that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself ' And again in 1 Corinthians 15 51-58, "Behold I shew you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality " These Scriptures have to do with this great event, the changing and catching up of the saints of God to heaven, and at this point in our study the change is the important consideration Natural laws control natural bodies, but our bodies are to be changed into bodies of glory like Christ's own body, the natural is to give place to the spiritual, and mortality is to be swallowed up of life (2 Cor 5 4), and what sort of laws will control glorified and spiritual bodies, think you ? Not natural laws surely, but spiritual laws the laws of the glory of God, and the greatest of all spiritual laws is that Christ is the centre of God's universe, and He will draw us to Himself and hold us there for ever So

that the law of gravitation need not stumble our faith in the Word of the Lord. It will continue to operate, when we have clean gone from under its power.

*Ques Are there any events recorded in the Bible that would help us as to this?*

Yes. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him" (Hebrews 11:5). And Elijah was rapt up into heaven in a whirlwind, accompanied by a chariot and horses of fire (2 Kings 2:11). And our Lord Himself was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of the sight of His disciples. The law of gravitation did not hinder these three great witnesses to the power of God, that subdues death and every other force to His own will. And here the fact of His power should be emphasised. This change in our living bodies is to be effected by His power, the power of our risen, glorified Lord, and it is that power whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself, as Phil 3:21 tells us. No force, whether natural or physical, in the heavens, or the earth, or in the nether regions can withstand that power.

*Ques When the Scripture speaks of the spiritual body in contrast to the natural (1 Cor 15:44), does it mean that we shall be simply spirits?*

No, a spiritual body or a body of glory, is a body, and a body is substance and spirit is not substance. It means that we shall have bodies suited to the Glory in contrast to our present bodies which are suited to the earth or natural life. We are to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven (2 Cor 5:5), the character, power, glory and

beauty of the changed bodies will be heavenly; it will be the beauty of the Lord. The flesh and blood life will give way to the spiritual and heavenly life, and our bodies will be in every way suited to that life, but they will be bodies. The contrast is not between what is material and what is unsubstantial, but between what is natural and what is spiritual.

*Ques We intended to discuss the appearing of the Lord, but so many questions arise in regard to this side of His coming, that we ought not to leave it until they are answered. Some of us want to know whether all the saints will be caught up at the Rapture?*

Most certainly. Those who deny it do not rightly divide the Word of truth, and they have not perceived the greatness and the glory and the indivisible unity of the Church—Christ's own Assembly. Let us see what are the actual words of Scripture. 1 Cor 15 does not speak of the Rapture of the saints to heaven, but of the resurrection of the dead in Christ and of the changing of the living, which precede the Rapture, verse 23 says, "Every man in his own order, Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's at His coming"—not a few of these only, or a selected company from among them, but "they that are Christ's". Again addressing the living saints, who shall be alive and remaining here at the coming of the Lord, he says, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall *ALL* be changed" (verse 51). 1 Thess 4:15, 16 divides the saints into two classes only, those that are "the dead in Christ," and "we which are alive and remain". There are no saints outside those two classes, and they are to be "CAUGHT UP TOGETHER".

None are to be left behind. One glorious eternally united company will be caught up to be for ever with the Lord, not because they have been faithful, but because, on the sure basis of His all-atoning blood, they have been made meet for that destiny by the sovereign grace of the Father (Col. 1. 12-14).

The saints of this great period of grace are indwelt by the Spirit of God, and baptised into *one body*. They are the church, or assembly—which word more truly expresses the truth—and when viewed from this side the thought that only a certain selected, faithful few will be caught up, becomes most repugnant. “Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it”—not that it might be a mutilated church, part of it in heaven, and part of it on earth passing through the tribulation in the day of His glory—but that “He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing” (Ephesians 5. 25-27). Between the Rapture and the Appearing the marriage of the Lamb will take place in the Glory, and the Lamb’s wife, which the Church is to be, must be in the Glory before the marriage can take place (Revelation 19).

Ques.: *But what about such a passage as Hebrews 9. 28, “Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation”? Does not that seem to teach that He will only appear to the faithful watchers?*

It most certainly does so teach, but it has in view just as certainly the Appearing and not the Rapture as it clearly states. While the Hebrews Epistle sets forth Christian doctrine, room is left here and there for the blessing of Israel as a people

on earth. Several instances of this could be cited, but ch. 8 is a very clear and definite one. The covenant there is certainly not made with Christians; it is the new covenant that is still to be made with the house of Israel. And I believe that the statement in ch. 9. 28 has Israel in view also. The Lord appeared once in their midst, not to deliver them from their enemies, but to be offered to bear the sins of many. The expression, “*The sins of many*” reminds us of the Matthew aspect of the Lord’s Supper, which is distinctly Jewish in its bearing and different from the way it is presented by Luke; it carries us back to Isaiah 53, where the Lord is said to “bare the sins of many,” and to “justify many,” the “many” referring definitely to the saved remnant of Israel. He is to *appear* the second time, apart altogether from the question of sin, for their salvation. The thought is that of the appearing of the High Priest, after he had taken the blood of the sin offering unto the Holiest. The people stood without earnestly looking for Him to appear, for they could have no assurance that propitiation for their sins had been made and accepted until He did appear to bless them. When the remnant of Israel is awakened to their sin and need, after the Rapture of the church to heaven, they will look for the appearing of their Messiah-priest, and they will not know that He has made propitiation for their sins until He does appear. He has passed into the heavens—into the Holiest, and the Christian does not wait outside that place of high privilege until He appears, but he has the title to go in now, as ch. 10. 19-22 tells us. Israel will never have this great privilege. But full of sorrow for their sins (see Zechariah 12. 10-14), they will wait amidst the

miseries of the Tribulation for the appearing of their great Saviour, and their repentance and faith will not be in vain, for as they look for Him He will appear unto their salvation. He will not appear to take up the question of their sins, but to shew them by His wounds that "He was wounded for their transgressions" at His first coming, and that He has made a full propitiation for them, and to deliver them from their oppressors. Consider that interpretation of this passage and I believe it will commend itself to you.

*Ques* But it is argued that if all Christians are to be caught up at the coming of the Lord irrespective of their faithfulness they may be quite easy and indifferent as to their lives and service. What about that side of the question?

It runs on the same line as the slander which was flung at Paul when he taught the sovereign, unmerited grace of God. He was charged with teaching, "Let us do evil that good may come," and again when he shewed that where sin abounded grace did much more abound, the question arose. Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? But grace works in the exact opposite way to that, and the Rapture will be the outcome of sovereign grace and divine love. Our responsibility is not overlooked, but that is taken up in relation to

the Appearing, as we have yet to see, but the thought of the Lord's scrutiny of our lives, solemn and sobering as it is, is not the greatest incentive to holy living, and to devotion to Himself. "The love of Christ constraineth us" Paul said, and it is His love to His own church that will be wonderfully expressed when He catches it up to Himself in the Glory.

The truth of the Rapture is more for the heart than the head. It is as a wonderful secret that we who love the Lord are to cherish, a secret that will keep us from conformity with the world and compromise with sin if we truly keep it. Take the words that are used to convey it to us. "I will come again and receive YOU UNTO MYSELF that where I am, there YE shall be also" (John 14:3). "So shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess 4:17). Truly he that hath this hope in him will purify himself even as He is pure. At the Rapture the Lord will come as the Bridegroom and what could appeal to the heart of the Bride more strongly than that? It is as the Bridegroom that He says, "Surely, I come quickly. Amen." His last word to His church in Holy Scripture. There can be only one response to that and it is, Even so, Come, Lord Jesus."

*To be continued.*

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'We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us, we are troubled on every side" (2 Cor. 4). There was only one Paul, but we all have the vessel, and the treasure, and the trouble, more or less, and we have the same source of power and consolation in God, and to experience God's comfort is a wonderful compensation for all trouble.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

## What is the Flesh?

Could you give me a simple definition of the flesh—what it is? What does it stand for—the whole man—spirit soul and body? How does it stand in relation to our mortal flesh?

In one place Paul can speak of not being in the flesh—and in another “The life that he lived in the flesh.” It is said that that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that Christ became flesh. That He was in the likeness of sinful flesh, and condemned sin in the flesh. There are many things that Christians do in common with the unregenerate. They eat and sleep and work and play, many things they enjoy in common with them, and all in the flesh, and having to do with the flesh. Galatians give us the works of the flesh in contrast to the fruit of the Spirit. Would it be right to say that the flesh stands for our old nature, and that **everything done** in connection with that old nature is sinful.

Much of this may perhaps display a dreadful ignorance on my part, but I don't feel satisfied with a mere phraseology that leaves no clear idea in the mind of young believers.

The apostle says, “For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing.” He seems here to distinguish the ME from my flesh. I would be glad of help.—B.Y.P.M.

THE context must decide as to the meaning of this term. It often describes *the flesh and blood condition*, i.e., the natural life of men in this world, as when Paul says, “The life which I live *in the flesh*, I live by the faith of the Son of God” (Gal. 2. 20). As to the Lord Himself, we read, “The Word became flesh” (John 1. 14), and “in the days of His flesh” (Hebrews 5. 5). The Word, by Whom all things were made, became a veritable man, and lived the life of a man with all its vicissitudes and calls for continual dependence upon God, though with Him it must always be guarded, as Scripture guards it, that His condition of flesh and blood was apart from sin, His flesh was holy flesh. Then the term describes the *actual body*, as when Paul says, “The life of Jesus might be made manifest in *our mortal flesh*” (2 Cor. 4. 11). But when we read, “They that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Romans 8. 8), it is clear that the term means something other than the foregoing, for Paul certainly pleased God when he lived by the faith of the Son of God, and when the life

of Jesus was manifested in his mortal flesh. And in regard to our Lord we know that the Father found His full delight in Him “in the days of His flesh.”

The flesh in this sense is wholly evil and it is essential that we should understand what it is; if we don't, we shall not enjoy Christian liberty. It describes, first, *the nature of unregenerate man*, which expresses itself in and through his body. “The carnal mind, or, the mind of the flesh, that which governs him, is at enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom. 8. 7). Instead of being subject to God's law, the works of it are given in Gal. 5. 19-21. A sorry catalogue indeed! The whole trouble is that the man in the flesh, in this sense of it, makes SELF his centre instead of God, and when self controls a man's thoughts and actions, he wants less and less to do with God, and the result of this is described for us in Romans 1. 21-3. 18; a part of Scripture that is often passed over, but which should be earnestly read by us all,

if we would learn the meaning of the Lord's words, "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh"; it remains flesh no matter what advantages it has of natural knowledge, exalted ethics, or religious rites and rules, or even the law of God. It will not be subject to God.

Before Adam fell, he was in the condition of innocent flesh; at his fall he became sinful flesh; he was dominated by a mind and will opposed to God's will, and his whole race is as he was. "God sending His own Son, *in the likeness of sinful flesh*" (Rom. 8. 3), means, that Jesus came, a true man, *like every other man*, yet without sin. He came into man's place, taking up the responsibilities of man both towards God and His neighbour; and having fulfilled those responsibilities in His holy life, He stood as man's Representative and Substitute, and in His own body bore the condemnation that rested upon man and upon the whole condition of sinful flesh, offering Himself upon the cross, when He was made sin for us, as a sacrifice for sin. The effect of this is that those who believe may no longer walk after, or, in the flesh, but after the Spirit.

It is definitely said, "Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you" (Romans 8. 9), and the flesh here plainly means something other than the body, and has a wider meaning than man's natural condition. It describes, we believe, the ground upon which men stood before God before the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. That was a period of testing—God knew what was in man; the testing was not necessary for His information, but

the weakness and wilfulness of the flesh had to be exposed, and so, first, without the law, and then, with the law, man was tested to see whether he could do right, and gain blessing on the ground of his responsibility. The testing proved that all were sinners; there was not a single exception, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Romans 3). Now the law applied to that condition and state of things—to the flesh. But those who believe are no longer on that ground; they are not striving by the fulfilment of their responsibilities to gain God's favour and blessing; God is no longer dealing with men on that ground, but on the ground of sovereign grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. There was no hope for any man on the ground of what he was naturally; God's condemnation has passed on all that, and a condemned thing is a thing that is useless and done with. We are saved by grace, and a new power has been given to us—the Spirit that dwells in us. We who have believed are in the Spirit for the Spirit dwells in us, and what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, we can do now, as we walk in the Spirit. "Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5. 16). "The righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8. 4).

Though we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, the flesh is in us; the old nature has not been eliminated, though we have a new one, and it will always, when allowed to do so, make self our centre instead of God, but as we walk in the Spirit, Christ is the great object of

the heart, the flesh and its workings are kept in abeyance and we walk in Christian liberty.

It is an important subject, and

cannot be understood by merely reading an article on it. Prayer and experience with an earnest desire to please the Lord will help us.

## “Born of Water.”

As a reader of Scripture Truth I should like to ask a question on John 3. 5. “Jesus answered . . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit.” Does the reference to water in this verse mean, water—(by baptism) or does it mean the word, as in John 6. 63 for example. The question has arisen and some insist that the water means actual water, while others insist it means the word, spoken. I trust you can see the difficulty and hope you can help us.—DERBYSHIRE.

**I**F water in this passage means baptism, then nobody is born again who has not been subjected to that rite, and all who have been baptised are at least half saved, no matter what their state of heart or conduct may be; and “baptismal regeneration” is not a delusion after all but the truth. The dying malefactor who cast himself upon the Saviour’s mercy has missed the blessing, and Simon Magus was not so dreadfully entangled in the bond of iniquity as the Apostle Peter supposed (Acts 8). It is evident that it cannot mean water baptism.

Was not the Lord citing an Old Testament Scripture, that Nicodemus ought to have known well, “Then I shall sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean . . . and I will put My Spirit within you” (Ezekiel 36. 25-27)? They were to be born again by water and the Spirit. That the Word of God is the instrument used in the new birth is plain from 1 Peter 1. 23, where we read, “Being born again . . . by the Word of God.” There it is spoken of as the incorruptible, life-giving seed, but it has another character; it not only introduces a new life, but it cleanses from the old. Many Scriptures speak of the Word in this way. By it a young man cleanses his way (Psa. 119. 9). We

read of the washing of water by the Word (Eph. 5. 26), but most of all to the point, because also in the Gospel of John, we have, “Now are ye clean through the Word that I have spoken unto you” (ch. 15. 3), and “He that is washed, or bathed, . . . is clean every whit” (ch. 13. 10). These passages shew that the Word of God is often spoken of as water that cleanses, and we believe the water in the passage in question is the Word of God in this character. It has not in view cleansing from all sin, which is by the blood of Jesus Christ (1 John 1. 7), but it is that which goes along with it, a moral cleansing, a man’s whole state of heart and outlook is changed, and this can really only be by a new nature, the new birth. The man is changed inwardly; he turns to Christ and to God as his only hope and confidence; he is in this way made clean from every false hope, and self-trust. There can be no better illustration of it than that of Peter in ch. 6. 68. Until he met the Lord, he had looked to the temple, the sacrifices and the priests as a means of blessing, and it may be to his own efforts, but he had turned his back on all these, that could only foster the flesh within him, and he said to the Lord Jesus, “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” His

whole confidence was in Christ; Christ instead of self had become his object; he was born again; made clean from all his selfish living and false hopes by the word that he had heard from the Lord's lips. Baptism is an outward

rite, important in its place, but this is a vital, inward change by the word and the Spirit, and it is of the utmost importance that this should be understood and that all of us should be sure that we have been the subjects of this work.

## “I'm always sinning—what about me?”

“I have been talking to a preacher, he said 1 Cor. 13 shews that one can through the power of God, be cleansed from every fleshly lust and made absolutely pure from all sin, temper, irritableness; that that was what the work of the atonement was for. Well, I'm not there, far from it. I'm always sinning. What about me?”—YORKSHIRE.

**1 COR. 13** does not shew what the preacher claimed for it. It does shew most beautifully what are the characteristics of the divine nature, LOVE, which is really the meaning of the word charity; and this divine nature is in everyone of God's children, and when it is allowed to shew itself, it will do so in the way there described. We can measure ourselves by the chapter and be humbled indeed that we fall so far short of it, and that we allow the old nature which is still in every one of us to shew itself so often in our ways and words.

But as to yourself, You are always sinning, you say. Well, if you are a child of God, you ought not to be. There are plenty of Scriptures to prove that. “My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not” (1 John 2. 1). It would be a help to you to read “these things” that John wrote, for there is evidently hope for you in them. Then power has been given to us into whose hearts God has sent His Spirit, and He has sent Him to all who are His sons by faith in Christ Jesus; we read, “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh” (Gal. 5. 16).

And still further, we may all be “more than conquerors through Him that loved us” (Romans 8. 37). It is the Lord Jesus who is the One who loves us, and we may be more than conquerors through Him because He is even at the right hand of God and maketh intercession for us (verse 34). Consider these three things. John in his Epistle writes about the Father and of His love to us, which is so great that He has made us His children. Galatians tells us that the Holy Spirit dwells in us, the new power to enable us to walk in superiority to the lusts of the flesh, and Romans tells us that our risen Saviour lives and intercedes for us on high. We are sure that if you realize more of the Father's love, the Spirit's power, and the Lord's constant intercession and care for you, you will be less self-occupied and have less cause to deplore continual failure.

If the preacher meant that the believer could reach the point in his spiritual experience on earth where sin would be no longer in him, then he was wrong, for the Scripture says, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1. 8),

but if he meant that it was possible for the believer to be free from the *domination* of sin that dwells in him, he was right, for the Scripture says, "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law but under grace" (Romans 6. 14). Consider these Scriptures prayerfully and

earnestly and they will help you.

It may be that you are learning the wholesome lesson that in you, that is in your flesh, there is no good, and that your one and only hope is Christ. You must send your address if you want an answer to your other questions.

## Are there other worlds?

There is some uncertainty in my and other young believers' minds as to whether there are other worlds other than the one known to us. Would it be Scriptural to assume that there are other worlds?

Would you be good enough to explain Matthew 18. 12. Do the lost sheep represent this world that we know, and the ninety and nine other worlds? Also Heb. 1. 2. Heb. 11. 3. A clear explanation of this subject would be invaluable to young believers.—SHILLINGSTONE.

**IT IS** a mistake to read into the Lord's parables more than He intended to teach us by them. That of the shepherd seeking the straying sheep (Matt. 18. 12, 13) was uttered to illustrate His deep concern for children, and His gracious purpose and His Father's will that they should be saved. The lost are of great value to Him and He rejoices at their salvation. We do not see anything beyond that in the parable, though if anyone said that the Lord has more joy over redeemed sinners than over unfallen angels we should not object.

The Bible records for us God's ways with men and the revelation of Himself in the Son who became Man and entered into this world for this purpose; it has not been given to us to inform us of other worlds, though they are countless in number, and all of them were created and are upheld by the Word of the power of the Son, as Hebrews 1. 2, 3 tells us. The word for "worlds" there stands for the universe. They have not been made in vain, any more than was the earth (Isaiah 45. 18). It may be that "the principalities and powers in the heavenly

places" (Eph. 3. 10), and "the thrones, dominions, principalities and powers" (Col. 1. 16) have the seats of their governments in these worlds that are beyond our range. We know nothing about them but this, that Christ is to be the Head and Centre of them all, and by Him they are all to be reconciled to God, i.e., they will be brought into complete harmony with all His attributes and into absolute subjection to His throne.

This much we gather from Scripture, and beyond this we may not go. It was in *this world* that God was manifest in flesh; here the only-begotten Son, which is in His bosom declared Him; here by the blood of His cross has our Lord redeemed us men, and on the basis of it things on earth and in heaven are to be reconciled. These great principalities and powers—spiritual beings—learn God's manifold wisdom in what He is doing in men in this world. Their attention is centred on God's work here, ours is to be set on Christ in glory, and we must not overlook the warning against intruding into those things which have not been revealed.

## RECOVERY AFTER FAILURE.

J. T. Mawson.

"Being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God" (Acts 5. 30).

"Where prayer was wont to be made" (ch. 16. 13).

"As we went to prayer" (verse 16).

"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed" (verse 25).

WILL those who are sincerely looking for a reawakening of spiritual life and a revival of the work of the Lord, notice that there is an entire absence of any reference to prayer in Acts 15, except it be at the very end of it. In every chapter, in this Book of the triumphs of the gospel, except the 5th, prayer has its place until this chapter is reached; but here, instead of prayer, there is "no small dissension and disputation" (verse 2), "much disputing" (verse 7); and most sorrowful of all, "the contention was so sharp between them (Paul and Barnabas) that they departed asunder one from another" (verse 39). Prayer comes back into its own place in chapter 16, and there trophies are won for Christ, and the gospel proceeds on its triumphant way.

I have no doubt that in the early part of ch. 15 Paul and Barnabas were compelled to earnestly contend for the faith, though "dissension" and "much disputing" have an ugly sound, and reveal the condition of things in the church in Jerusalem. One wonders whether, if there had been more prayer there would not have been less of this fleshly strife, but why did these devoted men who had together hazarded their lives for Christ's sake, quarrel with each other when the great conflict was over? It looks as though the hour of victory was the hour of weakness. However that may be, strife and division took the place of "if two of you shall agree as touching any thing that they shall ask." It is a solemn and sobering incident, re-

corded, surely, that we may learn the great lesson that if the servants of the Lord are to prosper in His work they must pray together. Prayer binds the soul more closely to God, it unites the saints in strong and holy bonds and gives courage and power to their testimony to the world. Dissension separates the soul from God, divides the saints in heart and labour from each other and leaves them weak in the presence of the foe.

Where there is "sharp contention" the work of the Lord must languish, and there will be sorrow and dearth; we need no argument to prove that, for many of us have learnt it in our own experience; and we can easily realize how pained and surprised those simple brethren at Antioch, young converts all of them, must have been at this breach between these very servants of the Lord who had been channels of richest blessing to them. But it was well for them that they turned to God when the conflict was over. They rose to the occasion, and were found not wanting when they commended Paul and Silas unto the grace of God (verse 40). Prayer was their resource, or I ought to say, God was their resource, for prayer is merely approach in confidence to Him. Let us ponder these words, "the grace of God," for they cannot be left out of our theme. The grace of God was very real amongst those brethren at Antioch. On the first visit that Barnabas paid to that place, he saw it and was glad (ch. 11). It had wrought for them and in

them at the beginning, and it had not failed them since, and now when they see failure in the servants of God they turn afresh to it. They do not speed Paul on his way as a man of inflexible fidelity, or as one whose spiritual force was enough to carry him on without failure, they commend him to the grace of God—his only hope and stay, and theirs, and ours. They were wise men and Spirit-led men, too, these brethren at Antioch; their faith did not rest in the steadfastness or the wisdom of either Barnabas or Paul, and it was not shaken by their failure, but in the grace of God. If that grace had been withdrawn, or if the failure of these men of God had been greater than the grace of God, there would have been an end of the work and no recovery, but that grace abounds over all failure and because of it the work goes on.

There are many who feel how barren of all fruit and joy "much disputing" is, and how the work of the Lord suffers when "contentions" prevail, but here is hope for them and for us all; the grace of God abides, and will abound to all who turn in their need to Him. The servants of God may fail and disappoint us, the grace of our God never will, and those who turn wholeheartedly to God will find that His grace will shew itself afresh in renewed blessing. It must do so or God has ceased to be the God of all grace. What an atmosphere of freedom and expectation and confidence the grace of God creates, and what a contrast it is to the restraint and misery that must be where contentions thrive!

With the prayers of these brethren behind them and the grace of God with them, Paul and his companions

start off on a new mission. But again the record is arresting and thought provoking. It seems as though Paul had not returned to complete dependence upon the Lord's guidance, for full of zeal, and impetuous in the work of the Lord, he had his own plans and intentions, which were not the Lord's. The Holy Spirit had to take definite action with him and forbid him to preach the Word in Asia, and in verse 7, when he assayed to go into Bithynia, the Spirit suffered him not; but in verse 9 there is a change, and he gets clear guidance from the Lord, though it was by a vision and not a direct word. We may conclude that that vision in the night was given to him in answer to the giving up of his own plans and his earnest supplication and prayer, that he might know the Lord's. Of such a character was it, that he and those with him had no doubt that it was from the Lord; they assuredly gathered that the Lord had called them to preach the gospel in Macedonia, and they endeavoured at once to carry out His command. Their confidence in the Lord and immediate obedience and energy in the Spirit are at this point is most delightful, and there follows an account of work unrivalled in its interest and blessedness, even in the Acts of the Apostles. But, mark it well, it began in the place where prayer was wont to be made; it continued as they went to prayer, and it reached its climax in the jail where the unfettered spirits of God's persecuted but happy servants poured out their earnest prayers and triumphant praise. What trophies the gospel, carried by these praying men, won for heaven in that heathen Philippi! A Jewess, probably famous for her piety; a devil-possessed damsel, notorious for her oracular frenzies,

and a pagan jailor, brutal as were all his kind, all blest and made one in Christ, and forming the nucleus of that company of saints that Paul afterwards addressed as "My brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and my crown."

I would emphasise the place that prayer has in this blessed change from the much disputing of chap. 15 to the triumphs of the gospel in chap. 16, that we may give ourselves to prayer according to the will of God.

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## REMEMBRANCE, ADORATION AND PRAYER.

Lord Jesus, we remember the travail of Thy soul,  
When through Thy love's deep pity the waves did o'er Thee roll.  
Baptised in death's dark waters, for us Thy blood was shed,  
For us, Thou Lord of Glory, wast numbered with the dead.

AS WE remember this, O Lord, the lowest of low places is the one we take before Thee. Angels that have never sinned may stand in the presence of the great Jehovah, but we, whose sin brought Thee into death, can only lie prostrate at Thy feet. **THY LOVE** for us brought Thee into the place that **OUR SINS** had marked as ours, and there Thou didst drink the bitter cup of our judgment to its last drop. The darkness which should have been our lot for ever, enshrouded Thee, when Thou, who knewest no sin, wast made sin for us. Thou wert wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Thee and with Thy stripes we are healed.

Saviour, we bow at Thy sacred feet and break our alabaster boxes there and pour out our adoration before Thee. And it is here that our souls are recovered from their wanderings. Here we learn our nothingness and Thine exceeding worth. Here in Thy presence we grieve that our hearts should ever

have a selfish thought, that any rival could dispute Thy right to fill our lives. Here we cast ourselves upon Thy pardoning mercy, and here would yield ourselves afresh to Thee.

"Let Thy love, Lord, like a fetter  
Bind our wandering hearts to Thee."

And Thou art risen from the dead. The grave could not hold Thee. The glory of the Father raised Thee, and Thou hast lifted us up from our degradation and sin and hast joined us to Thyself in all Thine own acceptance before Thy Father and God. We no longer cower in terror in the presence of death; we no longer hide from God; we are no longer indifferent to Thee, but we triumph in Thy triumphs, Thou Victor o'er the grave! Thou hast breathed into us a new life, the first and mightiest impulse of which is **FIRST LOVE TO THEE**. Recover us fully to Thee, O Lord, is our humble prayer to Thee. We would cleave to Thee with purpose of heart until we see Thee face to face. Amen.

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If you are not acting in the Spirit the whole body of Christ, of which you are a member, must suffer. You may think that you alone suffer, but that is not so; you are damaging the whole church.

# "FOR THE SAKE OF THE NAME."

J. Wilson Smith.

*A Reprint.*

*"For the sake of the Name have they gone forth, taking nothing of those of the nations" (3 John).*

**I** QUOTE the above words from the Revised Version of the Third Epistle of John.

The Name! What name? "Because that for the sake of the Name they went forth," writes the beloved Apostle.

In this brief fervent letter three names are mentioned; that of Gaius, that of Diotrephes, and that of Demetrius, whilst certain others are spoken of as "strangers," but are unnamed. Yet, with a significance which should command all attention, allusion is made to some one of whom "the Name" is deemed sufficiently descriptive. It is clearly assumed that merely the word "Name" calls for no elucidation. "The Name" passed as a watchword in the ranks of those early Christians who were the honoured subjects of the Apostle ministry. That Name stood pre-eminent with them; but shall it not do so to-day?

As to the three men mentioned by name in the letter. First, of Gaius we read that he enjoyed more prosperity of soul than of body; but spite of physical infirmities, he walked in truth and charity, and thus caused great joy to the heart of the Apostle, who had indeed, no greater joy than to hear that his "children (in the faith no doubt) walked in truth." But Gaius was a lover of hospitality; his charity was witnessed publicly. He maintained in equipoise, the balance of truth and love—not love at the expense of truth, nor vice versa. He exemplified, in practice, the "better

way" of 1 Corinthians 13. He was a fine specimen of an all-round Christian. No wonder that he gladdened the heart of the Apostle!

Second, Diotrephes comes before us, but in a deplorable contrast to Gaius. His sole object was self-exaltation; he loved to have pre-eminence (mark the word) in the church, refusing the Apostle himself and the brethren—the "strangers" referred to above, who "went forth for the sake of the Name," forbidding those to receive them who would do so, and casting them out of the church. This is that Diotrephes! In him, cold, stern, hard officialism; rank, rigid ecclesiasticism, and a kind of papal tyranny combined with the zeal of a Jehu, outweighed the grace, patience, meekness and lowliness that should characterize a servant of Christ. For such an one the Apostle had no regard. He would remember his deeds. He turns quickly away from thinking of Diotrephes; and, in his gentle style, he writes: "Beloved, imitate not that which is evil (let not the high-handed, merciless, inconsiderate ways of such an one be copied) but that which is good" (kind, profitable, beneficent); for, notice, "He that doeth good is of God (let these words sink into our consciences), but he that doeth evil hath not seen God." So much for Diotrephes!

Third, Demetrius. What of him? He carried "a good report of all and of the truth itself." Happy Demetrius! Like the elders of

Hebrews 11, his record was good. The truth had his name on its pages; the Apostle found pleasure in the very thought of him; he adorned the doctrines of Christ.

Each of these men had his history; but what of that mysterious Name which exerted so great an influence over these "stranger" brethren who went forth expressly and solely for its exaltation, and under its exclusive authority, at all cost to themselves? What of its omnipotence, its charm, its all-sufficiency, its infinite magnetism over heart and hand and foot—the Name that captivated, that saved, that delivered, that constrained, that separated, that entranced, that controlled without a rival, that commanded, and that obtained obedience unqualified? What Name was that?

It was not that of an apostle, nor a church, nor of a school, nor of a mission. It favoured no party, nor clique, nor section, nor division. All such things were annihilated in the immensities of that Name.

"He shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father (Father of eternity), Prince of peace" (Isaiah 9).

"God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2. 10, 11).

Now we understand why these devoted strangers "went forth." They had come under the spell of that Name. It meant, first, their complete salvation—their purchase at a price incalculable—even His precious blood. They were slaves no more; they were Christ's free men

and servants. He was their Lord and Master, their leader and commander, their treasurer and source of supply. From Him they had received and held their commission. They owned His absolute pre-eminence. These were some of the brethren whom Diotrefes would not receive! Then he should receive his own judgment. He may not be imitated. Happy it is to turn to a large-hearted, loving and truthful Gaius; or to a record like that of the upright Demetrius, and seek to follow their faith while honestly and before God loathing the spirit of the wilful, place-seeking, domineering Diotrefes; or to tread humbly in the self-denying, devoted footsteps of the strangers and brethren who went forth independently of man, simply and wholeheartedly "for the sake of the Name."

It is just possible that this epistle was the last inspired writing. Anyhow, it is striking that the expression "THE NAME" should have such prominence. For these last days are, alas, witnesses of a vast Babel of party names; sects are distinguished by the names of men, of doctrines, of places, to our common shame, all of which would, if the supremacy of "THE NAME" were but owned, sink into their own miserable nothingness, as, thank God, they certainly shall, when, as the rising sun outshines all lesser luminaries, that Name which is above every name shall obliterate for ever the petty names and designations to which we attach so much puerile importance to-day. Oh! that the Spirit of God may magnify before the hearts of all the children of God the worth and glory and power and excellency of "THE NAME." It gives its outline to the Philadelphian.

## 'ALL THINGS PUT UNDER HIM.'

L. R.

*"Nothing that is not put under Him" (Hebrews 2. 8).*

HOW fraught with joy and comfort are these words! How excellent this glory of the Son of Man! How all-surpassing His authority and power! The very greatest things, principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and the very smallest, all sheep and oxen, the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, the fish of the sea, and all that passeth through the paths of the seas; the highest of all, angels, authorities, powers, and the very least of all, writer and reader, your little concerns and mine, all alike are put under Him (Eph. 1. 21, 22; Psalm 8).

Very early in the world's history Job dimly perceived that man as he saw him could not be the end, the final result, there must be something, some one more, and he asks, for the first time, the question with which the words which head this paper are linked in the Scripture—"What is man that Thou shouldest magnify him, that Thou shouldest set Thine heart upon him?" (Job 7. 17). Job could see that the man he knew was subject to sorrow, disease and death, that he needed reproof, correction, discipline, but his eye had not beheld the Son of Man, indeed the time for this was not yet.

The Psalmist asks this same question and answers it as Job could not. (Psa. 8). "Thou hast made Him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned Him with glory and honour. Thou madest Him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under His feet"; and as He antici-

pates the glory of Him Who was to come, his heart overflows in worship, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy Name in all the earth." The same question is asked in Psalm 144. 3, "Lord, what is man that Thou takest knowledge of him, or the Son of Man that Thou makest account of Him?" It is interesting to note that the Psalmist in Psalm 8, as he surveys the heavens, the earth, the moon, the stars, asks what is man that all this should be put under him, but in Proverbs 30. 4, Agur, the son of Jakeh, of whom we know so little, as he looks upon the wind, the waters, the ends of the earth, and realizes that all this has a Creator, asks, "What is His Name? and what is His Son's Name? if thou canst tell."

In the New Testament is the full answer to Job, to the Psalmist, to Agur, to all the questions ever asked by prophets and wise men, or even by scoffers and unbelievers. Every prophecy of the Coming One, made a little lower than the angels, brought down to the dust of death, crowned with glory and honour, given universal dominion is fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of Man surely, but Son of God, the Word that was in the beginning with God, the Word that was God" (John 1. 1). The apostles all bear witness of Him. John tells us of His own most precious words, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand" (John 3. 35). "The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth" (John 5. 20). "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto

the Son" (John 5. 22). In different words from the other apostles, but none the less emphatically, John announces the universal supremacy of the Master Whom he loved. It is Paul who says, "All things are put under Him, and Peter as the third witness confirms their testimony that angels, authorities, and powers are made subject to Him (1 Pet. 3. 22).

In Heb. 2, the apostle quotes from Psa. 8., and it is important to notice the sentence which has no place in the psalm—"The suffering of death"—because this is fundamental. Every honour in heaven or on earth belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ, and is His by right, but it is as the One Who endured the suffering of death that all things are put under Him. We cannot fail to perceive that this death was sacred, unique, different from all other deaths. Great men had already lain down their lives for great causes, and since then many martyrs have shed their blood with joy, a good man has even given his life for his friend, but let us mark it well none other ever had died or ever could die as "*made sin.*" All others had been sinful men by nature, but He Who knew no sin was made sin for us and dying dismissed His Spirit (John 19. 30); no man could take His life, as He had told them "I lay it down of Myself." "We see not yet all things put under Him"; far from it; never perhaps did this look less likely than to-day, but now is the time for patience, the time for faith, and faith can say, "We see Jesus crowned with glory, and honour," and seeing Him we are confident that all will be accomplished according to the sure word of promise, and that the earth, and even the city which was the scene

of His suffering, shall be the place of His exaltation and glory. There where they crowned Him King in mockery, and bowed the knee in derision, every knee shall bow to Him and every tongue shall confess His name. We have read lately that some of the Jewish leaders would like "to re-try the case"; alas! they do not know that the case is eternally settled, and it is they who will stand their trial before Him when He comes in His glory.

We should note here that the Apostle Paul says three times, using nearly the same words, that all things shall be put under Him. In Hebrews 2. 9 the emphasis would seem to be on His death—the suffering of death; in 1 Cor. 15. 24-28 on His subjection to Him that put all things under Him, and in Eph. 1. 22, on His being given of God as Head over all things to the Church, adding to the other Scriptures a new thought entirely—the church which is His body.

These differences are very significant, we pray the Lord's enabling to meditate on them aright. We have looked first at Heb. 2, because the death of our Lord Jesus Christ is the foundation of everything for the glory of God, or for the blessing of man, but bearing this in mind 1 Cor. 15. 24-28 gives a very wonderful picture of His coming glory. Majestic, unhurried, He deals with one enemy after another, bringing all into subjection and setting free the different families whom we see in the Revelation, getting home, one by one, like homing birds, each with his own song of praise to swell the Alleluia at the end; reminding us of Psalm 150. Praise in the sanctuary, with the trumpet,

with the psaltery and harp, with timbrel, and pipe, with stringed instruments, and organs, with loud cymbals, with high sounding cymbals, all mingling in one eternal harmony of praise unto our God. Then the last enemy, death being destroyed and the whole world so long distracted by sorrow, oppressed by every kind of misery, the bitter harvest of sin and rebellion, being subdued under Him He, as it were, places it once more in His Father's hands "that God may be all in all."

To-day grace reigns, in the millennium righteousness will reign, but in that blissful kingdom of the Father love will reign for evermore. There is something here that greatly touches the heart. We see the Lord putting His pierced hand on the groaning and travailing creation, cleansing, healing, subduing, bringing in the reign of love where hatred had ruled, even when necessary doing His strange work of judgment and, as we gather from other Scriptures, associating His saints with Him. Those who have shared His rejection shall share His joy. What wondrous grace is this! and what shall be the gladness of those who are sent by Him to help to heal this poor world's hurts, and to labour for the inauguration of that rule of everlasting love.

Eph. 1. 22 shews us the fulfilling in Christ of the purpose of God, foreshadowed when "the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air and brought them to Adam and made him head over all to her who was ordained his helpmeet, the women for whom a man should leave his father and his mother that he might cleave unto her, the prototype of "we are members of His body, of His flesh and

of His bones. . . . This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Thus as having all things put under His feet, the Lord Jesus Christ is "Head over all things to the church which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (v. 33). Saints are brought into this relationship "according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own 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 (v. 20, 21).

What a vision is this of the mighty power on our behalf! Some have thought that such themes as these are scarcely suited to our difficult days, that their appeal was rather to saints of an earlier and more leisured time; nay, beloved, it is not so, the harder the day the more need of that mighty power, the more the power of darkness prevails—and surely never has it swayed men, as individuals, and as nations, as to-day—the more do we need to realize our present portion as translated even now into the kingdom of God's dear Son. There is trouble everywhere; it was said recently, "Civilisation as we know it seems to have broken down, and there is nothing to put in its place," but the word of our God shall stand for ever; He has "LEFT NOTHING THAT IS NOT PUT UNDER HIM."

With such a hope before us, with such a mighty power for us, we may well rejoice evermore as we watch and wait for His coming again. May He grant His grace that we may be here, ever and only for His praise and pleasure.

## THE WAY TO FULL SURRENDER.

**D**O you believe that God loves you, with a love that is perfect, all wise, unchanging; and because He so loves you He must do the very best for you? If so, can you not wholly trust Him? Can you not yield up your life, strength, every hope and desire wholly to Him? Is it wisdom on your part to have any reserve? If you hold back any part, leave Him out of any decision, decide to act according to your own will instead of His, will it not shew distrust of Him, and spoil His plan, and your joy? To come to this complete surrender of yourself to Him will mean deep exercise of soul and heart searching; it may mean pain and struggle, for the flesh does not readily accept the decision, No, to its plea; but it is surely the way of His glory and

your blessing. How freely the soul breathes after the great clearance, what liberty it feels on proving what is that good and perfect and acceptable will of God, after being cabined and cribbed within the desires of the flesh and self-will. The slums are swept away and a noble palace grows up in their place, an ivory palace for the King; for now Christ dwells in your heart by faith; and ye being rooted and grounded in love are able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length and depth and height; **AND TO KNOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST WHICH PASSETH KNOWLEDGE!** What compensation! Surely the hundredfold more in this present time! There it is, you must make your decision!

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### The Dawn of Life.

There was a time when your babe only slept and ate, but one day it looked up into your face and smiled, and you saw that it knew you. You will never forget that first smile. It is like that with the soul, there comes a moment when it looks up to God in the sweet consciousness, "I am loved and cared for, I can trust and not be afraid." Who was the more glad the day the child knew you, you or the child? You were, most surely. And who has the greater joy when you look up to God with the consciousness that you are His, when your heart says, Father, even before your lips frame the word? God has the greater joy undoubtedly. What rest, what joy that thought gives.

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### Omission.

It will be well to ponder over the fact, that it was the five virgins who omitted to take the oil in their vessels who were shut out of the marriage feast. It was the servant who omitted to put the one talent that had been entrusted to him to use that was cast into outer darkness. It was those nations that omitted to care for Christ in His brethren, who did not feed, and clothe, and shelter and visit them that were driven away into everlasting punishment. It is all recorded in Matthew 25 and the words are the Lord's own words.

# TRIUMPHING OVER SUFFERING. No. 1. R. McCallum.

On the Epistle to the Philippians.

**PHILIPPI** was the first place in Europe to hear the gospel of God's grace. In answer to the Macedonian call, Paul was drawn to this great city, early known as the Fountain City but later extended by Philip of Macedonia and called after himself, and a city which subsequently had conferred upon it by Augustus the dignity and privilege of a Roman Colony. Outside this city, by the river's side, Paul spoke to some devout Jewish women who were gathered on the Sabbath for prayer. As he presented the truth, the light of the gospel shone in upon the darkness of the Asiatic, Lydia, "whose heart the Lord opened that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." In this city a stronghold of paganism, the mighty emancipating power of the gospel manifested itself upon an Asiatic seeker after God, a Grecian maiden most manifestly dominated by Satan, and a brutal Roman, indifferent to spiritual values, and these firstfruits of missionary labour in Europe were but symptomatic of the suitability of "the truth as it is in Jesus" to satisfy the need and meet the condition of all classes of humanity—a suitability which thank God time has failed to eradicate and nothing can supplant.

The occasion of this letter was this: Paul now found himself a prisoner in Rome and under the limitations of his enforced confinement he could no longer support himself as he had done at Thessalonica, Corinth and Ephesus. The loving care of the Philippian saints had found expression in a liberal

contribution sent by the hand of Epaphroditus, one of their number. While Epaphroditus had been in Rome with their gift and ministering in some special way to the necessities of Paul, he had fallen sick and the news of his sickness reaching Philippi in due course, but added to the anxieties of the assembly there. As soon then, as he was well enough, Paul sent him back with this charming letter in which he expresses his deep appreciation of their remembrance of him in his bonds, bears enthusiastic testimony to the devotion of Epaphroditus, gives interesting information concerning his own condition and feelings and furnishes the assembly with affectionate and tender counsel. Written in the straits of imprisonment it bears the atmosphere of contentment and peace; written under the provocation of an unjust confinement it is not only free from complaint but throbs with joy. There is no epistle more free from the necessity of rebuke, there is none more fragrant with love.

The very first words of the Epistle present to us a beautiful picture of companionship in labour and love for the saints. "Paul and Timotheus the servants of Jesus Christ to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons. Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ." When occasion demanded, and abuses obtained necessitating correction, Paul could assert his apostleship in no dubitable way, but here he is able to associate Timothy, his son in the faith, with himself

in terms of equality. But that equality is in the lowest plane "bondslaves of Jesus Christ"—they are one in the spirit of devotion to their Lord; one in consecration to their common Master. And this was the passion of Paul's ministry—not to lord it over God's heritage but by love to serve—to "spend and be spent." All that he had was devoted without reserve to the service of Christ. There was no thought of self-seeking but the abnegation of self that Christ might be magnified. While he puts himself thus, in the lowest place, he gives to the believers at Philippi this high and honourable designation "saints"—saints not because of inherent sinless perfection; saints not because sufficiently illustrious to merit a place in coloured glass panelling—but saints in virtue of their standing in Christ Jesus, through faith in His name. Just as by faith in Christ, the believer is a justified person, being reckoned righteous by God, Christ being made unto him righteousness, so by reason of faith in Christ he is a sanctified person—for Christ "of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." Now while he speaks of them *all* as saints he makes mention of *some* who are bishops and deacons. Observe that he does not speak of a bishop at Philippi; still less does he speak of one bishop in charge of a number of assemblies in a Philippian diocese—a superior order of minister. At Philippi there were *bishops*—overseers in the assembly, taking the oversight "not for filthy lucre's sake" but in the true spirit of service and in a sense of deep responsibility to God, watching the flock of God.

*Grace* is the unmerited favour of God, exercised towards us in right-

eousness. *Peace* is freedom from all anxious care. Happy is the man, who, whatever his circumstances, is in the conscious enjoyment of grace and peace divine.

How constantly were these Philip-  
pians on his mind! "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you." Such remembrance was to him a constant source of delight as he contemplated their faith in Christ and their fidelity to His Name; a fidelity which had marked them "from the *first* day until now." On that very first day when Lydia had received the truth of the gospel she manifested her fellowship in it, by entreating Paul to accept of her hospitality, and from that day the Philippians had identified themselves in a conspicuous way with the interests of Christ. Through a decade the believers at Philippi had been marked in an eminent degree by their unity and zeal in the proclamation of the glad tidings. They had manifested a missionary spirit that bound him to them in a special sympathy, making them "partakers of his grace." Writing to the Ephesians he says, "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Of such grace had they become partakers, carrying the banner of Christ to other Gentiles. God had begun a good work in their souls and God will perfect it.

It is with the assurance that he is asking what is in accordance with God's will for them then, that he prays, "This I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment." The word *abound* suggests the overflowing of the bucket which stands

under the running stream. They had love in measure, but he desired that they should be so perfected in love that there would be room for nothing more. "God is love" and to love thus is to manifest the character of God. In such love there is no place for mere sentimental froth or foolish gush. It is love grounded in knowledge and marked by spiritual judgment; indeed, it has three main characteristics—discernment, sincerity and fruitfulness. The verses we are now considering are rendered thus in Weymouth's translation: "And it is my prayer that your love may be more and more accompanied by clear knowledge, and keen perception for testing things that differ so that ye may be men of transparent character and may be blameless in preparation for the day of Christ, being filled with these fruits of righteousness which come through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God." "Keen perception" connotes an eye quick to detect and a heart quick to feel moral and spiritual distinctions. In writing to the Hebrews the Apostle asserts: "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." In such a day of confusion and adulterating of the truth as this, what need there is for that abounding love which carries the seal of discrimination. "Sincere and without offence," these are the features of a man who has nothing to hide, whose Christian life is not marred by that fatal defect, hypocrisy or inconsistency, but whose outward life is but the manifestation of his inner self. Such a transparent life lived in the light of God's presence, will be without offence—or free from stumbling—

and will bear the third distinguishing mark of true love, namely *fruitfulness*, "being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ." May this righteousness be ours! the evidence down here of that place which God has given us before Himself in Christ

The next section in this chapter is a striking illustration of the power of God to frustrate the purposes of man. In the 76th Psalm the Psalmist says of God, "Truly the wrath of man shall praise Thee, the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain," and here, we find the apparent misfortune and real opposition promoting the interests of the gospel. Long had the apostle desired to reach Rome. With the strategy of a heaven-sent evangelist he longed to visit the metropolis of the world, the focus of civilisation, the city from which more than any other it might be expected that the gospel would radiate to the utmost bounds of Roman authority. Without doubt he expected to go there a free man paying his own passage, but his purpose had long remained unfulfilled and now at last his enemies conspired to accomplish what he had so far failed to achieve. He was to go a prisoner in bonds, his passage secured and paid for by the Roman Government. When he left Jerusalem under the escort provided by Claudius Lysias he was in no doubt as to his ultimate destiny, for the word of the Lord had come to him saying, "Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." It will be remembered how after two years imprisonment under Felix, another hearing was granted the apostle before Festus when he made his appeal to Caesar. Before being put on

board ship under a centurion however, he was privileged by God to bear testimony to the truth before Felix, Drusilla, Festus, Agrippa and Bernice. And then to Rome!—the hatred of Jews and the might of the greatest pagan nation of the world, harnessed to the will of God encompassing his transport. Moreover, he can aver in solemn truth, "My bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace and in all other places." Chained to a Roman soldier throughout the two years of his imprisonment, the guard being changed, it is said, every six hours, such bondage had been but a special opportunity of displaying his fidelity to Christ. The perfect consistency of his life and the discovery that here was a strange type of prisoner, guilty of no crime, but confined for this alone that he had preached salvation through faith in a crucified Christ, whom he declared to be alive again, had arrested the interest even of the hardened soldiery; and doubtless many a soldier who had heard from the lips of the beloved apostle the words of light and life was thereafter drafted to remote parts of the Empire, there to rehearse the simple story for the illumination of other dark hearts. A second fact is adduced to prove that apparent disasters but conspired to promote the progress of the gospel. The disciples at Rome witnessing the courage of Paul had been emboldened to cast aside their apathy and fear and to preach the word courageously. Some indeed were preaching Christ of 'envy,' hoping to add affliction to his bonds, enemies of Paul and preaching a gospel with a Judaistic bias or with a desire not to offend the cultured, they preached Christ in a spirit of faction and strife. "What then? notwithstanding every

way whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice," says the Apostle. Such confidence as the apostle has in the ability of God to work His sovereign will, causes a child of God to rejoice even when Satan rages. Paul rejoiced first of all because he saw that everything would turn out right for himself. "I know," he says, "that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ." It may be he had in view his personal deliverance from captivity, but just as he saw the gospel promoted by the opposition of its enemies, so he realized that the trials and pressure through which he was passing were securing the advancement of his spiritual life. See too the emphasis he lays on prayer. Here is one way open to us all to co-operate with those who labour in the gospel.

Whatever may come, whatever crisis may be before him, his earnest desire is "that Christ shall be magnified in his body whether by life or death." "For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain . . . I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ which is far better." How different the perplexity in which he found himself from that which besets the unconverted man, life for the latter so often ending in complete disappointment and disillusionment, as the result of buffetings of cruel fate and the suffering of "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune"—and death the obvious way out being so full of fearful mysteries. We "rather bear the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of," and so man looks to life as the way of escape from death. But the apostle weighs the blessings of life

against the blessings of death, and is in a quandary not knowing which to choose. To live is Christ, to die is gain! Life to him is the opportunity for blessed service, death the realization of the immediate presence of the Lord Christ. If we desire to avail ourselves aright of life's opportunities and would view not merely with equanimity but hail with delight the prospect of depar-

ture from life, we must take heed to the apostolic injunction, "Let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ."

It will be so if we are marked by steadfastness, unity, and courage in the presence of our enemies. "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him but also to suffer for His sake."

### "Thy Brother . . . for whom Christ Died."

CONSIDER these words, they occur twice in the New Testament, Romans 14. 15, and 1 Corinthians 8. 11, "Thy brother . . . for whom Christ died." Christ died that he might be thy brother, and that thou mightest be his brother. How are you treating him, as a brother or as a criminal? As one who should be welcomed to every family privilege, or as an alien, to be kept at a distance and treated with suspicion? Think of thy brother, as one for whom Christ died; only at that great cost could he be made a brother! He may be weak in the faith, and ignorant of much knowledge that has made you proud; he may be even—anything you care to call him, but Christ died for him. He could not have done more for him than that. What value the Lord has set on him! To die for him! Look at him from that standpoint, and you will neither think nor say, "Am I my brother's keeper?" That is the voice of the flesh, of Cain that was of the wicked one; the divine life within us rejoices in opportunities of serving Him, for we must love him for whom Christ died.

### "What—know ye not?" 1 Corinthian 6, 19-20.

There are two reasons why we are not our own. (1) The Spirit has taken possession of us for God. (2) We are bought with a price, even the blood of Christ; it is a completed purchase. Purchased by blood, possessed by the Spirit, to be for God and His glory, our bodies are not our own to do as we will with them; we have no right to give them over to sin. The last words of the verse are not a cold, logical deduction from a previous argument, but an earnest exhortation suggested by the solemn thought of our oneness with Christ, and the price paid by Him to make us His.

*Possess Christ, have Him as the treasure of your heart and you will express Christ, and your witness for Him will not be as a mask put on, but it will shine out of you, and be the same wherever you are, whether in private or in public.*

## “HONOUR ALL MEN.”

I HAD to address a number of men who were by no means attractive in appearance, indeed some of them were the very dregs. As I looked into their faces the Word of God spoke to me and it changed, in my view, every one of them. The words, “Honour all men,” forced their way into my very soul, and I was both rebuked and encouraged. To me they did not look honourable; but who was I to decide that, when the Word of God commanded me to honour all men? They were men, no matter how hardened and debased, so I spoke to them, taking those three words as my text. I told them that the Word of God commanded me to honour them, and there were three great reasons why I should do so.

1. God had sent a message to them and it was a message of love. Yes, He commanded them to repent, but it was His goodness that did this—His message to them was a message of love, and an invitation to them to dwell with Him for ever. I told them that if his Majesty the King were to send a kindly message to my next door neighbour, inviting him to be his guest, I should certainly respect my neighbour, and surely much more should I honour them, as God not only sent His kindly message to them, but had made me the bearer of it.

2. I must honour them because every man of them had an immor-

tal soul, some of them had forgotten it, and had lived more like beasts than men; they had neglected and starved their souls, but they had not killed them; they could not do that, even death itself could not do that, they would live on for ever and ever, either in the glory of God's house or in the depths of hell.

3. I must honour them, because of what they might become. If they turned to God, believing His message, and yielded themselves to the Lord Jesus as their Saviour, they would become the children of God, for to as many as receive Him, to them He gives the power to become the children of God, even to as many as believe in His Name; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

It was a new view of men that those words gave me, and I pass them on and press them upon others. We are praying for a revival of the work of God, we are longing for it, and looking for it, and if we look upon men, not as rich or poor, attractive or repellant, but as material for the grace of God, as souls to be saved or perish; it will help to prepare our hearts for the work of God, and contribute towards our fitness as vessels for the Master's use in this great service of turning men from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God.

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If your heart is in concert with the heart of Christ your prayers will go out for the gospel to the utmost bounds of the earth.

If you are not faithful to God, can you be faithful to anyone? We must fail in every responsibility if we are not true to Him.

# THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS.

*A Bible Study.*

J. T. Mawson

*Continued from page 43*

Ques Regarding the coming of the Lord Jesus for His church which we have been considering four times in the Revelation we read, "I come quickly." Some of us can't understand this, for nearly 2,000 years is not quickly. How do you explain that?

FIRST, let us be impressed with the fact that it is the Lord Himself who is speaking, it is not even an apostle delivering a message from Him; the words are His own. "I will come again," He says in John 14. "I come quickly," He says in the Revelation, they are His last words to us. If we grasp the fact that they are His own words to those He loves we shall begin to understand them with the heart. Let me illustrate. A mother must leave her children for a while, as she bids them farewell she says, "I'll be back soon," and if she has the opportunity of sending them a message the burden of it is, "I'll see you soon." If she writes a letter to them, instructing them as to what to do during her absence, she closes it with the words, "I'm coming quickly." Why? Because she knows that there is a great yearning in those young hearts, they won't be fully happy and satisfied until they see their mother again and she knows that no word that she could send them will be more prized by them. But there is another and a deeper reason. Her children are in her heart, she yearns for them, nothing will satisfy her but having them with her again, and nothing will hinder her when her business is

done from hastening to them, she will not tarry then. It is thus, we believe, with the Lord. The "quickly" is in His heart, He will not tarry a moment longer than is necessary. "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Heb 10:57). Do we understand that? Unless we have left our first love we shall understand it and we shall cherish these last words of His to us, and continually in our hearts there will be this response, "Even so, Come, Lord Jesus."

Ques: *What about the Old Testament saints will they have part in this coming of the Lord?*

We cannot doubt that, "they that are Christ's at His coming" (1 Cor 15:23) must include them. They have died in faith, and will be among the "blessed and holy" that have part in the first resurrection (Rev 20:6). They will be those who will be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb, the friends of the Bridegroom (Rev 19:9). All that are in their graves are to hear His voice and will come forth, some to the resurrection of life and some to the resurrection of damnation (John 5:28, 29), and Rev 20 tells us that there will be a thousand years between these two resurrections. All the saints of God—those that have done good, will have their part in the first resurrection at the coming of the Lord.

Ques 1 Thess 4:16 speaks of the shout of the Lord, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God. What are we to understand by these three things?

We shall have no difficulty as to the shout of the Lord. It is the Lord's own shout. As a captain commands his army, so the Lord will command and assemble the countless number of His saints, dead and living, to meet Him in the air, and there will be "our gathering together unto Him" (2 Thess. 2. 1). There will be authority and triumph in that shout, but more. I listened with great pleasure to a servant of the Lord, insisting that it would be a shout of joy. For nearly 2,000 years the Lord has waited for this moment, for the moment when He shall receive and present to Himself, His blood-bought church—this is the hour of His patience—but the waiting time will be over when He rises up in His power; and the shout will be a shout of joy, of long pent-up desire, if we may speak thus in deepest reverence. The shout of the Lord will have His saints solely in view, and that shout will have an instant answer; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye we shall be with Him.

The archangel is Michael (Jude 9), and he is Israel's prince (Daniel 10. 21): the great spiritual power that stands for Israel. Whenever he is mentioned by name it is in relation to events in the career of that nation (see Jude 9 and Rev. 12). I suggest then that the voice of the archangel will have to do with the gathering of Israel. The trump of God seems to be more universal, it will affect all mankind. If this is the interpretation, we have here three widening circles. 1. The Church, 2. Israel, 3. All men. All will be affected by this great event. The effect will not be simultaneous in these circles, the wheels will move

slower in regard to Israel and mankind, but they will begin to move then. There will be as I have said, an instant response from the church; the work will be slower in regard to Israel, but from that moment the nation will begin to move towards the land of Canaan and their preparation for the return of the Messiah will begin; and every nation will be affected also. It will not be until the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, that all nations will be gathered before Him, but the trump of God, which sounds forth at the coming of the Lord, will secure that.

What I should like us all to see is, that everything awaits the catching up of the church out of this world; until that takes place all the promises of God in regard to Israel and the nations of men are held up, they cannot be fulfilled, but when that does take place, events will move swiftly to the great and glorious appearing of the Lord, and the voice of the archangel and the trump of God will have accomplished their great work. We need a fuller conception of the importance of the church in God's ways. It is the brightest and most cherished prize that Christ will secure from among men, and until He has secured it—complete, perfect, glorious, without spot or blemish—nothing of God's plans proceed to their appointed end, but when it has been secured, to share with the coming King all His glory, then God will make no more no more delay, and Israel and the nations will bow the knee to Christ; God's kingdom will come.

*Ques.: Why are the saints not caught right up into the Father's house? Why should the Lord come to meet them in the air?*

They will be caught right up into the Father's house, of course. John 14 assures us of that, but the Lord will come forth to meet them to conduct them into that place that He has prepared for them. His coming forth to meet them shews the love He has for them, and the honour that He puts upon them. As a king goes forth to meet his royal bride when the news reaches him that she has left her own land for his, so will the Lord come forth to meet His bride.

But that He should meet her in the air is full of significance. The air is the seat of Satan's power; he is the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2. 2). It is from the air—the heavenlies—that the principalities and powers and rulers of the darkness of this world and the spiritual wickedness, operate (Eph. 6. 12), and it is there that the Lord will meet His own. Suppose a great king at war with another were to send a message to his army in a distant field of operations, saying that he would meet them in the capital of the enemy's country. Well, we should say, he will need to crush the enemy's power before he can do that, and if he does it, it will be the most conclusive evidence of his complete victory. It is just so in this matter. The enemy is a defeated foe; the power of the devil has been annulled. Would he not, where he able, prevent the Lord from receiving His own into glory? He certainly would; but it is in the very capital of his dark dominion, in the region from which he now operates against the church, and holds men in darkness, that the Lord will meet His saints, and they, sharing His triumph and joy, will pass through the air and into the Father's house to be for ever with the Lord.

Consequent upon this manifest triumph of the Lord over him, the devil is to be cast out of his present seat of power in the heavenlies. Revelation 12 tells us of this, and that he will come down to earth "having great wrath." We can understand that; since Pentecost his power and subtlety have been concentrated on the church. The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ," and this is true of the whole church, but, he added, "I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." This has been Satan's endeavour; with this end in view he has changed himself into an angel of light, and when this has failed, he has gone about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. His counsels and determination and efforts have been to rob Christ of His church, but the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, said the Lord, and here we see that word fulfilled, and in spite of the utmost that Satan can do the church passes clean through His domain, holy and without blame, having neither spot nor wrinkle nor any such thing, to be for ever for Christ, as a bride adorned for her husband. When the devil sees that and realizes the fulness of Christ's victory, he may well have great wrath.

*Ques.: What would you say as to the fixing of dates as to the coming of the Lord?*

The fixing of dates as to the coming of the Lord is a pernicious thing, and those who do it are presumptuous people. The Lord Him-

self said, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, nor the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13. 32). Yes, says some one, but we know the year. Indeed. Then why did the Lord add, "Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is" verse 33, and again, "for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at cockcrowing, or in the morning" (verse 35). To the apostles who have given us the Word of God by the Holy Spirit's inspiration, the Lord said, "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power" (Acts 1). If this knowledge was withheld from them in the Father's wisdom, where is there

any indication in the Word that it would be revealed to us? These sayings of the Lord have to do with His coming in glory, and they surely abide true in regard to it. The church period has intervened, it will close with the Rapture, but not a word or a hint is given in relation to the Rapture that the time of it may be known. Days, months, years and numbers are given in the Scriptures, but they have their relation to Israel and the earth, and are all in abeyance until the heavenly company is secured and caught up, then the clock of prophecy will start again, and God's calendar will justify itself. Meanwhile we must accept the words of the Lord, and wait and watch and work.

*To be continued.*

## THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE.

J. B. S.

*"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"* (Rev. 22. 17).

**C**HRIST'S chief interest is here.

The bride (characteristically of all the saints) is here on earth and the Holy Ghost. They are together. What are they doing? Occupied with Christ's interests, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." They invite Him to come—those only are fit to ask Him. What could be happier service than to say to Him, Come, because we are ready for Him? What next? "And let him that heareth say, Come." Here is a brother not saying, Come. I urge him to do so. I encourage him. But here is another who is not

happy; to him I say, "Let him that is athirst come." Let him come to enjoy. Is that all? No. I go out to the wide world, the whole length and breadth of the earth and say, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." It means everything to be in concert with the heart of Christ in the circle of His interests, and to come out from Him with the gospel to the utmost bounds of the earth. The evangelist has been commissioned by his Lord above, and to Him, the Head, he must report. He goes out to recruit for his own corps—the church; he is seeking faithful men to stand for his Lord on earth, and what a message of grace he carries. I never saw a man really devoted to God that had not a real care for souls, according to the grace given him by Christ.

# THE WORD AND LIFE.

H. J. Vine.

*"In the beginning was the Word . . . In Him was life" (John 1).* ❧

WHEN the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, His glory was manifested, but how different it was to that of renowned and ruthless warriors who are great in men's eyes—it was a glory distinguished by the grace and beauty of love and relationship—"the glory as of the only begotten with a father." With what wonder His disciples contemplated that glory, as we may also. His goings forth had been from eternity (Micah 5. 2), and now He had come forth in Time. The Word by whom all things were made had come into the world that had come from His hand, and He had come into it full of grace and truth. The world did not know Him, even the Baptist did not know Him, until he received a special revelation from God as to Him, then he bore witness and said, "This is the Son of God."

In the Word was life. He is called the Word of life, and as such He was seen, contemplated, heard and handled by His favoured disciples. He is the eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to those disciples, who have declared Him unto us. Yet though He had come so near to men, He was always the Son of the Father's love and "the true God and eternal life."

To none but this glorious person could Proverbs 8. 22-26 apply. He was Jehovah's constant delight, rejoicing always before Him. He was set up from Eternity, literally, "anointed from Eternity." When the foundation of the earth were appointed, it is said, "Then was I by Him, as one brought up with Him," and this signifies "the nurs-

ling of His love" (J. N. D.). Divine tenderness and deep affection were there even before the strong and solid foundations of the earth were appointed. There is a parallel to this expression in the New Testament—"the Son of His love" (Col. 1. 13).

We are seeking to shew that the Word, the Son, and the One "anointed from Eternity," the Nursing of Jehovah's love, are the same Person, and that He is shewn as the originator and fountain of life for men. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1. 4). "He that hath the Son hath life" (1 John 5. 12), and "Whoso findeth Me findeth life" (Proverbs 8. 35). Blessed is the man that heareth Him, watching daily at His gates, waiting at the posts of His doors.

The first name given to the Lord by the Spirit in both Luke and John is the Word. In Luke the name occurs in verse 2; there were those who from the beginning had been eye-witnesses and ministers, or attendants, on the Word. It is a most comprehensive name, conveying not only what is expressed, but the matter and form of both the thought and the expression as well as the expression of it. The Word is the embodiment and expression of God's mind; divine perfectness was there not only in what was to be expressed but in the expression of it, and it is important to see that it is the Holy Spirit who names Him, THE WORD.

In the administration of wisdom, words have a large and necessary place. It is said, "All the words of my mouth are in righteousness,

there is nothing tortuous or perverse in them." The alphabet is necessary for forming words as we know them. He who is the Originator of all says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega," the A and the Z Wisdom's words flow from Him with whom life stands connected and from whom all things received being. By investigation, no matter how earnest and keen, no man "can find Him out." Therefore in marvellous grace and wondrous love He came down to find us out. We were sin-

ners, guilty before the thrice holy God; yet He saved us by His grace. In righteousness and love He undertook our salvation. He died that we might live.

We live by His words, who is the Word. "He that heareth My word and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life," He said, and His disciples having received His words, said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." "He that hath the Son hath life."

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We utter PRAYER for our wants and in our needs; we give THANKS for the gifts of God—His mercies and His goodness; we PRAISE Him for that which He has done, is doing and will yet do for our blessing—all this is in language articulate and audible, possibly to the intelligence of men; but being the absorption of the soul in its glorious Object—the Father and the Son—may be beyond all possible expression. "The elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever" (Rev. 5. 14). What they said (if anything) we are not told.

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"For the Word of God is quick, and powerful (living and operative), and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (Hebrews 4. 12, 13). *The beginning of true recovery to the Lord will be by heart and conscience coming under the searching action of the Word. It is by the Word that God maintains His authority over the soul. And it is by the Word that His saints are preserved from departure from Him and kept in His ways. Every truly surrendered soul will cry continually to the Lord, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way (any way of death) in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139. 23, 24).*

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"Go in Peace" (Luke 7. 50). The Greek form is more expressive than the English. Our idiom hardly allows us to say, "Go into peace," and yet that is the exact meaning of the original. "Peace" is as a new home to which the penitent is bidden to turn as to a place of refuge.

**I**T is encouraging for the Christian to know that the Scriptures written aforetime, were written for our instruction. The above Scripture would particularly refer to the Old Testament writings, but one would not exclude the New Testament from its scope. It shews that we have an immediate personal interest in all the Old Testament Scriptures. We need them for the sustaining and strengthening of divine life in our souls, though the Spirit alone can make it effectual to us.

In travelling together through this world while we are waiting the consummation of our hope, we are exhorted not to please ourselves, but our neighbour for his good to edification (v. 2). It is a pathway of self-abnegation, and the Lord Jesus is again set before us as our example in this; "For even Christ pleased not Himself" (v. 3). God is a God of patience and consolation (v. 5), and as He speaks to us in His Scriptures of truth, there we find that constancy, cheerfulness, and spiritual solace we need in our intercourse with one another. Scripture affords the only substantial basis of solid comfort amid all the trying circumstances we may pass through. In the present world-wide depression many are finding their only comfort there, for God is the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort.

We are exhorted to seek the good of others regardless of pleasing ourselves, and we may not get any thanks for our activities in this way. We may even be reproached like the Lord Jesus, but we are exhorted "not to be weary in well doing" (Gal. 6. 9), and to "overcome evil with God" (Rom. 12. 21), and

Scripture tell us that God is "kind unto the unthankful" (Luke 6. 35), and so we take comfort from this.

It is helpful for us to read Scripture as children in order to hear God speaking to us, so that we may be comforted, searched out, and taught to listen to His voice. This comfort may be gleaned throughout the whole field of revelation. If passing through personal suffering like Job, or rejection by one's brethren, like Joseph, or tribulation through the machinations of enemies, like Daniel, how comforting it is to see how God sustains and delivers them, and teaches them lessons of His mercy, and power, amid their trials.

Scripture sheds the light of heaven, upon the gloom of earth, and shews us at the present moment One at the right hand of the Majesty on high, Who sympathise with them in their infirmities. And amid the difficulties of the way and the wreck and ruin of things in this world, what a comfort to know that He is coming again to put things right. How often His words "Be of good cheer, it is I" have comforted the tempest tossed, and "Let not your hearts be troubled" stilled and quieted their fears. And with the comfort with which we have been comforted ourselves, we have been able to comfort others. Waiting on Him Who alone can expound and apply the Scriptures, brings them before our souls in soothing, cheering, and strengthening power. And even when death has come in and taken some loved one away from us, and the heart's affections are wrenched and torn, nothing will

bring solace and comfort like the Scriptures. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words" bids us look on to that moment when we shall all be reunited again. We shall meet Him Who loved us and gave Himself for us, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. And our hope grows brighter as we look on to that moment and look up in holy expectation of seeing His face. What solace to our hearts.

And patience has its part in this too. Cheerful endurance is needed in passing through trying circumstances, and so in our patience we are to possess our souls, we are to go through trials cheerfully. When difficulties arise, we get so ruffled and distressed, instead of patiently going through them, and seeking the comfort of the Scriptures in them. God is over all our circumstances, and the trying of faith works patience, but we are to let it have its perfect work, that we may be perfect, wanting nothing. We have to learn our lesson down here like Job, that "The Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy." What a comfort to know this. One of the de-

sires that the Apostle Paul had for the Colossian saints was that they might be "strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness" (Col. 1. 11).

How greatly blessed is the Christian of to-day. The Scriptures are available to all, and very few in these days are unable to read them. Up to reformation times it was not so, yet there were many faithful souls in those dark ages. There is no excuse for us if we are unintelligent in the Scriptures, for we have dwelling within us the Holy Spirit who indited the Scriptures and alone can interpret them for us. Our failure mostly is in not devoting ourselves to searching the Scriptures, so that like Apollos we may be powerful in them, or not turning to them for comfort when difficulties or trials arise in our Christian pathway.

May the Lord give to all of us a deeper desire to know His mind and devote every spare moment of our spare time to the study of the Scriptures.

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The Christ of God and of Christianity is a living Person—truly God and truly Man—the Son of the Father, the Redeemer of men, the risen, glorified Lord and Head of the church, which is His body. He appeared once to put away sin by His own sacrifice; He is coming again to call His own to be for ever with Him in the Father's house. He loves them to the end and when He appears in glory, as He most surely will, they shall also appear with Him in glory.

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There is sympathy, succour, consideration and care and never changing love in the tender heart of Him who sits upon the throne. He has felt our pangs; He has shed our tears; He has known our sorrows; He was made like us in all things but sin. He calls us His brethren. He is the star and the sun of our life.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

## Would God move us to do wrong?

I should be glad to have some light on 2 Samuel 24. 1. It says, The Lord moved David to number Israel and Judah; then in verse 10 David confesses this act as sin. Would God move us to do what is wrong?—ROXBORO.

JAMES 1. 13 says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth He any man." And apart from such a plain statement as that, what we know of God would forbid the thought that God could move any man to do what is wrong. He may and does put men to the test to bring out what is in them, as when He tested Abraham (Genesis 22). In Abraham's case it was to bring into manifestation the faith that God knew was in him. In David's case the test came to bring out the terrible pride that had taken possession of his heart and the nation's, and the forgetfulness of God which always goes with pride of heart. In the Septuagint version the "*he* moved David," is given as "*Satan*," and 1 Chronicles 21. 1 states very definitely that "*Satan* provoked David to number Israel." Whether that version be right or not, Satan could only go so far as God per-

mitted him and it is clear that God had a controversy with Israel, for His anger was kindled against them. There was nothing wrong in numbering the people; it was the spirit in which it was done that was wrong. If Israel had been ready to bring the half shekel of silver for every man, humbly and thankfully acknowledging thereby that they all belonged to God, according to Exod. 30. 12-16, all would have been well, but it is evident that great prosperity had filled David and the people with pride; they took the glory to themselves instead of giving it to God; and that gave Satan his opportunity and called for God's chastening. This latter was not withheld, for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, to save them from worse evils; and the chastening was not in vain, for chastened David learns deeper lessons of God and His grace and rises to higher heights than he had ever known before.

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*'Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead'* (2 Tim. 2. 8).

He is our LORD, let us obey His word; He is our HEAD, let us hold fast to Him; He is our CENTRE, let us gather to Him with devoted and loyal hearts; He is the soon-coming BRIDEGROOM, let us with eager hearts be crying, "Come, Lord Jesus." He is still the REJECTED CHRIST, let us be faithful to His cross and cause; but He is the RISEN ONE, let us glory in His triumph and with great boldness give witness to this outstanding fact of our faith.

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The power of earth's Creator gives glory to Thy Name.  
The love of earth's Redeemer enhances still Thy fame.  
Creator and Redeemer, Almighty Saviour, Lord,  
The power and grace that saved us, for ever be adored.

# THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

J. T. Mawson.

*Bible Study.* No. 3.

*Continued from page 47.*

*Ques.: It is a popular notion that the world is to be converted by the preaching of the gospel or by the spread of righteousness, and that then, and not till then, the Lord will come. How does that fit in with the Scriptures?*

**IT DOES** not fit in with the Scriptures at all; it has no foundation or support in them. To quote a few texts will be enough to shew how false it is. "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him :and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him" (Rev. 1. 7). If it is to a converted world that He comes, why should all kindreds of the earth wail because of Him? If they were all converted they would most surely rejoice at His coming, and receive Him with acclamation. But it is because He is **COMING AS THE JUDGE** that they will fear. "Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of this, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds..." (Jude 14, 15). He is coming to judge because the world has not been converted by the gospel, and because the **only way** in which righteousness can be established on the earth is by judgment. This is made solemnly clear by another Scripture, "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 the glory of His power" (2 Thess. 1. 7, 8, 9). There are a host of confirmatory texts, but one other will be enough. "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from **THE WRATH OF THE LAMB**: for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand" (Revelation 6. 15, 16, 17). Could the Lamb be wrath with a converted world? And would converted men cry out for a hiding place from Him? Yet here men in every station of life are reduced to the common level of abject terror at the very thought of His coming.

*Ques.: Then what is the gospel for if not to convert the world?*

It has been sent into the world to gather a people out of the world for the Lord's Name. This comes out clearly in Acts 15. 14: "God at first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His Name." Those who believe the gospel are delivered from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father (Galatians 1. 4). The distinction between the disciples of the Lord and the world is clearly given in the Lord's own

words, "Because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15. 19), and throughout the chapters 14-17 of John's Gospel. Every true believer on the Lord Jesus is a "called out" one, sanctified in Christ Jesus, and belongs to His church that He is soon to catch away out of the world for ever; they look for mercy and salvation at His coming; while for the world there is judgment—"a certain looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Hebrews 10. 27).

It is of the utmost importance that we should understand that the gospel has called us out of the world to heaven; having believed it, our names are written there; our citizenship is there, and it is from thence that we look for the Saviour, who shall change our bodies of humiliation, and fashion them like unto His own body of glory, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. 3. 21). At the first stage of His coming again, when He will catch away from the world His blood-bought saints, He will get something *out of the world*, at His Appearing in glory with His saints He will do something *in the world*.

Ques. *Why do you stress the fact of our being called out of the world so much?*

Because the true character of the church cannot be understood unless this is understood, and unless we understand the character of our calling, we cannot be true to it; and neither shall we understand the prophetic Scripture, nor rightly divine the word of truth, if we fail to see the unique character of the church and its calling. We have been made partakers of "a heavenly calling"

(Hebrews 3. 1). Our blessings are in "the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 1. 3). Our hope is laid up for us in heaven (Colossians 1. 5), and we are to set our affections upon the things that are there (ch. 3. 1-4). And finally the Lord said in His prayer to His Father, "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world" (John 17). If the church had held fast to this great fact it would not have settled down in the world, and it would have kept free from those entanglements that have bound it a captive to the world's schemes and ways and made it grind at its mills, like blinded Samson at the mills of the Philistines. Thousands of earnest Christians are wasting their energies and time in efforts to improve the world that cannot be improved, because they do not see and realize their heavenly calling, when they might be building for eternity—building in relation to the chief corner Stone, which has been rejected by the world (Acts 4. 11, 12; 1 Peter 2. 6-8). That building, which groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord (Eph. 2. 19-22), is most surely nearing its completion; when it is completed it will be caught up to heaven. The door will be closed, and all those who have had nothing but an empty profession, will be shut out, and will knock without success at the closed door (Luke 13. 25-30).

Ques.: *We have heard much talk about signs of the Lord's coming again, especially during the war and since. Ought we to be looking for such?*

There are certainly sure signs that we are in the last days, but these are not "wars and rumours of wars, earthquakes in divers places and famines and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs" (Luke 21).

All these are to take place before the *Appearing of the Lord in His glory* and have nothing to do with the coming of the Lord for His church. Some have allowed their imaginations to run riot as to such things and as to sensational events in the political world. So, in the rise of Mussolini, and the efforts of the League of Nations, they have seen the Beast of Revelation 13 and the ten kingdoms. It is a superficial knowledge of Scripture that leads them into these errors, and the inability to rightly divide the word of truth. The Beast is to rise up out of the anarchy and confusion that will follow the catching up of the church to heaven. 2 Thess. 2. clearly shews us that neither he nor Anti-Christ can be manifested until that event has taken place, and the kings will have their power given to them at the same time for one hour—a brief period (Rev. 17. 12). The presence of the Holy Spirit in the church on earth holds back the full development of these evil forces, and He will continue to hold them back until He be taken out of the way. Signs of this sort and such as are given by the Lord in Matt. 24, and Luke 21, will be a help to the godly Jewish remnant awaiting the coming of their Messiah.

But the Scriptures do instruct us as to the character of the last days—"Men shall be lovers of their own selves . . . lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Timothy 1. 5). "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming?" (2 Peter 3. 3, 4). And this state of things is in the professing Church. Leaders in the "Christian

world" lead great campaigns for Sunday pleasures and scoff at the teaching of the coming again of the Lord; these turn away from truth, having itching ears (2 Tim. 4. 4); and their presence in the professing church and their activities are a sure sign that we are in the last times. Sad signs indeed they are, but there is another and a brighter one; it is the awakening of desire in the hearts of multitudes of the saints of God to see the Lord; they are being recovered to the truth of His coming again. The Spirit and *the bride* say, Come. Whenever there is recovery to first love to the Lord, there will be this longing for His return, and it is for this recovery, this true revival, that we should be praying and labouring, for this is the surest of all signs that His coming is near. The more definitely we are recovered to this true, normal Christian state, the more we shall talk of the Lord, and it will not be signs that will occupy our thoughts but Himself—the bright and morning Star.

Those who have this hope in Christ will purify themselves, even as He is pure; they will separate themselves from those evil men whose presence in the professing church are a sign of the last days, and they will draw together as those did at the close of Old Testament history: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His Name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels" (Malachi 3. 16, 17).

But notice, in this connection, "Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, be-

tween him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not" (verse 18). Nothing will promote holiness of walk and separation from evil and evil men like this great hope of the coming of our Saviour; it will make us like unto men that wait for their Lord.

*Ques.: Your last sentence is a quotation from Luke 12. And you said that the Synoptic Gospels do not present the Rapture of the Church, but the Appearing of the Lord. Has that chapter no applica-  
to us then?*

It certainly has a most definite application to us. It covers in its most wonderful sweep the whole period of time between the Lord's

rejection by the world and His Appearing in glory. This is not a more important chapter in the New Testament for us who through grace are the servants of the Lord. It shews us our responsibilities as being left in the world to serve Him and care for His interests during His absence, and how He will reward His waiting, watching and working servants on His return. Everyone who has taken the place of being His servant, whether real or otherwise, will be scrutinised by Him in that day when He will take all to account. It is a solemn matter, but must be left for consideration in our next issue, if the Lord will.

*To be continued.*

## Lead Thou me on.

A. H. Lycett.

*Suggested by reading an account of the origin of "Lead, kindly light."*

Lead, Saviour, lead, along life's bright'ning way;  
Lead Thou me on

The path which ends in heav'ns unclouded day;  
Lead Thou me on!

Keep Thou my mind, O Lord, "on things above,"  
My joy, my treasure, Thy most precious love.

Thy light, O Lord, has filled this once dark heart  
With joyful praise;

"Nor present things, nor things to come," shall part,  
Through all my days,

Me from Thy love—my portion and my rest,  
While trav'ling to the mansions of the blest.

And till I see Thee, Lord, where all is light,  
I'd learn of Thee:

Till I am with Thee in Thy glory bright,  
More like Thee be,

And give Thee daily more my heart-felt praise,  
As I, delighted, on Thy glory gaze.

## “NOT UNTO DEATH.”

*“This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God”* (John 11. 4).

THIS is a great saying, and might be aptly applied to every trial through which a Christian is called to pass; all pressure and every distress, and every painful experience may issue in the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby. “Take away this thorn” pleaded Paul, “it is crippling me.” “Nay,” answered the Lord, “it is for the glory of God, through My grace.” “If only I were not weighted by this disability, this weakness, this poverty, this narrow sphere, how much more useful I should be,” says a dissatisfied saint, “my life is wasted, it is poured out day by day for nothing; my trial

is unto death.” “No,” answers the Lord, “it is not; it is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby.” What a wonderful issue is that! “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God,” but this is greater! “Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,” but this is greater even than that! It is more than what will accrue to us from the distress, but what will come to God and the Son of God. Through the grace of the Lord and through His resurrection power the results will be for His eternal glory.

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John Berridge wrote:—

Run, John, and work, the law commands,  
Yet finds me neither feet nor hands;  
But sweeter news the gospel brings,  
It bids me fly, and gives me wings.

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In prayer the lips ne'er act the winning part,  
Without the sweet concurrence of the heart.

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*“The natural man receiveth not the things of God, . . . neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned”* (1 Cor. 2. 14).

There is all the difference in the world between what God says and what man says. If you take the finest thing man has made, say, for instance, the finest work in steel, which has been most highly finished off and burnished, and put it under a microscope, what a rough, wretched, scratched concern it is. There is no smoothness in it at all. Now, I put the wing of a butterfly under the glass, and the more you magnify it the more beautiful it becomes. That is the difference between what man makes and what God makes—what man writes and what God writes. Do not allow into your head any of the current, flimsy, and, withal, infidel ideas as to there being errors in Scripture. The error lies in the vision of the man who is reading it. He has got a spiritual cataract. Blind men do not see. W. T. P. W.

# THE LOVE OF THE FATHER TO THE SON.

Inglis Fleming.

**I**T is well to look away from the things of time and sense increasingly, and to engage our mind with that which is eternal—with that which had no beginning and can know no end. It enlarges and enriches us if we turn in our thoughts from man's fleeting day to that which was before the worlds began to be, before "the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy," when

"The earth's foundations  
On nothingness were laid."

For this the Holy Scriptures are our necessity. God alone could give us information concerning the eternal past and He has been pleased to do so in order that our renewed beings may reverence Him and delight in His unfoldings in His Word. There the glory of the Triune God, of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, in various activities and relationships come before us whether in eternity or in time. At some of these—with reference to the Father and the Son we propose to look briefly.

## IN ETERNITY.

The only-begotten Son was in the bosom of the Father. In that hiding place of love He dwelt eternally. Ever delighting in the Father's love and Himself the object of it eternally. This comes before us in John 1. 18 (and see Prov. 8. 22-31). We see it also in John 17 where the Son is heard addressing the Father, we hear Him say, "Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world" (verse 24).

Amid the awe-inspiring recesses of eternity there were divine affections, the mutual delights of the Father and the Son. Little is revealed con-

cerning them but that which is made known is for instruction and profit.

Then marvel of marvels we learn that in that bosom of eternal pleasures there were thoughts of us—for we were "chosen in Christ" then (Eph. 1. 3), and the Son was foreordained then also to be the Lamb of sacrifice in order that redemption might be wrought for sinful man when Time had begun and sin had come in and brought ruin and sorrow in its train.

## IN TIME.

When ages had rolled on in their course we find the beloved Son come to carry out the Father's counsels of grace to have many sons brought to glory, and through His atoning death to glorify the Father about the whole question of sin. Now in righteousness believers can be in joy before the Father's face, conformed to the image of His Son, so that He may be firstborn among many brethren and have them as His companions with and like Himself, sharing with Him the riches of the Father's love.

"The Word" which ever was "in the beginning" ever was "with God," ever "was God," became that which He had not been, "became flesh" and was manifested in this world—the Only-begotten Son here to reveal the Father. "God was manifest in flesh"—He who was ever the Son was now the Sent One of the Father.

## IN HIS PATHWAY.

And thus it is we see Him presented in the pages of the Gospels, the Object of the Father's delight and love. His coming into the world and His holy pathway called forth the expression of that delight

and love, and so the heavens were opened upon Him and the Father's voice was heard declaring, "Thou art My beloved Son in whom is all My delight." Those thirty years of privacy at Nazareth had been an odour of a sweet smell to the Father, and on the part of the Son His delight had ever been in fulfilling the Father's pleasure.

"Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business," He had said, when He was found in the temple by His sorrowing mother (Luke 2. 49).

"I always do those things which please Him," He could say later when declaring, "He that sent Me is with Me; the Father hath not left me alone" (John 8. 29).

Then again on the holy mount, the voice is heard from the excellent glory, "This is My Son, My Beloved, in whom is all My delight, hear Him"—thus from God the Father He received honour and glory. And the Father calls attention to Him declaring *His* delight in Him so that we may find our delight in Him as well.

In suitability to this we find our Lord on His part delighting in the Father's love. Rejected and opposed by men He retired into the home of affection, His Father's love, and we hear Him saying, "The Father loveth the Son" (John 5. 20). Consciously the object of the Father's love He found His joy and rejoicing in the warmth and blessedness of this amid all the cold-heartedness of the Satan-dominated world.

"We beheld His glory," says the apostle, "the glory as of an only begotten with a Father" (John 1. 14). Wonderingly they contem-

plated Him in His pathway, viewing something of the glory which words could not describe. Full of grace and truth towards man, and being in the bosom of the Father in His own delight, there able to make the Father known—to declare Him.

And so adoringly we may trace Him in His ministry here—the subject One—come unto the place of dependence and obedience and yet ever remaining that which He ever was, the Son, by whom all things were made, the Son of the Father, "sanctified and sent into the world" by Him (John 10. 36).

#### IN HIS DEATH.

But with worshipping hearts we may follow Him until the hour of all hours when He who had glorified the Father in His life of ministry should glorify the Father in His death at Calvary.

In view of it He could say, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life that I might take it again." He gives the Father a new reason for loving Him, as it has been said. In His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, He has shown His unswerving devotedness to His Father's will.

Nothing could divert Him from that path. No deflection from it would He allow. If in His holy hatred of sin He shrank from the drinking of the bitter cup of judgment, involving being forsaken of God when made a sin-offering, yet in His love and subjection He would take the cup from the Father's hand and, carrying it to Calvary, drain it to its last dread drop.

We hear Him cry, "Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour!"

But, in His perfection He adds, "But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy Name."

What glories and perfections are these! And in them our souls delight and as we admire we adore. But what were they to the Father's heart and eye? What delight was His in the love of His Son which led Him into the searchless depths of sorrow that His pleasure and purposes might be made good.

"I delight to do Thy good pleasure," the Son had said coming into Manhood, and at all costs to Him that good pleasure has been effected.

### IN GLORY NOW.

Now we see Him exalted and glorified. The Father's glory visited that dark sepulchre in which loving hands had laid His holy body. The Father had been glorified and now the Father would glorify the Son, and put Him on His throne in highest glory. "The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hand." All judgment is committed to Him, "that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father."

The Father's present love rests upon His Son as it ever rested upon Him. It is eternal love.

We see the Son glorified now with the glory which He had with the Father before the world was.

### SHARED WITH US.

But now redemption is obtained—obtained for us. And having accomplished redemption and being risen from the dead we hear the Son sending the message of His love to His own, "Go to My brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, to my God and your God." He

can introduce His own into this blessed relationship that He may share with them all that His love can share. To them He gives His peace, His joy, the Father's words, the glory given to Him as Man, and gives them to know that the Father Himself loves them.

Thus we hear Him say, "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" (John 27).

In His unselfishness He withholds nothing which He can confer upon them (His own essential Godhead glory is incommunicable). Joying in the Father's love He makes it known that we may share His joy with Him. The love of the Father not only resting upon us now but being in us—His love to us shed abroad in our hearts so that now we may find our chief joy in His deep affection, the embraces of His eternal love.

And there is added, "And I in them." To conduct that love into our hearts, as it has been said, and every question as to righteousness being settled, knowing that we are now "accepted in the Beloved," and "translated into the kingdom of the Son of His love," we are free to worship the Father in spirit and in truth, and to sing

His Father and our Father,  
His God and ours Thou art;  
And He is Thy Belovèd,  
The gladness of Thy heart.  
We're His in joy He brings us  
To share His part and place;  
To know Thy love and favour  
The shining of Thy face.

The love that now enfolds us  
Can ne'er wax cold or dim;  
In Him that love doth centre  
And we are loved in Him;  
In Him Thy love and glory  
Find their eternal rest;  
The many sons—His brethren—  
In Him, how near, how blest.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT.

I WOULD have you to dwell upon the fact that the Spirit of God is in you. You have not now to pray that He may be sent, He has come. "After that ye believed the gospel of your salvation, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1. 13), and your body is now the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God (1 Cor. 6. 19).

But think also of the place from whence He has come. He has come from heaven and He necessarily connects you with the place from whence He has come. "He is the earnest of our inheritance." The world could not receive Him, for He is not a worldly Spirit, and it cannot see Him and does not know Him (John 14. 17); but He has come to you, for you are not of the world, your calling is a heavenly calling (Hebrews 3. 1), and as is the heavenly One (Christ), such are they also that are heavenly (you and me who are members of His body).

But further, think of who has sent Him. The Lord Jesus said, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for

ever" (John 14. 16). What good will, what love and care the Father must have for you, in this great gift of His Holy Spirit, and you cannot separate the gift from the Giver—the One who has come from the One who sent Him—hence you are not only connected with the place from whence He came, but with the Father who sent Him, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father (Gal. 4. 6), and "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

Finally, think of the object of His coming. "He shall testify of Me," said the Lord Jesus, and He shall guide you unto all truth. He shall shew you things to come. "He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16. 15). Comment on these marvellous statements of Holy Scripture is needless; all we need is to ponder them with prayerful and thankful hearts and let them have their power over us, and to allow the Holy Spirit to have His way with us for the glory of our Lord and Saviour.

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Heaven's sympathy is greater than earth's sorrows.  
There is a key of promise to fit every lock of sorrow.  
To live by prayer means death to care.

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*"Behold, I stand at the door and knock."*

"Welcome, great Guest, this house, mine heart,  
Shall all be Thine:

I will resign

Mine interest in every part.

Only be pleased to use it as Thine own

For ever, and inhabit it alone."

## OUR LORD'S JOY.

E. Adams.

THE Cross was the consummation of His life of service and self-sacrifice. He went about doing good and came, not to be ministered to but to minister, and He completed and crowned the devotion of a lifetime when He offered Himself up to God, a spotless, perfect Sacrifice.

His was *the joy of solving a problem*. At the Cross were revealed with exceptional clearness the character and attributes of the Eternal God. There holiness and love met together, truth and grace, justice and mercy. There we see the infinite compassions of the God of love side by side with His inflexible determination to give sin its due. It is there that we realize the condemnation of sin is the very means of its forgiveness, and we behold, like the seven-coloured rainbow spanning the heavens with its arch of beauty, the glorious blending of all the attributes of the Almighty. As the poet sings:

"Truth, wisdom, justice, power and love,  
In all their glory shone,  
When Jesus left the courts above,  
And died to save His own."

The problem, "How can God pardon the sinner and yet remain just?" admits of no solution apart from the Cross of Christ. God's love desires to save the sinner; but God's justice says, "No." Only at Calvary are the desires of love and the claims of justice satisfied by that stupendous transaction. God took upon Himself, in the person of Christ, the issues of human guilt, and ended them by His blood!

A scientist or philosopher rejoices when he is able to find the solution to a difficult problem in his sphere of study; a statesman has joy when

he is able to reconcile the conflicting interests of rival nations or classes. These are but faint pictures of the surpassing joy of our Lord when, at the Cross, He solved the stupendous problem, "How can a just God forgive sin?"

"*Done is the work that saves.*" What joy, what relief lie before the man who is accomplishing a bitter and painful, but invaluable task! The knowledge that Christ was doing a work in virtue of which countless multitudes would be saved was the source of that joy in the strength of which He "endured the Cross, despising the shame." He was doing that for which He came into the world. He was the Master Workman Who was achieving the masterpiece for which He had planned and prepared from eternity.

At the Cross a victory was won; a victory over sin, and Satan and the world; a victory which is shared by all who believe in the Victor. Satan and his hosts had tried their utmost to mar that sacrifice. Had their efforts succeeded, the sacrifice could not have been accepted, the sufferings and death would have been in vain, the Saviour's power would have proved unequal to His love, and He would have failed in the work He had undertaken on our behalf. We shudder at the dreadful alternative and hail with glad relief the final shout of triumph, "It is finished!" Thanks be to God for our Redeemer's glorious victory at Calvary. His was *the joy of victory*.

And His was *the joy of exaltation*, as Son of Man, to the throne above. Consequent upon the humiliation came the exaltation and the "Name

that is above every name." The hands that were pierced at Calvary now wield the sceptre of the universe. The mighty Emancipator is the supreme Dictator,\* Who frees as He rules every soul that is subject to Him.

The consummation of our Lord's joy was *the joy of winning and*

*\*Not yet publicly manifested yet true to faith.*

possessing *His Church*. Out of His death came her life. She is the fruit of the travail of His soul and His portion for ever. And for eternity the redeemed will be learning more of the "riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints." And then will be fulfilled His deep desire, "That My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

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## Constant Communication.

Don't be satisfied with saying, "I heard the voice of Jesus so long ago, and I know that I am saved." If you love Him you surely must long to hear His voice continually and to know His present mind. If a wife is away from her husband, will a letter from him six months ago satisfy her? No, she wants to hear from him to-day, and watches eagerly for the postman. The Lord would communicate to us His present mind. Can you say, I have had an interview with Him to-day? "He brought me into His banqueting house, and I sat down under His shadow with great delight." That should be our experience, it is certainly His desire.

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## He is Coming.

The Spirit and the bride say, Come." If we are looking for Him we shall be attentive to all that concerns Him. True love delights to give pleasure to its object, and He said, If you love Me feed My sheep. The love that longs to see Him, will find its relief in caring for those who are precious to Him. This is true readiness. Those who are ready, who will not have to scramble to get ready at His coming, will earnestly labour that everything will be according to His pleasure at His coming. If I am not in a state and circumstances fitted for His coming, I cannot say, Come. I would not ask an ordinary friend to come if I were not ready to receive him, how much less the Lord. The greater the friend, the more I would like to have everything in order to receive him. May we be "like unto men that wait for their Lord." You say you will be prepared in a moment. No doubt, but if you are saying, Come, with your heart, you are ready now.

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"My soul, wait thou only on God; for my expectation is from Him"  
(Psalm 62. 5).

## HEAVENLY MINDEDNESS.

J. Houston.

**S**PEAKING in general terms, there are but two classes of Christians. There are those who are heavenly-minded, and there are those who are earthly-minded. The former are occupied with "things above"; the latter, with "things on the earth."

We do not infer, that there is doubt, as to whether both classes are going to heaven; but we do affirm, that both classes are not *occupied with* heaven. The essential point of difference lies there.

When we speak of the Christian going to heaven, we understand he is directed to the legitimate end of his calling. It is, by the grace of God, his destination. No human merit gained that place for him; and no human failure can ever deprive him of it. Grace prepared it for him; and grace will keep him for it (see Peter 1. 3-5).

In speaking, however, of the Christian being *occupied with* heaven, we understand him to be on the ground of his responsibility. It rests with him, whether or not, he will "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called." This, then, clears the ground for a word on the subject of heavenly-mindedness.

The mind guides the feet. If the mind is occupied with the right object, the feet will walk in the right path. This is a moral law which admits of no variation, or change. We can understand, therefore, why the Scriptures have so much to say about the mind. The inspired teachers well knew, that if this citadel were captured every other part of the moral being would surrender. The moral state of the Christian

must ever depend on the object of his occupation. If his mind is engaged with the supreme object of his calling (Christ), he will be changed "from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 3. 18).

But there are various obstacles which stand in the way of this subjective work of the Spirit. If these are not overcome by faith, the Christian may easily be side-tracked. Take, for example, the case of Lot. He walked, up to a point, in the path of faith, then turned aside, attracted by the well-watered plain of Jordan (Gen. 13. 10). His faith was weak, and he fell under the alluring influence of "things on the earth." He might have argued thus (as many Christians do):—"There is no harm in having these things; they are blessings from God; and God has given us all things richly to enjoy." But the harm lay, not in the *things*, but in Lot's *mind*, which was drawn away by the *things* from the object of his calling. What draws a Christian away from the object of his calling is harmful. And the moment Lot turned his face toward Sodom, he entered upon a retrograde path. He set his mind on earthly things, and was side-tracked from the path of faith. This retrograde path led him into very sorrowful exercises. His righteous soul was vexed every day, by the filthy conversation of the inhabitants of a doomed city. His mind, having been focussed on the wrong object, was darkened as to spiritual intelligence, for he was ignorant as to the fact he had taken up his abode in a place, over which the judgment of God was pending. He was the antithesis of Enoch, who walked with

God, outside a doomed world, while he beheld the coming of the Lord with His myriads of saints, to execute judgment (see Gen. 5. 24; Jude 14, 15). At the close of his life, he was literally dragged out of Sodom. Mercy spared *him*, though his *life-work*, in that evil city, was all destroyed. He is a sorrowful instance of a believer, who, as to *himself*, is saved, but whose *works* are all destroyed (1 Cor. 3. 15). And the only safeguard against this is heavenly-mindedness. It will guide us in the path of fellowship with God, as it guided Enoch, and spare us from the unparalleled sorrow of death-bed regrets, when we wake up too late to remedy the evil, and the sad consequences, of earthly-mindedness. Happy are they who can truly sing, in the path of faith:—

“This world is a wilderness wide!  
We have nothing to seek or to  
choose;  
We’ve no thought in the waste to  
abide;  
We’ve nought to regret or to lose.”

A further example of a side-tracked believer is Jonathan. He had faith enough to see in David the anointed king of Israel. He desired to be second in honour in David’s kingdom; and his love and devotion to David might well have secured for him that place. The surrender he made to David was a proof of his love and devotion to him (1 Sam. 18. 1-4). Wonderful faith he showed, indeed, that he, the son and heir of king Saul, could lay all that he had, of honour and glory, at David’s feet! The secret of this marvellous surrender to God’s anointed king was that faith which works through love. Jonathan had faith to see the purposes of God, as to David; and he had a love for David, such as we rarely see anywhere in the Old Testament. It

was “wonderful, passing the love of women” (2 Sam. 1. 26). When the bond, this wonderful love had formed, had to be severed, a most touching scene is presented (1 Sam. 20, 41, 42). Jonathan turned from David, leaving him in the desert, and “went into the city.” Fatal choice! Like Lot, in this respect, he chose that which was to be destroyed. Saul’s kingdom was already doomed. Jonathan went back into it, and went down with it! On the heights of Gilboa, he fell under the enemy’s sword! Ignominious end for such a mighty warrior! Well might it call forth the lament from David’s sorrowful heart—“How are the mighty fallen!” (2 Sam. 1).

The lesson remains. If Jonathan would be second in David’s kingdom, he must be with David in rejection. The cave of Adullam, and not Saul’s palace, ought to have been his choice. He was earthly-minded, in this respect, he “went into the city,” when he ought to have been “in the desert.” He might have argued thus (unbelief always argues in favour of ease to the flesh)—“I will act *for* David, in the palace, and stand *for* him before my father.” This, we know, he did; but standing *for* him, in the palace, was not being *with* him, in the desert. May we learn well the lesson!

But our picture, as to illustration, would be incomplete, if we only held up cases that were to be avoided. We have in Caleb an example we may well follow. He could say, “I wholly followed the Lord my God.” What marked him was his faith. Though he went through all the vicissitudes of the desert journey, with the unbelieving company of the children of Israel, he never swerved from his settled purpose of entering the land of

Canaan. His mind was upon that good land of promise, and his feet were directed to it. As a reward for his faith, he survived his brethren, and set foot on the inheritance, for which he looked, and on which he had, during his life, set his heart. He was forty years old, when he first set eye on the land; and he was eighty-five years old, when he set foot on it, to hold it in possession. The intervening period of forty-five years was spent in patient endurance. Of him it might well be said, "The just shall live by faith." Great were the temptations, sorrowful the experiences, solemn and sad the judgments of God in the desert, where unbelief had done its dread work amongst the children of Israel. Those who despised the good land, and gave way to unbelief, "were overthrown in the wilderness" (1 Cor. 10). But Caleb never moved from his settled purpose of heart. "He wholly followed the Lord God of Israel." And when he actually possessed it, as a reward of his faith, his enjoyment of it was not marred by physical disability, the natural result of old age; on the contrary, he could say, with triumph and gratitude, at the age of eighty-five years, "I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in" (Joshua 14. 11). Surely he experienced the support of the Lord! "As thy days so shall thy strength be" was no dead letter to him, but a living, blessed reality.

If we were to visualise some such scene, as might have been truly enacted in the desert, between the faithful and the unbelieving, we would depict it as follows:—

Unbelief: "Let us go back to Egypt; this desert is a miserable place. Would we had never left the land, where we lived, even as bond-slaves!"

Faith: "Let us go forward to Canaan; for that is the good land God has given to us, and into which He will surely bring us."

Unbelief: "Our souls loathe this manna; and well we remember the days we could eat the garlic and the onions to our satisfaction. Would we had them now! Would we sat by the flesh-pots!"

Faith: "Before us hang the grapes of Eshcol, earnest of the precious things of our inheritance. Our strength and sustenance are in God, who will never leave us, nor forsake us, until He has brought us into all the good He has promised."

The dialogue might go on interminably; but enough has been said to show the reasonings of unbelief, on the one hand, and the comfort of faith, on the other. And though these things are opposed to one another, often we find them in our own hearts. Who has not been tempted to go back? On the other hand, who has not experienced the stimulus of faith to go forward? Unbelief is always *retrogressive*; faith is always *progressive*. May we go on towards the good land God has provided for us!

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*"If children then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus."*

The title to an estate does not depend upon the health, strength or wisdom of the heir; but on his being of true birth.

# THE OUTLOOK FOR A REVIVAL.

T. Oliver.

(Read 2 Kings 7, verses 1, 2, 17, 18).

**A** PROMINENT Christian leader is reported to have said that it is extremely unlikely that a revival will occur in our time; indeed the idea of a revival is out of date. In referring to that statement there is no wish to cast a slur on the speaker in question, but the incident is adduced to show the character of the times in which we live.

Some time ago, a daily newspaper propounded the question, "Have we lost God?" Prominent men representative of different walks in life, were called up to answer the question. Only one of them, a worker in the slums of London, had a clear-cut solution to offer, and he was imbued with the sense of the continuing value of the old, old story of redemption through the blood of Jesus. The others were greatly divided in opinion as to the need of revival, and where this was admitted it amounted to no more than a revival of religion. But we ought to remember that the great persecutors of the Christians in the first century were the greatest religionists of all history.

With such evidence before us, we conclude that, in spite of the enormous sale of Bibles, there is a great famine of food for the soul analogous to the conditions relative to the body obtaining in Samaria at the period recorded in 2 Kings 7. The sale of an ass' head for eighty pieces of silver is an apt description in metaphor of what obtains in spiritual food purveying in many circles professedly Christian. It is not suggested that the theological philosopher has an ass' head. In common speech, an ass is averred to be typical of a fool and a fool is

the Scriptural title of a man who says "there is no God." But that is not the thought we wish to impress, because it would be a libel on the ass, as the ass is a very wise animal. But the head of an ass is mostly skin and bone and affords little food. Those enlightened by the Holy Spirit will readily concede that the spiritual nourishment derived from the bulk of current theological disquisitions is very like the physical nourishment derived from an ass' head.

In such depressing conditions, the prophetic word of good news came to the people: "To-morrow about this time, there shall be a measure of fine flour for a shekel and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria." Fine flour and barley set forth typically different aspects of the preciousness of Christ revealed in the Bible, as esteemed to be the Word of God. In the record of Philadelphian virtues (Rev. 3) prominence is given to keeping His Word—the Word of His patience. In every revival there is a recurrence with fresh zest to the Bible as the living Word of God.

In quietness and confidence, Elisha with personal knowledge of his God could assure his hearers of immediate blessing. So the apostle Paul could encourage his shipmates in spite of every evidence to the contrary in the words, 'Be of good cheer; for I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me' (Acts 27. 25). So again the prophet Zechariah could speak of the great mountain becoming a plain before Zerubbabel! Every obstacle to the accomplishment of God's purposes vanishes in His good time.

However, there was a man in high position, trusted implicitly by the king, who judging entirely by external evidences discredited the prophetic word. Faith alone, and not secular perception is required to see that in spite of the apathy all around, the people of God have still a link with heaven. The scoffer ridicules the idea that "the Lord will step into the blue vault of heaven." The real Christian may not directly express his judgment of the idea similarly, and yet be culpable indirectly of fellowship with the scoffer. The Apostle writing to the Thessalonians addressed them as "sons of the day" and not of the night, and therefore exhorted them not to sleep as others but to watch and be "sober" (i.e., properly balanced as to self-judgment), putting on (for heart protection) the breastplate of faith and love, and (for head protection) a helmet, the hope or prospect of salvation which involves the securing of the body as well as of the soul by the Lord. In order to do that He will open a door in heaven! There are always windows in heaven because although God may not be interfering markedly in the affairs of men, He sees everything that is going on and is making perfect disposition of the affairs of those who shall be heirs of salvation.

The nobleman was not only in the intimate counsels of the king, but was appointed to administrative position in being given charge of the gate. For the illustration of our point we shall pass over the source of his appointment. That he was in administrative capacity is sufficient, and probably he was well-fitted by natural ability for the dispensation of authority. But he was swept away by the unceremonious

rush of the people when they became aware that outside the city there was excellent food for their bodies. Analogous to the nobleman's position in that period long ago, we find at the present time, Christians placed in the gateway of supply from God, entrusted with the dispensation of the "fine flour and barley" (speaking of the preciousness of Christ) to the needy people of God. How is such trust being administered? That is a salutary question for everyone of us!

How often we are like the disciples absorbed with bickerings as to our relative administrative positions, altogether oblivious of the fact that not our greatness but our littleness will contribute to the efficiency of our administration of the Lord's interests in view of His speedy return. It is well to realize that the Lord will not be debtor to anyone. If any continue in self-complacency reckoning that they are indispensable to His service, they may easily suffer the fate of the nobleman so far as their usefulness to the Lord's interests is concerned—unceremoniously brushed aside as merely obstacles hindering the people from securing food for their souls, which is the prominent requirement at such a juncture as this. In a revival, the preciousness of Christ is always at a premium amongst the people of God. It is quite true that "souls being saved" is the prominent feature of a revival, but an essential accompaniment is that the Christians are shaken up from drowsy slumber to watch over the interests of their absent Lord.

O keep us, love divine, near Thee,  
That we our nothingness may know,  
And ever to Thy glory be  
Walking in faith while here below.

## Comprehensive Love.

MARTHA was active, she served at the table; her sister was restful, she sat at the feet of Jesus; Lazarus was patient, he was a sufferer. We have our likes and dislikes according to our temperaments; some of us would have admired Martha's energy and have called her sister a mystic; others would have marvelled at the patience of Lazarus and kept out of Martha's way; but Jesus embraced them all in His great love, and this fact distinguished them more than any natural quality, and if everything else about them is forgotten in eternity this will abide.

We are strange folk: "If only I had the energy of my friend," says one, "I should be more pleasing to the Lord, and He would love me more." "If only I were patient or quiet like my sister, I should be more worthy of the love of the Lord," says another; and so, in our self-occupation and self-condemnation, we lose the sight and the sense of that love that loves because it must, without partiality or prejudice—"Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus." What we are is not the starting point, it is what He is, and what His love is, irrespective of what we are; from that

everything that could be pleasing to God flows.

Some of us who have been drawn into this circle of unchanging and eternal love, have been called to *do*, to be energetic and full of activity; others seem appointed more to *be*, they shine by what they are; and still others are made to *bear*, they suffer, and bear it patiently. But the love of Jesus is the starting point for each and all; "*The love of Christ constraineth us,*" cries the Apostle, and because of this love we cannot live unto ourselves; whether we are called to *do*, to *be*, or to *bear*, He must be the great and all-worthy object of it all. But here there is rest in activity: He loveth me. Here there is power to be quiet: He loveth me. Here there is support in suffering: He loveth me.

What a joy it is to the heart that appreciates His love to know that in the circle of it there is no monotony. As a beautiful garden pleases the eye by its variety, so in this circle, the Lord by the activity of His love produces in His loved ones, that which is delightful to Him.

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## The One Who is Able.

The believer is perfect in Christ; but in himself he is a poor feeble creature, ever liable to fall. Hence the unspeakable blessedness of having One who can manage all his affairs for him, at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens—One who upholds him continually by the right hand of His righteousness—One who will never let him go—One who is able to save to the uttermost—One who is "the same yesterday, to-day and for ever"—One who will bear him triumphantly through all the difficulties and dangers which surround him; and, finally, "present him faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."

C. H. M.

## ON THE WING

IF we would be preserved from the snares of earth, we must be on the wing. "Vain is the net set in the sight of anything that hath wings" (Proverbs 1. 17, New Trans.). If we are above and see what is going on below, we are warned and thus preserved. A bird has the air for its domain, and from thence can survey all that is going on here. The dove sent out of the ark surveyed the earth, and because it found no place to rest in, it returned to the ark. This is our true position, sustained by a power, the wing of the Spirit of God, which keeps us above the earth as it is; and yet we are visitors to it, missionaries on one errand or another, and though walking here as ordinary mortals, yet always with wings. A bird on the wing then is our true position as to this world; but while it is so, we must keep in mind the home and enjoyment of the bird on God's side. These are described in Psalm 84: "The sparrow hath found an house and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young; even Thine altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God." The sparrow signifies properly (as used in Scripture) any bird. It has power to keep above earth and its snares, but it has also found a house, the house of God; a house, a home in heaven. Stephen knew this home when, "being full of the Holy Ghost, he looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God and Jesus." The bird that had soared above the din and tumult, the murderous hate of man, had entered the ark of God and had found a dwelling in the house of God. What a rest to Stephen to have found such a home, or to Paul when he found it in the third heaven! Nothing but

the Spirit of God can carry one to it, or unfold the delights of it.

This is the first thing for us, as Psalm 84 sets forth. We must first "dwell in Thy house, and be still praising Thee." We must know its delights, as did Stephen and Paul, before we can be the swallow. (The swallow signifies liberty: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.") The swallow has not only a house, like the sparrow, but a "nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even Thine altars," etc. She is in full rest there, hatches her young, and bears fruit. Typically this describes the ease and formative power of the glory of the Lord; and hence the ability, as Moses with a shining face, to come forth and testify here of God, and bring forth fruit in patience. Stephen returns to this scene of perturbation and violence, with all the dignity of one who had a nest in fulness of joy outside it; and he exhibits to his murderers how superior he is to all their evil and malice by his prayer for them; and one of them, Saul of Tarsus, was one of his "young," the fruit and answer to his prayer. This *second* part, the Psalm expresses as, "Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee, in whose heart are the ways of those who, passing through the valley of Baca, make it a well." The one in the known enjoyment of the swallow is the one whose strength is in the Lord, and in whose heart are the ways of a well-maker in Baca; that is, ministering cheer and blessing in the land of sorrow, where it really has no place. I fly from the earth like a bird; and I find a house with God; and there at rest, and furnished with blessing, like a swallow, I can con-

tribute to a scene which contributes *nothing to me*. In the one case, we fly from it to heaven, like the dove to the ark; and in the other, we are so replenished and invigorated there, in the grace and power of Christ, that we can make a well—minister blessing to the weary, in a world of sorrow and trial. This sparrow and this swallow you are

to be, having nothing here but every-thing in heaven—a house and a rest. And as you know both, you will be still praising for the one, and because of the other you will contribute to the cheer of others—make a well in Baca, you yourself going from strength to strength. Praise within and blessing without.

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## Obedience.

The great guardian principle of our conduct in the church of God is personal responsibility to the Lord.

No guidance of another can ever come in between an individual's conscience and God. In popery this individual responsibility to God is taken away.

Whenever the principle of obedience is not in our hearts, all is wrong; there is nothing but sin.

The principle which actuates us in our conduct should never be, "I must do what I think right"; but, "I ought to obey God" (Acts 5. 29).

The spirit of obedience is the great secret of all godliness. There is no case whatever in which we ought to do our own will.

I may be called upon to act independently of the highest authority in the world, but it ought never to be on the principle that I am doing my own will, which is the principle of eternal death.

Obedience is the only rightful state for the creature, or God would cease to be supreme—would cease to be God.

The spring of all evil from the beginning has been independence of will. Wherever there is independence, there is always sin. J. N. D.

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True faithfulness knows no distinction between great and small duties. . . . From the highest point of view—that is, from God's point of view—nothing is great, nothing small, as we measure it. The worth and the quality of an action depend on its motive only, and not at all on its prominence or on any other of the accidents which we are always apt to adopt as the tests of the greatness of our deeds.

## WISDOM AND LIFE.

H. J. Vine.

*"He expounded to them in all the Scriptures things concerning Himself"*  
(Luke 24).

WHO is it that says, "Blessed is the man that heareth Me, watching daily at My gates, waiting at the posts of My doors. For whoso findeth Me findeth life," in Proverbs 8. 35? The same One who in the New Testament says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My words and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life" (John 5. 24), and again, "He that believeth on the Son hath life" (John 3), and again, "In Him (the Word) was life" (John 1). It is Wisdom, the Son, the Word. As to creation we are told, "The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth." Wisdom and the Word are identical, for all things were made by Him, the Word (John 1), and the Word is the Son of the Father's love, for "all things were created by Him and for Him" (Col. 1. 16). In Jehovah's challenge to Job, He asks, "Where wast thou when I founded the earth . . . when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38. 7)? We are taught that, in all things in creation, reconciliation and in every other sphere, the Son of the Father's love must have the preeminence—the first place. Surely there would be no exception in the joy of "the sons of God" when the earth was founded! God's sons shouted for joy then! Surely THE SON, by Whom and for Whom all was created, the Causer of that joy, was there! As to that we are not left in doubt, for we read, "Then was I by Him . . . daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him" (Prov. 8. 30)—the loved

Object of Jehovah's pleasure,—His glorious Companion, in that scene of creation wonders and divine joys.

Sin and sorrow, rebellion and enmity, have stricken the world since then; and redemption and reconciliation were needed! Salvation from coming wrath was needed! Jesus, "GOD'S SON," is the trustworthy Surety of this,—"our Deliverer from the coming wrath" (1 Thess. 1. 10, N.T.). Not one of His own—blood-redeemed and Spirit sealed—will the Son leave behind for that day of wrath! He is surely coming again! He is coming quickly! The day draws nigh! *He will shout* then! His shout will be a shout of command from the throne from which He will arise, and His loved ones will be caught up to meet Him in the air (4. 17). If the founding of the earth called forth shouts of joy, what rich bursts of praise shall His own delivering shout call forth, when the redeemed shall see the radiant face of their Redeemer actually for the first time! Creation caused shouts of joy! Redemption and reconciliation bring still richer shouts of joyful praise! And the Son of the Father's love has the preeminence in all.

Wisdom is sometimes spoken of in the plural. 'Wisdoms' (plu.) administrations are various. Her voice cries without, and her house is builded within. By Wisdom (sing.) "kings reign, and rulers make just decrees"; by her "princes rule, and nobles, all the judges of the earth" (Prov. 8. 16). A wise nation may

have wide influence. She may have varied administrations. Her sovereign head, however, is over all. "The assembly of the firstborn" in redemption is also "the bride, the Lamb's wife" in administration (see Rev. 21. 9-27). Bringing creation and administration together through redemption, Ephesians 3. 9 says, "To enlighten all (with the knowledge of) what is the administration of the mystery hidden throughout the ages in God, who has created all things in order that now to the principalities and authorities in the heavenlies might be made known *through the assembly the* **ALL VARIOUS WISDOM OF GOD**" (New Trans.) and the assembly which the body of Christ, has as its Head, the Son of the Father's love (Col. 1).

In what has been called the gem chapter of Job, ch. 28, the question is asked, "Where is wisdom to be found, and where is the place of understanding?" The answer comes from destruction and death, "We have heard its report with our ears." Death and hades have their gates, but there is no administration of life and blessing from them, but by their sinister authority men are enslaved and held in bondage by the fear of death; but the anointed Possessor of Wisdom's gates ministers peace and favour and life from them. And Wisdom is aggressive; right out into the broadways Her voice cries unto men, "Turn ye at My reproof: behold, I will pour forth My Spirit unto you, I will make known My Words unto you" (Prov. 1. 23). This clearly pointed forward to Pentecost, when Peter said of his ascended and glorified Lord, "Having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed

forth this that ye see and hear; and about three thousand gladly received the word."

Wisdom's administrations still maintain the public proclamation of the Word of God without. Nothing can stop it! Faith recognizes and rejoices in it! "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound!" How full and free for men is the final invitation in the inspired volume—"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev 22. 17)!

Nor can hades' gates prevail against what the exalted Son of Man is building within. Upon His Father's revelation of Himself as the Christ, the Son of the living God, He is building His assembly. The One who "was anointed from eternity" speaks of "the post of My doors" as well as "My gates"! The fame of Wisdom had reached the ears of "destruction and death!" When, however, the Lord of glory came, the princes of this age ignorantly and wickedly crucified Him; but God "made foolish the wisdom of this world." It was God's Wisdom in a mystery, that hidden Wisdom which God had predetermined before the ages" (1 Cor. 2. 7), that through death secured the defeat of the schemes of hades, and the living, risen, triumphant Victor is now gloriously seated in His Father's throne on high. His own building meanwhile goes on! Nothing can stop it! "Till we all arrive at the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God," and are translated from earth to be with and like Him above. Then, "when Christ who is our life shall appear" we shall also appear with Him in glory.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

## Jachin and Boaz.

Why does the Holy Spirit record the height of the two pillars in front of the Temple in 1 Kings 7. 15 as of 18 cubits individually, and gives a total of their united measurement—35 cubits, in 2 Chron. 3. 15? What do we learn thereby in each case? and what means the contrast?—SWANSEA.

WE can throw no light on the significance of the height of these pillars, or why the total length of the two is given in 2 Chron. and the individual height in 1 Kings, though we are sure that everything in the Scriptures has its own meaning. But there is no obscurity as to the importance of the pillars themselves or their meaning. The house that Solomon built was, as David said it was to be, "exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries," but it was merely a type or figure of what Christ will be when He reigns in His glorious kingdom, of which Solomon's reign was also a type. Within, the house was all of gold, setting forth what is entirely suitable to God, for this is the significance of gold in Scripture; such indeed will Christ be in every inward motive and movement that will make His kingdom what it will be—"Thou hast loved righteousness, and

hated iniquity" (Hebrews 1. 9). And as God was in Him for the shining out of His grace when He was in the world in humility, so will He be in Him in His exaltation for the shining out of His glory. But outside the house all was of brass, as one approached it; and brass signifies stability, stability based upon absolute righteousness—"a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom" (Hebrews 1. 8). This is specially indicated in these two pillars that looked outward at the entrance to the porch. Their names meant, "He will establish" and "in Him is strength." Though Solomon failed, and though the kingdom was not established on his line, yet those pillars stood as witnesses of the One who was to come, Who in the strength of His inflexible righteousness would establish God's will on earth, and reign, "till He hath put all enemies under His feet."

## No Condemnation. Romans 8, 1.

The usual explanation of the words "There is therefore now no condemnation" appears to me to present them as somewhat of a weak anti-climax. That we are justified is a fact that is more than equivalent to the absence of condemnation, and this truth is developed in chaps. 3 and 4. In chapter 5 we are led still further and to connect with this the **therefore of 8. 1** certainly does involve an anti-climax.

IF THE "no condemnation in Christ Jesus" of chapter 8. 1 were the absence of condemnation in regard to offences only, then the justification of chapters 3 and 4 would be at least "an equivalent," but it means much more than that. Justification in those early chapters has the offences of those who believe in Jesus in view—from every charge of

sin they are cleared, and they stand righteous before God through faith. But Romans 8 describes the new position in which God sets the believer; the emphasis is on "*in Christ Jesus.*" This is a great advance on chapter 4, and the knowledge of it gives a wonderful rest to the soul. Abraham and David were justified, but they could know nothing of the

no condemnation which is in Christ Jesus. For believers in this day, the grace of justification, and the peace that accompanies the knowledge of it, comes to us THROUGH Christ Jesus, but this no condemnation is IN Christ Jesus. It connects with the end of chapter 5. There we learn that by our natural birth we were in the one man—Adam—who by his disobedience brought in condemnation and death; every member of his race lies under that condemnation, for all have

sinned and have the same nature as he had; by Christ having accomplished the one obedience, has been raised up from the dead as the Head of a new race, and all who believe are in Him and are made righteous in Him the righteous One, who bore the condemnation that lay on them, and are now for ever beyond the reach of all condemnation. It is a position in which no man could be until Christ died, was raised and exalted.

Chapter 7 closes with the assurance of deliverance from the law of sin (and death) in our members, but leaves us uncertain whether this deliverance is to be waited for in the future, when the Lord comes, or whether it is to be enjoyed in the present. Chapter 8. 1 answers this question, and I think we should emphasize the word "now."

We are not, even now, doomed to perpetual servitude to the law of sin and death, for the Spirit is the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus and makes this effectual in us. Is not this the way that there is "no condemnation"?

CHAPTER 7 closes with thanksgiving, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord," which seem to indicate that the longed for deliverance had come, and that the painful history of defeat in himself had closed in victory "through Jesus Christ our Lord," and with the fact that he had learnt the important lesson that the flesh would never serve any law but that of sin; his efforts to make it serve the law of God were all in vain. For the maintenance of this life of liberty from the law of sin and death, the Spirit

of life is, of course, absolutely essential, but it is *in Christ Jesus*, and can only operate in those who are there also, so that we should say that the law of the Spirit of life being effectual in us is a consequence of our being in Christ Jesus where there is no condemnation, and not that the no condemnation is the consequence of that Spirit being in us. It would be right to say, that we could not be in Christ Jesus without the Spirit of life, nor could we have the Spirit of life apart from being in Christ Jesus.

Surely if the usual interpretation were right, the apostle would have argued "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus; He bore their condemnation on the Cross and having been raised from the dead, no such thing can now attach to Him, nor to us."

But the fact of there being "now no condemnation" finds its basis in what the Spirit does, not in what Christ has done. It would appear, therefore, to have reference to experimental matters rather than to the great basic facts of redemption that are proclaimed in the Gospel.

Help on this Scripture (Rom. 8. 1) will be welcomed.—TORONTO.

THE Apostle does base his argument on the fact that Christ bore our condemnation on the cross in verse 3. "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,

and for sin (a sacrifice for sin) condemned sin in the flesh," but this carries us beyond His being delivered for our offences (ch. 4). It means "our old man is crucified

with Christ" (ch. 6). The man who committed the offences and the whole state in which he committed them came under God's condemnation at the cross, so that for the one who is in Christ Jesus, everything that could be condemned has been condemned. This is the cause of the no condemnation. It is not, no *self-condemnation*, but no condemnation before God, for God's condemna-

tion is the only thing that matters, and the one who is in the 1st verse of our chapter can exultantly say, "It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?" The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus enable us to live the life of liberty that belongs to this new position, but it is not the Spirit's work in us that puts us into it.

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## The Blessedness of Service.

Note the threefold blessedness of service.

1. "*A faithful messenger refresheth the soul of his masters*" (Prov. 25. 13).
2. "*He that watereth shall be watered also himself*" (Prov. 11. 25).
3. "*As cold water to a thirsty soul so is good news from a far country*" (Prov. 25. 25).

The faithful servants rejoice their Master's heart, their service yields joy to themselves and their message carries joy to those who hear them.

Every bit of true service springs from the knowledge of the love and glory of the Lord; if we know Him we shall be glad to serve Him, to hold ourselves at His disposal and to delight in the fact that He is our sovereign Lord and only Master.

"Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands our souls, our lives, our all."

Constrained by this love we shall say with Samuel, "Speak, for Thy servant heareth"; and with Isaiah, "Here am I, send me"; and with Saul of Tarsus, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

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The Scriptures are the permanent expression of the mind and will of God, and furnished as such with His authority. They are the expression of His own thoughts. They edify, they are profitable; but this is not all—they are inspired. It is not only that the truth is given by inspiration. *They* are inspired.

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## The Remedy for Decline.

Occupation with our state will never bring us one whit nearer the Lord; it will only distress, cast down, and enslave our souls. Occupation *with Christ* will produce any moment increasing conformity to His image. The true remedy, therefore, for a bad state is *Christ* so completely filling our vision—Christ in what He is and in what He has done—that self cannot be seen in the light of His glory. State is not everything; and in proportion as we learn this lesson will our state meet His mind.

J. N. D.

## CLOUDS.

J. T. Mawson.

OUR steamer was expected to reach a small sea coast town on a West Indian island about daybreak, for the disembarking of mails and passengers, and we knew that we ought then to see one of the most beautiful views on earth. A high range of mountains, shading away from a vivid green at their base to a deep purple at their summit, rearing their heads against the glorious blue of a tropical sky, while waving along the shore were feathered palms, as of some fabled land, and all the picturesque surroundings of a harbour, the waters of which were as blue as the heavens above: this was what we had anticipated and talked about. We were early astir, waiting for the morning to break over the eastern sea, but when it did at last appear, we saw not the landscape that we had expected, for heavy clouds hid those mountains with their gorgeous colours from our view and we could only see the foothills that skirted the coast. Those who had not seen the mountains could scarcely believe that they were there, and if they had not been indelibly photographed on our minds, we too should have questioned their existence, so that, even to us they were but a memory.

Our disappointment that morning became a parable to me, and it spoke so loud that I was compelled to listen and consider it. How often in my own life have clouds arisen, obscuring my outlook, and hiding from me "the things that are not seen," the eternal things; and I know that it is so in the lives of my brethren also. What a disappointing thing the Christian life is when clouds have gathered about

the soul, and when the eyes that God has created and set in the heart cannot "see Jesus, crowned with glory and honour."

"When mists hang dank in front and  
flank  
And straining eyes can naught discover."

Things nearer at hand may remain in view—perhaps formal fellowship with Christians, or some service undertaken in brighter days, but the joy, the rapture, the spiritual experience of faith's undimmed outlook: these have vanished, and become a thing of memory, a memory that only increases the unhappiness and forces sighs from the lips that ought to be full of song.

Clouds are of various sorts and are caused by various conditions, but the chief causes are, either the mixing of two currents of different temperatures, or the cooling of the air by diminishing pressure. The cooling of the affections towards the Lord is bound to produce clouds over the soul, and how easily this may be brought about by the currents that prevail in the world; indeed even apart from these, it is the tendency of the soul to decline. An old Christian was asked as to the spiritual condition of the company of Christians with which he associated. His answer was, "It's all chilled down." "But what is the cause of its being chilled down?" "There ain't no cause," he said, "It's just naturally chilled down." And that, I believe, hits off the situation in ten thousand cases. And so the clouds arise, not from any deliberate backsliding, but through the soul getting lethargic and going to sleep, and becoming wrapt in mists so that

the Christ no longer shines effectually upon it. If any are conscious of this "chilled down" condition, and of clouds upon the soul, there is need for an arousal, or spiritual health will decline more and more, and the soul become an easy prey to the world, the flesh and the devil. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead, and the Christ shall shine upon thee" (Eph. 5. 14, New Trans.).

There was one great thing that was impressed upon me that morning in the West Indies, and it may be that it will bring consolation to some who are realizing that clouds have arisen between their soul and God; it was this, As the sun climbed the heavens in his strength, it came home to me with great force, what of course I well knew, *The clouds were temporary, but the mountains were permanent, the clouds passed and the mountains remained.* How I thanked God for that thought, and I thank Him again for it as I write. Even if the world has come in, and as a black cloud covers the whole of your sky, my friend, for whom I write earnestly and prayerfully, turning the summer of your happiness into a veritable winter of discontent, yet we read, "The world passeth away and the lust thereof." It shall pass for you and your eyes shall see Him, whom having not seen, except by faith, you do love, though now, alas, to your misery and His grief, you have left your first love. Yes, God remains in all the blessedness of the revelation that Christ has made of Him, and Christ remains, the same yesterday and to-day and for ever. The clouds pass; they do not cover His face but your heart; they have not changed His love, it is your love that has "chilled

down"; yet the clouds are not permanent; God and Christ, and the things that God hath prepared for those that love Him, these are permanent, these are eternal.

What a wonderful thing true restoration of the soul is; how blessed it is to feel the chilling mists lifted and dispelled by the strong shining of the Saviour's love, and to feel the light and the warmth of it reaching the soul afresh. It is a never-to-be-forgotten experience. J. N. Darby has expressed it beautifully and for our help in one of his remarkable hymns,

"And yet Thy love's unchanging,  
And doth recall my heart  
To joy in all the brightness,  
The peace its beams impart.

"Still sweet 'tis to discover,  
If clouds have dimmed my sight,  
When passed, Eternal Lover,  
Towards me, as e'er, Thou'rt bright."

But this experience can only be known by those who sincerely, and with deep heart-searchings, seek the Lord's presence, and are subjected to His searching. "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

But what a hope is ours! a joyful and blessed hope! "We have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

"There shall all clouds depart,  
The wilderness shall cease,  
And gladly shall each raptured heart  
Enjoy eternal peace."

But now the Lord would have us clear of the clouds, that beholding His glory, we might be changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3. 18).

## “THE WORD BECAME FLESH.”

EVERY true hearted lover of the Lord must feel that right thoughts as to Himself are of first importance. What think ye of Christ? is still the great question and we should ever be challenging our hearts with it. And this, not merely that we might be orthodox in our views, for we might be that and yet be dead and cold as the stones, but that we might be fervent, preserved in first love, and moved to deeper adoration as the glory and wonder of the Divine revelation grows upon us. And how great is this wonder: “The Word became flesh” the Word, eternal, all perfect, all-glorious, who was with God, and who was God, in the beginning<sup>1</sup>. Nor men nor angels can describe His greatness. The heavens declare His glory and the firmament sheweth His handywork, but it is beyond the power of man to do so.

In one of the latest books on astronomy we read, “A few stars are known that are hardly bigger than the earth, but the majority are so large that hundreds of thousands of earths could be packed inside each and leave room to spare, here and there we come upon a giant star large enough to contain millions of millions of earths. And the total number of stars in the universe is probably something like the total number of grains of sand on all the sea-shores of the world.”

The Word is the Creator, the Centre, the Head of all that illimitable universe, and He upholds it by the word of His power, guiding those mighty stars in their ceaseless processions. And “the Word became

flesh”<sup>1</sup>. It was amazing grace “Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same,” and that with death in view. There was nothing in His outward appearance to impress the beholders, nothing superhuman or glorious; He was always dependent, and subject to the weaknesses of human life. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. We must not think of Him as merely *appearing* as a man, or as being a man only in body. He was man in spirit, soul and body, as much a man as any other that ever lived on earth, and yet how different to every other man. He lived by faith, He was cast upon God from His birth, He delighted in the word of God, it was His meditation and His food both day and night. He spent nights in prayer, and that specially when He had some great and important work to do. He sighed because of men’s burdens, wept with His sorrowing friends, rejoiced in spirit when He saw the Father’s grace at work, was angry when He beheld the hypocrisy of the Jews. His soul was exceeding sorrowful in anticipation of Calvary, and He was sorely pressed and in an agony in Gethsemane, and needed to be strengthened in His physical weakness by an angel. He suffered being tempted.

This incarnation of the Word outstrips creation in wonder. Creation is the manifestation of His eternal power and divinity, but incarnation was for the revelation of His love. He had to become one of us if we were to know Him, He has done this to win us and redeem us, but we do well to dwell upon the fact,

THE WORD became FLESH. There is the height and the depth, the glory and the humility, the sovereign Ruler, and the obedient Servant, and these

extremes, these marvellous contrasts, are perfectly blended in Jesus, the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father.

## The Grace of our God.

In the City of Bath there is a tablet inscribed in praise of its medicinal waters. It is as follows:

“These healing waters have flowed on from time immemorial.

Their virtue unimpaired, their heat undiminished,

Their volume unabated.

They explain the origin, account for the progress, and demand the gratitude of the City of Bath.”

How well is the grace of God illustrated by these waters. It is an inexhaustible fountain, a flowing stream, a stream hot and health-giving, that never cools or fails. And we who are citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem know that we and our city owe our origin to the grace of God, and whatever progress we have made in spiritual things we owe it to that same grace. And grace all the work shall crown, as long as we need it; there it will be, and now and for ever it calls for our deepest gratitude.

“Streams of mercy, never ceasing,  
Call for ceaseless songs of praise.”

Grace divine makes gracious men. The grace-saved sinner works out the salvation that has been wrought in him. He cannot be content with triumphing in the grace of Christ, he must grace His triumph too.

## Rejoice in the Lord.

“I have walked up and down my house many a time and wept because I do not belong to Jesus.” I rejoiced to hear those words from the lips of one who had many things that are supposed to make people happy. I rejoiced because I knew that her tears proved that she longed to know the Saviour, and He always satisfies the longing soul. He did it for her that very day. But I meditated about it afterwards in this way: If one wept because she did not belong to Jesus, how much those ought to rejoice who do; if one sorrowed because she did not know His saving grace, what songs of thanksgiving should ring through the homes of those who do. No wonder we are exhorted to speak to ourselves “In psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God the Father in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.” If we are right we shall do this, for the blessing of being loved by the Lord and of belonging to Him is beyond all human thought.

## REJOICING IN LOWLY SERVICE.

R. McCallum.

Philippians 2. (No. 2).

IN THE presence of Divine condescension so impressively portrayed in this chapter, how utterly incongruous does the self-seeking of the creature in any shape or form appear! If the Apostle seems to crystallise his exhortations around the personal plea "Fulfil ye my joy" it is not because he is seeking mere personal gratification, but because he has a genuine desire for the greatest good, individual and collective, of his beloved Philippians, and because he realizes that this could only be achieved by the display of the spirit of Christ. To this he exhorts them.

As in other parts of Scripture the *if*, of the first verse, is not indicative of doubt but is the "if" of argument. We might read it, as rendered by another, "By whatever comfort there is in Christ, and by whatever consolation there is in love, and by whatever fellowship there is in the spirit... fulfil ye my joy." Because these things do exist, they constitute the motives to which he can appeal to them to make his joy full. The motives are these—First—"the consolation in Christ"—but the thought suggested in the original by the word translated *consolation* is persuasiveness, or persuasive power, or constraining force. We sometimes sing—

"Father, 'twas Thy love that knew us  
Earth's foundations long before,  
That same love to Jesus drew us  
By its sweet constraining power,  
And will keep us  
Sately now and evermore."

That "sweet constraining power" of the mighty God which led us so gently to Christ, is manifested towards us now in Him, to lead us into "paths of pleasantness and,

peace," where the unity of the Spirit can be realized. The second motive is "the comfort of love." We all know the cheer that natural love can engender. Genuine love seeks to encourage and strengthen those who are the objects of it, and as we apprehend the love of God in Christ and appreciate the comfort of such love so shall we be able to communicate good cheer to others. Thirdly, there is the motive of the "fellowship of the Spirit." To enjoy such fellowship is to know the Spirit's leading and to realize that the resources of God are made available for us by the Spirit. This in turn will have its counterpart in our resources, sanctified by the Spirit, being placed at the disposal of God. It will mean self-emptying that there may be the Spirit's filling. It will involve personal "decrease" that Christ may "increase," it will mean that we shall be characterised by the "mind which was in Christ Jesus." The fourth motive to which he appeals is their own tender mercies and compassions. He appeals to their hearts and seeks their sympathy with him in his present condition and desires for them. We are to act in consonance with the leading of Christ and the guidance of the Spirit on the one hand and in harmony with the thoughts and desires produced in our hearts by their agency on the other.

The object of the appeal is "that ye be like-minded." The Psalmist could say, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." It was just this that the beloved Paul desired for the Philippians—"the same

mind, "the same love," "one accord." The Word of God does not contemplate uniformity of thought by the suppression of difference, but it does suppose unanimity of mind among the people of God, by conformity to the mind of Christ. This is the unanimity that arises from having right thoughts. There can be no true unity by cherishing wrong views, nor can there be complete unity over partial views of the truth, but where eternal verities are apprehended in the full light of the heavenly revelation given in the Word, there will be that oneness of mind which is a delight to the heart of God. But how can such unity be attained and maintained?—that is the question. The Apostle answers:—

(1) "Let nothing be done through strife." Avoid the spirit of faction. The moment a man makes it his business to raise objections and find faults in the spirit of strife and sheer wilfulness, he ceases to be a blessing and becomes "a sower of discord among brethren" and an abomination to God.

(2) Do nothing in the spirit of "vain glory." Do not be actuated by motives of vanity, the most contemptible of motives—doubly contemptible when exercised in the things of God and when viewed in contrast with the mind of Christ Jesus.

(3) Display the spirit of *humility*. Conceit and self-assertion are deadly foes of effective service and unity of thought. The one who is truly Christlike, while thinking soberly of himself will estimate highly the labours and qualities of spirit of others. Judging his own demerits and appreciating the merits of others he will find it easy to be humble.

(4) "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Our interests, sympathies and prayers should embrace the interests of others. The truth like a magnificent jewel has many facets: let us value the emphasis laid by others on those lines of truth which we do not find ourselves qualified to unfold. The principle underlying the unity advocated is *love*. Where *love* dwells, the factious spirit will be suppressed, the spirit of vain glory will be uprooted and destroyed and the interests of others duly recognised. Is the spirit of unity in the assemblies any less necessary or desirable to-day? Where jealousies, envyings, ambitions, self-seeking, oppositions, have play, the effective testimony of an assembly is utterly destroyed.

There follows one of the most sublime passages in the whole range of Holy Writ, setting forth the condescension and consequent exaltation of Christ, and enforcing the unselfishness he was urging on the saints at Philippi. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation." Those competent to speak of the original assure us that the word *form* used here, connotes not merely outward similarity but substantial and inward likeness, so that the passage asserts His participation in Godhead. The glory which was eternally His, for a season, He surrendered. He thought equality with God "not a thing to be grasped at" but for the great purpose of redemption He voluntarily and temporarily veiled His glory and took upon Him the *form* of a servant. The one form gave place to the other, but it was the same divine

Person. He emptied Himself not of Deity but of the form of Deity. He was found here in fashion as a man and is found in that fashion to-day and will retain it for ever. When occasion demanded, even when a man upon earth, He exercised His divine attributes and never divested Himself of them, but He refrained from the habitual exercise of the prerogatives of Godhead. He was a man, but God and man in one blessed person: unique not only in degree but in kind. As one who had ever pleased God and in whom there was no sin, death had no claim upon Him. But, He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." For us men and our redemption He identified Himself with our sins and with sin so completely that "Jehovah laid (focussed) upon Him the iniquity of us all." This changes the foundation fact of the gospel—that Christ died—from a mere historical fact to a blessed truth with doctrinal significance—"Christ died for our sins." His death was predicted, penal, and propitiatory: it was substitutionary and satisfied the claims of a righteous God, and happy are the people who are resting wholly for eternal blessing on the work effected by the Son of God on the shameful cross. "He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, *even the death of the cross.*" "The death of the cross" was that reserved by Rome for the riff-raff of its condemned; it was the lowest indignity to which the most degraded and "abject social pariah" could be doomed. We need not dwell upon the physical tortures, the lingering suffering, the shameful exposure, the racked sinews and bones of the impaled victim, nor upon the mocking taunts of hell expressed through human lips heaped

upon the Saviour of sinners, these form the lesser side of His suffering. Beyond these there was what we cannot understand, the abandonment of God as He suffered the just for the unjust. May God grant that all who read these lines have appreciated the necessity for the death of the Son of God upon the accursed tree and have realized that the truth of the Substitutionary death of Christ is no mere academic thesis, but a question of eternal life or death. Then shall we be found saying with the beloved apostle, "God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

We are prepared then for the place of glory to which He has been exalted by God. "Wherefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name." There we have the descent; here the consequent ascent. And the name of Jesus, Jehovah Saviour, given to Him at birth, and borne by Him through His pathway of humiliation, is the name so honoured of God that at the name of Jesus every knee in heaven, in earth and in hades, shall bow. Reverence that name then, fellow-believer, for it is dear to God; and let us confess now by all that we say and do that Jesus Christ is Lord, while we rejoice in the day to come when His glory shall be publicly displayed and universally acknowledged.

The place to which Christ went in His humiliation and the place to which He has gone and that which will yet be His ought to be an incentive to everyone of us to walk worthily here and to work out the salvation which by God's grace has been worked in our hearts. There is no conflict here between grace and

works. We are saved from the penalty of sin the moment we trust in Christ for forgiveness. At that moment, we receive salvation in the germ, but the spiritual life is to be nurtured, exercised, manifested. It is with a view to spiritual growth that suitable ministry is exercised through the gifts given by the ascended Lord; but even in the absence of the encouragement which His personal presence and ministry had effected in them, the Philippian saints are exhorted by the Apostle to such reverential solicitude, regarding the proprieties of Christian walk that the inward life and salvation will be outwardly manifested. Two facts of tremendous import are involved here, the free agency of man and the sovereignty of God. We are by grace, left at liberty to choose—to choose to follow God; but the initiative lies with God, and when men move in the paths of righteousness making outwardly visible the inward work of grace, it will be found that God has by His grace stirred the spiritual faculties and prompted the impulses to action. God began the good work in our souls, and thank God, if subject to His guidance, the good work will be performed until the day of Christ. We cannot work apart from God's enablings; God cannot have His blessed way unless we be co-workers with God. Work out then, what God works in. While the disposition is of God we must by grace be willing to follow the dictates of these divinely awakened inclinations. We have to act too, in such a way that none shall justly point the finger of disapproval or blame. "Do all things without murmurings and disputings that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation." In the path-

way of humility, there must be no half-uttered, albeit suppressed complaints—murmurings; there must be no disputings—murmurings expressed and resulting in angry discussions. High indeed is the standard desired "blameless and harmless," without outward fault, without duplicity: pure within, approved without. Such are the characteristics of the children of God. May we covet and cultivate such virtues. We still live "in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation," wherever our lot as Christians may be cast, and like stars in the firmament we are to be as luminaries to the world. But stars vary in magnitude—our light may be bright or dim. Men stand in dire need to-day of light and the knowledge of God and the borrowed radiance which the Christian dispenses is the clearest light that many in this world ever behold. There is more however, than the silent witness of the life, there is the testimony of the lips, and so may we "hold forth the word of life." Our coming to Christ should be followed by a going to men, to witness to His work and worth. Helping others is accompanied by help to self—to diffuse the light is to increase the light we have: to give is to receive. Helping others we strengthen ourselves. When the saints of God are by God's grace determined to exhibit the virtues of Christ, and the servants of Christ are willing to serve their Lord Christ, as the apostle of the Gentiles was—so that he would count it a joy to suffer martyrdom on account of their service and faith, then will there be a true and God-honouring "Forward movement" in the church of the living God. But it will be because we are one and all found "Rejoicing in lowly service"—and "By love serving one another."

# A LIFE THAT IS WORTH LIVING.

Inglis Fleming.

**T**O begin a life which is worth living one must have spiritual life—a new life altogether.

It was this which Nicodemus could not understand. Our Lord had said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus answered, "How can a man be born when he is old?" As a religious leader of the Jews he could understand ordinances and observances, but to be "born again"—to have a new beginning of life altogether—puzzled him completely.

But nothing less will do—What we are by nature is unfit for God—"That which is born of the flesh is flesh"—and "the flesh profiteth *nothing*." The mind of the flesh is enmity against God—it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be."

The one who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God—this new nature is his—he has begun to live and the Holy Spirit is given to him that he may live a life which is really worth while. This life is

## A SPIRITUAL LIFE.

It is on another plane altogether from that which is natural. The Christian lives "in the Spirit" and consequently is exhorted to "walk in the Spirit." So doing he will exhibit "the fruit of the Spirit." "Love, joy peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control" will mark him in greater or less degree, according to his spiritual growth.

Our Lord Jesus Himself has "left us an example that we should fol-

low His steps." He has shown us what our lives should be in a life worth living. In John 12 we read His words concerning Himself and concerning us, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die it, bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it, but he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve Me let him follow Me, and where I am there shall also My servant be; if any man serve Me him shall My Father honour."

Our Lord has died that we might live. He, the Corn of Wheat, was here incarnate in order that He might suffer for us and so save us. He must be lifted up upon the cross if life—eternal life—were to be ours. His death is our life. His suffering is our salvation. We are some of the many grains of wheat, the result of His falling into the ground and dying. He abides not alone—we live of Him—we live in Him. He has become our life. Thus He can call us to follow Him in His pathway. And following Him we shall live a life worth living. That life is

## A SAVED LIFE.

Have you ever thought that even a true believer may live a lost life? It is true. You may live a life that will not count at the judgment seat of Christ. You may live a life which will not count in eternity, whatever it may appear to be worth now. One may be forgiven and blessed of God, justified from every charge and assured as to a heavenly home and yet, as to the present, live a lost life. This has been ex-

pressed in the words of Bonar, the Scottish preacher,

“One little life, ’twill soon be past,  
Only what’s done for Christ will last.”

All that man builds of fame and fortune; all the “castles” erected by him at such cost of thought and toil, all will fail and pass

“And like the baseless fabric of a vision  
Leave not a wrack behind.”

One man lives for science, another for music, another for business, another for money, but when it comes to the last analysis of any of these, “self” is found. As some one has put it,

“I lived for myself,  
I thought for myself,  
And for none else beside,  
Just as if Jesus had never lived,  
As if He had never died.”

For the believer such a life is a lost life. But the one who hates his life in this world, who refuses the self-life, keeps his life to an eternal day. Such an one seeks not self-exaltation, self-gratification, self-aggrandisement here; he is set for that which is for the glory of Christ, his Saviour, and of God, his Father, and for the good of others on all sides. Honour shall be his in another world.

So it was with the apostle Paul. He could say, “I through the law am dead to the law *that I might live unto God.*” His old life had been brought to a close in the death of Christ who died for him at Calvary. The law had done its work and had slain the sinner in the person of his sinless Substitute. Now a new life was his—that he might “live unto God.” He adds, “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Brought to an end in judgment as to his old existence—he now

still lived. Yet it was not old Saul the persecutor, the blasphemer, the foremost of sinners, it was Christ living in him—the Christ-life being continued on earth in Paul, he drawing all his strength for this life worth living, from Christ Himself. Thus he adds, “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.”

Oftentimes that sentence “the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me” is quoted as though our salvation from judgment was in view exclusively. It was in view, surely, when our Lord in His deep love gave Himself for us. But is not the setting of the verse this, that He gave Himself in love for us that He might have us for Himself, and live His life through us in the world out of which He was cast? Faith in Him—present, continuous faith—draws down power for this.

The trolley-pole of the street car draws down the power for progress and light and usefulness, and does this moment by moment. Apart from this power the car would be valueless for service and only a block to the traffic. But through this it is enabled to assist many on their way. So the believer living by “faith of the Son of God,” faith which has Him as its object, will have force to succour others as the Christ-life is expressed. His life will be

#### A SERVICEABLE LIFE.

A simple incident may illustrate this. A child was asked the question, “Where does the Lord Jesus live?” The answer looked for was, “In heaven.” The questioner wished to turn the thoughts of the child to the Saviour seated now in the glory

of God because the work of redemption had been perfected at Calvary.

But the child gave a new turn to the teacher's thoughts, as she replied, "He lives down our court." What did the child mean?

A girl named Bessie had been converted. As a sinner she had come to the Saviour. He had received her and she knew that her sins which were many were all forgiven. Now she drew her strength from her Saviour and in that dingy slum-alley her life shone as a bright light for Christ.

If a neighbour were sick Bessie would be found caring for her, sweeping her room and ministering in other manners. If an errand were to be run Bessie was willing to be the messenger. In any way in her power Bessie was at the service of those around her. It was Christ living in her. Hers was a life worth living.

Someone may be saying, "I have tried to live such a life and have failed again and again. For me it is impossible; I admire it in others, but cannot produce it in myself." Stay friend! You have not to produce this life. It is Christ living in you. Only maintain communion with Him—abide in Him—and that life will be expressed. As He Himself said, "Abide in Me and I in you."

Put your life into His hands. Keep in contact with Him and all unconsciously to yourself His life will be seen shining out of you, as light shines from the electric lamp.

What can a coil of electric wire do to give light? In itself it is dark and dead. But link that dead

wire with the electric main and the power from the power house will flow through it and light be available for house or street. It is this contact with Christ which is necessary for a life worth living.

"Abide in Me and I in you." Mark well the order of His words. We abide in Him. We commune with Him. We maintain our link of fellowship with Himself, then He abides in us for life and power and victory. The virtue of healing went out from Him of old when He was touched in faith. The virtue of spiritual force flows from Him when He is touched by faith to-day.

If the enemy cannot rob us of salvation, he will seek to rob us of power for witness. If he cannot pluck us out of the hand of Christ, he will endeavour with all his wiles to hinder our being for the honour of Christ. He minds not what it is, however "harmless" it may appear to be, if only our living by faith of the Son of God is checked.

A mountain between us and the sun will hinder our seeing it. The leaves of a book may shut out our view of it as fully.

So anything which checks the flow of our communion with Christ will suit the enemy's purpose. He knows that apart from this abiding communion with Christ we are powerless and valueless in service and testimony. The more innocent the thing which comes between our hearts and Christ the better it will suit the devil's purpose.

"He that abideth in Me, and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit" (John 15. 5). May it be ours thus to abide and so to live a life worth living.

## “LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED.” T. Oliver.

THAT injunction is the preface to the marvellous series of communications from the Lord to His disciples in the 14th chapter of John's Gospel. In the three preceding chapters, reference is made to His being troubled:—

(1) In sympathy with the sisters at the grave of Lazarus, “He groaned in the spirit and was troubled” (John 11. 33).

(2) Consequent on the Greeks desiring to see Him and in view of His death, which was the necessary condition for the fulfilment of their desire, He said, “Now is My soul troubled” (John 12. 27).

(3) Contingent on the thought that one of that little company of His choice associates should betray Him, it is recorded that “He was troubled in spirit” (John 13. 21).

With all these thoughts pressing on Him and in spite of the evidences of lack of sympathy, faithlessness and treachery, He drew His own more closely to Himself and assured them in these words: “Let not your heart be troubled.” From the preceding chapter, the prediction of Peter's denial followed on the indication of Judas as the traitor, and upon the announcement of the Lord's departure. These thoughts were well calculated to produce troubled hearts. The dark shadow of the cross had cast a gloom on Himself. But He calmed the anxious thought that He read in the disciples' hearts.

Up to that moment they had never had occasion to trouble about the future, because their Master had been at hand, and He had been their un-failing resource at every juncture. He was going where they could not follow. They were to be left alone and consequently they were filled

with gloomy forebodings. It was that sense of desolation which the Lord sought to dispel. That was to be effected by the realization that thenceforward He was to be an object for faith, even as God was. Every true Israelite believed in God. That belief lay at the very foundation of their theocracy. But like all axioms in creeds, it was accepted as a matter of course, and often had little or no real power in the lives of those who professed such belief.

“In My Father's house are many mansions: if not, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you” (John 14. 2). The Jews were accustomed to the idea that heaven was the dwelling-place of God, and the disciples had been taught to pray thither. In modern English, the word “mansions” implies the qualities of size and ornate display. But in the English of 1611 A.D., the word meant no more than the meaning that the original language would convey, viz., “resting-places,” “abodes” or “dwellings.” The only other usage of the word in the New Testament occurs in the 23rd verse of the same chapter and is there translated “abode.” “Many” should not be understood as indicating diversity of condition, but rather abundance of accommodation. There would be room not only for the Lord, but room for all them also. There would be no risk of that house being overcrowded as the inn at Bethlehem had been at His first advent.

The Lord was not going away merely to escape from trouble, as they might quite reasonably have concluded. He appealed to His record of perfect candour in previous dealings with them. If matters

had not been right, He would not have concealed the facts from them, they would know well! If there had been any limitations, He would have certainly indicated such. Their place was with Him. But it was necessary that He should prepare that place for them.

“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 14. 3). “If” does not imply uncertainty, but condition of argument. It expresses the fact although in the future; it is perfectly clear and certain to Him. His setting out had a definite object, and they could depend that He would not leave it incomplete. Where He was going, they could not follow because the path lay through death. They had not the power then to pass through death. But the preparation of the place was a necessary antecedent to His coming again for the precious purpose of receiving them unto Himself. He would not accomplish the purpose by sending an angel, but He would come personally for them. Heaven, not earth, was to be the goal. The future of His own is to be where He is, i.e., a position totally eclipsing any position they could possibly have had due to His remaining on earth. Even His establishment as Messiah with all the concomitant glory on earth could not have placed them in such favour.

On this subject there has been much written which has tended to weaken the force of the straightforward meaning of the words. Some have sought to impress that the reception was at the death of the individual disciples. That impression needs little more than its statement to carry its own refutation. Others have inculcated the idea that

the passage refers to the spiritual presence of the Lord amongst His own and that the Father's house has a present significance in Christian experience. It is unfortunate that expositors who often in the main line are well-instructed should indulge in such far-fetched argument. That the verb is in the continuous present tense, *ερχομαι* (*erchomai*) literally, “I am coming” and not “I will come” in verse 3 as in verse 18 is no warrant for doing despite to the obvious meaning of the passage. Attention should be paid to the context of the expression in question.

By the statements in the preceding paragraph, it is not intended to weaken the present bearing of the Lord's future coming. The Lord's object is to take us out of the world in a moment at the earliest juncture. With such an issue to our calling on high of God in Christ Jesus, there should be a very definite answer in our spiritual outlook and practical conduct. The result will be our gradual withdrawal from the world in soul experience. The power that will raise or change and snatch up the people of God in the moment of complete triumph at the rapture, is the same power that is operating now to effect a spiritual severance from the world. That spiritual process will have a consequent effect in our daily lives. We shall be obviously in the enjoyment of the hope of our calling. In spite of all the turmoil without as often within the Christian company, as well as connected with the individual Christian's heart, the same words, “Let not your heart be troubled” come from the same source in their *unparalleled* sweetness and assurance. Let us seek to experience their value in an ever-increasing way!

# THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS.

J. T. Mawson.

*A Bible Study.* No 4.

*Continued from page 76.*

Ques.: *What bearing has Luke 12. 34-48 upon us, who are looking for the Rapture of the church at the first stage of the Lord's coming?*

**I**T sets before us in the Lord's own words, our responsibility during His absence from this world, and the rewards for faithfulness. Three things are to mark us: readiness, expectancy and activity; we are to be waiting, watching and working.

Ques.: *What is the meaning of the figures used: loins girded and lights burning?*

The lights burning shew that it is night, the night of the Lord's absence, and the tendency is to ungird and go to sleep at night, but in a spiritual sense we must not do that; for while we are *in* the night we are not *of* it, but "we are children of the day . . . therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Thess. 5. 5, 6). The loins girded and the light burning indicate readiness to move at the word of the Lord; there must be no scrambling and scurrying when He comes; we are to be like unto men that wait for their Lord.

Ques.: *Does the watching of verse 37, to which a special blessedness is attached, indicate something better than simply waiting?*

Both have their place, but watching means expectancy, the heart is engaged. A servant might be quite ready for his master's return, as simply obeying a command, but if he is watching, it shews that his master's return is absorbing his thoughts. But with the Christian the two must go together; if the

heart is not right towards the Lord, the loins will become ungirded and the light will grow dim.

Ques.: *What of the next section, where the faithful servant feeds the household, and is also called, "blessed": is that evidence of greater devotion?*

It shews us the servant in his activities and runs on with the waiting and watching; the three things give a complete description of a servant altogether pleasing to the Lord. I might illustrate these three things. The mother of a family has been compelled to leave her home for a while, and it and the younger children are left in charge of Mary, her mother's trusted daughter. She has told them that she will not tarry when her business is finished, and they are expecting her daily. With this expectation bright in her heart Mary keeps the home clean and tidy, so that when the mother does return she may find *everything ready*, the home clean, the children dressed and waiting. But they are not only ready but expectant; often they run to the door or peer out of the window for the first sight of the returning mother, and as the days go by Mary becomes more eager than them all. Yet she does not forget her mother's wishes; she sees that the children are fed and she does not allow them to forget that mother is coming; she actively cares for her mother's interests, idling not for a moment. Between her journeys to the door and window, she slips first into this room and then into that, to see that nothing is out of place, and she keeps her eye on her brothers and sisters, for she does

not want to be ashamed of them before her mother when she returns; she waits and watches like them all, but she diligently works as well. She does everything as she feels her mother would if she were there. She is faithful to her trust. Blessed is Mary when her mother returns. She has a twofold joy; her mother is back again, and smiles her approval on her little daughter.

Ques.: *Do the rewards of which the Lord speaks shew the measure of His appreciation of the faithfulness of His servants?*

Yes. I will continue my parable to illustrate this. Mary has the joy of her mother's presence and the satisfaction of her mother's approbation. But now the mother's turn has come. She makes Mary sit down at the table, and all the children, for they were all alike longing and watching for her return, and she brings out the good things she has brought for them; they feast together, but the mother serves. Her delight in being with her children, and the pleasure in their love that made them long and watch for her return, makes her their servant now. But what a reward that feast is to Mary; she has it as a secret understanding between her mother and herself, and a special mark of her mother's approval. This is the way the Lord proposes to recompense His watching servants in verse 37. "Verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them."

Ques.: *What is the the difference between that, and "he will make him ruler over all that he hath" (verse 44)?*

The service of love rendered to His watching servants, seems to be *inside the house*. It is a private

festival that the world won't see. It is love answering to love. It is love in the hearts of His servants that leads to this expectancy and watching, and love in the heart of the faithful Lord will lead Him to shew His appreciation of that love that did not forget Him during His absence. But the making him ruler of all that He hath, is a *public honour* for public service; the servant is rewarded openly for his faithful service by a place of trust in the kingdom. Both are blessed, but the latter would not be greatly valued without the former.

Ques.: *Before leaving this Scripture, please explain what the Lord says about the unfaithful servants in verses 45-48?*

The servant evinces his reality by his conduct and vice versa. Many are servants by profession who are not so in reality and in heart, but a man's conduct shews what is in his heart. This servant says *in his heart*, "My lord delayeth his coming." He does not openly deny that He will come, but he defers the coming and casts off the true servant character, and lords it over God's heritage, as though the day of reckoning would never come. To such a servant the Lord's coming will be sudden, unexpected; He will come as a thief in the night to him, as He will to the world. He is an evil servant (Matthew 24), and shall have his portion with the unbelievers, because he is an unbeliever. The solemn words stand as a warning to each and all, yet how clearly there is foretold in them the unfaithfulness of the professing church; how soon in its history it lost the hope and desire for the Lord's return, and left its first love, and settled down in the world to eat and drink with the drunken, as

though it belonged to the world and the night (1 Thess. 5. 7), and then to lord it over kings and princes, and to persecute the faithful servants of the Lord. It is the spirit of the world in the professing church and must be a grief to the Lord and all who are faithful to Him, and it will meet with His unsparing judgment at His appearing.

The words as to the faithful and wise steward are an encouragement, for they shew that until the Lord does come there will be such, who shall care for His interests and feed His household with wisdom and love. He cares for His household, and has provided abundant food for their spiritual health and strength, and this food has been committed to His stewards. There could be no greater sin on the part of any of His servants than the withholding of this food from those who need it, and no greater service to the Lord than the diligent dispensing of it. Blessed are those servants, whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing. Awake ye stewards of the Lord; the time is short; the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

Ques.: *You think that the Scriptures teach that the manifestation of the servants of the Lord as to their faithfulness or unfaithfulness will take place at the Appearing and not at the Rapture?*

Yes, the Rapture of the saints to heaven will be according to the sovereign grace of God, and will usher us into the Father's house, while our responsibility and rewards for faithfulness are generally bound up with the Appearing and Kingdom. It will be at His appearing that the Lord Himself will be publicly vindicated and then His servants will be vindicated and rewarded

also. We read of "them that love His appearing" (2 Timothy 4. 8), and every faithful servant and saint is looking for it. The true and proper hope of the church is the Rapture, to be for ever with the Lord; it is this that is spoken of as "that blessed hope," but the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2) must not be left out of our thoughts; the heart that is faithful to Christ could be satisfied with nothing less than this. This has its place in our hope, and will be the answer to our prayer, "Thy kingdom come."

Ques.: *Will you cite texts to shew that there is this distinction between the Rapture and the Appearing, and that when the Lord does appear His church will not be on the earth? In 1 Timothy 6. 13, 14, Paul exhorts Timothy to "keep this commandment . . . until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ," which seems to support the idea that the church will be here until the Appearing.*

There are many passages of Scripture which shew that when the Lord appears in glory His saints will appear with Him. Some of these are: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3. 4), "The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints" (1 Thess. 3. 13), "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him" (1 Thess. 4. 14), "The Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints" (Jude 14), "They that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful" (Revelation 17. 14), "The armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean" (Revelation 19. 14). It is clear from these Scriptures that He does not find His

church on earth at His Appearing, but that it comes with Him; how this is possible is unfolded in 1 4. 16, 17). He first catches it up to Himself and then it comes forth with Him in His glory.

The charge to Timothy in the passage quoted, emphasizes the responsibility of the Lord's servants to hold the fort for the Lord until He returns, to establish His kingdom and authority. This is one side of our witness and service; we represent Him while He is absent from the world because we know that He is coming back to it. This is a most important part of our testimony to the world. Our testimony is really threefold: He has been here in grace, He is not here for He was rejected, He is coming back again in power and glory to judge and to rule in righteousness. Meanwhile His servants, of whom Timothy was a pattern, must hold the truth in its spotless purity, without compromise, in subjection to the Lord. When the church has been taken out of the world, God will bring to light others who will hold the standard aloft and keep the light burning until the Appearing of the Lord.

*Ques.: You think then that the Lord will find faithful servants on the earth when He appears. If these are not of the church, who will they be?*

He will, but they will be saints of the Jewish people, a remnant in whose hearts the Spirit will work

after the Rapture of the church. He will appear for their salvation. With the Rapture of the church, the Spirit who dwells in it will also be taken out of the way. Then the man of sin and Antichrist will be revealed (2 Thess. 2.; Revelation 13.), and the great tribulation will begin. All the world will be tried by it, but the Jewish nation, because they rejected their Messiah, will suffer most, and in this nation, a faithful remnant will appear, who shall turn to God and suffer more than all, and that even from their compatriots. The Lord will appear for their salvation, as many Scriptures tell. "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at His word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified. But He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed" (Isaiah 66. 5). "Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Hebrews 9. 28). "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matt. 24. 30, 31).

*To be continued.*

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#### THE LORD'S ANSWER TO THE MALEFACTOR'S FAITH.

"Verily, I say unto thee"—What certainty.

"To-day"—What promptitude.

"Shalt thou be with Me"—what company.

"In paradise"—what delight.

## THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

IN THE history of the universe there is nothing so great and admirable as the cross of Christ. It stands forth preeminently as the dawn of an eternal day. If at Adam's fall the sun went down at noonday, at the cross Jesus went down into the depths of blackness and darkness—combated all the principalities and powers that held sway in the darkness and despoiled them, and inaugurated for us the endless day of heavenly glory.

The fall of Adam occasioned universal judgment, for by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, and from that point the deluge of death and distance from God swept over all, but with what wonder and rapture we see the cross upreared, stemming that deluge, rolling back the tide of judgment, nay exhausting it, meeting all its demands, and setting God at liberty in righteousness to reconcile all things unto Himself! "And having made peace through the blood of His cross" is a marvellous word, and one that our souls will do well to consider, but who can open it up to us but the Holy Spirit of God? It was a divine work and can only be known by divine teaching.

From the moment of Adam's fall until the cross there was no rest for God, and no liberty for Him to work according to His own heart; it is true that He dwelt with Israel, but they grieved Him every day, and only His infinite long-suffering and patience enabled Him to do it, but now He has been glorified on earth. The cross of Jesus has done it, and now according to His own mind and in the blessed harmony of all His attributes He can deal

with the world and reconcile all things unto Himself. Think of God's holiness, righteousness, justice in judgment, hatred of sin, mercy, lovingkindness, compassion, omniscience, omnipotence, and many other attributes that radiate from the fulness of the Godhead, and above all, what He is in His own nature, love, all harmonised in the cross, so that the gospel is at once the sweetest and most magnificent music that the universe will ever hear. Language is exhausted in its endeavour to describe the glory of the diapason that shall roll upward to the throne of God from a redeemed universe—as it were the voice of a great multitude, the voice of many waters, the voice of mighty thunderings, and harpers harping upon harps! But this powerful imagery drawn from the heavens, the sea, the earth and the skill of man's nature concentrated on one great purpose, does but describe *the response* to the music that will roll eternally from the Throne—from what God is. The cross is the golden harp from which this music flows; the Lamb is in the midst of the throne.

The cross of Christ has enabled God TO RECONCILE US, who were alienated and enemies in our minds by wicked works. It is through the cross of Christ that God can reach the prodigal, for there the distance between God and the sinner was removed, for the judgment that rested on guilty man was borne by the Son of God. He took away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and grace reigns through righteousness, and God can gratify His heart by running to meet His once rebellious but now repentant creatures, who are lighted on the homeward

way by the glory that shines from the cross; He can embrace them, and kiss them and forgive them and set them in such wise before Himself that even His glory can find no flaw in them. The ruin was great, but the reparation, or the way in which it has been repaired, is immeasurably greater; the free gift is beyond all comparison greater than the condemnation.

What has the cross effected for the believer? When Adam sinned he fell under the judgment of death. Dying he must die! Nothing can relieve of this judgment but substitution. The judgment must be borne; the righteousness of God requires it. Man who is under it can only be relieved of it by another bearing it. It cannot be cancelled or overlooked. Righteousness demands judgment, and if man falls under it, he cannot rise out of it, and if God recovered him out of it He would compromise the righteousness of His own sentence. Man can only be righteously exonerated by one, not chargeable with his guilt, bearing the judgment of it. This Christ did on the cross. "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." He bore the judgment in His own body on the tree. Our old man was there crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed. The cross was the only way by which we could be rescued from the judgment. Christ would have abode alone for ever, but for the cross. The Son of Man must be lifted up, or eternal life could never have been given to us. The blessed Son of God spent thirty-three years on earth, but by His life He did not, and could not, bring anyone into His own ground before God. "Except a corn of wheat fall

into the ground and die, it abideth alone." But He went down into the depths of judgment, and His cross has opened a way from darkness and escape from the dungeons of eternal torment to the light and the rest of the Father's house.

But there is another side, to which earnest consideration must be given. The cross has not only secured the way of escape for man; but on it was crucified our old man that the body of sin might be destroyed. I do not see the cross truly if I only see it as opening a way of escape for me, and yet allowing that *in me* to escape which had incurred the judgment. This is one of the general limitations in the effect of the cross. The cross opens up a way for escape from the judgment, but the state of the flesh has been judged and not the acts only. What is judged cannot be continued. If by faith I see my escape from judgment, by the cross of Christ, I am, by that same cross, set on entirely new ground, even as the fruit of Him who died, and I must leave "the old man" behind, crucified: "for I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." If I do not accept this, I have limited the cross, and in fact have assumed that I can be freed by Christ's work on the cross from the judgment which rests on the old man and yet retain that which caused the offence. In short, that I escape through substitution the penalty for my offence, but that the state in which the offence placed me may be continued. Which means that a man may be saved through the intervention of another from the penalty under which he laid—say for forgery—and yet may retain the position acquired by it. Righteousness requires that not only shall the full penalty be

paid, but that there should be a discontinuance of the state of offence; in fact the offending state must cease. The one who understands this will say, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world." Here the question of sin is not alluded to, but everything which in any degree is unsuited to God.

Some see that the cross has removed their sins before God, and rejoice in it; but they do not see the extent of the action of the cross, either with reference to God or themselves; and hence in practice,

while they would place the cross in faith between themselves and their sins, and know that they must not return to them, yet they can sanction and enjoy carnal things and the world, just as if there were no cross at all. If Christ died for me, I am bound by every good and right feeling to lay aside that for which He died, and which needed His death. Without that death I could not have been delivered from judgment; but how dreadful to retain the condition for which my Saviour was judged! Nay, I must hate my own life; and I may well do so, since through faith I have the life of the Son of God.

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## "Abba, Father."

"I don't think I ever enjoyed the words, 'Abba, Father' more than I did last night. They were a pillow of the softest down to a brain that had been surveying hopelessly the state of things in general. Yes, hopelessly, and then came the 'Abba, Father' of heaven's repose. It was the fond 'cuddle down' in the cradle of divine comfort, and the assurance of the strength of the everlasting arms" (*From a letter*).

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## God's Love.

The Christian is the object of God's love, which from its immensity and power can secure everything good to its object, yet he is often exposed to the most trying circumstances. Yet it is in these very circumstances that he may prove how thoroughly he is the object of God's infinite love. Born of God and poor, yet he may be supremely happy, for he has more occasions to look to God, whereas if he had means he has what might divert him from dependence on God.

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David's day of sorrow produced the most precious psalms, whilst Solomon's experience in unbroken prosperity is recorded in Ecclesiastes. In the one the absolute blessedness and eternal faithfulness of God shine out, for the dark days had made these real to David; in the other the utter emptiness of the best that vaunts itself beneath the sun.

## “LORD, THOU KNOWEST.”

A. E. Walker.

John 21. 17.

THERE is great comfort in the fact, that the Lord knoweth all things. “He knoweth the way of the righteous,” and as He said to Israel, His eye was never off them and their land, so it is with the child of God. There are times when our hearts get overwhelmed with the knowledge of failure, as Peter’s was filled with grief about his. We cannot express our feelings of grief, even if we could tell them to any one—and we shrink from confiding in any other other, for who can fully understand us and measure our motives justly but He who knoweth all things?

He fully knew what slow and wayward scholars we should be before He *undertook* to fit us for His companionship. He knows as none other our imperfections, “But loves us notwithstanding all.” This draws us to Himself and makes us confide in Him; it was this that drew forth Peter’s tears—after he had denied the Lord. Love to Christ had impelled Peter long before to leave the boat on Galilee’s Lake, and walk on the water to go to Jesus, but since then how woefully had failed, and in his failure to whom can he go? He comes as a repentant saint, his self-confidence gone, and when the Lord hailed the disciples on the shore of Lake Tiberias, and asked them “Children, have ye any

meat?” he threw himself into the sea and came swimming to reach his Master, and have the first word with Him! I wonder what they said when they met? He heard the Shepherd’s voice and that was enough! The Lord was calling His disciples back into that fellowship of love which they had left! Peter, like ourselves, could not easily forget his great past failure, but that look of tender pity in the eyes of his suffering Lord in Pilate’s judgment hall had assured him that nothing could alter His love, and now he could cast himself on the tender compassion and patience of His Lord, and say, “Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee.” There was not a word of rebuke on his Lord’s lips, and Peter was restored to the enjoyment of that circle which meant so much to him.

Sin is not possible when near the Lord, and if we leaned more upon His bosom day by day, and trusted Him and not ourselves, He would keep us from falling; He is able to do this. It is not in self-confidence and carnal boasting in our faithfulness that true confidence and strength lies, but in humble dependence upon Him who knoweth all things. Simon Peter was a different man after being brought to the confession, “Lord, Thou knowest.”

## God and our Tears.

It is not *time* that heals our sorrows, or dries our tears; it is God; God Himself; God alone. He reserves this for Himself, as if it were His special joy. The world’s only refuge in grief is *time*, or pleasure; but the refuge of the saints is GOD. What a precious word to those who believe is that: “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” It declares His tenderness of heart, and is a pledge to us that no tear shall ever wet the cheek of one of His children that is not needed and for their blessing.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

### The Judgment Seat of Christ.

"Some little difficulty has arisen as to the correct interpretation of 2 Cor. 5. 10. Could you please make it clear if the 'all' refers to both believers and unbelievers. If believers, are the deeds done in the body before conversion also included in this manifestation? It seems evident that this is a wider thought than 1 Cor. 3. 13-15, but perhaps you could give us a little light on the subject."—CATHCART.

IT IS true that all men must appear at the judgment seat of Christ, "for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then everyone of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14. 11, 12). But in this 2 Cor. 5. 10 the "we" is the Christian "we." It and "us" occur in every verse in the chapter to the tenth verse, and the same persons are in view all through. The body of the Christian is the subject of this part of the chapter; it may be dissolved by death, or swallowed up of life at the coming of the Lord, but the deeds done in it won't be forgotten; they are to be reviewed in the full light at the judgment seat of Christ. "The things done in the body" refers, we believe, to all that has been done from the very beginning of our lives; apart from the full light of God being cast on it all we should have but an imperfect knowledge of that grace that has saved us and the wisdom of all God's ways with us. We quote from the writings of J. N. Darby.

"I believe the whole of our acts will be detailed before the judgment seat, not for us, however, as if we were in the flesh, and thus to our condemnation, but to make evident to our eyes the grace that occupied itself with us whether we were regenerate or unregenerate. Our whole history will be detailed before the Judgment seat, and,

parallel with it, the history of the grace and of the mercy of God towards us. The why and how we did this or that will be manifested then. *For us the scene will be declarative, and not judicial.*

"We are not in the flesh before God; in His eyes, by His grace we are dead. But, then, if we have walked according to the flesh, we must see how we lost in blessing thereby, and what loss we have incurred; and on the other hand, the ways of God towards us, ways of wisdom, of mercy, and of grace, will be perfectly known and understood by us then for the first time. The history of each one will come out in perfect transparency; it will be seen how you yielded and how He preserved you, how your foot slipped and how He raised you up again, and how you were drawing near danger and shame, how He by His own arm intervened. On the other side I doubt not the manifestation of God's grace towards us individually will be so magnificent that even the sense of the perversity of the flesh that we had, if it could possibly enter there, would be excluded by the greatness of divine goodness."

2 Cor. 5 is wider than 1 Cor. 3. 13-15. In this latter Scripture it is a question of the work done in building up God's house on earth. It has special reference to the service of the servants of the Lord—all their work is to be tested.

## “All things working together for good.”

“I have been reading Romans 8. Verse 28 is dear to all Christians. I think we lose nothing by giving up the old translation and reading, ‘We know also that those who love God, those who have been called in terms of His purpose, have His aid and interest in everything.’ It is a greater joy to me that in everything I have the aid and interest of the God of eternal purpose, than that He makes everything turn to my good. But both undoubtedly are true.”—ROSEAU.

**WE MUST** not give up the old translation of this much loved statement for this other one, for the change we are assured, does not convey the full and true meaning of it. It is true that we have God’s interest in everything that concerns us, “*even the very hairs of our head are all numbered,*” and we have His aid in everything that is according to His will, though surely not if we go contrary to it. We could quote many texts to prove these blessed facts; but to us there is much more than that in this passage. In view of the condition in which the heirs of God are in this life, and the perplexities in which they are often involved, it is a necessary statement. God has a great purpose in regard to those He did foreknow; they are His children and heirs, and He has “predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren.” In effecting this purpose He has won their love—they love Him—this is a mighty triumph, yet it seems strange to some, that those who have

been called to so high a destiny and who love Him, should suffer and groan with a groaning creation, and that their redeemed and Spirit-sealed souls should be left in unredeemed and weak bodies, and that sometimes they should be brought into such trials and straits that they do not know what to pray for; but faith has an answer to every doubt or question that may arise and it is a triumphant answer. “We know,” faith cries, that every circumstance and condition, every trial and tribulation, all suffering and need that may connect with creature conditions, while we await the coming deliverance, are turned to our account. God who is over all, and without whose permission nothing can happen, controls everything and controls it for our good in relation to His ultimate aim for us. We know this must be so since His love is so great that He spared not *His own Son*, but delivered Him up for us all. This knowledge gives great confidence and quietness of spirit and leads on to the triumphant conclusion of the chapter.

## Shame at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

“I have read in ‘Notes of Interest’ and elsewhere that some will blush with shame at the Judgment Seat of Christ because of lack of faithfulness in this life, and slackness in service. I have much to be ashamed of and if I am made to blush with shame up there I shall be unhappy, and I am faced with the fact that there will be unhappiness in heaven—then will the fulness of joy in His presence be (Psa. 16. 11)? Please say something about this when you have space.”—CORK.

**IT IS** worthy of note that the feelings of shame, joy and grief at the coming or presence of the Lord are not said to be the portion of

the unfaithful Christians, but of those who have laboured for their blessing and cared for their souls. The Scriptures are interesting. Paul

says, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: . . . that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain" (Phil. 2. 16), and again, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy" (1 Thess. 2. 19, 20). John says, "And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming?" (1 John 2. 28). To the Hebrew saints, the exhortation was given, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (ch. 13. 17). These are not idle words; in every one of them there is an appeal to the affections of the saints towards those who had been the channels of blessing to them or had the care of their souls at heart.

But if there was a possibility of these being ashamed at the coming and the presence of the Lord, when all unfaithfulness to Him would indeed appear shameful, why should not those who had been faithless be themselves ashamed? It seems to us that we shall be ashamed of everything that has been a dishonour to the Lord in our lives in that day, and we shall rejoice to see it set aside and burnt up, and shall glory in the grace that has dealt with it all, and which laid the guilt of it on our Substitute, when He hung on the cross for us, who will then shew us how it all appears in His sight. Thus having everything out with Him, we shall enter into that fulness of joy which will spring, not from our faithfulness, but from His unchanging and everlasting love. We should have no dread as we think of that judgment seat, but it should have a salutary affect upon us now, and should lead us to desire to be continually manifested as to our consciences before the Lord day by day.

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## Consider Him.

Look upon the Lord and wonder. He is the way, and yet He was weary; He is our strength, and yet He was faint; He is the Bread of life, and yet He was hungry; He is the Fountain of the water of life, yet He was thirsty; in Him was life and yet He died. It was no mean price that He paid for our redemption. He has bought us with a great ransom. He sold all that He had to secure us, and even gave Himself. Who can outbid Him for our souls?

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## "My Favourite Text."

He was a wise man who, when asked for his favourite text, replied, "On a stormy day I want a cloak, on a cold day I want a sunny side of the road, on a hot day I need the shade; now I want a shower of manna, then a drink of cool, living water; I want an arbour to rest in, a pilgrim staff, and I cannot do without a sword. My favourite text! I might as well try to tell which is my favourite eye. The one I might lose is the one I might need."

# THE LORD'S SUPPER.

J. T. Mawson.

[IT IS the first day of the week, THE LORD'S DAY, and my heart and mind have been concentrated on THE LORD'S SUPPER. The Day and the Supper are bound together in the New Testament, by one word that is used to describe them both. *Kuriakos*, the "Lord's," means "belonging to the Lord": the day belongs to the Lord (Rev. 1. 10), and the Supper belongs to the Lord (1 Cor. 11. 20), but those who have the Lord as their Saviour are called by the grace of God to have their part in both and specially to understand the meaning and importance of the Supper. We greet the Lord's Day with gladness, but it is specially dear to us because on it we can have part in the Lord's Supper. Let us consider it.

It is in 1 Corinthians 11. 23-34 that the most definite instructions as to it are given, and the opening words are arresting.

"I HAVE RECEIVED OF THE LORD," wrote the Apostle.

The word has come from the Lord, and from the Lord in glory. It is more than a wish expressed, more than an entreaty, though both are surely in it; it is a command, the command of our royal Lord, who is also our supreme Lover. It were almost treason to ignore it, and to treat it with any sort of indifference would evince an insensitive and backslidden state of soul. Let us realize the importance of this declaration. Paul was not there when the Supper was instituted, but he had not been dependent on Peter or John for his knowledge of it. The Lord Himself had communicated to

him what he knew about it, that he might deliver it to the churches among the Gentiles. If the Gospel accounts of it were all that had been preserved to us, we might have said, "It was instituted for the disciples who companied with the Lord, and not for us," but this 1 Cor. 11 shews what the Lord's thoughts are towards us. He would not be forgotten; He remembers those hours of darkness and the great sacrifice, and His desire is that those whom He loved enough to give Himself for them should remember Him as He passed through them, and in this way have fellowship with Him in His death.

The Lord's Supper is the one feast of the Assembly of God, and it stamps upon that Assembly a wonderful character. By the Assembly I mean that great company of men and women that has been called out of the world by the gospel for Christ—His *ekklesia*—His called out ones—The Supper marks it out as being in complete contrast to the world.

It is truly an inexhaustible theme and that chiefly because it presents our Lord to us in the fidelity and invincibility of His love. The occasion of its institution emphasizes this. It was on

## THE SAME NIGHT IN WHICH HE WAS BETRAYED.

This is surely arresting, and we must pause and consider why the Supper is identified with this blackest of all black nights. Had Paul been left to his own wisdom to give an account of the institution of the Supper he would most probably have con-

nected it, as we should have done, with the crucifixion. He would have said, "It was on the night before the crucifixion that the Lord took bread." For the natural thing is to associate events with what is greatest in our thoughts. But that was not the way in which he received it from the Lord, nor was he so inspired by the Holy Ghost to write it. It was on the night of the betrayal. The betrayal is the background that throws into bright relief the love that moved the Lord to give to us the Supper that we might have it until He comes as a memorial of His death. The betrayal was very definitely in the Lord's thoughts; how keenly He felt it we must surely feel, as reverently we consider Him in that solemn hour. "One of you shall betray Me," He said to them (Matt. 26. 21). "One of you that eateth with Me shall betray Me" (Mark 14. 18). Then in Luke 22. 21, after they had partaken of the Supper, His words are recorded, "The hand of him that betrayeth Me is with Me at the table." And here in 1 Cor. 11, though now in the glory of God, the Lord does not forget this; it was on "the same night in which He was betrayed" that He took bread and gave thanks. There was base treachery in the inner circle, and this caused Him the deepest pain. Jerusalem He loved, but it had never professed to love Him. It had always despised Him, proudly asking, "Who is this?" When His love took Him to it to spend laborious days in the midst of it, it offered Him no welcome, no rest, no home. It left Him friendless on its streets, with no place to lay His head unless He sought it on the Mount of Olives. He felt this, and only His touching lament over it and His tears can tell us how keenly

He felt it. But in this inner circle He surely could find consolation and rest! These disciples of His, the "you" whom He loved with a special love, they surely would be faithful to Him; for one and all of them had protested oft and again their love to Him! No, He cannot rest even here, for having gathered them together He says, "ONE OF YOU shall betray Me." Treachery within was a hundred-fold worse than hatred without, and this treachery was well calculated to discourage and destroy a less than perfect love. But He rose up above it all and in connection with it He instituted the Supper which was to be to all His own as long as ever they needed it, a memorial of His love that no failure on their part could change or destroy.

I am sure that none who are truly and vitally the Lord's could do what Judas did; he was a child of the devil, and the devil was in him; nevertheless he was in that circle, he was one of the "you," and he had received the same tender consideration at the Lord's hands that had been shewn to them all. He had been in that best of all company, and had had the best of training and circumstances, but this only brought out the worst that was in him, and proved that the flesh is incorrigibly bad. And the flesh in Judas was no worse than the flesh in Peter and John, and in you and me, and the lesson that his treachery should teach us is that we can have no confidence in the flesh. Then in what and whom may we place our confidence? In instituting the Supper the Lord replies, "You may trust in Me." For the Supper tells us of love that nothing could daunt, an invincible love that was stronger than death.

"What love with His can vie?" "One of you shall betray Me," said the Lord, and "the disciple whom Jesus loved" seemed to enter into the full meaning of it all, for he put down his head upon Jesus' bosom. It was as though he said, "Lord, I cannot trust my heart, nor depend upon my love to You, but I can trust Your heart and I can find perfect rest in the love that beats in Your bosom for me." And it was that disciple *that stood by the cross*; not Peter who boasted in his love to the Lord, who said in effect, "Lord, you may trust me, I'll stand true to You. You may put Your head on my breast, I will not fail You," not Peter, but John, who distrusted himself, but leaned wholly upon his Lord; he it was, and he only of all the disciples, that stood by the cross. The Supper invites us, and encourages us to act as he acted, so that we also may call ourselves "the disciples whom Jesus loves." What a resting place is His bosom! What solace and joy His love yields! and that it might be ever fresh before us the Supper has been given to us; and that we might clearly see that it is not a love dependent upon our faithfulness it was instituted on the night of the betrayal—the *same night*.

That then is the setting; see now how He acts in it.

### HE GAVE THANKS UNTO GOD.

Behold Him in the midst of those disciples, with the bread in His hands which was to be to them, the symbol of His body given in death for them, lifting heart and voice in thanksgiving to God, His Father. He gave thanks as their Leader and Head; they were those whom He

would call "My brethren" when He had overthrown the power of death; they were to be the beginning, the nucleus, of that Assembly in which He would raise a perpetual song unto His Father, and theirs. So now in the midst of them He gives thanks, and the thanks must have been for His death and the great results of it. He looked beyond the cross and beyond the tomb, and measured the favour, immeasurable to all but Himself, in which His Assembly would stand with Him before the Father as a result of His one offering; and with this in full view He gave thanks. That act stamped upon the Assembly its first distinctive feature, *it is a thanksgiving company* and the Lord's Supper is an eucharistic feast—a feast of thanksgiving. In this the Assembly of God—that which God has called out of the world—stands in complete contrast to the world. The world does not and will not give thanks; "neither were thankful," is one of the charges that God brings against the heathen world in Rom. 1. 21, and it is not the least item in the heavy indictment drawn up against a pleasure-loving, God-forgetting Christendom in 2 Tim. 3. 2. But the saints of God can and do give thanks; from their hearts they can cry with exultation, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It should cause us much exercise that we give thanks so feebly, and that often murmurings and repinings take the place of praise. We are not living up to our character and privileges when this is the case, and the reason of it is that we have lost the sense of the favour in which we stand, or have never known it. Nothing is more calculated to restore to us a sense of this favour, or

teach us what it is, than the Lord's Supper, the feast of thanksgiving. For in the death of our Lord the heart of God was fully declared. His love flowed out there towards us without any reserve, and that when we were both dead and guilty, as we read in 1 John 4. 9, 10: "*In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son, to be the propitiation for our sins.*" Since our sins are removed, and our souls quickened into life, what can we do but adore and thank Him Who is the source of it?

Our thanksgiving is commensurate with the sense of God's favour in our souls; the more fully we enter into this the fuller our thanksgiving will be. It is feeble at the best, yet it is to me a most cheering and comforting thought that a perfect thanksgiving has entered the Father's ear; for when the Lord gave thanks He did so as fully knowing the favour in which His own would stand with Him. That perfect thanksgiving abides, and I delight to think that when the saints of God come together they do so in all the fragrance of it.

#### HE BRAKE THE BREAD.

Having given thanks, thus giving God the first place, He brake the bread and gave it to His disciples, saying, "This is My body given for you; this do in remembrance of Me." Mark the words, My BODY for YOU. This was that His own personal love to them might be kept continually before them and before us all; and in partaking of this broken bread the Assembly responds

to that love and shows its devotion to Him. I speak of it, when it is done, not as a matter of form but with hearts moved by His love to grateful adoration. In this again the Assembly stands out in contrast to the world; *it is a company devoted to Christ* whom the world despised and slew. His body was given for us. The cup also He gave to them, for the two elements complete the symbol of the Lord's death—His body given, and His blood shed. His love led Him to sacrifice Himself on our behalf; it is upon this that we dwell, and dwelling upon it our souls are bound the closer to Him. "This do," He says, "in remembrance of Me." "When on the cross I thought of you, now gathered in My Assembly, think of Me." And when we do *this*, when we eat of that bread and drink of that cup, we say—"Lord, we do not forget." Here then is His love, and here is our response to it.

#### YE DO SHEW THE LORD'S DEATH.

There are two sides to this breaking the bread and drinking the cup, to this memorial feast. First it is for the Lord's joy; we remember Him; it is love responding to love; but in doing this we shew to all who can take notice where we stand; we shew that we are identified in the world with His death.

I know of no better illustration of it than that of Joseph of Arimathea. The Lord hung dead upon the cross; all the world had followed its princes in crucifying Him; He was utterly rejected and as far as men could tell hopelessly defeated; then stepped forth Joseph and identified himself with that dead and dishonoured body. It was as though he said, "The world hates Him, but

I love Him; the world has slain Him, but I claim His body even though the world meets out the same treatment to me." So we, when we partake of that broken bread, identify ourselves with the dead body of Christ. As far as the world knows and cares He is still dead; the world's last act against Him was to rend His side, and it has not seen Him since. We know that He lives in resurrection life and power; the Word of God tells us this and the Holy Spirit who dwells in us is a witness to it, but we recall Him as He was, and identify ourselves with His death. We announce to angels and men that we hold to the One who was crucified by the world.

I have read somewhere that after James II. was driven from the British throne, his secret adherents, when at state banquets the king's health was drunk, used to draw their glasses across the finger bowls, meaning by that act, "We drink to the king across the water." What they did by stealth we do openly. We drink to the King across the water—to Christ, our earth-rejected Lord. We shew His death and by our action say, "God forbid that we should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is

crucified to us, and we to the world," and though men are indifferent to this, angels look on, and learn that Christ has not died in vain.

#### TILL HE COME.

We link His death with His coming again, and that coming is our hope and joy. We look backward and forward; the glory must follow the suffering, the crown must follow the cross, and between the two we hold the fort for Him. ' And here again the Assembly stands out in contrast to the world; to us His coming again is "that blessed hope," the Assembly is a community awaiting the return of the absent Lord, the heavenly Bridegroom; the world will wail because of Him, when He appears. His coming will be the climax and consummation of all our joys; it will bring to naught all the schemes and pretension of the world that will not have Him.

Here then are some of the distinctive features of the Assembly of God that plainly prove that it is not of the world but of God. It gives thanks to the Father. It is devoted to Christ. Its great hope is the coming again of the Lord Jesus.

*To be continued.*

## Abound more and more.

1 Thessalonians 4. 1.

To abound more and more in pleasing God is the true test of life and spiritual energy.

It is certain where there is no growth in holiness there must be decay.

We live not in the sufficiency of what we have acquired, but in the energy of acquisition.

The vital question is not whereto we have attained but the goal of pursuit (Phil. 3. 7-16); when the latter fails, the failure of the former is inevitable.

We must "follow on to know the Lord."

## “I WILL COME AGAIN.”

S. L.

Read John 14. 1-3.

THIS word was spoken to the whole Church as one—“Let not your heart be troubled” is an expression repeated in verse 27 with respect to His peace, “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” He speaks to the heart of His church, and He speaks to His church as one heart. These three verses indelibly engraved upon the heart of every believer, and in which is found the quintessence of loving intimacy, give us three central points, His *person*, *place* and *purpose*.

Firstly—*HIS PERSON* The nominative pronoun ‘I’ is used five times. “I will come again and receive you unto Myself.” Is not this the sweet whisper of the very Bridegroom Himself? And is it not in line with 1 Thess iv 16, “The Lord *Himself* shall descend” Abraham’s servant went to seek out and bring home a bride for Isaac, but it was Isaac himself who met her at the close, and brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent. The servant doubtless spoke much to Rebekah whilst on the journey to the honour and praise of Isaac, even as the blessed Spirit Himself—of Whom the servant is, at most, only a feeble type—glorifies this All-glorious One Who is coming for His bride. Oh how sweetly and fully He has taken of His things, and revealed them unto her as,

A pilgrim through the lonely night  
From earthly joys apart,  
She sighed for one yet far away,  
The Bridegroom of her heart

Dear brethren, the long night of our pilgrimage is nearly o’er, the Bridegroom of our hearts will not tarry, the Morning Star appears, harbinger of Heaven’s eternal day. Soon “Heaven’s morn shall break

and earth’s vain shadows flee”. very soon prayer shall be turned to praise, faith to sight, and faint hope to glorious realization. Oh, come let us adore Him, Whom having not seen we love, our Lord, and our God, the Eternal Lover of our souls, and the altogether lovely Bridegroom of our hearts.

Firstly then His glorious Person, then—*HIS PLACE* In Eph. 3 14, 15, the Spirit speaks of ‘every family’ for which there are mansions in the Father’s house, and in Heb 12 22, some of these families, I take it, are found. But His ‘place’ is more intimate. an inner circle. A place for “You”. Only the Bride can fully catch the sweetness of that strain, the music of those words, “I go to prepare a place for you”

But how the heart swells, and the pulse quickens, as He reveals—*HIS PURPOSE*, and the dominant thought of His heart. He delivered Himself a voluntary sacrifice to the supreme and inconceivable anguish of being God-forsaken. He is about to enter into the dark shades of death to purchase for her a place in the ineffable glory of the Father’s house. This is the crowning bliss, the heart’s perfect rest—Himself—“That where I am there ye may be also”. In a moment of supreme intimacy and unveiling in chapter 17 24, He expresses again the longings of His heart, saying, “Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am”

With Him!—His own deep joy to share,  
Ours to be for ever with Him,  
His, that we are there

His *Person* our object, His *place* our home, His *purpose* our eternal satisfaction.

## WHEN JESUS COMES.

R. C. Westcott.

" . . . so shall we ever be with the Lord " (1 Thess. 4. 17).

Yes He is coming! and if 'twas to-day  
 Would mine be an expectant, gladdened heart?  
 Would His appearing find a joyous peace  
 My portion as enjoying now in part  
     His company?  
 Or would He find me—His—but oh so cold  
 As though I'd lost of heavenly joy all hold?

Ah yes, if Jesus came to-day for me  
 Where would He find me in this world of woe?  
 Going hand in hand with Him along life's way  
 Or blindly seeking pleasure where the foe,  
     Alluringly,  
 Displays the baubles which at best are brief?  
 (A course which fills my Saviour's heart with grief)

Or would He find me nigh o'erwhelmed with care,  
 Forgetting that He tenderly doth yearn  
 That all my burdens I should bring to Him,  
 And thus in sweet dependence daily learn  
     His sympathy?  
 O keep me, Lord, contented, happy, free,  
 In every state just leaning hard on Thee.

Cause me to treasure day by day Thy Word,  
 Make me a vessel meet for service true,  
 Help Thou my heart, enraptured, Lord, by Thee,  
 Help me whilst here Thy interests to pursue  
     And prayerfully  
 Bring in the arms of faith, O Lord, to Thee  
 The needy ones, that they may ready be '

To hear that shout, so soon to summon 'Home'  
 Both dead and living who belong to Thee;  
 Past then all conflict, failure known no more!  
 There for Thy glory through Eternity!  
     O blessed Lord  
 Keep me till then, O keep me by Thy grace,  
 Watching and waiting till I see Thy face!

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JESUS! to whom each knee shall bend and every voice be praise,  
 To Thee shall joyful hymns ascend through everlasting days.

# THE UNCHANGING ONE.

James Boyd.

*"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8).*

HOW cheering, refreshing, and establishing it is to be brought into contact with One who is infinite in goodness, grace, righteousness, holiness, and love; and who never can be different to that which, at our earliest introduction to Him, we found Him to be: One upon whom the lapse of ages leaves no mark of change! Such is JESUS, the subject of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which the old order, like a dissolving view, melts from before our vision, leaving to fill the scene that which is new and eternal, radiant with the glory of God.

And how often has the passage at the head of this paper spoken peace to the soul disquieted by the capricious and changeful nature of the selfish principles of the fallen creature, who no longer ago than yesterday may have been brimming over with evidences of most tender affection, and to-day may, in spirit and deportment, have become as cold, cutting, and severe as the January east wind. It has ministered comfort, consolation, and encouragement to thousands perplexed and weary with the every varying conditions of things with which we are compassed in this world of restlessness, confusion, envy and falsehood. It presents to the shipwrecked and hopeless mariner an island of peace in the midst of a turbulent and treacherous ocean. It is a shelter for the battered and toil-worn wayfarer, alone and lost in the pathless and storm-swept wilderness. It is an invulnerable citadel into which the besieged and war-broken may retreat, and thus escape the anguish which is invariably the lot of those who foolishly trust their

happiness to the vicissitudes of a world in rebellion against God and agitated by the fell destroyer of the human race.

How good it is to be brought to the knowledge of this changeless Jesus! He came into this world, which was without moral foundations, that man should have a firm rock upon which he might plant the foot of faith, and be assured that amid the crash of everything that seems stable in the universe, it could not be shaken. He came to illuminate the benighted vision with the gracious light of God, and to warm into life the cold dead human heart with the holy love of God.

See Him at the well of Sychar, and hear Him speak of the gift of God to a poor sinful creature, for whom no one else had a word of comfort. There He is the Giver of the living water which alone can give satisfaction to a thirsty soul. See Him in the house of Simon the Pharisee (Luke vii.), the Creditor in the midst of His debtors, speaking only of forgiveness. See Him at the grave of Lazarus, the Resurrection and the Life, mingling tears of sympathy with those of the two bereaved women, before His almighty voice awoke the echoes of the dull domain of death and Hades, and called back the dead man to life. See Him amid a multitude of publicans and sinners, and hearken to the words of grace which proceed out of His lips, until you hear the throbbing of the heart of God, as He enfolds in the arms of His immortal love a prodigal come back from the far country, naked except for those rags which bore witness

of his rebellious and disgraceful career. See Him in the temple and synagogue, and in the streets and lanes of the city, and hear Him tell in the ear of devil-deceived men and women the grace and love of God. See how He feels for the diseased, the demon-possessed, the blind, and the broken-hearted, until you learn what those mean who say: "*Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.*" See Him amid the gloom of Golgotha, dying for the ungodly, and praying for His murderers; and as you contemplate Him, "stricken, smitten of God and afflicted," may you be able to say: "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" (Isa. liii.). And then think of Him as *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*

Oh, the deep, deep blessedness of knowing Him—learning Him in His pathway down here, and knowing that He is just the same blessed, living, lowly, gracious Saviour now that He is on the Father's throne. May both reader and writer get to know Him better every day of our pilgrim journey through this world until we see Him face to face in courts of light.

But consider the setting of this short, simple, peace-imparting sentence. In verse 7 we are exhorted to remember them who had (not have) the rule over us, who spoke to us the Word of God. They have gone from our midst. Their voices are no longer heard amongst us ministering the living Word, but we are to call them to mind; and considering the issue of their conversation we are to imitate their faith. Then in verse 9 we are warned against those who would introduce

divers and strange doctrines. Between that needful exhortation and this very wholesome warning we have the brilliant and comforting truth shining like a silver star: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day and for ever."

Whether it be the gospel to the world or ministry to the saints, Christ must ever be the subject (Rom. xvi. 25; Acts xxviii. 31). He is the living Word, the spirit of all Scripture. It was Christ the apostles preached and taught, and there is nothing else for saint or sinner to-day; and *He never changes.* John, writing to the babes, says, "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning" (1 John ii. 24). The devil brings in novelties, and the human mind loves them and revels in them. And just because men love them, they flatter themselves that they are parts of the truth, but alas, they are but "sporting themselves with their own deceivings." That which turns away the heart from Christ is a snare of the devil. We are told we must not hold too obstinately to old forms, but must advance with the times; but the whole truth has come to light in Jesus, and there is no change in Him.

It is affirmed by men of science that signs of decay are visible in some of the heavenly bodies. The sun seems to be giving evidence that he has passed the meridian of his years; the moon is a defunct world, the earth is in the sear and yellow leaf. This is just what Scripture tells us in those remarkable words which were addressed to Jesus, when in the sorrow of His soul He drew near to the gates of death, stricken for the transgression of believing sinners: "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 shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed" (Ps. 102. 25-27; Heb. 1. 10-12). Peter tells us that the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, the elements melting with fervent heat, and that the earth also and all the works that are therein shall be burned up, but that we, according to His promise, look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness (2 Peter. iii.).

The nature of the change which will pass over the universe has not been revealed to us, we do not need to know it. We are confident however of this, that He who built it at the beginning to serve His purpose, and Who in infinite wisdom allowed the enemy to defile it with the stain of sin, is able to cleanse it from the presence of that which is so hateful to Him and so ruinous to the creature, and to fill it with light and blessing, and make it the abode of righteousness. To accomplish this, and to set man in new and eternal relationships with God, He laid down His own life. The Creator is the Redeemer. He who stooped down to know what human weakness was, and who had His days shortened, is the same One who then, as now, was upholding all things by the word of His power. What creature mind could compass such a thought? No man knoweth the Son.

But not only must the material universe undergo a change, a much greater change must pass over man himself. The old order no longer occupies us; angels, Moses, Aaron, the tabernacle, the sacrifices, the covenant—in a word, the whole

earthly order disappears before the face of Jesus, and we are exhorted to abandon the shadow for the substance, types which pass away for realities which abide for ever. And for this state of things a change must take place upon us. We are heirs of a kingdom which cannot be moved; but except a man be born again he shall never see it (John iii.). Man must have a new nature, as born of God, or perish for ever.

The wonderful thing about man is that *he can be changed*. I do not for a moment doubt that God, who knew the end from the beginning, and had His counsels formed with regard to all His works before He put into operation His creative power, so made man that he could be changed in the whole principle of his being. We are not told anything about angels to lead us to believe such beings capable of being changed. Some of them have fallen away from God, and an opportunity of salvation does not seem to be granted to them. Man is the creature chosen of God in whom His workmanship of grace is to be displayed. What He has wrought as a Saviour will be brought to light in ransomed *human beings*.

And what a change He is capable of making in His rebellious and ruined creature! Hear what He says to the headstrong, intractable Simon Peter:—"When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not" (John xxi. 18) And what made that change? Age? Never. As to nature it is ever true: "The child is father of the man." That change was wrought in

Peter in the school of God, and by Him who Himself changes not.

And consider the insolent overbearing Saul of Tarsus; that proud, self-righteous, Christ-hating Pharisee. Wolfish in his nature, and getting the first taste of blood at the martyrdom of Stephen, he ever after seeks to satiate his ravenous appetite with the slaughter of the sheep of Jesus, until met on the highway of his merciless career by Him before whose subduing power nothing is able to stand. What meekness, gentleness, patience, tenderness, and lowliness were wrought in this striking subject of the grace of God! What ceaseless solicitude for the salvation of the lost! What care for the flock of Christ! What devotedness to that Holy Name once so hated and persecuted by him! And this wonderful change effected by Him who is *the same yesterday, and to-day and for ever!*

And has not the reader as well as the writer, come under the changing influence of this changeless Person? From that throat, which once was *an open sepulchre*, is exhaled the perfume of immortal love. That mouth, once "*full of cursing and bitterness*," is now replete with bless-

ing. That *tongue*, long accustomed to "*deceit*" now spreads abroad the word of truth and life. Those *lips*, which once concealed the deadly "*poison of asps*," are now pregnant with life-imparting grace. Those *feet*, once "*swift to shed blood*," now "*shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace*," run joyfully in the pathways of mercy. A new power, that of the Holy Spirit, has taken possession of the earthen vessel, the members have become instruments of righteousness, the will of God is done and the soul finds eternal rest. The glory of the Lord with all its life-giving and attractive power, shines full upon our hitherto benighted hearts, and we become *changed* into the same image (2 Cor. iii.).

One more change will complete our blessing, and place us beyond the need of change for ever. I refer to the change which shall pass upon our mortal bodies. We look for the Saviour from heaven "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." Then we shall be like the Lord and with Him for ever in those bright and blessed scenes where sin can never come.

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How comforting to know that the Saviour is still carrying on His service of unwearied love towards all His own. His arm is not shortened nor is His ear heavy. All that is needed on our part is to appropriate Him as our great High Priest, in the same way that we appropriated Him as our Saviour. Every fresh need on our part means a fresh transaction with Jesus; we may rest assured that He will never fail us.

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Here we are passing through our schooling days, and if sometimes we feel that the tasks are hard, yet let us remember that every bit of advance we make is something of *self* displaced and something of Christ built into our souls.

# SOME OF THE PRESENT ACTIVITIES OF OUR LORD.

Inglis Fleming.

THE present activities of our Lord are often overlooked. We are happy in knowing that He is a seated Saviour, that the work of atonement is done, that purging of our sins has been effected by Him and that He has set Himself down "at the right hand of the majesty on high" (Heb. 1. 3).

But our Lord not only *died* for us, He *lives* for us, that we may be saved by *His present life*.

Luke, in writing to Theophilus, speaks of what Jesus "*began both to do and teach*" (Acts 1. 1). This seems to indicate that the Lord has not ceased these operations, but is active still in blessing through His ministry on high.

In Mark 16 we find this corroborated.

## IN THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL

we see Him still engaged. He is the great Evangelist. He had bidden His disciples, "Go . . . into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "And they went forth and preached everywhere, *the Lord working with them*" (Mark 16. 15, 20).

What encouragement is here! The preacher can go forth in confidence that the Lord is interested in his service, and will work with him through the message given. It is God's appointed way of blessing and He pleases "through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Thus the preacher may be assured of support in his labour. It may be on one occasion, or on another, that the result may be effected, or it may be every time.

The word in Ecclesiastes 11. 6, gives cheer. "In the morning sow

thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." "Both . . . alike good." In the grace of our Lord this may result. In any case it is for the servants to sow, it is the Lord who gives the increase in *either this or that*—or the other, or in both. We need spiritual energy to go forth and tell the sweet story of salvation being assured that our Lord will work with us.

It may be noted that in this last chapter of Mark we learn of this spiritual energy being shown. Mary Magdalene having seen her risen Lord *went and told* the disciples.

Again the two, who were going into the country, to whom He appeared *went and told* of it at once to the others. "Go and tell," was the word. "*They went and told*"—the result. Shame will be ours "in that day" if we fail, in our turn, to go and make known the grace which has met us in our need and can meet others in their need.

## IN GIVING ETERNAL LIFE.

Turning to John 17. 1, we are permitted to hear the Son of God, the Son of the Father, telling out His heart's desires. "Father, glorify Thy Son," He prays, "that Thy Son also may glorify Thee." The Lord Jesus is now glorified and from that glory where He is He *still glorifies* the Father. In what way? Does not the next verse show? "As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him." On the ground of His finished atonement our Lord is active, when

the gospel is proclaimed, in giving eternal life to those given Him by the Father.

“And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent” (v. 3). This knowledge of the Father and of the Son is one of the great characteristics of eternal life. It is our greatest privilege even while on earth to be brought into “fellowship with the Father and with His Son.” To have communion thus with them will be our joy in eternity. But it is our privilege to enjoy it in part now, while we wait for its unhindered enjoyment, when in the Father’s house, in the likeness of His Son. That this may be the case and that thus the Father’s heart may be gratified, the Son, from His glory, is giving eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him. Given by the Father to the Son, brought by the Son to the Father, in righteousness, receiving eternal life for present and everlasting enjoyment, this is the believer’s present portion and position. Not only will he “not perish”—that is one thing—but “eternal life” is his—that is altogether different and infinitely greater.

#### IN WASHING THE FEET OF HIS OWN.

In order that we who believe should live in the enjoyment of eternal life and of our sonship privileges, our Lord *continues* to minister to those to whom He has given eternal life according to the Father’s gracious counsels. In view of this we find His typical action, in John 13, in washing His disciples’ feet. That it was typical teaching we are assured because our Lord said, “What I do thou *knowest not now*, but thou shalt know hereafter.” The *spiritual bearing* of His action would

be understood when He was glorified and when the Holy Spirit had come.

“Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.” Perfectly, persistently, He loved them. Knowing all that they were, and would be, He loved them. But He was leaving them in the world and was acquainted with all the difficulties which would face them while He was away, gone “unto the Father.”

His heart of deepest affection desired that they should have “part with Him,” even though He were absent. He was therefore about to unfold to them the heavenly privileges of having His joy, His peace, filling their hearts, and of their *sharing* with Him in these things. For this their feet must be cleansed from earthly defilement, that unhinderedly they might have communion with Him, in His place before the Father, and His place before the world.

Every believer has part in blessing “*through* Christ. Every believer has part in blessing “*in*” Christ. But it is our Lord’s desire that every believer should have “part *with* Him.”

Thus His ministry goes on to-day in removing all that hinders us, by His service, direct, or through that of others, by “the washing of water by the word.”

Blessed, gracious Lord! He would take our feet into His pierced hands, in lowliest service for His loved ones, so that our hearts might beat with His own, while we tread the path of faith which leads to the Father’s house on high. May we respond to this love and place our feet in His hands that we may be cleansed, for He has said, “If I wash thee not thou hast no part with Me” (John 13. 8).

*To be continued.*

# A LOVE COVENANT.

(Contributed)

*"Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul" (1 Sam 18 3)*

DAVID and the Giant what a story! Beggarly even on the surface, that of Leonidas and Thermopylæ, with a greater than David and a bigger Giant under the surface. This unique fight in the valley Elah is rich in type, and big with Messianic issues. It is Gen 3 15, and Heb 2 14 in picture.

David's great love for Israel begat in Jonathan's heart a love "passing the love of women" a love all-surrendering and undying. Jonathan lost his heart to David whilst watching the fight. He was "converted" or "saved" as we would say, watching the victory of right over might, of God-directed weakness over devil-directed strength. Christ "crucified in weakness" tells the whole story. As we speak, "a sight of Thy dear cross did everything." One is edified by the spontaneity of Jonathan's love. There was no effort—no trying. Nor can we love Christ by trying, nor by wishing. Divine love never entered the soul of man by the door of effort, and never will. It is spontaneous. We cannot help it, as a French brother in giving his experience of conversion said, "I was fast asleep in sin, but the blessed Saviour came and awoke me with a kiss."

What a beautiful (if not perfect or exhaustive) illustration of divine love have we here in

## THE SEVENFOLD MANIFESTATION OF JONATHAN'S LOVE

### ITS NATURE

*"As his own soul"*

Not the same *measure*, but the same *nature*. Divine love in the

soul is God-begotten. "Love is of God" (1 John 4 7). "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4 19). The Spirit does not say that Jonathan loved David "as much" as his own soul, but simply "as" his own soul. The same nature. The stream may be feeble, yet as pellucid and pure as the torrential flood from which it flows.

Can a believer so love God? Yea, he can do no other. He has no love of his own to give Him. The flesh has no love for God. Quite the contrary. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Love must be where God is, for "God is love." Love is not something one gets by instalments. It is not put up in packets. It cannot be enjoyed apart from God. Apart from Him there is no divine love. Divine love then is the fulfilling of the law, not the arguing it away, for only the very least in the Kingdom of Heaven seeks to do that, as our Lord expressly says in Matt 5 17-20. Can a believer then fulfil the law? The Scripture surely answers this in the affirmative. How can he do it in the Scripture sense, by effort? No, but by the Spirit of life, Who not only frees from the law of sin and death, but causes those who walk after the Spirit to fulfil the righteousness, i.e., the very spirit or intention of it. The love of God and the love of His law cannot be separated. Both take up their abode in our hearts at the same time, as our Lord, the very Ark of the covenant, said in Psalm 40 8, "Thy law is within My heart." The Spirit therefore fulfils the law in the believer by changing his atti-

tude toward it. It is not so much *action* as *attitude*. So that he "consents to the law that it is good" (Rom. 7. 15). He is brought into line and agreement with it. The "fruit of the Spirit" (ninefold, Gal. 5. 22, 23) displaces the work of the flesh. Against such there is no law; for "all the law is fulfilled in one word, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (14). And if you walk in the Spirit and "if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law" (12). On the contrary you are in accord with it. You start by loving it, and delighting in it, and continue by doing it. This is the action of divine love in the heart and thus love is the fulfilling of the law. "Love is of God." This is the reverse of the love that is of the flesh, which is soulish, *lawless* love: divorced from God's truth: and that is why the moment a man becomes loose in doctrine concerning Christ he begins to rave about love, saying, in effect, "love is God" instead of "God is love." Judas was not the only man who betrayed with a kiss. Absalom was the Judas of the Old Testament, for he kissed his royal father, and then with black treachery in his heart went and plotted the downfall of his kingdom.

Jonathan's love was loyal because it was begotten by its object, as is God's love in the heart of a Christian who is God-made. God's "workmanship" or *Masterpiece*. His great dynamic or motive power is God's love placed in the power room of his new life—in his heart. Thus much for the love of Jonathan itself. All that follows is effect and result. Twice the Spirit gives the great cause, vv. 1, 3. In verse 1 comes the union of soul, suggesting Col. 2. 2, "That their hearts being knit together in love," which con-

veys the same thought: love was the cement. Then comes the covenant "*because he loved him as his own soul,*" followed by

#### LOVE'S CONSECRATION.

*"And Jonathan stripped himself to clothe David."*

What a stripping! Utter self-abandonment. Everything had to go. Jonathan had no sceptre to give, so he gave himself. This is Phil. 3. 7, 8. Death with Christ. Absorption in David. Where Jonathan dies, David lives. He does not "lose all to gain all" as we sometimes hear, but gives all *because* he has gained all. It is cause and effect. It is not the consecration that *talks*. Were I asked, "What is consecration according to God?" the answer that would suggest itself would be *practical death and resurrection with Christ*. Romans 6 gives a good account of this death with Christ when it says, verse 11, "Reckon yourselves to be dead," not *recognize*, but *reckon*. Not the recognition of self as a living misery, but the reckoning of him as dead and done with. Have done with the foul thing. Do not soothe him, slay him: yea rather, treat him as slain.

Such is consecration *according to God*. What is it according to man? Alas! too often it is just religiosity. Hurry and bustle, bustle and hurry. Consecration according to the flesh takes two forms mostly. Firstly—"Do nothing." Asceticism or Monksism; and secondly—"Do everything" or fleshly evangelism. Both alike fail. Fussy=busy=bodyism is not devotion. Sentimentality is not sanctification. True consecration chooses "that good part"—Himself. It is practical above all things, for what

could be more so than to strip oneself to clothe another?

### ITS JOY.

*"Jonathan delighted much in David."*

"All my springs are in Thee.' Here is heart-work. Here we are in the "garden of spices." Where the Bride finds Him Whom her soul loveth. Here all things take their place in the picture scheme. The world is left far below. Its clamours are no longer heard. Its attractions and distractions fade from our view. Here indeed is the sweet stillness of that love which is quenchless. It is Christ Himself.

### ITS TESTIMONY.

*"Jonathan spake good of David"*  
(1 Sam. 19. 4).

This is highly spiritual. When He, the Spirit of truth is come . . . He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine and shall shew it unto you."

When "the heart is bubbling up a good matter" it is so delightful to "speak of the things we have made touching the King." Oh that we might meditate more upon Him, then shall we find as in Psalm 140. 34, that our meditation of Him shall be sweet, and we shall be "glad in the Lord."

The difficulty, if difficulty there be, is not how to speak good of Him, but how anybody, save His declared enemies, could speak ill of Him. But alas! how many who seemed to run well, and who seemed to "draw near" have now joined the ranks of those who "draw back" unto perdition, Heb. 10. 22, 39. That blessed One of Whom they spake

"good" they now speak *evil*; seeking to bedim the brilliant lustre of His immutable, unchanging Deity by the foul breath of their "limitations" and "peccability." All such draw back unto perdition and belong to that company which in Heb. 10. 26, the Spirit designates as wilful sinners, and 'adversaries' for whom "judgment and fiery indignation" is prepared. How beautifully the Samaritan woman spake of Him! How touchingly the saved demoniac spake of Him, telling what great things He had done for him, and had compassion on him." And the surging crowd by the sea of Galilee crying, "He hath done all things well." And shall not our hearts gladly join in the ever-swelling chorus, crying,

"And when on that bright day we rise,  
And join the Anthem of the skies,  
In ceaseless song this note shall swell,  
Our Jesus hath done all things well!"

Not only for the bright day that is coming, but even now in the wilderness, in the day when even those who profess to love Him speak evil of Him. This is the time to speak 'good' of Him.

### ITS OBEDIENCE.

*"Whatsoever thy soul delighteth, I will even do"* (20. 4).

We only love as much as we obey. The blessed Virgin put divine love in a nutshell when she cried, "Whatsoever He saith unto thee, do it" (John 2. 5).

How precious is the word in Psalm 40. "Thy law is within my heart." Here is the true Ark. Heartwork again. "I delight to do Thy will,' not I groan to do it. This is worlds above the Imitation of Christ. It is not *imitation* but *revelation*. And this obedience prepares the soul for suffering. Hence we find

## JONATHAN IS GRIEVED FOR DAVID.

*"Jonathan arose from the table . . . for he was grieved for David"*  
(20. 34).

Compare Amos 6. 6, which speaks of those who are not "grieved for the afflictions of Joseph."

Saul is angered at Jonathan's love, and vents his rage upon him. Here, truly, is a suggestion of Phil. 3. 10, which speaks of "the fellowship of His sufferings."

The people's man is flourishing for a time, whilst God's King is rejected; but Jonathan stands for David in the court at the risk of his life—20. 32—is grieved for David (34), separates himself from the table of his enemy, and seeks David in

the solitude and seclusion of the wilderness, and there they weep out their sorrows on each other's breasts and give us a perfect exhibition of that last and crowning trait in the love that is of God, 20. 41, that of

## COMMUNION.

"And as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times, and they kissed one another, and wept with one another, until David exceeded."

We have already seen the *nature* of divine love, and here we have the *measure*, "Until David exceeded." Our David always exceeds. He is even now saying, "Continue ye in My love."

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## FOR HIS BODY'S SAKE.

**T**HERE was just about a score of

Christian folk gathered together to hear the Word, mostly old, poor and apparently careworn. As I looked round on them the question occurred to me, Is it worth while to come so far to speak to so few, and these few not very promising material? It was a challenge as to how I really viewed them and I am glad that I got a decisive answer. They belonged to Christ, they were all precious to Him. He loved them and cared for them. He had died for them and now He lived for them. Could any labour or sacrifice be too great when Christ's own loved ones were in question? To Saul, the persecutor, He said, "Why persecutest thou ME?" and it was just such as these that He spoke of. They were members of His body,

Himself. How wonderfully that great fact seized the heart and mind and burned itself into the very soul of the astonished Saul, we know, for from that hour it governed his life, and he afterwards wrote, "I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory," and again, "I rejoice in my sufferings . . . for His body's sake."

Such thoughts gave me a new zest in the ministry of the Word that evening; it seemed to be such an inestimable privilege to be allowed to edify those who were so dear to Christ, and as those faces brightened as they listened, and when they expressed their thanks when the meeting was over, a joy filled my heart that no earthly honour could have yielded.

## THE LORD IS THERE.

T. Oliver.

**T**HE prophet Ezekiel concludes his prophecy with the words: "The name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there (Jehovah-Shammah)." That striking statement refers to the focus of interest in the millennium. One might have been tempted to think that the characteristic mentioned should have been the transcendent glory which will make everything in the millennial state effulgent with the praise of the Lord. But not so, it is the Lord's presence which will be the most prominent feature of that day of bliss to come.

What will be known in a national (yea, in a universal) way in that day to come, is known in a specialised way in this era, which is the Spirit's day. The Lord's people have now the special privilege of anticipating the universal condition obtaining in the "world to come." "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18. 20).

The disciples to whom the Lord addressed these words formed a select group who enjoyed the Lord's presence in their midst and who were attracted to Himself. But the statement is prophetic, as indicating that His bodily presence would not be continuing with them. In His absence, the authority residing in Himself would attach to His name. Moreover, consequent upon His departure from them and His exaltation to God's right hand, the Holy Spirit has come to give power to His name and to gather people together to that common focus or centre. So that the assemblage is relieved of the imputation of being whimsical, i.e., according to change-

able individual opinion, or of being fortuitous, i.e., according to accident.

Obviously, the Lord's presence must now be a spiritual presence, but yet not less real than that physical presence which inspired His disciples with joy, and which will yet fill the whole earth so that the significance will be impressed on the name of its metropolis.

The Lord is the point of attraction. He said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me" (John 12. 32). Christ is known in the glory of His person and His work as Lord. He is not manifesting Himself in the world to claim His rights, but He is drawing people to Himself on the ground of redemption. Then those so drawn find that they have endowments, qualities and interests in common. So that fellowship or communion is expressed in connection with the name of the Lord. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4. 5).

The name of the Lord cannot be linked up with the world. The Lordship of Christ appertains in an observation way to the "world to come." The apprehension of Christ as Lord leads us at once into the light of another sphere or day. The apostle said to the Ephesian Christians, "Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord, walk as sons of the light" (Eph. 5. 8). Spiritual darkness has settled down on the world. Even as light and darkness are wholly inconsistent entities, so the Christian and the world are radically different in constitution, interests and destiny.

The name of the Lord then has a wonderful selective effect. Coming under the Lordship of Christ draws

us to a centre where His presence is known, but in the process we are dissociated from the world, i.e., the spirit or course of the age. We are no longer dominated by the ideas which control the worldling. We are relieved from even the legitimate ambitions which influence him. The Christian's interests find their focus at the right hand of God. Therefore the apostle exhorted the Colossians to seek those things, because Christ sits there!

Then the highest point to which natural ambition would tend to take him fails to satisfy the Christian for at least two reasons: (1) that the position would not be high enough (2) that it would not be permanent enough. It is useless striving to reach a mountain peak that will be blown down in a moment! Previous to the eruption that overwhelmed Herculaneum and Pompeii in 79 A.D., Vesuvius had never been known to manifest volcanic action. Doubtless the dwellers on its slopes scoffed at the possibility of such an occurrence, yet that did not relieve them from the effects of the mountain top being suddenly blown off! So the world tendencies will come to a similar climax as described in the prophetic Word of God.

However, the power of separation from the world does not depend on any qualification possessed by the individual Christian, but on an external attraction. This is exquisitely expressed in the lines of a well-known hymn-writer:—

'Tis the treasure that I've found in His  
love

That has made me a pilgrim below.

That was the expression of an individual experience. Similarly what gives character to a meeting of Christians is the presence of the Lord.

The antecedent is that the Spirit's constraining power draws His redeemed people together in the sense of the Lord's name, and the inevitable consequence is that the Lord honours that gathering together with His presence. Now it is well to recognise the precision of Scriptural expression. He does not grant His presence necessarily to every claimant company.

Scripture shows that there will be those in the day of manifestation who will claim: "Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name . . . and in Thy name done many wonderful works" (Matt. 7. 22). Yet the claim will be absolutely and irrevocably repudiated by the Lord. So no mere claim of orthodoxy will avail. Nor will clear enunciation of the truth afford a prescriptive right. There are lopsided Christians who are arrogant enough to lay claim to an absolute monopoly of the Lord's presence in the connection to which this subject refers. But the claim only requires to be stated, for its absurdity to become self-evident.

The responsibility attaching to such a condition would be overwhelming. Moreover, by the fruits of the claimants shall the value of their contention be tested. In that coming millennial day, when the Lord's presence will be known in its ocean fulness, there will not be a wish expressed in dissonance with the Lord's will. There will be perfect unanimity amongst the components of society because of the Lord's will being owned. Although the conditions then and now are vastly different in a quantitative way, they are identical qualitatively. It is impossible to conceive of different results where the Lord's will is owned, and that is contingent on being in

the sphere of the Lord's presence. That the claimants of such prescriptive monopoly are palpably found wanting in maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace is so evident that their claim falls to the ground.

From the foregoing, it will be readily conceded that nothing else in our meetings is to be compared with the Lord's presence. Thus it is of prime importance that we apprehend that He is there. The realization of that condition will deliver us from every sentiment of human religion. All the trappings, with which man's tradition and superstition have trammelled Christian assemblages, will fall off as the gravecloths fell off Lazarus at the Lord's command! If on the one hand we are freed from ritualistic tendencies we shall be prevented in the same way on the other hand from drifting into rationalistic tendencies. It is easy to weave a web of metaphysics

from our own reason which will enmesh us as effectually as ritual ever did.

The Apostle, in summing up the ministry of the New Covenant, wrote: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." That is neither the "cringing servility" of ritual nor the "arrogant license" of reason, but freedom to be occupied with the Lord, so that with all the privilege of unveiled face we may behold the glory of the Lord. Then we become the subject of a wonderful series of transformation into His image from glory cause to glory effect as by the Spirit of the Lord. In such a sequence of operations we shall be reduced in our own estimation sufficiently to preserve us from all presumption. The criticism of every meeting then will be in the individual analysis: "Did I realize that the Lord was there?" Otherwise all other conditions and personal presence were valueless!

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May He who from the vanquished grave  
 The great, good Shepherd brought;  
 Who rolled back death's terrific tide  
 And full redemption wrought,  
 Perfect the saints in every grace  
 Till that bright day shall come,  
 When we shall see Him face to face  
 In our eternal home.

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## Christ Supreme.

It was refreshing to hear a Christian woman, whose husband had been converted, say, "It was a good day when he came home on Thursday. His first words when he came into the house were, 'Christ must be the Head of this house.' It is more of that that we need and long for; the acknowledging of the supremacy of Christ; He is Lord, He is Head. This is the true effect in the soul of the gospel of God concerning His Son. Myself and my household for Christ.

## OUR CALLING.

A. E. Walker.

"Who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory" (1 Thess. 2. 12).

THE call of a Christian is a very wonderful thing. We are called from earth to heaven, and from the place where sin and sorrow reign, to another place where eternal peace abides; from unrest to rest, from death to life; or as John Bunyan so aptly described it, from the "City of Destruction" to "the Celestial City."

This world is to be burned up, and all its glory, but the Christian's hope is *beyond* it. It is a heavenly calling and it is sure and eternal, and we are exhorted by the Lord Jesus Christ to "Lay up treasure in heaven" (Matt. 6. 19) because *there* "they are safe"—"where no thief approacheth" (Luke 12. 33).

But if our calling is a heavenly one, it is an "unseen" one, and so faith comes into exercise. Faith sees what to the natural vision doth not appear—*created* things were made out of things "that do not appear" (Heb. xi. 3), and so in the New Creation, it doth not appear what we shall be, "but when He shall appear, we shall be like Him" (1 John 3. 2); what has always made faith famous is that it reaches out to the *unseen*—Moses "endured as seeing Him Who is invisible" (Heb. 11. 27). Hence it has the power of the unseen, and where exercised "removes mountains." It is the power of loving faith making use of the power of God, and it glorifies God, for it demonstrates in a world, that knows not God, evidences of God's existence, and His claims upon man.

This world is our place of testimony, but we are passengers in it with a through ticket—to our Home

above where everything is congenial to us, and to our Lord. We are called "unto His kingdom and glory" (1 Thess. 2. 12). What a destiny! And will He who has called us neglect us on the way? Nay, verily, on the way we shall be well cared for, "For he took him to an inn and saith to the host, take care of him." The story of the good Samaritan is worth studying. This inn *may* be the Assembly of God, anyhow it shews the blessing that is ministered to those who have been rescued by the Lord, and how the Host, the Holy Ghost, is ministering what sustains hope and courage, and what is fitting us for the kingdom while we wait for it. "When I come again," said He, "I will repay thee." Then all that blessed work of the Spirit will be manifested in the day of glory, and what joy will be in that day when not only will the Lord see of the travail of His soul, but the Holy Spirit also will see the result of all His labours and will be well repaid for it all, and Who shall share in it all in the day when Christ shall present us to Himself, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish.

The kingdom then will be resplendent by His handiwork, the filthy rags of our own righteousness will be replaced by a white robe of His own provision. God's wonderful purpose and work will be demonstrated, and "death shall be swallowed up in victory." To this we are called; let us rejoice and be glad, and bring our conduct even now into consistency with it.

# THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS.

J. T. Mawson.

*A Bible Study. No. 5.*

*Continued from page 113.*

Zechariah 13. 8, 9 describes this godly Jewish remnant in the Tribulation, and "they shall call on My Name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is My people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God," and Daniel 12, speaking of the same time says, "There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." One more passage from the Old Testament is well worth quoting in this connection. "Behold the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble, . . . But unto you that fear My Name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall" (Malachi 4).

As to their faithfulness during the terrible persecutions of the Tribulation, this is described, and the recompense for it in Rev. 14. 1-5, Zephaniah 3. 12, 13 and other Scriptures.

*Ques.: Have we any information in the Scriptures as to what will take place in heaven between the Rapture and the Appearing?*

Yes, I think we have. 2 Corinthians 5. clearly indicates that we shall be manifested before the Judgment Seat of Christ, and it is equally clear that the church will be presented to Christ in glory (Eph. 5). The marriage of the Lamb precedes His coming forth in glory (Revelation 19.). Our time of responsibility must have closed before our manifestation before the Judgment seat, and the rewards must be apportioned

before the coming of the Lord in glory. This I think is clear from such Scriptures as Matthew 25. 14-30; Luke 19. 12-27, and 2 Cor. 5. At that judgment seat all our works will be finally tested; our whole lives will pass in review; and we shall see everything in the light as our Lord sees it. It should have a sobering effect upon us, but should create no alarm or dread in our hearts, for the One before whom we shall stand is our Saviour, who gave Himself for us, and we shall stand there in our spiritual bodies of glory. It will be then that we shall receive our rewards or suffer loss.

*Ques.: How can a Christian suffer loss, what will he lose?*

Well, he will lose nothing that has been the gift of grace. All spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ are his, by God's sovereign gift, and these can never be recalled or forfeited. His place in God's family, and as having part in the church, which is to be the wife of the Lamb, are his, for ever; he could not gain these things by his works and he cannot lose them by his failures. They are his not because of his conduct but as the gift of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. The loss will be in relation to his life of responsibility and its results. Suppose two men are employed by one master: one labours faithfully and hard for six days in the week; the other works for three days only and spends or squanders the rest of the week in idleness and folly. Those men will be very differently placed at the end of the week; one will

receive his master's approval and a full recompense; the other will suffer the loss of what might have been his in the way of wages, and receive the censure of his master. It will be in this way that reward or loss will be received at the judgment seat.

Then think again of the two workmen: to both, carefully written instructions as to what the master wishes them to do are given and of the kind of material that they are to obtain for their work. One workman, not leaning on his own understanding, pays great attention to his master's wishes and consults his instructions as to every detail; the other thinks he knows what is needed and how to do it and pays scant respect to the master's written word. When the master comes to inspect the work, one man receives a reward, the other man's work is rejected; he suffers loss, and this is just what is taught in 1 Cor. 3. "If any man's work abide which he hath built thereon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

The results will have their answer in the kingdom. He that hath been faithful in that which is little, will be entrusted with much there. We must distinguish between our place in the Father's house, which is all of grace, and the place we shall occupy in the kingdom.

*Ques.: In respect to the Marriage of the Lamb, what is the meaning of she hath made herself ready?*

There seems to be two sides to the marriage of the Lamb. Ephesians 5. 25-27 gives that side on which we have the full and perfect work of Christ, not only for, but

in His church—she will be a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but holy and without blemish; that is certainly all sovereign grace, and perfect divine work, and what she is as in the beauty of Christ. But in Revelation 19. 7-9, we learn that "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 righteousnesses of saints." This shews what she herself has wrought in her life of responsibility here, and it is to have its place on that great day.

This "fine linen, clean and white," will silence the voice of the accuser, and that specially in view of the public manifestation of the saints with Christ. Apart from it, it might have been said to the Lord, "Produce practical righteousness in your church, your wife, before you attempt to establish it in the world." The fine linen will be evidence that it has been produced in that circle which is nearest to Him, and these same saints who are the wife of the Lamb, will come forth in this same "fine linen, clean and white" when He comes forth to judge and make war in righteousness.

The apostle Paul laboured and prayed for this in the saints in view of the day of manifestation. He prayed that they might be "sincere and without offence till, or for, Christ's day," and again, he was confident that God would complete the work He had begun in them, with that same day in view (Philippians 1). May we also be deeply concerned about these things for our present living and service are to have important results for us, for Christ, and unto the glory and praise of God.

*To be continued.*

## “IT IS NOT YOURS TO KNOW THE TIMES AND SEASONS.”

*In view of the publicity given to a renewed attempt to fix the date of the Lord's coming, we reprint these remarks by the late Edward Cross which appeared in the 1st volume of Scripture Truth (1908).*

**I**N Acts 1. 7, when the disciples enquired of the Lord, “Wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?” He replied, “It is not yours to know times and seasons, which the Father have placed in His own authority.” This it was not given them to know, but the great prophetic fact of “the day of the Lord” (see 1 Thess. 5. 1, 2) was already revealed; and so much at least they knew, as their question shews. But further information as to “times and seasons” was reserved from them.

How unbecoming, then, is the presumption that would peer into those things, which for wise purposes are kept secret: and how disturbing to the health of the soul and enervating for true service, the restless inquisitiveness that would mispend its energies in prying into hidden mysteries and trying to forecast the time, instead of “redeeming” it (Eph. 5. 16), in seizing the opportunity to serve the Lord. There is great fascination for some minds in this kind of imaginative occupation; but Christianity is not a fascination, but a life of humble obedience and

submission to the will of God.

We cannot foretell from the trend of circumstances according to our judgment, nor forecast from Scripture that does not reveal it, when the time is fixed for the Lord to gather His saints to Himself; nor when He is to return in the power and glory of the kingdom in which He will judge the world in righteousness. The times and seasons are not for us to know, and we cannot divine them. The Thessalonian saints knew that “the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night,” with the certainty of sudden destruction. That was the horizon of their knowledge with regard to it. This much they knew “perfectly,” but they knew no more, nor does the Apostle furnish them with further knowledge as to it. Certain events were to take place, spoken of of in second Epistle, prior to the revelation of the man of sin “in his own time” (ch. 2. 6), but they are referred to, not to satisfy curiosity, but to encourage the saints to “stand firm, and to hold fast the instructions” which they had been already taught.

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Come, Lord Jesus, claim Thy people,  
Here we wait and watch for Thee;  
Thy blest voice shall be the keynote  
Of eternal jubilee.  
Gath'ring us—Thine own creation  
To Thyself in Thine abode;  
Like Thee—with Thee—and for ever  
Near Thy Father and Thy God.

## “MINE EYES HAVE SEEN.”

J. T. Mawson.

Luke 2. 25-32. “*Mine eyes have SEEN Thy salvation.*”

John 19. 30-35. “*He that SAW it bear record, and his record is true.*”

Hebrews 2. 6-11. “*We SEE Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honour.*”

1 John 3. 1-3. “*We shall SEE Him as He is.*”

**I** OFFER you a chain of four golden links. Four passages from the Scriptures for your consideration that shew our Lord to us in four different positions. First, coming into the world; second, going out of the world; third, exalted to the highest place in heaven; fourth, coming again. In a manger, on a cross, upon the throne, coming again with clouds of glory. How different the circumstances, yet the same Person, admirable and perfect wherever He is seen.

### HIS ADVENT.

Consider the first. The great hour had arrived, and He who had been promised had come. It was by God's own lips that His coming had been foretold forty centuries before, and faithful men had waited; their eager eyes had longed for the sight of Him, but He had not appeared in their day; they had died in faith but had passed the great hope on to their successors, who had treasured it and passed it on to others in an unbroken line of faith. But now the due time had come, and the Virgin-daughter of David's royal house had brought forth her Firstborn, according to the Scriptures, and laid Him in a manger. The great Deliverer had appeared, but not as some supposed He would come, with mighty hosts attending, and with power and great glory, to insist upon His rights and to exercise an undisputed sway over all nations on earth, but in weakness, lowliness and unparalleled poverty.

Only the anointed eye could discern who He was, the eye of faith, for though the angels voiced the gladness of heaven, and proclaimed the greatness of that Babe, His lowly birth and great humility made no appeal to men, except to such as Simeon who had the eye of faith. He was an old man, unknown and perhaps poor in the world, but rich in heaven's reckoning, and highly favoured of God. He took the Babe, now eight days old, in his arms, and blessed God, and said, “Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace: for *mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.*” What an affecting scene was that! The aged saint who had waited until his natural eyes had grown dim for a sight of God's Salvation, looks upon Him at last and knows Him; his arms embrace Him and he loves Him and presses Him to his heart, and is satisfied and at peace.

Yet things were not as a godly Israelite would have had them in the land. The nation was under the heel of a heathen Gentile power; the proud leaders of it were as dead as corpses towards God, and darkness, demon-possession, and disease held the people in a bitter bondage; there was a great parade of external religion, but underneath the surface, putrefaction and moral death and everything that was hateful to God. Yet Simeon was at rest about it all, for though he saw not yet everything put right, he saw Jesus, and that was enough, the One who would put things right had come.

It is clear that only faith could have given him such rest; unbelief might have argued that some adverse force would appear that would shatter his hopes, or that the One upon whom his eyes rested with adoration and joy, was but a helpless babe, dependent upon His mother, and she one of the poorest in the land, the wife of a village carpenter, but faith saw Him to be Emmanuel, God with us, and was satisfied.

Yet here, indeed, is a marvellous thing; the Babe that lay in the arms of Simeon, was He, who had created the hosts of heaven, and without Him nothing was made that was made. He had come forth from the Father, the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, and had come into the world, a human Babe. This is the mystery of the Incarnation. Who would dare to explain it? No creature mind can grasp the immensity of it, yet we can believe and rejoice and give thanks that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world, a Light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of His people Israel. Yes. He sent Him from heaven, and He came bringing light and life and love from thence to men in their misery and sin.

That old man with his keen eye and steadfast trust is a pattern for us, and we might well covet the rest of heart that he knew. Things are not as we would have them in the world; confusion and chaos abound; and things are even worse in the church, but has our faith laid hold of the great fact that the Son of God has come and that upon Him help has been laid, and that He can and will undo the works of the devil and bring heaven and earth into reconciliation to God? In the knowledge of this there is peace and rest of heart.

## HIS EXIT.

Simeon seemed to have realized that the road upon which Christ's holy feet would tread for the accomplishment of God's will would be a rough one, and that men would be tested and exposed by His coming; and it was even so, as we well know who have read and believed the Divine record. We part company with Simeon beholding with adoration the lowly Babe, and we take our stand with John as astonished and bewildered he gazes upon a cross. Thirty-three eventful years had passed between the two, years in which "Jesus of Nazareth went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the devil: for God was with Him," yet in spite of His life and ministry of love He was hated and despised by men; His way was no "royal progress" to a throne; instead

"His path, uncheered by earthly smiles,  
Led only to the cross.'

And John saw it and bare record, that *ye might believe*. And herein is a strange thing, for what was it that John saw? He saw his Lord and Master, the One whom he trusted would have redeemed Israel, hanging upon a malefactor's cross, with thorn-crowned head bowed in death, and blood and water flowing from His spear-ripped side. That was a sight that had shattered the faith of many and destroyed their hopes, yet John tells us that he bares record of it, *that we might believe*. What was there in that sight to command our faith? It looked as though His cause was lost. His foes exulted in what they considered was His extinction. His disciples with the women who had followed Him thought that He had been utterly defeated, and they mourned and wept in hopeless sor-

row But the conclusions of foes and friends were hasty and wrong; it was not defeat but victory, as John had surely learnt when he bore record of it that we might believe. But what are we to believe? We are to believe that God's love is greater than man's hatred, and that there and then, when man's hatred of God broke all bounds and rose up to murder His Son, and drive Him from the world that they claimed as their own, His love triumphed, and

"The very spear that pierced His side  
Drew forth the blood to save"

"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 4) Seeing with the eye of faith what John saw, we exclaim with rapture, "We have known and believed the love that God has for us, God is love." We see not only God's salvation, in His beloved Son, whom He sent into the world, but we see in that cross the great sacrifice, apart from which He could not have been the Saviour, we see Satan defeated, sin expiated and God glorified, and seeing it we believe, and admire, and adore.

### HIS RETURN TO GLORY

And now we turn our eyes to the right hand of the Majesty on high, and there we see Jesus, crowned with glory and honour. Yes, the One whom Simeon looked upon, a lowly Babe at His mother's breast, the One whom John saw crucified and dead upon a cross, we see now in the highest place in the glory. God has raised Him from the dead and set Him there. Every Christian heart thrills at the thought of His exaltation, and yet that glory that has received Him has not made Him more glorious. It was the only

place in the universe that was worthy of Him. His disciples anticipated the throne of David for Him, and He shall have it, in due time, with every other throne, but there was only one place that was worthy of Him when He came forth from among among the dead, and that was the Father's throne on high. The diamond is put in a golden setting, but its setting does not increase the value of the gem, it is the only fit setting for it; so it is with Jesus, whose Name is now above every name, and who is crowned in heaven with glory and honour, He is in His right setting there. God has said to Him, "Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool," but He is not inactive there, but having passed through all suffering He is the fully-qualified Captain or Leader, of God's many sons. I should like to deepen the desire within us to follow Him, and to awaken and stir up a holy enthusiasm for Him in the hearts of those He has saved.

Psalm 110 is a remarkable Psalm, it is quoted in the New Testament more often than any other. It begins, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool' plainly presenting the Lord as faith sees Him now crowned with glory and honour. The third verse of it is very beautiful, it describes what is yet to be seen in Israel when the Lord shall rule in Zion, but I want to give it a present application, which I feel is wholly just, and for this purpose I will quote it as it is translated in Darby's *New Translation*. "The people shall be willing (or offer themselves willingly) in the day of Thy power, in holy splendour from the womb of the morning [shall come] to Thee the dew of Thy youth." When all His foes are sub-

dued beneath His feet, and Israel shall surround Him, their Messiah and King, with loud Hosannas, a new-born nation, never more to grieve Him, it will be a thing splendid to behold; but there is a greater splendour, and it may be realized and seen now. This is the day of His rejection by men, He is not wanted by the world, but those who love Him may come to Him with whole-hearted devotion; they may be filled with enthusiasm for Him, and as a new-born race, the children of the morning, they may follow Him with steady steps and loins well girt; they may make their boast in the Lord. This in the eyes of heaven is "holy splendour," and nothing else than this can please our God.

We see Jesus crowned with glory and honour, and it is as the victorious and crowned Saviour that He is leading many sons to glory. Glory is our destiny, for we are following the One who is there. This is all real to men of faith, but not to those who walk by sight, and we must be on our guard against the glamour of "the things that are seen" which dim faith's keen vision, and often betray the Christian into fearing men, or into admiring and following them. But the greatest of men can offer us no destiny. Death is their master, it mocks at their promises, and shatters all their hopes and ambitions. Every day is a witness to this.

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth  
e'er gave,  
Await alike th'inevitable hour—  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave'

There is no hope beyond the grave but in Christ. He has overthrown death, and destroyed him who had the power of it, which is the devil,

that He might deliver those who through fear of it were all their life-time subject to bondage. And in Him we have a hope that maketh not ashamed. He will not fail us, nor be untrue to God who has entrusted His sons to His care. He is not only a great Leader, but He is "a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God," and He ever liveth to make intercession for us. And that brings us to another side of His activities in the glory for us. If the road is rough, and the trials great, and if the fight waxes fierce and we grow faint, "He has said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," and He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and knows how to sympathize with us and to succour us in our hours of need. He considers us and cares for us and provides the grace that we need, so that when we look to Him and come to His throne of grace, we find the help already prepared and waiting for us. Jesus is not only a great Leader but He is a sympathetic Friend. His Name is glorious, and His arm is omnipotent, but His heart is tender. He has won our admiration by His exploits, but He has won our hearts by His love.

#### HIS COMING AGAIN.

"We shall see Him as He is." That will be the climax of our joy and the consummation of all our hopes, when the stress and strain of our pilgrimage is over and the testing is complete. We shall meet Him and look upon His face; we shall see Him as He is. To the world He will come as the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, to judge and make war, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. But we shall not wail because of Him, for though we too

shall see the splendour of His Majesty, we shall see Him and know Him as we have learnt Him here. What He is to us now He will be when we see Him. We shall not meet a stranger whom we fear, but a Saviour and a Friend whom we love; One who has been near to us in our sorrows and carried us through them, who is our daily resource and joy; as He is to us now, so we shall see Him then. What precious experiences have bound us to Him in this valley of weeping, what intimate links we have with Him, and these we shall never lose.

We shall see Him also as the One in whom the Father delights, the Object of the Father's love; and in this we shall have full communion with the Father, and this will be the supreme joy of the Father's house, where the Father's beloved Son is honoured and adored by all. And we are to appear with Him when He comes forth to reconcile all things to God, and when His

glory shall shine to the uttermost bounds of the universe that He has created. We shall see Him then, just as blessedly perfect as He was in the manger, and on the cross and on His Father's throne, and every remembrance of Him and every fresh view of His glory will call forth fresh praise from our willing hearts and lips.

He is a great and glorious Saviour, and I wish that I could set Him forth in a worthier way. But this is at once my joy and my grief: my joy that I am able to speak of Him at all; my grief because my words about Him are so cold and dull, when they ought to be words that would move you and thrill you and bring you in holy enthusiasm and full surrender to His feet. But a thousand times better than hearing of Him is to draw near and learn what He is for yourself, and that knowledge that you gain of Him now you will never lose; it will be your prized possession for ever and ever.

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## God giveth the Victory.

Within one week I visited three dear and valued friends. They had all been on the very verge of heaven and had expected to go right in, but had recovered a little physical strength. One of them who had ministered the Word for years, sent this message to some who had often listened to him. "Tell them," he said, "that I have found the Lord to be far better than the very best they have heard me say about Him." Another said, "I have walked by the river with my Lord and Saviour, and there wasn't a cloud, nor a fear. It was very wonderful, and I am disappointed to find that I am getting better. I did want to go." The third, an aged saint, said, "I am weak, and cannot expect to be active in the Lord's service again, but what rest there is in giving up everything here and knowing that He loves me; to come to the end of everything, but His endless love."

What a joy and encouragement it is to see that when the greatest of all tests comes these divine realities prove how real they are.

# THE PRESENCE OF THE SPIRIT.

James Green.

**T**HE Spirit of God is the mighty worker in the Deity by whom the will of God is carried into effect. He is ever the active all-sufficient agent for the accomplishment of this, whether in the realm of creation or the sphere of grace. He is independent of every creature resource, but may use in the exercise of His Divine power that which has been called into existence by the Eternal Son, by whom and for whom all things received being, in order that the purposes and counsels of the Father might be consummated to the glory of the triune Godhead.

This being so, how important is the consideration of the outstanding fact that the Holy Spirit is present in person on the earth during the present period during which Christ is hidden in the heavens from mortal gaze.

It was by the Spirit that the heavens were garnished (Job 26. 13); the same Spirit moved upon the face of the waters (Gen. 1. 2); in order that out of chaos there might be produced by Divine energy a scene of order and beauty in view of the man who was to be its inhabitant.

Again and again the Spirit had come in irresistible power upon the chosen vessels for the accomplishment of some design of God; as in the case of the constructors of the Tabernacle (Ex. 31. 3), or in the case of a Samson (Jud. 15. 14), or a Saul (1 Sam. 10. 10), that they might subdue the enemies of God; or for the higher purpose of the communication of the mind of God, holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Pet. 1. 21), but in none of these was He an indwelling Spirit, or in

continued Divine presence on earth. It is this fact which gives the present time its distinctive character, it is the day of the Spirit, the day of the Comforter who abides (John 14. 16, 17).

Sent by the Father and the Son in order that the eternal purpose of the Divine will in grace may be brought to full fruition, He acts not by creature might nor by the power of human intellect or will, but by the exercise of an energy having its wisdom and resource in God alone.

Never have dispensations past, nor shall that which is to come experience such a holy privilege as is now extended unto men, yet there is nothing so easy as for the mind to give assent to the truth as stated in Scripture, and still at the same time be unconscious of the import and consequence that the fact involves. All Christians will readily acknowledge that on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit came upon the assembled disciples, His presence being borne witness to by tongues of flame and rushing wind, these being the manifest signs of His power and operations; but that He, a Divine Person, still abides dwelling in a God-built temple is another matter. Yet so it is all believers constitute such a holy temple, a house for the Spirit composed of living stones, and they are such, and so builded together, for an habitation of God, because the body of each individual believer is itself a temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. 3. 16; 6. 19). How far is this recognised as being the constant factor in the daily life of those redeemed by the blood of Christ? True it is that such are never alone, for ever with them is the presence

of a Divine Person. Would it not be well that we should wait awhile upon God, that such an arresting fact should lay hold upon us? Just as surely as we have received the gospel of our salvation through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, so also is it equally true that God has sealed us with His Holy Spirit of promise, ever to abide with us in view of the day of redemption, when the manifestation of the glory of His grace shall be revealed in us (Eph. 1. 13, 14).

In the parting scene on Olivet the two things which the Lord promised as resulting to the disciples from the coming of the Holy Ghost, were power and witness (Acts 1. 8), and in the consideration of what these involve we may gather something of the portion and experience of every believer in whom the Spirit dwells ungrieved.

Alas, it is sadly possible, and it is a serious consideration, that the working of the flesh in mind and will, may result in so hindering the Holy Spirit, that instead of the fruit being produced which should result from His presence, instead of His revelation to us of the glorious purposes of the Father and the Son, He has in grief to become a Spirit of reproof upon the works of the flesh.

Power; what is power? Our natural vanity would desire some display which would arrest the attention of others, something spectacular, some exhibition of ability of speech or utterance, some energy by which works great and good might be accomplished, such things may result, but is this how Scripture defines in the first place the power that worketh in us? In Eph. 1. 17, wisdom, revelation, knowledge, appear as the outstanding features; in Eph. 3. 16, etc., love and understanding; and

referring back to the words of the prophet, Isa. 11, 2, 3, concerning Him who was the root and offspring of David, he enumerates the moral qualities, which in their perfection were exhibited in Him by the Spirit.

It is in the renewing and transforming of the inner man, that the power of the Spirit acts, and without this, outward signs and activity of service are of little avail, if at all.

Where, however, the inner man is so strengthened, then in every sphere of life which may be afforded us, there will be a testimony to Christ which no adversary shall be able to gainsay or resist. True the world will hate and reject all who so live godly in Christ Jesus, even as no toleration was afforded to Him in whom the light of life shone in perfect radiance.

The Holy Spirit uses spiritual means to accomplish His renewing work, and has provided all that is needful for this purpose in the Spirit taught words of the New Testament (1 Cor. 2. 13). Therein we may learn Christ as the Father ever found delight in Him, and by these spiritual communications stored in the heart we are also preserved from the imaginations of the human mind, all too ready to conceive ideas which have no foundation in the Word of God. A most important provision is afforded in this, by which we may discern the Spirit of truth from the spirit of error.

During the farewell conversations on the betrayal night, the coming of the Holy Spirit was the uppermost thought in our Lord's mind, and in one sentence He gathered in a focus of description the work the Comforter would perform when come, "He shall glorify Me" (John 16. 14), and in a threefold way He

shewed how this would be. First of all He would gather up the preciousness of the life of Jesus on earth, by bringing to remembrance all that the disciples had heard Him say (John 14. 26). Secondly, by a revelation of the Divine thoughts connected with Christ, a man in heaven (John 15. 26). Thirdly, by the unveiling of the glory of the coming reign and victorious mediatorship of the Lamb of God (John 16. 13). This was to be the Spirit's work, "He shall take of mine and shall shew it unto you." Not for those men only, who on that night heard the voice of the Son of God, but for all who should believe on Him through their word, until the returning Lord shall fulfil His promise, these things should remain in holy writings. In the first case, the Gospel records are all-sufficient; in the second, the wealth connected with Christ's present place is unfolded in the epistles; finally, while entwined in the teaching of the foregoing, things to come are brought to a climax in the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

If we recognise the all-important fact that the Spirit of God dwells in us, then it must follow that if we would hear His voice, and be

taught by Him as the truth is in Jesus, then His Spirit-taught words must be our constant study and delight. As the Holy Spirit is the Author of these divine communications, so by His teaching only can they be understood. If, however, so learnt from Him whose object is to glorify the Sent One of God, then will Christ become more personally real to us, and the heart's affections will be set upon things above where He sits at God's right hand, and so shall we be eagerly expecting His coming to receive us to Himself.

The present work of the Holy Spirit will be completed in the quickening of the mortal bodies in which He dwells, after the pattern of Christ's own glorious body, according to the power that worketh in us.

How glorious the destiny, how blessed the hope! The time is appointed in the Father's secret keeping, and though to us it may seem to tarry, let us wait for it, for from faith's watch tower we shall surely discern by the Spirit, the coming day, and be assured that He who shall come will come and will not tarry.

*(To be continued)*

## The Untroubled Heart.

*"Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid"* (John 14. 27).

Two painters painted pictures to illustrate their conception of rest. The first chose for his scene a still, lone lake among the mountains. The second depicted a roaring torrent, over which there bent a fragile birch tree and in the fork of a branch of it a robin sitting upon its nest, just above the spray, hatching her young. The lake, untroubled by even a breath of wind, was no true picture of an untroubled heart, but the robin quietly fulfilling its function amid tumultuous surroundings, that was. And the peace that the Lord gives to those who are near to Him is of that sort. Let but the mind be stayed upon Him, then amid the rush of city life, or tried by sickness or care, or beset with sorrow or need, the heart is at rest, and the presence and the power of the Lord to maintain His own is realized and manifested.

## “HIM THAT IS WEAK IN THE FAITH.”

“OH, that sentence describes me exactly,” sigh you, “Others seem strong and joyful, I groan and struggle and stumble. My trials are many and my burdens heavy and my faith weak.” Yes, you may feel like that, and fear that you will not be able to continue in the faith, but God has something to say about you, and if you can spare a few moments from your self-occupation and listen to what God has to say, you may be greatly helped. “*Him that is weak in the faith*” is the opening sentence of Romans 14, and since it is on your own confession that you are that, you ought to be greatly interested in what follows. Well, this follows. “YEA, HE SHALL BE HOLDEN UP: FOR GOD IS ABLE TO MAKE HIM STAND” (verse 4).

This word contains good news for you, for notice it does not say what you are able to do, but what God is able to do. It does not say that you will stand up, but that you shall be holden up. There is no question here of your power to re-

main erect, but the power of another to maintain you so.

It is not your weakness that causes you to stumble and fall, that should only make you cling, but the secretly cherished thought that, in spite of all your failures, you still have some power by which you will be able to rise above your temptations. Give up this foolish notion, for were you as strong as was Simon Peter before he denied his Lord with oaths and curses, it would no more avail you in the hour of trial than it did him. Look up to God who is able; He loves you with a great love and His power is the servant of His love. All He looks for is that you should own your feebleness and cling to Him. “*Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy: to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen.*”

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## “Thy Kingdom Come.”

O haste the day when Thou shalt have Thy rightful place;  
 When diadems shall deck Thy brow as King of every race;  
 When righteousness shall rule and plough supplant the sword;  
 And all men join Thy praise to swell: Thy kingdom come, O Lord!

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QUESTION. *Is there Scripture warrant for preaching the gospel to every creature?*

ANSWER. (Mark 16. 15).  
 Our Commission, “Go”  
 Our Orders, “Preach”  
 Our Message, “The gospel”  
 Our Parish, “All the world”  
 Our Audience, “Every creature.”

# THE FATHER IN THE REVELATION.

H. J. Vine

**T**H**E**R**E** is special instruction and encouragement for us in the way **THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST** is mentioned in the prophetic and symbolic book of Revelation. Five times He is there named. Three times our risen and ascended Lord speaks of Him as "*My Father*," and twice He is named as "*His Father*" by the Holy Spirit.

**FIRST** (chapter 1. 5, 6). What a joy it is to know that the One who loves us, has removed our sins in His own blood, and has made us—as we are here told—a kingdom of **PRIESTS TO HIS GOD AND FATHER.**" Well might we praise Him.

This is blessedly true to-day of all His redeemed; they are priests, and their happy privilege is to approach unto God to perform their priestly service in holy freedom, offering thanksgivings, praise and worship. When religious formalism would exclude from this the majority of those who are saved, and make it the special privilege of a class, we should ponder these words the more deeply and rejoice in them.

**SECOND** (chapter 2. 27). Here our exalted Saviour, the Son of God, encourages the overcomer to be faithful in the midst of ecclesiastical corruption and presumption. There are those who would seek national authority for their religious system, and exercise political power in the world, while Christ is still in rejection; but the overcomer waits in faith for His coming again—"Who is he that gets the victory over the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God" (1 John 5. 5, N.T.). The Lord gives encourage-

ment to the overcomer by announcing to him that He is coming again, when He Himself shall reign over the nations publicly, saying, "*As I also have RECEIVED FROM MY FATHER*" (see Psalm 2. 8). The Crucified shall reign and that by His Father's just decree. So He will give, along with Himself then, to the overcomer, "*authority over the nations*," as it is said. And, meanwhile, before that day of His kingdom rule, Christ as "*the Morning Star*" is his glad portion as he waits for Him.

**THIRD** (chapter 3. 5). A still more intimate word of cheer is found here. It is to stimulate the faith of the overcomer in the midst of a worldly and dead state of ecclesiastical formalism, where there is a name to live but a lifeless profession prevails. The reward here is more of an inward nature, whereas the former is outward. The Lord Jesus has the plenitude of power and direction at His disposal, therefore none who trust in Him need falter in the path of faith, though they be surrounded by chilly indifference. He assures the heart of the overcomer. "*White garments*" in glory await him! His name will "*not be blotted out of the book of life!*" and He Himself will "**CONFESS HIS NAME,**" as He says, "**BEFORE MY FATHER AND BEFORE HIS ANGELS.**" That our glorious Lord finds pleasure in confessing the name of such an one before His Father and before His angels, surely imparts joy and courage to the believer in Him.

**FOURTH** (chapter 3. 27). Still greater are the difficulties which arise in the so-called Christian world.

Overcoming may be found where ecclesiastical corruption and presumption are; also where a dead formalism obtains; but a nauseating lukewarmness as to the Lord's own glory, along with Laodicean wilfulness and boastfulness, present very grave snares and difficulties for true believers who seek to be loyal to their living absent Lord. The rush of pleasure and self-gratification without Christ the Lord flows on at flood-tide, and it is no easy matter to withstand and to stand and heed the Lord's Word. Self-will breaks forth impatient of all right authority, and God's Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, alone can sustain those who are truly His own amidst it all. To the overcomer, His encouraging Word promises a place along with Himself, "in His throne," when His authority shall be publicly established, even as He Himself overcame in the midst of worldly Judaism, and is, as He says, "SET DOWN WITH MY FATHER IN HIS THRONE."

The rewards are great and glorious! But how precious to our hearts it is to view our Saviour along with His Father, receiving from Him authority over the nations of this world; and then His owning the worth to Him of the overcomer—confessing his name before Him; and also placing him with Himself in His throne!

FIFTH (chapter 14. 1). This Scripture is not connected with the Assembly. It speaks of a specially favoured company connected with Zion on earth—"the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth"—"the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb,"

having a place of peculiar blessing though still on the earth; and they catch the heavenly music of the new song, which others could not learn. Just before the beams of the Sun of Righteousness shine over all the earth, these appear at Zion along with Him, the Lamb—at Zion, whence His administration for the earth will flow forth to all. And not only does this virgin throng catch the strains of heavenly music, but the heavenly favour of God is reflected by them, as they company with the Lamb, "HAVING HIS NAME, AND THE NAME OF HIS FATHER WRITTEN UPON THEIR FOREHEADS" (N.T.). At the very centre of earthly government with the Lamb, the Lord of lords and King of kings; heavenly grace will impart its wondrous character to them, and be reflected, as they share in the glorious reign of righteousness.

We would refer again to the first Scripture (1. 5-6). There, as in the last, we read of "His Father." It is here a company favoured with peculiar priestly nearness, which ascribes to our Lord Jesus Christ glory and dominion for ever and ever. Knowing their holy place divinely given to them before His God and Father, they take full advantage of this portion and knowledge, granted to them through the atoning blood of the One who loves them, and they render loyal homage. It cheers and rejoices our redeemed souls to observe this, recorded at the very commencement of a book which faithfully describes prophetically the opposite to this in the churches, the nations and peoples of the world, which will bring down upon them God's sweeping judgments. The notes of loving harmony sound very sweet before the harsh tones of men's

discords are spoken of, and the thunders of righteousness are justly uttered.

The Spirit of God's Son has been given to us, and the cry of relationship is ours—"Abba, Father." Moreover, Christ Himself loves us with an unchanging love; and having removed our sins in His atoning blood, it is not only that He *loved* us, He "*loves*" us now. It is a present love, and the love of One who has put away our many sins. The Father Himself loves us also.

And, being given by our Lord Jesus Christ such a priestly place of nearness to His Father, how beautifully the glad chords of praise break forth—"Unto Him!"—Yes, "UNTO HIM WHO LOVES US!" It is thus that the hearts of the loved ones respond—"UNTO HIM WHO LOVES US, AND HAS WASHED US FROM OUR SINS IN HIS BLOOD, AND MADE US A KINGDOM, PRIESTS TO HIS GOD AND FATHER; UNTO HIM BE THE GLORY AND THE MIGHT TO THE AGES OF AGES. AMEN."

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## To Please Him.

It is a poor cold thing to say to an ardent healthy young Christian, "Don't do that, it is wrong." It is worse to say, "Don't do it, it is not expedient." It is altogether different to say, "Even Christ who gave Himself for you pleased not Himself. You may displease Him if you do that; you will certainly please Him if you seek to know and do His will." That is the love that melts the ore. That is the heat that makes flexible the hard, stiff material. That is the motive that gives a new zest to living, and puts delight into what otherwise might be called duty. It invests service with a halo, and is the one motive that can be trusted to secure in us all whatsoever things are noble.

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Low at Thy feet, Lord Jesus,  
 This is the place for me;  
 Here I have learned deep lessons—  
 Truths that have set me free.

Free from myself, Lord Jesus,  
 Free from the ways of men;  
 Chains of thought that have bound me;  
 Never can bind again.

None but Thyself, Lord Jesus,  
 Conquered this wayward will;  
 But for Thy love constraining,  
 I had been wayward still.

## LOYALTY TO CHRIST.

SOME think that provided a man is amiable, his denying Christ, or having a false Christ, is no matter, provided people are good friends. It is a current doctrine, much in vogue. But there are still Christians (and we among them) who believe that God, in His supreme love, became a man and so died for them in love—and that the first of duties, the truest affection, without which all others are vile, is to appreciate this and Him who did it as we ought. They believe that the first of all obligations is to the Saviour, and that to slight this, and to attempt to sustain love in despite of this, is the chiefest wickedness and the worst of all dispositions. We owe everything to Christ; and if He be 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 own Him yet dishonour Him is worse than heathenism: it is to own and acquiesce in His dishonour. The man who believes Christ to be God, and is the professed Christian companion to him who denies it, is worse than the latter. We may all err, but he who knows the truth yet accepts, or goes on with what he knows degrades Christ, is deliberately preferring ease and companionship to Him, though he may

dignify it with the name of love. Every effort to recover the one who has erred from the truth is right; but a step in acquiescence is a step in disloyalty to One whom no one would dare to dishonour if He had not come down in love.

I believe that Christ, not opinion, is the centre of union; but I do not mean that the true Christ and a false one are equally good as a centre, provided people are amiable one with another; for this means that union is man's amiability, and is the denial of Christ. What do I want with union if it be not union in Christ, according to the power of life, through the Holy Ghost. The business of those so united is Christ's glory. If Christians ever unite on the condition that that is not essential, their union is not Christian union at all. I have no reason for union with others but Christ, the living Saviour. I do not want any union but that which makes Him the centre, 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 that a plea for indifference to Christ's personal glory, in order to be one with him, who calling himself a brother, denies and undermines Christ's glory, is, in my mind, wickedness.—J. N. D.

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### Some of Christ's Musts.

"Wist ye not that I *must* be about My Father's business."

"Even so *must* the Son of Man be lifted up."

"Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I *must* bring, and there shall be one flock and one Shepherd."

"To-day I *must* abide at thy house."

## THE LORD'S SUPPER.

J. T. Mawson.

*Continued from page 125.*

**WE** have considered what the effect of the Lord's Supper upon us should be in regard to the Father, to the Lord personally, and to the world; it has a special bearing also for each one of us in regard to the whole body of Christ, and this we must not overlook. It means the joy and blessedness of holy Christian fellowship, but it also involves us in solemn responsibilities.

"THE CUP . . . WHICH WE BLESS . . . THE BREAD WHICH WE BREAK" (1 Cor. 10. 16, 17).

It is a matter of COMMUNION together, and in this we see the difference between baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is an individual matter and done once and for all. This comes out clearly in the request of the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 10. 36: "See here is water; what doth hinder ME to be baptized?" It was his individual identification with the death of Christ. But in the Lord's Supper it is the cup which WE bless and the bread which WE break. It is not the bread which *he* breaks, as though a man could do it on his own responsibility, and no one else be involved or affected by it. Nor did Paul write, "The bread which YOU at Corinth break," as though each Assembly did it independently of every other Assembly. Paul included himself in it, though he was far away from Corinth, and he included in it all the saints of God on earth. "For WE being many are one bread, one body, for WE ARE ALL partakers of that one bread." The Lord's Supper is the communion of the one body of Christ.

In Pentecostal days the believers broke bread from house to house; probably whenever and wherever they met together they had the Supper, and the simplicity and blessedness of it must have been very real, but we are sure that it would be done in the unity and fellowship into which the gospel that the Apostles preach had brought them. But when the truth of the one Assembly had come out fully through the ministry of Paul, the Lord's Supper is seen in its special place in regard to it. It became a great expression of the unity of the body of Christ, into which all believers had been baptised by the Holy Ghost. We can see the fitness of the saints coming together in one place to partake of it, and if this was impossible from the exigencies of distance, they would still gather where they were and partake of it as being of the one body of Christ on earth. For though ten thousand companies are gathered together in different parts of the land, it remains true, that "we being many are one bread, one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."

This carries with it a great responsibility but a blessed one; not a slavish subjection to hard "ecclesiastical" prohibitions and restrictions, to rules and regulations, but a tender care for every member of that one body; "that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another" (ch. 12. 25). This, I believe, is involved in the Apostle's words, "Wherefore brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another" (ch. 11. 33), which

most surely means more than wait until all are assembled; it denotes the spirit of patience, consideration and compassion, that those who are bound together by such a bond should display to each other as they gather together in the fellowship of the Lord's death. His death has obliterated all fleshly distinctions; it has abolished the enmity that existed between Jew and Gentile, and is a sufficient solution for every other enmity; it is the basis of all fellowship which is according to God, and without it the body of Christ would have had no existence. Well ought we to bless the cup and break the bread.

I know that it is in the 12th chapter of Corinthians and not in the 10th that the vital unity of the body by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, is spoken of, and that in the 10th it is, we "are one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread," but it is the same body from another point of view. Here we are one body, for we have all eaten of that one bread, we have eaten of the body of Christ, we have partaken of the Lord's table and we have drunk the cup of the Lord. By eating of His body we stand identified with the Lord, who has supreme rights over us by His death, and by drinking His cup we pledge ourselves to Him. It is His death that binds us together here. We may have divergent views as to other things, as Phil. 3. 15 suggests, for all have not attained to the same knowledge, but there can be no divergent views as to the death of the Lord; every Christian gratefully owns that to it he owes his very existence as a Christian; here he meets his brethren on one common ground, where to maintain distinctions would appear to be some-

thing very much akin to treachery to the One who died to gather together in one the children of God, and who by His death is Lord of all that He gathers. A responsibility flows out of this side of the truth also; we cannot hold faithfully to Him and at the same time throw in our lot with Judaism, Idolatry, or anything else outside of which His death has placed us, or that is a challenge to His Lordship. To do that would be to flout His claims over us and to provoke Him to jealousy (ch. 10. 22).

#### "GUILTY OF THE BODY AND BLOOD OF THE LORD."

The question often arises as to what it is to "eat and drink unworthily," and to be "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," and what "discerning the Lord's body" means. For answer we must consider again the bread and the cup of the Supper. The bread and the cup have been compared to a portrait of a man's mother, and a good comparison it is. I might point to a portrait and say, "That is my mother." To someone else it may be only an indifferent painting, or mere canvas and paint. But to me as I look at it, my mother fills my thoughts. I remember her gentleness, her patience, her self-denying love. So it is with the bread and the cup. The Lord said, "This is My body given for you. This is My blood which is shed for you." And if our hearts are right He fills our thoughts as we partake of them; we look beyond the emblems and remember Him in the greatness of His love that led Him into death for us. The bread and the wine are only bread and wine, but they are to us, to use our illustration, His portrait, telling us powerfully as we partake of them of the price that

He paid to make us His own. Many artists have attempted to portray Him; they had done so according to their own imaginations. We do not need these portraits, they are not Him, but this is Himself, the bread and the cup tell us of Him in death for us, and His death has revealed all His love to our wondering hearts.

Suppose someone threw dirt at my mother's picture, or treated it with disdain, he would be guilty in my eyes, not of disrespect to a mere painting, but to my mother, and I should greatly resent it. Now some in the church at Corinth were doing what was analagous to that; they were treating the Lord's Supper as a common meal, or worse. They did not recognise its sacred character, sacred for two reasons, because of what it represented, and because the Lord Himself instituted it for a remembrance of Himself in death. They were each gratifying his own appetite and behaving in a way that would have disgraced their own houses, as this chapter shews, and by their conduct they were guilty of gross disrespect in regard to the body and blood of the Lord, in which He is set before us in the most moving way in which we can think of Him, even as dead for us.

We cannot imagine such conduct as theirs taking place now, for the Lord's Supper is eaten now in an orderly way and with more or less reverence. God grant that it

may be with more reverence and greater reality. But has the passage no application to us? We believe it has. If a man who partook of the Supper were going on in an unjudged sinful course, indifferent to the fact that the Lord died for the very sins he is committing with such lightness, it would shew that he was insensible to the reason of that death, that he cared little for its deep meaning, that the bread and wine were to him like the canvas and paint of the portrait. It would shew that he did not discern the Lord's body, that he did not see in the death of the Lord the judgment of the evil that he was committing, or the love that led the Lord to bear that judgment; though by eating the Supper he professed to see both. Such a one would be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, and would have no need to be surprised if he were judged of the Lord for his indifference to what is due to the Lord.

But mark verse 28 of our chapter. He is not told to cease to eat the Supper, which would mean that he chose to go on with the sin and abandon that which speaks of the judgment of it, but that he should judge himself, that he should discern the evil of his ways and turn from them with repentance and go on with the Supper, and so cleave to the One who died to put away his sin.

*To be continued.*

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“O love of God, how deep and great!  
 Far deeper than man's deepest hate;  
 Self-fed, self-kindled, like the light,  
 Changeless, eternal, infinite.”

## "THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME." J. A. O. Allan.

(Luke 24. 14).

I came from far for thee,  
In love the long way down;  
I left My throne for thee,  
I wore a thorn-set crown.  
All this I did for thee!  
Wilt thou REMEMBER ME?

I bore thy sins for thee,  
Wept tears of deepest woe:  
I bore God's wrath for thee  
To make thee white as snow.  
Could love do more for thee?  
Wilt thou REMEMBER ME?

I tasted death for thee,  
Bore shame thy sins had wrought.  
My life laid down for thee  
To thee Life endless brought.  
What is My Death to thee?  
Dost thou REMEMBER ME?

I gave Myself for thee,  
My All was freely given  
Thy Bread of Life to be,  
Thy Manna come from Heaven.  
All this am I to thee,  
EAT and REMEMBER ME.

I drank thy cup for thee,  
Thy cup of pain and tears.  
My hands have filled for thee  
My Cup of sinless Joy,  
Of Blessing full and free.  
DRINK and REMEMBER ME.

I'm coming soon for thee,  
My blood-bought Home to take.  
Canst thou not watch for Me  
Until the Morning break?  
Until I come for thee,  
THIS DO, REMEMBER ME.

## THE PRESENT ACTIVITIES OF OUR LORD.

Inglis Fleming.

*Continued from page 133.*

### IN HIS ADVOCACY.

"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 1, 2). The communion which is our portion, "fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ," may be lost. Through folly and sin allowed in our heart or life, we may forfeit, for a time, that holy intercourse which should be enjoyed. Therefore the apostle writes to his little children in order that they should not sin. But the fact that he writes this shows that it is possible that they may do so. What

then happens? Has the propitiation made in the precious blood of Christ failed in any wise? No! Jesus Christ the righteous, is still with *the Father*, and He is our abiding righteousness. In virtue of His work for the purgation of our sins at Calvary, He intercedes on our behalf. He did this for Peter before his downfall and then looked upon him after his denial. That prayer and that look brought about Peter's true repentance as he "went out and wept bitterly" and Peter was restored and able to strengthen his brethren and witness in power.

For us the effect of our Lord's gracious advocacy is, that the Holy Spirit brings home to us our sin and sinfulness, and leads us to the full confession to God of these.

And "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." He is *faithful* to His purpose, to the relationship into which He has brought us, and *faithful* to His word. He is *just* and *righteous* to forgive, because of the work of His blessed Son in atoning for our souls at the cross.

He does not excuse our sin, for there is no necessity for sin, on our part. He brings us to judge ourselves on account of it, in the light of Calvary. We then see how *that* sin needed the sufferings and death of our Saviour in order to blot it out. So we learn to loathe sin more and more and to love Him who bore our sins and who now maintains our cause on high, by His gracious intercession. His active love on our behalf is manifested *when* we sin—not when we have confessed the sin. It is His advocacy which leads to our confession.

#### IN HIGH PRIESTLY MINISTRY.

Though so rich in heavenly privilege and with such glorious prospects as are ours of being with and like our Lord Jesus, yet we find ourselves compassed about with weakness. Our bodies are "bodies of humiliation," still. We are exposed to sickness and death, hunger and thirst, sorrow and suffering, loss and bereavement, while on our upward, homeward, heavenly road. Thus it is that we need the succour, and the sympathy of our Lord Jesus. "We have such an one, an High Priest," therefore. His hand has power to succour, His heart has power to sympathise.

He has been tried by all the external sufferings and circumstances which are known to us (never was He tried as we are by the "sin in the flesh" of which we are con-

scious, for He was "holy, harmless, undefiled"). Seeing this is so, He ever makes intercession for us and ministers to us suited grace and mercy as occasion demands it, giving us the support of His almighty arm that we may come up "out of the wilderness leaning upon" our Beloved. And He ever lives.

Death overtook the Jewish high priests. But our Great Priest lives beyond death in the power of an endless life. And so we read, "He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7. 25). As it has been put, "He is an all-the-way-home Saviour."

He is able to save the vilest sinner because He *once died* for sinners on the cross. He is able to save all-the-way-through, the weakest believer, because He *always lives* for him. So it is that with fullest confidence we may face the future whatever it may bring for us. His hand will not fail us, "He has said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,' so that we may *boldly* say, 'The Lord is my helper and I will not fear what man shall do unto me' (Heb. 13. 5, 6).

He is all-sufficient and sufficient for all the way.

Thus we have traced some of the present activities of our Lord. Our condition here in the world, with the flesh still in us, and the opposition of Satan levelled against our progress and testimony calls for this activity. But the day is coming when He will come for us and present us faultless before the presence of His glory exultingly. Then He will rest in His love for we shall answer in every way to His desire for us, while praise—endless praise will rise from our glad hearts.

## THE END OF PRAYER.

T. Oliver.

*"There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; . . . Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be His glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen. The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended"* (Psalm 72. 16-20).

THE literal rendering of the first verse of our text is that there shall be abundance of corn in the earth, so much so that the valleys will not be able to hold the profusion, but it will reach up over the tops of the mountains. That is a great contrast to the conditions obtaining now. The tops of the mountains are simply rocks, in the crevices of which minute traces of vegetation may exist. Trees are found often thousands of feet up the mountain sides, but corn makes little headway if far removed from the valley.

That will undoubtedly be a feature in the material creation during the millennium. But the same profusion of fruit will mark the spiritual sphere as well. "The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon." A servant of the Lord was once asked for terse Scriptural evidence of the revolution introduced in the millennium. His reply was:—"The meek shall inherit the earth." If so, a radical change must take place! The meek are at present pushed to the wall. The world has no use for the backward contemplative frame of mind. The bustling "go-getter" is the man who inherits the earth under existing conditions. But all that will be changed when the glory of Jehovah Elohim shines in on this sad earth. "He will bid the whole creation smile and hush its groan." The creation itself shall be set free from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God (Rom. 8. 21).

Man has had a long innings of nearly 6,000 years interrupted only once by wholesale judgment in the Flood. During the last generation, his wondrous doings have eclipsed the sum total of the achievements of all preceding generations. So that the Psalmist's dictum, "The Lord God only doeth wondrous things" would seem to be somewhat antiquated! However, human doings have never got beyond the physical sphere. The wonderful manipulation of ether waves which seems "uncanny" to the ordinary observer, is nevertheless strictly within the realm of inanimate creation.

Man has never performed the feat of evolving life. He has devised many improvements in the art of killing or taking life away, but he has made no progress at all in communicating life to inanimate matter. "If a man die, shall he live again?" is one of the oldest propositions enunciated by Job (Job 14. 14). He certainly has never lived again by human agency. So the most wondrous doing is reserved for the operation of the Lord God alone. At first, He breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. Of greater significance is the New Testament revelation, "The last Adam is a quickening, or life-giving, Spirit" (1 Cor. 15. 45).

The integration of the process is that the whole earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord. So this peculiar aspect of doxology is a fitting climax to the second book of

the Psalms and receives the double Amen from the Psalmist as the emphatic seal of his aspirations His prayers were ended! Why? Because there was nothing left for which he could pray When the glory of the Lord fills the earth, every need will be satisfied There will not be one further desire

Now, there is a phase in which this desirable end is achieved now The Lord's people have the privilege of coming together in the bonds of His love and in the authority of His name In such assemblies His presence is realized The sense of the honour which is His right becomes paramount The glory of the

Lord fills everything. So like the disciples on the mount of Transfiguration, they see no one save the Lord of glory

When the climax of the Psalms is reached, there is no room for any other idea than praise to the Lord "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord Praise ye the Lord" (Ps 150 6) So when in assembly we sample the state of affairs which will superabound ere long in the universe of bliss, we, too, have no petitions to make, we are simply enveloped in a garment of praise May that delectable condition be sought after and better realized by Christians everywhere!

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

### "The Man, Christ Jesus."

"Will you allow me in all sincerity to ask you for Scriptural authority for the assertion on page 99 of 'Scripture Truth,' that the Lord was man, in spirit, soul and body, also lower down, that He became one of us?"

He said 'a body hast Thou prepared Me, He was 'partaker of flesh and blood,' 'He was found in fashion as a man,' 'made in the likeness of sinful men,' but He came down from heaven The Person was unchanged, the body was the temple in which He dwelt"—DOVER

THE short paper in question was written to emphasize the full and veritable Manhood of our Lord Jesus Christ, for that is as essential a part of the faith once delivered to the saints, as is the truth of His eternal Deity

We hold, with all Christians who who accept the truth revealed in the Scriptures without reasoning, that He is the Son in the Godhead: eternal as to His being, eternal in His relationship to the Father, and the Creator of the worlds And, as our correspondent states, there could be no change as to His Person, nor could there be as to His relationship to the Father, or as to His supremacy over the worlds that He has made. And it is most instructive

to see that the unchangeability of His Person was declared in arresting language when in the days of His flesh He had reached the very nadir of weakness, and when with "prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears" He said, He weakened My strength in the way; He shortened My days I said, O My God, take Me not away in the midst of My days'—it was then that from the height of the eternal throne there came back the answer, "Thy years are throughout all generations Of old hast Thou laid the foundations 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*" (Psalm 120. 23-27). And Hebrews 1 tells us that these wonderful words were said to THE SON. He was the same Son of the Father's love in His Gethsemane agony, and in His complete submission to the Father's will there, as He was when all things that are in heaven and in earth were created by Him (Col. 1), and the same as He will be for ever and for ever. But there never was an hour in His life on earth when the reality of His Manhood, with all its attendant dependence and weakness and suffering, was more fully manifested than when He was thus addressed. In *the body* that had been prepared for Him, He sweat as it were great drops of blood; He said to His disciples, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death"; and when that agony was past and the cup of sorrow and degradation drained to its last drop, He cried, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." It is the consideration of such statements as these that lead us to say the "Lord was Man: spirit, soul and body."

"The Word became flesh," is surely an expression which declares how complete and real the Manhood was into which He entered. It was perfect manhood, with nothing lacking as to its completeness, and in considering Him we learn what man is, not as we know him in his fallen condition as seen in ourselves, but what he is according to God's will and pleasure. He is the answer to the question, What is man?

In saying that "He became one of us," we do not mean that He became such as we are, inheritors of

a sinful nature upon which death lies; for His Manhood was sinless and holy; He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and the power of the Highest overshadowed His virgin mother; so that as born of her He was that holy Thing, called the Son of the Highest—but we mean that He became as much a man as any other. He passed by angels and took hold upon the seed of Abraham; because the children were partakers of flesh and blood He also Himself took part of the same, that He might stand in our place, and fight our battles, and by dying destroy him that had the power of death, which is the devil, that He might deliver us.

But it was the SON, whose eternal dwelling place is the Father's bosom, who became a Man. He came forth from the Father and came into the world, as He Himself told His disciples (John 16. 28), and He spoke of Himself as "a Man that hath told you the truth" (John 8). He was, and is a real and veritable Man, "the Man, Christ Jesus." Yet He is unchangeably the Son. If He were less than the Son on the Divine side He could not have declared to men what God is; if He were less than man on the human side He could not have redeemed us. He is the Daysman desired of Job, who could put His hand upon God, being God's equal, and who could put His hand upon man, being a true Man, who could bring God to man and man to God in justice and peace, the one Mediator between God and man (Job 9. 33; 1 Tim. 2. 3). The texts quoted by our correspondent must all be considered in relation to the Incarnate Son, they all have their part in the full truth, but not one of them contradicts the fact that He is the Man, Christ Jesus.

## The Slaughter of the Midianites.

"I have had conversations with a man who became an infidel through reading Numbers 31. He said, 'He wanted nothing to do with a God who could command that war.' An explanation in your *Answers to Correspondents* would be interesting and helpful to many"—WALSALL.

IF we are to understand the reason for this expedition of extermination against the Midianites, we must see that it was "to execute the vengeance of the Lord upon Midian" (verse 2). And we must enquire as to the reason for this. We get the answer in chapter 25. The Midianites did not fight against Israel as open enemies, they were afraid to do that; instead they set themselves to seduce them from the Lord by their wiles. They did this at the instigation of Balaam, the soothsayer. He had learnt something about the Lord; he knew that He was holy, and would not tolerate vileness and idolatry among His people, and it would appear that he hoped, if only they could be ensnared, that the Lord Himself would punish them, and thus, at the least, they would become less formidable foes. So these Midianites shewed a friendly side to these Israelites with a base intention. "They called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself to Baal-peor" (Numbers 25. 2).

The first and second of God's Commandments were broken by these people who had protested their willingness to obey them; and not only so, but of all the abominations of the Canaanite nations, the worship of Baal-peor was the worst. Calmet in his Bible Dictionary describes this god as "the god of impurity," "the idol of turpitude." The rites at the sacrifices offered to the idol were unspeakably obscene, and centuries afterwards the prophet Hosea re-

fers to this apostasy as one of Israel's crowning sins, "They went to Baal-peor, and separated themselves unto that shame, and their abominations were according as they loved" (ch. 9. 10). And in Psalm 106. 28, "They joined themselves also to Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead," and it is said that these were human sacrifices.

Because of these horrors in which the Israelites were drawn by the Midianitish women, the wrath of God fell heavily upon them; 24,000 of them died by the plague (Numbers 25). Were their seducers and defilers to escape all punishment? And since the Israelites were so peculiarly susceptible to these abominations, was this nation to be allowed to continue to corrupt them more and more? God said, No, they must be wiped out. His vengeance had to fall upon them, and that vengeance was just. He only has a right to vengeance. "Vengeance is Mine," He has said, "I will repay." And in this 31st chapter of Numbers we see God repaying; pouring out a righteous recompense upon Israel's despicable enemies. Nor did this judgment fall upon them one day too soon. They, with the other nations of the land, had filled full the cup of their iniquities.

If the question is raised as to why the women should have been slain as well as the men, Moses gives the answer, "Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord in the mat-

ter of Peor" To save Israel from being again allured, they had to be slain, and only those who had not been initiated into those heathen abominations were to be saved alive to be servants in Israel, and as to such, special laws had been given by

God for their protection and well being

There is nothing surprising about all this when the situation is fully understood, and in this matter, as in all others, the Judge of all the earth did right.

## Baptism with Fire.

What is the meaning of the baptism with fire, Matthew 3 11? I would like some light on the subject, as a Pentecostal friend brought it before me, claiming to have received this baptism"—B ON S

**T**HE Pentecostal friend should be very thankful that he has *not* been baptized with fire, for the fire of this passage is undoubtedly judgment, as the context shews. The fulfilment of this prophetic word looks on to the time when the Lord shall appear in discriminating judgment *in the midst of Israel*—Israel is the threshing floor, and the wheat gathered into His garner will be the saved remnant of Israel, upon whom the Spirit will be poured out and who will, by that baptism, be introduced into millennial blessedness, but there will be judgment for the chaff the godless, unbelieving part of that nation that will refuse to acknowledge Jesus as their Messiah, as their fathers did. Upon them will be the baptism of fire—"the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire" (verse 12)

It may be claimed that John's word was fulfilled at Pentecost but take note of this. In Acts 1 5 the Lord did not quote John's word, but made His own authoritative announcement "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" There is not a word

here about the fire, for the time for the fire had not come, though the Holy Ghost was given then. And Peter, in explaining to the multitudes what had happened at Pentecost, says nothing of a baptism of fire; nor again, when defending his visit to Cornelius before the brethren at Jerusalem (Acts 11), he does not speak of a baptism by fire, but only of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, quoting the Lord's words as to this and not John's. John's prophecy from Matthew's standpoint awaits fulfilment.

The tongues "*like as of fire*," that sat upon each of the Apostles in the upper room in Jerusalem, was a very different thing to this baptism of fire, they spoke of the searching, discriminating words that they were to speak in the power of the Holy Spirit, that would bring conviction of sin to the hearers and produce self judgment in them. The baptism of the Spirit means life and blessing, whether at Pentecost or in the day when the Lord shall appear in glory. The baptism of fire means death and judgment for all that come under it.

## "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men"

"A friend asked me what I understood by John 12 32, 33 'And I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto Me. Thus He said, signifying what death He should die.' His trouble is with the 'all' How can a heathen savage in the heart of Africa who has never heard of the existence of the Lord Jesus be said to be drawn to Him?"—LEANDER

THE immediate and present fulfilment of these words is seen in the fact that the Lord is the gathering centre not for the Jew only but for all men. He came as the Son of David to gather Israel; they refused to be gathered and crucified Him, but that very act, the witness of their rejection of Him, opened the door for the Gentiles to come into blessing. "And now there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same *Lord over all* is rich unto all that call upon Him" (Rom. 10. 12). Those who resist His drawing power and refuse His rich mercy will fall under His judgment.

In His coming glorious kingdom He will be the great gathering centre for all nations, as a hundred prophecies declare. When that kingdom is finished, the wicked, dead in their graves, shall hear His voice and come forth to be judged by Him. So that, whether now or hereafter, for blessing or for judgment, the cross will have its bearing upon all men, as distinct from the former racial or national distinctions between Jew or Gentile—and upon every man also, for every one will be drawn to have to do with the Son of Man either for blessing or for judgment.

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"While I was afflicted with fears of my own damnation," wrote John Bunyan, in his "Grace Abounding," "there were two things which made me wonder. One was, when I saw old people hunting after the things of this life, as if they should live here always; the other was, when I found professors much distressed and cast down when they met with outward losses. Lord, thought I, what ado is here about such little things as these."

But it is these little things that prevent true soul rest, only as we are able to value things rightly—the seen and the unseen, the temporal and the eternal, the things of the soul and the things of the senses—is true rest possible, and we can only do this as we are near the Lord. "Learn of Me," He said, "and ye shall find rest to your souls."

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## I will Guide Thee.

If we keep near enough to our Lord the glance of His eye will do for guidance, as the old Psalm has it. They are rough animal natures that do not understand how to go, unless their instructors be the crack of the whip or the tug of the bridle. A glance of the eye is enough where there are mutual understanding and love.

Ninety per cent of all our perplexities as to conduct come from our not having a pure and simple wish to do what is right in our Lord's sight, clearly supreme above all others. When we have that wish it is never left unsatisfied. "If any man wills to do His will he shall know of the doctrine."

## NOTICE TO QUIT.

J. T. Mawson.

I REMEMBER seeing years ago in Ireland a village in ruins. All the cottages in it were roofless and uninhabited. I was told that the people who once lived in them had refused to pay the rent and had been evicted. That down-tumbled village was a melancholy sight, but it was a parable to me. We dwell in "the earthly house of our tabernacle"—you, my reader, and I, and we have received "Notice to Quit." Why? God is the landlord, He is the designer and builder of our bodies; "He giveth unto all life and breath and all things"; consequently He has claims upon us, and we have not met them, nor even desired to. We were all alike in that respect, until some of us—but that is another matter that we don't enter into here—we did not pay the rent, we were determined not to; "we turned everyone to his own way," and that is why notice to quit has been served upon us. We are awaiting eviction—some of us have a better hope, but again that is another matter. The truth is, "It is appointed unto men once to die." The grim bailiff DEATH has his work to do and when the time comes he will do it regardless of our feelings. To some he comes suddenly, and without warning evicts them from their earthly dwelling, but however and whenever he comes the long cherished and tenderly cared for tabernacle falls into ruin, nothing can save it, and the question is, and it is the greatest of all questions surely to the man involved, What of the one who dwelt in it?

Suppose the landlord of those defaulting Irish folk had sent a message to them of this sort, "You

have failed in your obligations, and in justice I must have you evicted from the cottages in which you have lived and disregarded my claims, but when the time comes for you to be turned out, I will open the doors of my mansion and welcome you to my home; you shall live with me and on my bounty. It will be my pleasure to have your company."

I have never heard of a landlord of that sort among men; if there had been such an one, his fame would have spread to the ends of the earth, and his deed would have been the theme of many a story book; but it is my business and joy to make known the fact that such a landlord God is. He has thrown open the doors of His house—and there are many mansions there, there is room for all. And in the gospel which is now preached to men, God tells them, that though all have got notice to quit, for death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned, yet He will welcome to His home whosoever will accept His invitation when the time of their eviction comes. It is a surprising offer, and the more so that it is made to those who are His enemies, and alienated from Him by wicked works.

When this great and gracious gospel is heard and believed, the believer of it no longer dreads the approach of death as an inexorable enemy, but can welcome it as a friend, who does but assist him to step out of a tired and suffering body into the presence of his Saviour—he enters into fulness of joy for he is "absent from the body,

present with the Lord," there to await the final and eternal glory, "for we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Yes, it is a wonderful thing, and it is as true as it is wonderful, this offer that God is making to men—to men driven out of an earthly paradise, which was forfeited by disobedience, and under sentence of death for the same reason! Think of it and marvel at it, a place in the heavenly paradise through the merits of the Saviour's blood, and better still a place in the Father's house, which is in the midst of that paradise, the innermost and most intimate place of all! How attractive! how blessed a home is this to all those who know their Saviour's love! It is,

"...the Father's house  
Where love divine doth rest;  
What else could satisfy the hearts  
Of those in Jesus blest?"

"Our eyes undimmed shall there our  
God, behold,  
Behold Him face to face, and walk  
by sight,  
Not trusting only, as in days of old,  
But seeing with our eyes eternal  
'Light.'"

But what of those who do not believe, those who with an evil heart of unbelief neglect this great salvation or reject it because it comes to men only through the Name of the once crucified but now risen Lord Jesus Christ? There is but one answer to that question, and it is found in His own words, "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins: and whither I go, ye cannot come" (John 8. 21-24). And "The rich man died also, and was buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments" (Luke 16. 22, 23).

## The Head and the Body.

DO not forget that Christ has no place in this world. He is in heaven, and He is there because He was rejected by the world. You are a member of His body, and that means the closest possible oneness with Him. Can the Head be rejected and the members accepted? Impossible! But if Christ is in heaven the Holy Ghost is on earth, and He is in the members of the body of Christ; it is thus that they are in complete oneness with their Head, and it is by the Spirit that they can set their affections on things above, where Christ is. A member of Christ who is worldly or earthly minded is a denial of the truth. But how can one be heavenly minded? Only by being carried to

heaven in spirit, because your Saviour, your Head, is there, having been rejected by the world that makes a bid for your affections.

As a member of His body, you are left here to express Him, that His life—the life of your Head—may be manifested in you. Are you here as a member of His body standing for Him to whom the earth belongs, but who has been refused His rights in it? As a member of His body you have a place where He is, and no place where He has been rejected, but it is your privilege to witness for Him where He is not, until He translates you to that place that is yours because it is His.

## DAILY CARES.

“CAST thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee” (Psa. 55. 22), said David. But Peter goes further, making use of the present participle, “Casting all your care upon Him for He careth for you” (1 Pet. 1. 5-7).

### YOU DO THE CASTING, HE WILL DO THE CARING.

Paul, strong in faith, shews us the way in Phil. 4. 4-9 where he employs an ascending scale or ladder of experience, beginning verse 4, with what is, to the superficial reader an impossibility. “Rejoice in the Lord always” O how my soul exults in that much misunderstood adverb of time, “Always.” “Sometimes” suggests unbelief and compromise. “Always,” saith the Spirit, and “again I say, rejoice.” A double affirmative. “But can one rejoice in the loss of health, wealth, or life?” queries my reader. I reply, by no means; neither does the Spirit ask us to rejoice in these things, *but in the Lord*; and that is a very different matter, is it not? Next—in verse 5—we are exhorted to “Let our moderation, or rather *yieldingness*, be known unto all men, for the Lord is at hand, i e., near, or standing by.” Do not assume a fighting attitude.

### LET HIM DO THE FIGHTING YOU GET ON WITH THE REJOICING.

Next come verses 5, 6, 7, bidding us

Be careful for nothing  
Prayerful in everything, and  
Thankful for anything.

The end of that threefold exercise is a heart experience of the peace of God, which beggars both understanding and expression Now—strange to relate—this is not all—there is more to follow, for verse 8 touches a very practical theme where the pre-occupation of mind and heart—the *thought life* must be engaged with things that are honest, true, just, pure, lovely, virtuous and praiseworthy. The seven constituents which form a sphere and create an atmosphere in which the “God of Peace” can move along with you. So that the supreme goal is thus attained, and you have both

### THE PEACE OF GOD AND THE GOD OF PEACE.

Well said Agur the son of Jakkeh, Prov 30 5, “Every Word of God is pure” Let not that saint who allows his eyes, tongue or mind to be engaged with *the reverse* of verse 8, think that he will retain either the “peace of God” or the “God of peace.” They cannot co-exist or co-operate. Keep a watch, dear fellow-pilgrim, on *eye-gate* and *ear-gate*, the enemy has subtle ways with both and there is a traitor within. Let verse 8 control and decide everything.

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Whatever enfeebles attachment to Christ destroys power. It is not gross sin that does it, which, of course, will be met and judged, but it is the little things of everyday life which are apt to be chosen *before* Christ. When the world creeps in, the salt has lost its savour, and we shew that a rejected Christ has little power in our eyes. The Lord keep us in the path with Christ, where all is bright and blessed If the film of this world has been drawn over our spiritual vision, hiding Christ from us, He alone can remove it.

J. N. D.

## JOY IN HEAVEN.

James Boyd.

Luke 15.

“THE publicans and sinners drew near to hear Him; and the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, ‘This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.’” How wonderful it is to see publicans and sinners drawing near to listen to His words. How different the words that proceeded out of His mouth, from the words that were uttered in the ears of the people from Mount Sinai. There the mount burned with fire in the midst of blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more, for they could not endure that which was commanded. And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight that Moses said, “I exceedingly fear and quake” (Heb. 12. 18-21).

In the presence of “GOD MANIFEST IN FLESH” there was no fearing and quaking with any one; publicans and sinners drew near to Him. At this manifestation of the grace of a Saviour-God, self-righteous men were indignant. How blind to the goodness of God and to their own wretched condition they were! But of their foolish and unreasonable criticisms they were soon made thoroughly aware. However many sheep one of them might have possessed, if he lost one he would go after it till he found it. And if he would go after one of his sheep, may not the Creator go after one of His creatures? And when he has found it he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing. And when he has brought it home, he calls his

acquaintances together, saying to them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. “Likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.” As to the woman who lost a piece of silver, when she found it, she called her friends and neighbours together to rejoice with her. “Likewise there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”

The lesson we have to learn here is that it is the joy of heaven to see sinners recovered for God. And the joy has its source in the heart of God. It does not say that the angels rejoice, but it does say that there is joy in their presence, and that joy coming from the heart of God not a being in heaven can be indifferent to it.

But to complete the picture we have the wilful son, and also the self-righteous legalist, the elder son. We are told that a certain man had two sons, and that the younger demanded from his father the portion of goods that fell to him. Therefore his father divided all he possessed to them both. Not many days after this the younger man gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country. The father's house was irksome to him, and therefore was he determined to have his fling in this wide world. He would, as they say, see life. This is man, all men, without exception. Every man desires to have his own way. In this the self-righteous Pharisee is quite as determined as the sinner. The elder son disputes his father's right to receive the re-

pentant prodigal. God's ways, whether in grace or in judgment, never please the natural man.

The son who went out to enjoy the world soon found that he had lost all his substance, and was reduced to the condition of a swineherd. That world that he had thought would yield him satisfaction he soon found would yield him nothing but shame and starvation. Whatever his need might be, hunger or nakedness or both together, no one had any compassion for him. Doubtless he might have found people willing to sell him all he needed but without money he could not buy.

But there was a moment when it is said he came to himself. He saw himself as he really was. He had made shipwreck of all he had which his father had given him, and the plenty that was in the father's house became the attraction for his perishing soul. It is thus with the sinner when God in His mercy gives him to see that his wilful ways have been his ruin, and to the God he had abandoned he must return with sorrow of heart. The gospel comes to us and tells us of forgiveness, in order that we may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, to receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among all them that are sanctified by faith in Jesus. As this prodigal turned to his father, so the sinner turns to God.

And the way the father receives the returning son shows us the way in which God receives us. He had just a little sense of grace, and therefore thinks he can no more be received as a son. He is content to come in as a hired servant. But when he was yet a great way off

his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell upon his neck, and covered him with kisses. But the son said, "I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." But the father will please himself, and so will our God please Himself, with regard to His ways with us. He has no intention of bringing His son into the house in his nakedness to have him ashamed of himself. He says, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him. The best robe is Christ. In heaven there is none to equal it. Put a ring on his hand. He is brought into new and eternal relationships with God. There never can be a break in these relationships. Put shoes on his feet. He is a son, not a servant. He is at home, and in perfect liberty. It is not said to him: "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Ex. 3. 5). He goes in with his shoes on.

Next we have, "Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." And they began to be merry.

Now we have a pattern of the supper spoken of in chapter 14. And what a joyous company it is. The elder son coming near to the house hears the music and dancing; and he is so little in the mind of the father that he has to ask one of the servants what it all means. The answer is, Thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. But he would not go in; rather does he venture a rebuke to the father for the beggarly way in which he thinks he himself has been treated. He knows nothing

of the joy the father has in the return of a penitent sinner

Now God will have His own joy in that which has been accomplished by the cross of Christ. In righteousness He can now receive the vilest, and His delight in doing this

is His answer to the work accomplished on Golgotha, and to the glory of the Son of His love who did that work. For ever blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! What a God is our God! GOD IS LOVE!

## DANGER SIGNALS IN THE WORD.

*"It is not for you to know"*

THE Word of God is a light unto our path and a lamp to our feet. It is the sure guide directing us in the ways of righteousness, but it often flashes before us as a danger signal when we are inclined to turn off into some way of our own, and great is the disaster to us if we do not heed its warnings. Take, for instance, the Lord's words to His Apostles, "It is not for you to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power" (Acts 1). If in any mind there arises the desire to know more than is revealed as to the future, and to prophecy and prognosticate, then flashes out this red light. But why should we not investigate and calculate and discover by our searching what has not been plainly told? I cannot say, but certainly there is some hidden danger along that road, some lying in wait to destroy our faith, and the danger signal flashes out to warn us against taking the

road, and the subject mind will take heed to it and draw back, and so by the words of the lips of the Lord we shall be kept from the paths of the destroyer.

It is easy for us, so foolish are we, to be vainly puffed up by our fleshly mind, and intrude into those things that the Lord, for His own wise reasons has not revealed to us, and we may be sure that the great deceiver is very alert, and ready to seize upon our folly. He rejoices when we ignore the danger signals and start off on a road in which we cannot have the guidance of the Word and the support of the Lord.

Wise are we when we discern the red lights in Scripture, many words that seem like peremptory commands in the New Testament have just this character. They are there to preserve our feet from false ways when we are in danger of being drawn aside, and by them we are kept in the ways of the Lord. (Ed)

The Church is always to wait for Christ, having no special time; every moment is its time in desire and duty, as, alas, it is the world's for negligence. The Jews have a time. Days, years, and earthly computations belong to them, and therefore signs. To us it may be the second watch or the third watch; blessed only if we are found watching

J N D.

## THE FOUR GOSPELS.

James McBroom.

THE four holy Gospels stand alone. They present Him who is the glorious Luminary to the whole moral universe, just as the sun is the light of the solar system. They shew us One who stands alone in His divine glory. They shew us a life that could not have been imagined or invented by any man, and such is the glory of that life that no creature could have recorded it apart from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God.

We should not dare to speak of these Gospels if we did not know that the One who inspired them can give an understanding as to them. So we venture, as others have done, to dip our tiny vessel into this fathomless ocean of bliss, with fear and trembling and yet with holy delight, for it is a joy to speak of the wondrous Person who once lighted up this dark world with His presence and whose glory is destined to cover the whole creation of God.

The writers of the Gospels speak in the simplest way not appearing to say anything great or extraordinary. There is neither exclamation nor acclamation, no unnecessary stopping to comment on the great things they have to record. They take up the dealings of God in past times, going back to the beginning of time, and then on to its end; touching the great outstanding events in the world's history, and pass on to coming greater events. They tell out the grand facts of revelation, speaking of wonders, signs and miracles without comment. They shew our Lord dealing with the present in relation to the past and future in the way that none but He could do it, combining all into one grand and glorious whole.

The Gospel of Matthew quotes more from the Old Testament than the others, and by the law of the relation of type to antitype is more closely related to it. It presents our Lord in relation to David and Abraham, to whom the land and the throne belonged. Refused by the Jews as the Fulfiller of promise, He turns to the Gentile, in view of the calling out of the world and the building of His Assembly, the Church. This transition underlies the greater part of His ministry as given there both in miracle and parable. It was historically accomplished in the Acts and witnessed to in the Jewish Epistles of the New Testament.

Mark begins with the Son of God. The Spirit presents our Lord as the Servant and it was necessary to give the descent from which He entered upon His work. The amazing thing is that this Servant is God. "Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently, He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high." Such a Servant goes to the highest place of all, even the right hand of God.

Luke goes back beyond Matthew, to the beginning of man's history. He is not here viewed as the Son of David or Abraham as in Matthew's Gospel, but the Son of Man in relation to mankind. He appears as the One able to take up in His Person the whole of man's history from Eden onwards, to glorify God where everyone else failed and carry everything to the Kingdom and eternal glory. The Man Christ Jesus is seen here in every way fitted to take up and carry through every question, principle and obligation which stands between God and man. Here we see with deep delight that "The charm of a Man is His kindness" (Prov. 19. 22).

In these three Gospels what Christ is to God in relation to His time ways comes before us. There had been a long line of faithful witnesses on earth which God in grace had secured for Himself. In them certain features of Christ had been portrayed. Ever since the fall God had been working in view of another order of man entirely. God had created man for His own pleasure, Christ alone can be that in perfection, but in spite of the fall God had so wrought that features of Christ could be seen in men who were subjects of mercy. In Adam, *life*; in Abel, *righteousness*; in Noah, *rule*; in Abraham, *sovereignty, calling and election*; in Isaac, *Sonship*; in Jacob, *head of the earthly company in prophecy, blessing and worship*. The Lord Jesus Christ came to fulfil in His own Person every blessed divine trait which grace had produced in these and all others belonging to the family of faith.

But what of the Gospel of John? In Mark the designation Son of God was a necessity, because He had become a Servant. But in that Gospel there is no genealogy, no history of His birth, no great sermons: He is a Servant. In John there is no genealogy, no birth, no mount of transfiguration, no agony in the garden nor cry of abandonment upon the cross. In John we go beyond the prophets as in Mark, beyond David and Abraham as in Matthew and beyond Adam as in Luke. We begin with God and eternity. "In the beginning was the Word." If the others begin each at his respective point and go on to shew our Lord in relation to the time ways of God, past, present and future, John goes beyond them to shew our Lord, and indeed the Godhead, in relation to eternal pur-

pose. This Gospel gives the activities of Godhead both before and after time began.

This is the distinguishing feature of the fourth Gospel. While all of them are divine and heavenly and above the creature there is that here which in measure leads us to the inner life of the Godhead. This last is touched both in Matthew 11 and Luke 10, but we are speaking of what characterises each. In John we have the Persons of the Godhead in relation to each other. In the others we see God in relation to time and the creation, taking in the whole arena of good and evil, but in John, Father, Son and Holy Spirit are seen in relation to each other in what is native and proper to Godhead in such a way as nowhere else. Certain statements in relation to time may touch this, as in the words "Let us make man," or "Let us go down," but while these speak of plurality in the Godhead they fall short of that which John gives, namely; the essential unity of the Godhead in the triune blessedness of holy love.

Here the adoring heart finds its deepest delight in contemplating that which stands out as the richest part of divine revelation. The eternal Word, the Logos, is seen as the Son of the Father's love in communion of nature, essence, being and counsel; coequal and coeternal, yet in perfect Manhood carrying out the Father's will. The holy intimacies which were there without beginning in virtue of the unity of the Godhead in essential Being, in the eternal reciprocation of what is native to Deity, in love and fulness of glory, could but give a matchless, heavenly grandeur to all that path of suffering, shame and woe.

This is JESUS, "Our Lord Jesus" (Heb. 13. 20). We dwell with holy adoration upon His beauties and perfections as with ever fresh and increasing joy we follow His holy footsteps in these Gospels. The charm of this blessed Man: His tenderness, sweetness, compassion and

beauty bind our souls to Him in love which is eternal, and as we pillow our heads in the holy seclusion of love in His blessed bosom we ever remain conscious that He is "God over ALL, blessed for evermore. Amen."

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## "He careth for You."

"HE careth." He, whose love is as great as His power, and knows neither measure nor end. He CARETH. Precious word, in which all the tenderness of the most devoted mother, all the skill of the most expert physician, all the attention of the most accomplished nurse are compressed, and all according to the perfection of Deity. He careth FOR YOU. For you, as though in all the worlds He sustains, you were His special and peculiar charge—as indeed you are.

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## The Word, the I AM.

"The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory." Men say He "veiled" or "emptied Himself" of it. On the contrary the Apostles "beheld" it. The glory of John 1. 14, was His essential moral glory, and that He never "veiled" and of that He never "emptied Himself." How could He veil or lay aside Himself? "Alpha"—"Omega"—"First and Last"—"Beginning and Ending"—El Shaddai, "The Almighty"—The Great "I AM," Who Himself said, in the days of His flesh, "If ye believe not that I AM, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8. 24). Could anything be more solemn? So there was nothing left for these religious Jews, but to *die in their sins*. And how about religious Gentiles to-day, who question or deny that "the Man Christ Jesus" was the "I AM"? Will the fact that "The darkness is past, and the true Light now shineth" (1 John 2. 8), render them less responsible?

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What wonders intercessory prayer has wrought! The Word of God teems with its marvellous deeds. Believer, thou hast a mighty engine in thy hand, use it well, use it constantly, use it with faith, and thou shalt surely be a benefactor to thy brethren. When thou hast the Lord's ear, speak to Him for the suffering members of His body.

# THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS.

J. T. Mawson.

No. 6. Continued from June No., page 143.

THERE is an illuminating word in 2 Thess. 3. 1. The great Apostle Paul begs the young Christians at Thessalonica to pray that the Word of the Lord may have free course—or *that it may run*. If we remember that the subject of the two Epistles to the Thessalonians is the coming again of the Lord Jesus, we shall realize how striking and appropriate is this figure of speech. The King is coming, and His herald runs before Him announcing the fact. The Word of the Lord is the herald. It is the gospel, of course, but not the gospel as it is so poorly understood and preached by many preachers in these slack days. The gospel of God is *concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord*, who is raised up from the dead and set in the place of supremacy at God's right hand, to administer the grace of God from that place of power to all who will receive the Word, until the hour arrives when He shall appear in glory and God shall set Him on His throne in Zion. This was the word that the apostles preached, with the result that those who believed it "turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, our Deliverer from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. 1). This word of the Lord, the herald going before the Lord to announce His coming, is indeed a word of grace, the gospel of our salvation, giving all who believe it heavenly hope, but it is also an imperative word, it claims and commands obedience. It is like the herald that went before Joseph

in Egypt, crying, "Bow the knee" (Genesis 41. 43), and those that refuse to obey it, "that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" are to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" at His appearing (2 Thess. 1. 8-9).

Ques.: *You want us to understand that the Word of the Lord proclaims the coming of the Lord in glory—His appearing, can you give Scripture for it?*

Yes. I will give three from the Apostolic preaching in the Acts of the Apostles. Peter said, "Repent . . . And He (God) shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3. 20, 21). Again, "And He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which is ordained of God to be the Judge of the quick and dead" (ch. 10. 42). Paul said, "God . . . now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (ch. 17. 30, 31).

Ques.: *One of those Scriptures speaks of blessing, and the others of judgment, which is it that the appearing of the Lord will bring?*

God's purpose is the blessing of men, and Christ is coming for bless-

ing and to fulfil the Scripture, "I have set Thee to be a light to the Gentiles, that Thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth" (Isa. 49. 6; Acts 13. 47), but judgment must go before the blessing, because of what men are. It is the persistent rebellion of men against God, that makes judgment a necessity. Yet judgment is God's strange work; He does not delight in it, He delights in mercy. This comes out in the very language that Scripture uses. When it is a question of judgment, we read "a short work will the Lord make upon the earth" (Romans 9. 28), but when it is a question of mercy, "He is long suffering, not willing that any should perish" (2 Peter 3. 9). When vengeance is in view it is "the day of vengeance, but when mercy, it is the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4). It is because God's terms of grace are rejected, and because the world will not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and because men will not receive the knowledge of God when they may, that judgment must come, and it surely will come, though long delayed. The blessing will also come, "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass" (Psa. 72. 6). The rain speaks of the blessing, but "the mown grass" means that the scythe of judgment will have swept the field before the blessing descends.

Ques.: *But the Lord will not come in judgment as long as His Church is on the earth?*

No, because evil will not come into its full manifestation as long as the church is here, and God withholds His judgment until evil reaches its climax, that none may charge Him with unrighteousness. That is plain from 2 Thess. 2. The mystery of iniquity is already working, and

those who are taught of God can discern it; indeed it is obtruding itself everywhere, in the increasing lawlessness, the impatience at authority, the disdain of God's claims and the diminishing of His fear in the world, the rejection of the great truths of the Word, the spread of ritualism and modernism, and the substitution of "Science falsely so called" for the gospel in professed Christian circles; yet there is a restraining power here. There is that which withholdeth, or restraineth, and "He who now letteth, or hindereth, until He be taken out of the way" (ch. 2. 6, 7). He that hindereth is the Holy Spirit of God who dwells in the church. As long as He is here it will be said to all the pride and purposes of men, "Hitherto shalt thou come and no further, and here shall all thy proud waves be stayed." We have often seen it, especially during the last quarter of a century; when evil forces have seemed to be rising up in irresistible waves, threatening to overwhelm all law and order, they have been checked and have subsided, and Christians have still been able to "pray for kings and for all that be in authority, that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty." But when the church is completed and taken up to heaven, the Holy Spirit will go with it, and God will allow men to have their own way. Then "that man of sin," "the son of perdition" (verse 3) and "that wicked one" (verse 8) will be revealed. In these two men—the Beast and the false prophet, who is also called Antichrist, and of whom we read in Revelation chs. 13, 17, 19,—Satan will find vessels of wrath, through whom he will work his will, and by them he will make his most desperate attempt to hold the world against God

and Christ (see Revelation 16. 13, 14; 17. 14). It is against these and their deluded followers, that the Lord will appear in judgment. Revelation 19. 11-21 describes this appearing. Every name and character that He bears in that vivid description of His appearing is consistent with the event. He is the Faithful and the True, in contrast to the false pretensions of men and the lie with which the devil has deceived them (see 2 Thess. 2. 9-11). "In righteousness He will judge and make war," against all "the deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." He is called "the Word of God," for He will reveal God's holy wrath against *sin* in its completeness, as once He revealed His love to *sinner*s. He is King of kings and Lord of lords, and will assert and establish His rights by the sharp sword of His mouth and with the rod of iron. There will be no mercy for those who oppose Him, for He will tread the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

Ques.: *Does 2 Thess. 1, where we read of the Lord being revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, refer to the same time as Rev. 19?*

Yes, but in that passage the judgment takes a wider sweep, it has more than the armies of the Beast and false prophet in view. The flaming fire, which is figurative of

judgment, is against all who know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Those who have not obeyed the gospel, are those who have heard it, and would apply to Christendom, and those who know not God are those who have had the opportunity of knowing Him, but who have not availed themselves of it. The judgment will fit the crimes and the conditions in which men are found; it will be a discriminating judgment, executed in absolute righteousness. Another passage that fits in with those already cited is Revelation 1. 7: "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. Even so, Amen." That word plainly describes the Lord's appearing, not to any section of mankind, but to the whole world, and it is a parallel word to Matthew 24. 30, where the Lord Himself says, "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." He comes thus to judge the living at His appearing, the dead will not come before Him until the great white throne (Revelation 20), which judgment will take place after the close of His millennial kingdom.

*To be continued.*

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In Thy cross I saw a beauty  
 Far outshining all I knew,  
 There Thy love's surpassing glory  
 Won my heart, and bound me, too.  
 Now, O Lord, my heart is spellbound  
 Not, as once, by earth's vain blaze,  
 Calvary's cross, Eternal Lover,  
 Holds and fascinates my gaze.

## THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT. No. 2.

James Green.

## 1 Cor. 2.

THE devices of Satan against the testimony of God are exhibited in three ways. Firstly, in direct *opposition*, so that men are kept from receiving the truth which would bring to them the salvation of their souls. Secondly, in the *corruption* of the truth, by which it is divested of its active force through the admixture of error, or rendered valueless by some artificial or distorted interpretation. Thirdly, by that which is the most dangerous of all, an *imitation* of the truth, which appeals to the human mind, and consequently reduces the revelation of God to that which is within the comprehension of natural intelligence. Against these efforts to frustrate the truth, the Holy Spirit is antagonistic, and has provided in the Epistle to the Romans a sufficient guard against the first attack; the Epistles to the Corinthians and Galatians warn against the second; and those to Ephesus and Colosse provide a safeguard against the third. In the first case the obedience of faith is a sure answer to the opposition of unbelief; in the second philosophy and science, the product of the human mind provide a poor substitute for the fulness that is in the Son of God; and in the third, the purpose of God centered in the Head, even Christ, exposes in the light of His glory, the cunning craftiness by which the truth of God is imitated in various forms. But even this provision will not avail for any one apart from the active power of the Spirit of God revealing a Person to the heart, who is outside man and his world, and so producing an affection which shall be the expulsion of all that is not Christ.

Having recognised the supreme fact of the presence of the Spirit indwelling the believer, it is important that such should know the direction in which His power is manifest, in giving the positive witness to our spirits of the deep things of God. Apart from this a mere negative refusal of error will be of small avail against so wily a foe as the enemy of God and of Christ. In this may be found the reason why so many in escaping from one error have become entangled in the meshes of another. Our present meditation upon the energetic power of the Spirit of God may be followed in the consideration of the Holy Spirit as,—

1. The power of knowledge.
  2. The power of revelation and communication.
  3. The power of demonstration.
1. *The Spirit as the power of knowledge.*

The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. The Creator has endowed man with a marvellous capacity for reasoning and knowledge, but it is evident that in this he has limitations, which are bounded by the sphere of created material things, in the midst of which His Maker has placed him. Any attempt on man's part to extend his knowledge and reasoning powers to unseen realms inhabited by spirit creations, is ever attended with disaster both to mind and body. Again and again man has proved his folly in so doing and has paid the penalty of intruding into things he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind. How much less can man in his natural state comprehend the thoughts of Him who is above all

creations. He may know and understand the things of a man, but for the knowledge of God, he is dependent entirely upon the Spirit of God. Yet in this there are again certain limitations, things that must ever remain secret, occasioned by the fact that the creature whether angel or man is finite and the Creator is infinite, whose essential being no one hath seen, nor can see. This can never be the subject of knowledge to the creature, however near such may be brought to Him in the purpose of His love, and the revelation of His character in grace and truth. This is truly the nearness into which God brings His redeemed and which carries with it the gift of the Spirit that we may know the things which are freely given to us of God. In these things are revealed His purpose, His thoughts, His counsels, and the unchanging excellency of His affections expressed in the eternal relation in which the Father and the Son have ever dwelt, in the intimacy and delight which fills that home of love. The Holy Spirit is inseparable from the Father and the Son, equally eternal as they in unity of the Triune Godhead, therefore what power for the knowledge of the Divine mind lies in the fact of the indwelling Spirit, who is the seal of the Divine intelligence and proceeds from the Father of whom are all things.

With a similar capacity for knowing each other, how little men enter into each other's feelings and thoughts, for after all the spirit of a man only knows himself. So God with whom none can compare alone knows Himself by His own Spirit, and therefore none by searching can find Him out.

The natural man knows Him not; the world knows Him not. When

the Lord of glory was present in the world the princes of this world knew Him not. The great, the learned, the rich, mighty, noble, the leaders of religious culture, were so ignorant of the manifestation of God in His Son, that they deemed Him only worthy of a cross of shame. Such is the spirit of the world, what a contrast to the Spirit which is of God; He who is the fountain of eternal truth, the divine instructor, dwelling within us in order that the depths of divine revelation may be communicated to us in the power of life. To quote the words of another, "Surely it will be well to ask ourselves how far it is realized by us in practice that we have dwelling within us a Divine Person; the perfect Judge of all doctrine, the Teacher of all teachers, whose presence with us it can never be humility to forget; whom if we listen to we shall never be deceived or go astray." Natural men who live in the realm of the flesh and its desires, have a will which is opposed to the mind of God, they have the mind of the flesh, and this is enmity against God, is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Therefore when the truth is presented to such a man he judges it according to his fleshly mind and receives it not. At the same time his incapacity is made evident for he considers it foolish. It is sadly possible for a converted man to be in a condition which though not viewed in Scripture as natural, yet to say the least is carnal. The believers in Corinth were such; true they were indwelt by the Spirit, but their thoughts and ways took character from the world of men, and they regarded each other from that point of view, the result being debates, envyings, strife, divisions; for

it is with such things the natural man fills his world.

How different is the proper Christian state, that of the spiritual man, one who yields every faculty of his renewed being to the control of the Spirit of God. Divine thoughts occupy his mind and give him a true understanding of all things according to God. At the same time and in consequence thereof, the natural men amongst whom he moves understand him not, for they understood not Him who is the source of his life. Not only is the Spirit of God the source of Divine knowledge, but in order that that knowledge may be received, a new receptive faculty must be communicated, a new capacity which would not exist apart from the creative power of the Spirit. A faculty suited to the intelligent reception of the revelation of God in Christ, quite different from that which the natural man glories in the possession of, it is in fact "The mind of Christ."

This leads us to the consideration of—

## 2. *The Spirit as the power of revelation and communication.*

The importance of this must be evident from the foregoing, for no one can know God except in so far as He reveals Himself. In the Old Testament this revelation was partial; men such as Moses and David knew this; the former said, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God" (Deut. 29. 29); the latter said, "Thy thoughts are very deep" (Psa. 92. 5). "God spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets" (Heb. 8. 1), and "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1. 21), but it was only the

rays of coming glory shining through the rifts that grace made in the thunder clouds of law and judgment. But now that the tempest has spent its terrors upon the head of Him who took the guilty sinner's place, the full light of God shines forth in the revelation of all that is knowable of God by the creature. "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all." But now the written word becomes a necessity, lest so glorious a manifestation should be lost in transmission, or corrupted by the admixture of human thoughts. Hence through chosen vessels the Spirit has acted in giving them Spirit-taught words, by which to communicate the things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard. The keenest natural vision has not perceived them, nor the acutest hearing caught the music of them, and they are beyond the loftiest flight to which human intelligence can soar. Nevertheless, these great unsearchable things are revealed by spiritual means in the New Testament Scriptures, and so exclusively so that an apostle could say, "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error" (1 John 4. 6).

At first it seems strange that the Holy Spirit who is the intelligence of the Godhead and consequently in whom perfect knowledge is found, should be spoken of as searching the depths of God (1 Cor. 2. 10), but it is just in this way that He becomes to us the power of communication. Uniting His infinite knowledge with our growing consciousness, His searching involving diligence on our part to follow on to know as He on His part leads us into all truth. Just as a tutor

will identify himself with a student to guide him in the steps of a research with which his own mind is perfectly acquainted. In so doing the Holy Spirit does not call attention to Himself; it is Christ whom He reveals, and becomes a power of life in us by which we appreciate more and more the moral excellence of the Son of God, and so beholding His glory are changed, transformed, transmuted according to the pattern we gaze upon, by a continuing process from glory to glory even by the Lord the Spirit. The Lord the object, the Spirit the power that worketh in us by an energy which reproduces the life of Christ in the perfect liberty of sonship.

As yet this treasure is in earthen vessels, but their fragile weakness

becomes the occasion of manifesting that the power is of God, and not of human origin, and that the praise belongs to Him whose strength is made perfect in weakness. Let us at the same time remember that that which the Spirit communicates is the hidden wisdom. It was kept secret before the world was, and now that it is revealed it is only known to those in whom the Spirit dwells. It is still a mystery to the princes of this age, and will remain so, even though they may read the words in which it is conveyed, until the day of manifestation shall come, and in great unveiling shall be displayed that which has been wrought by the Spirit in the lowest parts of the earth.

*To be continued.*

## Jesus Wept.

THE word is different from that which is used to express weeping in verse 33; it is used of our Lord in Luke 19. 41. It does not mean the cry of lamentation, nor the wail of excessive grief, but the calm shedding of tears. They are on their way to the sepulchre, near to which they have now arrived. He is conscious of the power which He is about to exercise, and that the first result will be the glory of God (verse 4); but He is conscious also of the suffering hearts near Him, and the sympathy with human sorrow is no less a part of His nature than possession of divine power. Men have wondered to find in the Gospel which opens with the express declaration of His Deity, and at the moment when that Deity was about to fully manifest itself,

these words, which point them still to human weakness. But the central thought of John's Gospel is "The Word became flesh." Not an abstraction which the intellect only could receive, but a Person, living a human life, and knowing its sorrows, whom the heart can grasp and love.

A "God in tears" has provoked the smile of the stoic and the scorn of the unbeliever; but Christianity is not a gospel of self-sufficiency and its message is not merely to the human intellect. It is salvation for the whole man and for every man; and the sorrowing heart has never seen more clearly the Deity of the Son of Man than when it has seen His glory shining through His tears.

# THE PASSOVER AND THE PASS OVER. Inglis Fleming.

Exodus 12. 2-30; xiii. 12.

THE night of the Passover is one to be "had in remembrance" (Exod. 12. 42). Indeed it shall never be forgotten. It was not the night of Israel's deliverance alone, but it pictured that greater deliverance. For "Christ our Passover," has been "sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5. 7).

All down the centuries it pointed on to the Lamb of God who was to come to be God's Lamb and glorify Him about the whole question of sin, and open the way in which we might be delivered from this present evil world, and from the power of Satan, its prince.

Studying the type we shall find our hearts drawn out in delight in our Lord Jesus and in praise to our God and Father, while we learn more and more of the love of God wherewith we are loved, and of the place of privilege into which we have been brought.

"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you." A new beginning was to be theirs. The old order was to be set aside and a new period was to open. Thus the great importance of the time was to be marked in perpetuity.

For us who believe the gospel this may speak of our new birth, of REGENERATION. The time past of our life may suffice us. It was characterized by self and sin. In the mercy of God that period is closed for ever. A new era has dawned. A new life, a new birth-day, is ours now, that we "may live unto God."

The hour of Israel's departure from Egypt had come at last. Abraham had been told of the long sojourn of his posterity in a land

that was not theirs, and of the evil treatment they should endure. Now four hundred and thirty years had gone their way and their sojourn was to end. The clock had been set to strike at a determined time, and that time was now reached. For it is ever thus in the ways of God,

"God never is before His time  
And never is behind."

And so "it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord (verse 41).

In delivering Israel God would act in RIGHTEOUSNESS. The Israelites were sinful, as sinful as the Egyptians. A difference must be put between them. Thus we find the direction given by Jehovah unto Moses and Aaron, "They shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their father, a lamb for an house."

In this provision we may see illustrated,

1. The need of the sinner,
2. The grace of our God,
3. The work of our Saviour.

The sinner's sins must be atoned for. He must be redeemed by blood. God Himself in His grace provided the way of redemption, and Christ in His delight to do the will of God came and by His death on Calvary furnished the mighty work of redemption.

The passover was provided for all the firstborn of the houses. There was no distinction made among them. Some of them may have been much more sinful than others. Some of

them may have thought themselves worthy of deliverance and others may have judged themselves utterly unworthy. But *all* were guilty as sinners. *All* were exposed to the judgment. *All* alike needed the sheltering blood. And for *all* alike the sheltering blood was provided.

Faith carried out the directions given of God and sprinkled the blood outside the door. Faith rested within the house on what God had said.

The firstborn was cleared by the blood of the passover lamb. But Jehovah claimed the one who was cleared.

So we read in Exodus 13. 12 that "Thou shalt set apart unto the Lord" the firstborn. Whether of man or beast the males were to be the Lord's. And solemn were the words as to them, "And 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." "All the firstborn are mine" (Num. 3. 13.).

Now we may notice that the reading given in the margin of our Bibles shows that the Hebrew is "cause to pass over" unto the Lord." They were "set apart"—to "cause to pass over," the firstborn. Jehovah demanded them for Himself, they were His. Henceforth this was to be recognized by them. They were to hold themselves free for His service.

So it is that we read that Christians are viewed as belonging to God who has redeemed them. "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."

The Holy Spirit has come to take possession of the believer's body so that in the power that He gives, God may be glorified, glorified in our bodies by lives devoted to His interest.

We are His purchase by the precious blood of Christ.

We are His property now for His use.

His Spirit is in us with this end in view.

He is for us and we are for Him. We recognize the first thankfully as we hear the gospel. Let us recognize the latter and own to ourselves and to others that we are His and keep ourselves for His service as those who are "saved to serve." The body is for the Lord and the Lord for the body" (1 Cor. 6. 13). In temporal things we claim that that which is ours by purchase is for our service and we care for it. A watch bought by me is my servant. It is owned by me for my pleasure and use. And I care for it so that it may be of service. Now we have been bought for the service of God and are no longer our own. Our object henceforth is to glorify God. Shall we not thankfully say,

"Lord we are Thine; Thy claims we own,  
Ourselves to Thee we'd wholly give,  
Reign Thou within our hearts alone,  
And let us to Thy glory live."

Sheltered by the blood of the passover lamb the firstborn was to "pass over" to the Lord for His pleasure. God joined these two things.

So it is with us as Christians. Do not let us attempt to put asunder that which God hath joined. Let us not endeavour to have a half-Christ. We shall lose part of our highest privilege if we make the attempt. On the one hand we shall not enjoy our richest blessings in the presence of God. On the other

hand we shall miss the opportunity of earning the honour which the Father will give to those who follow the Lord Jesus in His footsteps here.

“Set apart for Himself” God has come in on our behalf and has raised us up from our death in trespasses and sins and quickened us together with Christ, creating us anew in Him. But He has wrought us thus for His pleasure “unto good works which He has before ordained that we should walk in them.” “Set apart” from the world which still lies in the wicked one. “Set apart” for God’s good pleasure entirely, and this sets us at liberty to be here for Himself.

And thus it is that the call comes to us to “present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our intelligent service.” And the exhortation follows, “Be not conformed to the world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

“Set apart” to God. “Set apart” from the world which has not known Him when revealed in Christ.

“Lo, I come to do Thy good pleasure,” said our Lord as He came into holy Manhood here (Psa. 40. 7, 8).

“Ministers of His which do His good pleasure” (Psa. 103. 21), is said of the angels, holy and unfallen.

“Teach me to do Thy good pleasure” (Psa. 143. 10), cries the Psalmist.

Shall we not echo his cry with all the heart’s deepest longings. We have within us the flesh ever self-seeking which would draw us towards the world and hinder our being for *Himself*. It would say, “Be for *yourself*.” But the Holy Spirit given to us and indwelling us is greater than he that is in the world and in His power we may overcome and be here for the accomplishment of the will of God. “Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly FOR HIMSELF” (Psa. 4. 3).

If we answer to His desire, acting in the light of our calling, we shall be qualified to be here for His glory and for the blessing of others.

Have you caused yourself to “pass over” to the Lord?

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## Christ and His Members.

Christ is exalted in heaven, but His body is on earth to be descriptive of Him here. The Holy Spirit dwells in each member of that body to this end. Now just as Christ was morally superior to every adverse influence when He was here, so now should His members be, and as in Him every heavenly grace shone out, so now should these graces be seen in His members, for the body is for the expression of what is in the Head. This is a truth we need to ponder well; it is an arresting and a challenging truth. Is it Christ or self that is seen in us? If we desire to know the reality and blessedness of it the Holy Spirit will help us. We may always rely upon His power.

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Preacher, do not substitute the word in fashion for the word in season.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

## On Confession to "priest" and "forgiveness."

Will you please explain through the pages of S. Truth verse 23 of the 20th chapter of the Gospel of John.

In a recent conversation it was said that this verse confirms the fact that people are right in going to a priest for confession, not believing he has the power to forgive sins, but to confess sins to God in the presence of a priest. Not being clear as to the exact meaning of the above verse I should be glad to have the answer in print to pass on.—LONDON.

**P**LEASE note that there is not a word about the confession of sin in these words of the Lord. To justify "the confessional" in Romish and ritualistic Churches, James 5. 16 is quoted, if Scripture is quoted at all. "Confess your faults, or offences, one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." But no so-called "priest" enters into this. If one has wronged his brother he simply confesses his fault to him and is forgiven; or if one is conscious of being sick under God's governmental hand for some offence, he may confess this to one in whom he has confidence and seek his prayers for healing. The general confession of sin to a man does not enter into it at all, nor is it found in Scripture. We confess to God, who is our Father, and He is faithful and just to forgive (1 John 1. 9).

The confession of sin to a "priest" was not made obligatory in the Romish Church until the 13th century, under Pope Inocent III. But that pope was one of the worst that ever ruled in Rome, his "cruelty, avarice and arrogance clouded the lustre of any good qualities which his panegyrists have thought proper to attribute to him" (Mossheim), and at that time the church had reached the very depths of darkness and superstition.

As to the passage in question, we admit the difficulty in the

interpretation of it, but one thing is certain, and that is that God alone can forgive sins and remit their eternal penalty, and we hold it to be one of the proofs of the Deity of the Lord Jesus, that He, the Son of Man, had power on earth to forgive sins. Here the Lord was giving His APOSTLES their commission with the special authority and power needed for its fulfilment. He had been in the world, sent by His Father, reconciling the world unto God, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and now the Apostles were to continue this mission, and to them the word of reconciliation was committed, that they, as ambassadors for Christ, might in Christ's stead beseech men to be reconciled unto God (2 Cor. 5). Their ministry was a ministry of grace and forgiveness to a guilty and rebellious world; they had to make known for the first time in the world's history that this was God's mind and attitude towards men. This we suggest is the primary force of the Apostle's commission as given to John.

This public proclamation of forgiveness was something entirely new. Repentant individuals who had cast themselves upon God's mercy, such as David, knew the blessedness of forgiveness in Old Testament days, but it was not publicly proclaimed, for that was the age of law, which meant just demand on God's part,

and condemnation where the demand was not answered. But now, since Christ who knew no sin had been made sin for us, all is changed, and the apostles were entrusted with the proclamation of the change, and we see how well Peter used it amongst the Jews at Pentecost and how zealous Paul was in carrying it to all nations, the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit were their great themes.

It was a very serious thing to refuse the Apostolic testimony. They were "unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one the savour of death unto death; and to the other a savour of life unto life" (2 Cor. 2. 15, 16), and John says, "He that knoweth God heareth us (the Apostles), and he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error" (1 John 4. 5, 6). And this abides, and the witness of the Apostles we still have in the God-inspired Scriptures. So that their commission is still in force, and those who believe the word of reconciliation that was committed to them are forgiven; they receive by faith what is in God's heart and mind for them, and the sins of those who reject that word are still retained upon them. Hence how serious is that modernistic teaching which ignores the Apostles, and raises the deceptive cry, Back to

Christ, for those who refuse the Christ whom the Apostles preached have no Christ at all.

There is, no doubt, involved in this commission what is called "administrative forgiveness," which has to say, not to a man's eternal relationship with God, but as to his reception into or exclusion from the privileges of that favoured sphere on earth where the Lord's Name is owned. Peter exercised the power of retaining sin in the case of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5; and again in the reception of the Samaritans, there would be the remitting and in the rejection of Simon the Sorcerer the retaining (ch. 8). And the same *authority in the Name of the Lord*, was exercised by Paul and the assembly at Corinth, in retaining sin upon the wicked person and excluding him from Christian fellowship until his repentance (1 Cor. 5), and in remitting his sin and receiving him again in 2 Cor. 2 (see Matthew 16. 19 and 18. 18). Ardicular confession and the monstrous claim on the part of a "priest" to absolve a "penitent" is a gross and wicked counterfeit of all this; it is an invention of the devil, and well calculated to harden the conscience of the sinner, and bind him the more effectually to the darkness of a false church, and so prevent him from coming to the feet of the living Saviour, where only true and eternal forgiveness can be found.

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## The Traitor and the Lord's Supper.

Arising out of the paper on the Lord's Supper in the June issue. I should like to ask, Does Scripture shew us that Judas partook of the Supper? I have heard it said that some ministers allow anyone to be at the Lord's Table because Judas partook of the Lord's Supper. And do the words "after supper" in Luke 22. 20, refer to the Passover Supper?—CAMBERWELL.

**WE** do not think that anything would be gained either one way

or the other, if we could settle this matter beyond question. One thing

is certain—the Lord made no difference on the night when He instituted the Supper between Judas and the other disciples. He washed his feet, for instance, as He did the others, and Judas partook of the Passover feast with the rest of them. What is important, and we are glad to have this opportunity of stressing it, is that the Supper and the act of betrayal are indissolubly bound up together in the Word. Luke only of the Evangelists, presents the Supper as a memorial feast, and in that Gospel the Lord's words follow the institution of it. "Behold, the hand of him that betrayeth Me is with Me at the table." Then in 1 Cor. 11, where, from the glory, the Lord has expressed His will for His church as to it, we read, that it was on "the same night on which He was betrayed" that He instituted it. As long as the Lord's Supper is eaten for a remembrance of Him by His saints on earth, so long will the night of the betrayal continue. It is the presence of the traitor that in one sense makes the perpetuation of the Supper a necessity; but we must not look round and enquire, is so—and so the traitor? for the traitor is the evil flesh that is in every one of us. But we gave in our June issue, as clearly as we were able, our view as to the reason for the join-

ing together of the Supper and the night of the betrayal, and to it we refer our correspondent and readers.

As to "anyone being allowed at the Lord's table." The Supper is not for anyone; it is for the members of the body of Christ alone, they have it as a memorial feast, none others have any right to it, for none others have anything to remember in respect to the death of the Lord. Where it has been degraded to a mere religious observance, we can understand indifference as to who takes part in it, but those who appreciate the blessedness of it will not be indifferent, they will seek grace to maintain what is due to the Lord in relation to it. We cannot read the heart, the Lord does this, and He knows them that are His. Only by their fruits can we know them, and we have to seek the grace of discernment so as to keep company with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart, and "follow righteousness, faith, charity and peace" with them; with such our fellowship is to be. Thus we are commanded in 2 Timothy 2. Apart from this there can be no fellowship according to God.

The Supper mentioned in Luke 22. 20 must have been the Passover Supper.

## Names blotted out of the Book of Life.

Does the statement, "I will not blot out his name out of the book of life," (Rev. 3. 10.) imply the converse, namely that he that does not overcome will have his name blotted out of the book of life?

Several have raised this question with me, and while I am at perfect peace in my own heart, I find it somewhat difficult to explain to others. As an example I enclose a letter from a friend with a reference to Moses, Exodus 32. —SWANSEA.

**T**HREE times in the Revelation we read of those whose names were not WRITTEN in the book of life,

and once of those who are WRITTEN there, and twice in relation to this writing the book is spoken of

as the Lamb's book of life" (ch. 13. 8; 17. 8; 20. 15; 21. 27). It is clear that there is no hope of salvation for those who are not written, and blessing only for those who are written there, and we conclude from this that the writing in this book is God's work, and that those who are written there can never be blotted out of it. It is sovereign grace that has done this writing, as Philip Doddridge put it in simple and beautiful verse,

"I was grace that wrote each name,  
In God's eternal book;  
"I was grace that gave us to the  
Lamb,  
Who all our burdens took."

The Lamb had to die to atone for the sins of those who are written in the book; it is the *heavenly* register of all the redeemed.

Then the book out of which names can be blotted must be another book; for surely names are to be blotted out; there would be no meaning or force in saying, "I will not blot his name out," if none were to be blotted out. This cannot be the Lamb's book of life. Let us consider the connection in which the words occur. Of the church at Sardis it is said, "Thou hast a name to live but art dead." Sardis represents a baptised profession, and Protestant too, while Thyatira represents the Romish system. How well and truly the Anglican catechism was anticipated in that charge, "Thou hast a *name* to live." We quote one question and answer from it.

"Who gave thee thy name?"

My godfathers and godmothers in my baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."

The outward rite of baptism could not make a child any of these things, only an inward work of grace could do that; but it places the one who undergoes it on the register of Christian profession in the world; he is christened outwardly; it gives him a name to live. And every one on that ground will be held to the responsibility that it entails, and dealt with accordingly at the coming of the Lord. The *reality* of the profession will be tested when He comes. He will find in this profession some who have not merely a name to live but who have life, who are not Christians in name merely but in reality, and these He will confess before His Father and His angels. This confessing on the Lord's part is the very opposite to blotting out, and it seems clear that every true Christian will be an overcomer; the fact of their *living* in spite of prevailing death would be evidence of this. But at the coming of the Lord those who are professors only will be blotted out, the very name of Christian will be theirs no more, they will be judged with the world. The Lord's coming "as a thief," indicates this (verse 3).

As to Moses (Exodus 32), the heavenly counsels and purposes of God had not been revealed in his day, and the reference to God's book out of which He would blot those who had sinned could only have reference to His purposes for Israel. He had redeemed them all out of Egypt, "but with many of them He was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness" (1 Cor. 10. 5). He had brought them out, but because they did always err in their ways He swore in His wrath that they should not enter into His rest (Hebrews 3. 10, 11).

## “ A GOODLY PRICE.”

*“ If the ox shall push a manservant or a maidservant (slaves), he (the owner) shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned ” (Exodus 21. 33).*

*“ And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them ” (Zechariah 11. 12, 13).*

*“ Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver ” (Matthew 26. 14, 15).*

*“ Then Judas, which had betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, . . . and he cast down the silver in the temple . . . and they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in ” (Matthew 27. 3-10).*

Under the Mosaic law, if a slave were killed by being gored by an ox, the master of the slave was to be recompensed by the payment of thirty pieces of silver. Thirty pieces of silver was therefore regarded as the value of a slave. And such was the sum at which the Lord of glory was valued by the people whom He had come to bless! Judas may have haggled for more, we are sure he did, but beyond that price those leaders of Israel would not go, for in their estimation the Nazarene was worth no more. Was His heart indifferent to this contemptuous valuation of Himself? Does not His grief find vent in the exclamation of pained surprise, “ A goodly price that I was prised at of them ” (Zech. 11)?

In an infinite compassion He had come down from His glory to serve and save men, “ not to be ministered unto, but to minister,” and this too comes out in Zechariah's prophecy, for it would seem that the concluding sentence of Zechariah 13. 5 should read, “ For man has acquired Me as a bondman from My youth.” He took the bondman's place in the greatness of His love, to be at man's disposal for his blessing, but these proud leaders of the people taking advantage of this lowly grace treated Him with contempt as they would treat a slave, and paid for Him a bondman's price, and finally crucified Him.

And what was His answer to this contemptuous treatment? “ Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”

## THE LORD IN THE HOME.

J. T. Mawson

*"And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James an'd John. But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell Him of her. And He came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them"* (Mark 1. 29-31).

**T**H**ERE** are some who would confine the Lord to the Sunday services, and when they are over, they would lock the door of their place of worship, as they call it, and would shut Him inside and live the rest of the week without any reference to Him. But I venture to say that if all they know about the Lord is confined to one day a week they don't know Him at all, and further, those who really know Him would say that if they could only know Him in the Sunday services He would be of little more value to them than are the gods of the heathen to their devotees. They need Him every day. Moreover, the Lord will not be confined to one day a week, or to what we might term the religious side in our lives. He loves us too well for that, and He delights to be with us in our homes and to mingle with us in the joys and sorrows of our everyday life. I proclaim an everyday Saviour, a domestic Saviour, who understands domestic difficulties and knows how to meet them by His own power and grace.

*"Forthwith He went into the house of Simon"*—straight from the synagogue into the house. I am sure that Simon asked Him to go with him, but I am equally sure that He made Simon feel that it was the one thing He desired to do. And there was trouble in Simon's house, his wife's mother lay sick of a fever and the whole house

was disordered. What was it that had brought that fever on her? Let us reverently read something into the story that may not be out of place, and may the lesson help us all. Not long before this, Simon had given up a lucrative calling. He had abandoned boat and nets and fishes to follow the Lord, and Simon's wife's mother saw very plainly that the Lord had nothing, not even a home; He was a poor man without a place to lay His head, and if Simon followed Him, would he not be homeless too? It seemed a foolish thing that Simon had done, and his mother-in-law, practical body that she was, began to wonder and to worry about her daughter. And Simon was so headstrong a man, it was no use talking to him. The mother-in-law would have to shoulder the whole burden, so she supposed, and see that her daughter and the children did not want. And so she set to planning through sleepless nights, and the more she planned the more anxious she became, and anxiety deepened into continual worry until she lay fevered, sick and helpless. It was her love for those she dearly loved that brought it all about, and she did not understand that the more she worried about them, the less she was able to help them. May that not have been the cause of the fever? Anyhow, whether that was the cause of it or not, there it was to the grief of them all.

We are going to travel from Simon's house to your's and see if the story does not touch you somewhere. Somehow things are askew with you and you have worried and planned about them but your worry has not straightened them out, and the more you have considered your difficulties the more they have seemed to be in a hopeless tangle, until you are indeed sick of a fever, and you are adding by your fevered spirit to the difficulties that you have wanted to solve, and to the burdens that you have longed to lift from the shoulders of others. It will be well for you to face the question, not of these difficulties first, but of your own condition, and the worried and perplexed state of your heart. But let us return to Simon's house. The Lord made Himself at home there, and they, the household, became so conscious of His sympathetic interest in them, that they tell Him of the sick woman.

How wonderful is this to us, especially when we remember who He was, the High and Holy One, that inhabiteth eternity, and before whom the hosts in heaven bow down in worship, yet Simon's family was not afraid of Him, to them He was so gracious, so accessible, that they could bring their trouble to Him, talk to Him about it. He is the same to-day, He invites our confidences and wants us to let Him into our homes and lives. I heard of someone the other day who had burdens, personal and otherwise, and who longed for someone to whom he could tell them, but knew no one whom he could trust. Simon's family did not feel like that about Jesus, nor need we feel like that about Him.

Mark's laconic style makes it all very vivid. "Anon they tell Him

of her. And He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up." He passed at once into that inner chamber and the moanings of the sick woman ceased as He took her hand, her pulse steadied, her temperature slid down to normal, she was instantly calmed. One touch of that sympathetic but almighty hand changed everything. Contact with Jesus assuaged the fever, and *He lifted her up*. He did not leave her lying in a state of helplessness, there was no period of convalescence. She did not need to know Him a long time before she could trust Him wholly about her daughter and the family and every other trouble. His touch, His look, were enough, she had nothing to fear if He was near, and she stands up—*the fever gone, and she ministers to them*. What a change! What a Saviour is our Lord!

I know the sort of woman she was, nothing gave her greater pleasure than to be serving those whom she loved; but the fever had stricken her down, she could do nothing to help them and had become a burden to those she would have served. But now she is free again, her heart can express itself in her activities, she can resume her normal life and serve the household that she loved, and she must have done it as she had never done it before. Her experience of her own weakness in the fever, and the strength that Jesus had imparted to her by His touch had made her wholly new in the way she served. His touch had transmuted the poor metal of her love into calm, unselfish, unostentatious service.

Again let us travel from Simon's house to yours, and instead of thinking of his mother-in-law, think of

you. It is the contact with Jesus you need. His touch—"I will give you rest," He says, "Ye shall find rest to your souls." How wonderful it will be for you when you do find this rest! What a priceless treasure it is! Then will it be said of you, "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength." Then will you be a help and not a hindrance in your home, a glad servant of others' need, and the service you render will be the service of love, love first to the Lord, and then to others.

Now let us bring to the Lord our burdens and cares. Our homes may be His kingdom. The world's door is a closed door, bolted and barred

against Him, but we may open the doors of our homes to Him and constrain Him to come in, and when in answer to our request He becomes our Guest, we may tell Him all, and let Him take charge of things, our Guest, but also our Lord. There is no detail too small for His grace and no trouble too great for His power. It makes a difference when the father and mother bend their knees in secret before Him, and it increases the blessing when the family is drawn into the daily habit of prayer. If He is asked and allowed to handle things, peace and order and contentment will be the result, and the humblest home will be transformed into a royal dwelling if the Lord is there.

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## The Bottle or the Spring.

**H**AGAR'S bottle soon ran dry in the desert, and it may be that her distress and disappointment thereat blinded her eyes to an un-failing spring that was close at hand. Anyhow, she is a forlorn and pathetic figure crouching on those desert sands, about a bow-shot from her dying lad. Cast out from her home, her son was her world and her life, and now that "*the water was spent in the bottle,*" what was there for him and for her but death. But Hagar's extremity was God's opportunity, and He turned her eyes from the empty bottle to the inexhaustible spring. What an eager, happy woman she must have been

as the life-giving drops of that water bathed and revived the lips and throat of her dying boy!

Are we depending on the bottle, perhaps trying to extract some drops from its dryness? Hear the Word of the living God, "I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Discard the bottle and rejoice in the fountain. The bottle may even be some favourite preacher, some religious service, something that may be right in its place, but it is not the fountain and it will run dry and disappoint. The fountain is inexhaustible, it is Christ.

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Whenever we speak of Christ to one another, He will always be there, listening to and hearing our conversation (Mal. 3. 16). If we desire His company, let us talk together of Him.

## “CONSIDER HIM.”

M. B.

IN Hebrews 3. 1 those who are called “holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,” are exhorted to *consider* the Apostle and High Priest of their profession—Christ Jesus.

The word *consider* is one used of an astronomer as he fixes his telescope and all his attention on one particular star. And who is this upon whom we are to concentrate our gaze? It is Christ Jesus—the unfading Star in our heaven. What a contrast is He with the stars in the firmament of men, who flare up but for a short day and then fade ignominiously into obscurity and darkness! Christ Jesus shines continuously with ever-increasing beauty, He ever liveth, and as the eyes of our hearts consider Him, crowned with glory and honour, and at the right hand of the Majesty on high for us, more and more intently our affections are drawn towards Him. Again we are called to consider Him—Jesus—the author and finisher of faith—the A to Z of the revelation of God. He who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame. The joy of

accomplishing the purposes of God, His Father, through the work of the cross which ensures our blessing as part of the fulfilment of those purposes, enabled Him to count the shame and sufferings, even though they were the most cruel that men energised by Satan could devise—as small in comparison.

When the way is difficult and rough, consider Him! When disappointment, discouragement and dismay would burden our hearts, consider Him! When suffering of any kind, but especially for His sake is our portion—let us consider Him, our joy and goal—already as our Forerunner set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Turn faith’s transpiercing gaze upon Him, use faith’s telescope; trace His journey from the glory to Bethlehem and to Nazareth, and on to Gethsemane and Calvary and onward and upward to the glory—Look off unto Jesus; look away from all others, and draw your strength from Him.

“O fix our earnest gaze  
So wholly, Lord, on Thee  
That with Thy beauty occupied  
We elsewhere none may see.”

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## THE HAND OF THE LORD AND HIS BOSOM.

“*Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand?*” (Isaiah 40. 12).

“*He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom*” (Isaiah 40. 11).

THERE have been times in our lives when we were self-willed, and apparently untameable, like the great sea. If God writes the story of those days, and indeed He has written it, and if He shews it to us, and indeed He will shew it to us, then what a gasp of astonishment will break from us as we

realize the perils we were often in when we raged against restraint. Yet as the sea lies in the hollow of God’s hand and is restrained in all its fierce wrath by His power, so were we in those days held and restrained by Him. We were in the hollow of His hand. We felt the restraint, chafed at it and endeavor

oured to break from it, but we could not. How great is God and how strong, and how small are we and puny. But how shall we bless that mercy for ever that held us in bounds and kept us back from destruction? His hand holds the tumultuous waves in check but He carries His lambs in His bosom. If we are subject to Him, conscious of our need of Him, not self-willed, but delighting to be near to Him we shall surely know the love and

protection of His bosom. But what a word it is! His hand upholds creation but His bosom is the place of rest for His lambs. All creation must acknowledge His power, its wildest forces are held in check by Him, His bosom is open for the weakest of His lambs, they know His love. And if He has restrained us by His mighty hand it is that we might know the rest and the safety and joy of His bosom.

## ALWAYS CONFIDENT.

J. T. M.

When a dear and well known sister in the Lord knew that her illness must have a speedy and fatal end, she quietly said: "Now is my salvation nearer than when I believed."

Nearer and nearer draws my great salvation,  
 My hope and joy since when I first believed;  
 The will of God I meet with approbation,  
 His hand upholds me and I'm not deceived.

While perishes my earthly habitation,  
 Before my soul there shines the glory bright,  
 Where God's rich thoughts in their full aggregation  
 Shall prove to me that all His ways are right.

I tread the valley without trepidation  
 For where I am, my Lord will surely be,  
 Before His face, foes fly in consternation,  
 And leave the road to JESUS and to me.

One step, and I shall reach my destination—  
 This have I learnt from God's most faithful word—  
 Freed from this tired body's limitation,  
 Absent from here, but present with the Lord.

There to await the glorious consummation—  
 With bodies changed into His likeness fair—  
 Living and dead, one saintly congregation,  
 Shall see their Lord, and meet Him in the air.

Nearer and nearer draws my great salvation,  
 The fight is won and finished is my race,  
 My heart is filled with holy exultation;  
 I go to meet my Saviour face to face.

# THE SYMBOLISM OF EZEKIEL I.

(A few suggestions)

Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
The Lion	The Ox	<i>The Man</i>	The Eagle
The King	The <i>Servant</i>	Humanity	Divinity
Royalty	Patience	Sympathy	Soaring
Dignity	Strength	.	Divine aspiration
Courage	Endurance		Swiftness

**I**N the first place they appear to be upon the Throne.

These living creatures figure our blessed Lord as Son of Man. "They had the likeness of a Man" (5). "A Throne and the appearance of a man upon it" (26). Four *faces*, and four *Gospels*, to reveal the "Man, Christ Jesus." The *symbolism* is very illuminating, whilst its moral application is abundantly clear.

We all need equipoise, evenness, or balance. Some are all eagle, and apt to become dreamy, unpractical mystics, as a very zealous Bible teacher of my acquaintance, a baker by trade, who, whilst engrossed in Paul, or absorbed in Peter, let his bread burn in the oven so frequently that he came to earth in the bankruptcy court.

Then there is the all-lion man, who lacks the divinity of the eagle, the patience of the ox, and the sympathy of the man. Left to himself he easily becomes a hard materialist. He would storm hell itself. He is a born fighter. Pugnacious and aggressive, he makes a first-class fighting protestant: a bold and valiant open-air preacher, and finds his place quite naturally among the Gaddites (1 Chron. 12. 8), whose "faces are as the faces of lions."

**SAMSON** was one of these, but for lack of the divinity of the eagle, he got his head in Delilah's lap, and his locks at the mercy of her scissors; yea, and in the end, lost his precious eyesight, then life itself. There was **BENAIAH**, who slew two lion-like men of Moab, and actually one snowy day, slew a lion in a pit.

Prominent among these lion-like men was Eleazer, the son of Dod, who, with David, stood in a barley field and slew an army of the Philistines. Yet probably all these lacked the patience of the ox, for by far the vast majority of these lion-like men are one-sided.

A kingly man is inspiring; an eagle-man enlightening. An all-eagle man may carry you to heaven's gate, then drop you into space. He may tell you many high and wonderful things, yet allow you to pine your heart away for want of a word of sympathy.

An ox-like man may be as patient as Job, yet allow his barns to burn out while he is getting out of his chair.

A Luke-like man may be as sympathetic as a tender mother yet altogether lack the spiritual aspiration of the eagle, and the boldness of the lion.

With Christ there was a perfect equipoise. The "fine flour" of the meal offering beautifully expresses the evenness of His perfect character.

An eagle soaring through the heavens is useless for ploughing and plodding; but the miracle of the new life is that it is capable of both.

The highest ambition, shall I say the *only* ambition, of every believer should be the life that pleases God, the Christ-life—well pleasing to the Father.

Stennet, the puritan, in his hymn of 1697, commencing "O Blessed Saviour is Thy love," reminds me of an Imperial Cupbearer pressing out the grapes into a golden cup. He seems therein to press out the Christology of the four Gospels, whilst the sixth stanza seems to express all I would like to say on this affecting subject.

"Like Thee in faith, in meekness, love,  
In every beauteous grace:  
From glory unto glory changed  
'Till we behold Thy face."

"Every beauteous grace." A true, well balanced Christian life is as a brilliant with four facets.

If, in our lives, we do not present the four sides of our Lord's character, we are grossly misrepresenting Him. A one-sided testimony is as far as can be from the truth. Volumes might be written to illustrate the tragedy of a one-sided life.

THE LIFE OF THE LORD WAS OMNIFORM PERFECTION. There was no moral specialism in His perfect life. From whichever point of the moral compass you look, absolute perfection meets your eye, and, that which is of infinitely more importance, the Father's also.

The Living Creatures had "WINGS" and "FEET." Heavenly and earthly. To soar to heaven and

to walk on earth. "Stretched upward" (11) heavenly, looking to God. "Unto Thee lift I up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens" (Psalm 123). "They looked to Him and were lightened" (Psalm 34. 5). "Set your affections on things above" (Col. iii. 2).

Their "wings were joined together" (verse 9). No overlapping or sordid motives, emulation or strife. No getting in the way of each other. "Let there be no strife between me and thee," said Abraham to Lot (Gen. 13. 8).

But there was more than unity for, THEY KISSED ONE ANOTHER (ch. 3. 13, *Marg.*) Perfect harmony. Fancy an Angel with one wing! What magnificent two winged ministries are to be found in Scripture, e.g., David and Jonathan—Paul and Barnabas.

"THEY COVERED THEIR BODIES" (11). Conscious imperfection. Cf. Isaiah 6. Two wings to fly with—Service. Two wings to *hide* with—Self-extinction.

"And they had the hands of a man under their wings." Skill without display. Earthly activities covered by heavenly progress. Only that which is of God may be seen.

Further—"THEIR FEET WERE STRAIGHT" (7). Note the difference between the feet of Cherubim and Seraphim in Isaiah 6. Here it is *service*, and therefore they are displayed. There it is *worship*, therefore they "cover their feet." Straight feet for straight paths.

"THEY WENT EVERY ONE STRAIGHT FORWARD." No crookedness. Abraham's crookedness cost him the censure of a heathen king, whilst Isaac was put to shame in a similar way by Abimelech. Peter's double dealing brought

upon him the stern rebuke of Paul; whilst, on the contrary, Jabez—1 Chron. 4. 9—is immortalized because he was “more honourable than his brethren.” Jacob’s crookedness cost him many years of misery, but the names of the three Hebrew children are the synonym for honour and straight-dealing.

“THEIR FEET WERE LIKE THE SOLE OF A CALF’S FOOT.” Dividing the hoof and chewing the cud. *Separation and meditation*: suggesting that beautiful word in 2 Cor. 6., “Come out,” saith the Lord, verse 17, and you shall come in: “I will receive you.”

THEIR FEET WERE “SPARKLING” FEET (7). Shod with the golden gospel of righteousness and peace. “Burning.” Not *expiring* as in 1 Sam. 3. 3, or “going out” as the lamps of the foolish virgins in Matt. 25. But “Shining” as John the Baptist. “And they that be wise shall *shine* as the brightness of the firmanent” (Dan. 13. 3). Some shine as the moon, clear but cold. John burned as the seven lamps of Rev. 4. 5, which are the seven Spirits of God (perfection of spiritual energy) or as the undying altar fires of Israel (Lev. 4). “As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire . . . the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.” Not only a “burning” and “shining” but a “lightning” ministry.

“THE LIVING CREATURES RAN AND RETURNED AS THE APPEARANCE OF A FLASH OF LIGHTNING.” No loitering, but swift obedience, dispatch and celerity. This is the ministry the Church needs to-day. Men who *run* as a *flash—burn* as a *fire*—and *shine* as *lamps*.

These living creatures who dwell in the devouring fire and the everlasting burnings of the Holy Place, are so integral a part of it that they themselves are described as “flames of fire” (Psalm 104. 4).

Now observe the CONCURRENT ACTION OF “WINGS” AND “WHEELS” (19). Unity of action. “Wheels,” human agencies under divine direction. “Wheels within wheels” (v. 16). “As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful”; suggesting Cowper’s lines—

“Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of never-failing skill,  
He treasures up His vast designs  
And works His sovereign will.”

“Vast designs.” “Rings so high.”

“THE WHEELS AND THEIR WORK” (16). “They four had one likeness.” Omniform—yet uniform. Polygonal, yet one likeness. Perfect balance and equipoise. Nothing lacking. Not one trait at the expense of another, but the lion, ox, man, and eagle forming one perfect character. “One likeness.” Such is Christ.

“THEIR APPEARANCE AND THEIR WORK” (16). No disparity. Perfect agreement between *appearance* and *action*.

“THE SPIRIT OF THE LIVING CREATURES WAS IN THE WHEELS” (20). A symbolic foreword upon Romans 8. 14.

“Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, . . . and when those stood these stood” (20, 21). “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

The “spirit” of the living creature agreed exactly with its symbolic appearance. The spirit was the quintessence of its quadruple signification, and permeated as well as in-

spired their work. Perfect accord between "their appearance and their work."

THAT WHICH EZEKIEL I. SYMBOLIZES THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES REALIZES. Let one illustrious example suffice. In Acts 16. 6, "They—Paul and Barnabas—were bidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the Word in Asia." "Where those stood, these stood" (Ezek. i. 21). "They assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not." Then follows verse 10, the "Assuredly gathering." "Whither the Spirit went, they went."

In conclusion, we learn that "NOISE" AND "SOUND" HAVE THEIR PLACE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD. "I heard the noise of their wings" (24). "When thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself, for then shall the Lord go out before thee" (2 Sam. 5. 24). Then come the solemn and awe-inspiring words in Acts 2. 2: "There came a sound from heaven." "And

they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak—not according to their emotions, but "as the Spirit gave them utterance." Sound and fruit. Bells and pomegranates (Ex. 28). Our Great High Priest went in to Heaven after His redemptive work, having secured incorruptible fruit for God, and the Holy Ghost came out with a "sound" as of a rushing, mighty wind." Word and work. Only let us seek to be filled with the Spirit, then we shall have—in our small measure, as the Apostles had in their large measure, the boldness of the "lion"—the endurance and strength of the "ox"—the human sympathy of the "man"—and the heavenly aspirations of the "eagle."

Let us not be asking God to give us more of His Spirit, but rather let us seek to give the Spirit more of ourselves. He, in unison with the "Man upon the Throne" is in the 'wings,' 'wheels' and 'Rings,' directing the providential agencies and the vast designs beneath the firmament.

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*"Thou understandest my thoughts" (Psalm 139).*

Before men we are like opaque beehives. They see thoughts coming out of us in words and deeds, but those that are hidden and unexpressed, yet are the very essence of our characters, they do not know, but God sees them; He has searched us, we can hide nothing from Him.

*"Thou hast beset me behind and before" (Psalm 139).*

If one feared to meet God and turned to flee from Him it would be unavailing, He is before and behind us; but how blessed if we desire to follow Him. Then He is not only before us as our Leader, but behind us as our rear guard and shield.

*"Praise ye the Lord."* Once more, Hallelujah! So the book of the Psalms closes. And that shall be the result of all the goodness of God to you, my brother. But do not wait until you come to the full end of His mercies to praise Him, Do it now. Praise for a moment now, and worship the Lord thy God. Hallelujah!

# “LET US EXALT HIS NAME TOGETHER.”

L. R.

WITH the Lord's gracious enabling I desire to thank the readers of "Scripture Truth," who in past years have helped me by their prayers and sympathy, and more recently, in the great sorrow that has come to me through the home-going of my beloved husband, to whose counsel and encouragement so much of what I have written is due.

When the last farewell was said on earth, there were those who, like Mary's friends, "came to comfort me concerning him." We spoke of him and of the long years he and I had had together, and they contrasted the godless, loveless marriages that are too often made, with ours. I said, "The sad thing is, they spoil the picture," and they asked, "What do you mean?" Then I tried to tell them in very simple words, what you know so well, beloved reader, that God intended the union of Adam and Eve in Eden, the union of man and wife on earth, to be a picture in miniature of the mystical union of Christ and the church (Eph. 5. 32). I said, "if God had spoken in the language of heaven we could not have understood it; when St. Paul was caught up into Paradise he heard unspeakable words which it was not possible for a man to utter, and so God speaks to us in words we can understand, and uses the most beautiful thing we know—the love of the bridegroom for the bride—to explain to us that most wonderful love of all, the love of the Lord Jesus for His church, the one pearl for which He sold all that He had." They said, "how beautiful! why have we never heard it before? Do tell these things to others in simple words that they can understand."

So I am telling you; if you have long known and enjoyed this precious truth, you are, I am sure, never tired of hearing it, and never tired of telling it to others; and if you have never known in your own experience that "Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it," and that He loves the church to-day with love passing all human thought, I pray my little story may awaken in your heart the desire to know Him and His great love, and awaken, too, the glad response which shall give Him joy. It was said once that "Love must have love" and it is ever true.

How many different figures the Lord uses to tell us of His love! of all that He would make Himself to our hearts were we but a little more receptive.

As sinners, He shed His precious blood that He might be our SAVIOUR and He saves evermore those who come unto God by Him.

As foolish sheep, alas, too prone to stray, He is to us the GOOD SHEPHERD who gave His life, the GREAT SHEPHERD who rose again, the CHIEF SHEPHERD who is coming.

He claims our joy for obedience for He is our LORD, and knowing how ignorant we are, He is our TEACHER.

He is our GREAT HIGH PRIEST, our ADVOCATE, our FRIEND, and these words connote all the highest and best, that words can reach, in each relationship, and far beyond; if one may say it He exhausts the possibilities of human speech, and even so, the half cannot be told.

Again, He is the "Beloved," the One in Whom the Father finds all His pleasure and in Whom He hath

made us "accepted." Thus we may take account of ourselves not as the failing, sinful beings we know so well, but as "graced" in Him, beautiful with His beauty in His Father's sight. Also when we pray it is to be "in His Name." Who can ever measure the worth of that precious Name except our God and Father to Whom our prayer is made? It may be said that all this has been said before, is well known, even familiar to readers of "Scripture Truth," but we forget, and going over the dear familiar things may often warm our hearts and, as we sing, "kindle within us a holy desire."

As I write, the thought is pressed home on me, how easily these lines may be the last, for the Lord awaits the blest moment when He shall present to Himself "a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. 5. 27), and our hearts would have it so. Well may we ask, is He to have no fruit of His toil? But perhaps there is another question we should ask with deep soul-searching—How much do we want Him to come again? Do we want Him enough to pray daily, hourly almost, "Come

Lord Jesus"? I have sometimes wondered if He tarries for want of the response in His bride. Do we want Him enough to tell those around us of His coming? for there are still so many who have never heard it yet—not fixing dates, but just speaking out of our own joy in waiting. Again we may ask what will it be to Him to have "His wife" made ready, meet for Him, in the place where He can tell forth His love to her without stint or hindrance? What will it be to the myriads of suffering saints who in one glad moment shall leave it all to be with Him? What will it be to the creation which groans and travails? or to the world in which so many evil things abound?—war, slavery, fear, death; and yet it is His inheritance which He shall surely claim at length, and gather out of His kingdom all the things that offend.

I have tried to tell you in a few words the way the Lord has brought me through, and the thoughts of Him which have been my solace. I know your hearts and mine are saying, "Come Lord Jesus." May it be soon for His Name's sake. Amen.

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"*The Lord shall preserve thy going out and coming in.*" Whether going out to your public life in the morning and coming in to your private life in the evening; or going out at the beginning of an enterprise, or coming in when it is completed; or from your very earliest days, when the battle of life begins or coming in at its close when the fight is over. This is the portion of the one who wholly trusts the Lord.

"*The Lord shall preserve.*" The word preserve, *shamar*, has a most tender meaning; from it comes *stemwroth*, signifying the eyelids, because they are the keepers of the eye. Every motion of the eyelid is for the good of the eye. And you, believer, are as the apple of God's eye. He shall preserve you.

## THE GREAT SUPPER.

James Boyd.

Luke 14.

OUR Lord had entered into the house of one of the chief Pharisees on the Sabbath day to eat bread. We read, "Then said He also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours, lest they bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Hearing these things, one that sat at meat with Him said unto Him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. Then said He unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many."

The supper is the celebration of the grace of God that reigns through righteousness. Whether God acts in grace or in judgment He must act righteously. He would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, but how can righteousness be maintained and the sinner saved? How is God to be a just God and a Saviour? The cross of Christ is the sole answer to that. There God executed righteousness. There sin came under His unsparing judgment. There He shewed how He hates sin. It was before Him at the cross. He dealt with it as it deserved. There was no pity shewn to it. Not an element of compassion was mingled with the blackness and darkness of that terrible hour, when from the midst of that mysterious scene was heard the bitter cry: "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU

FORSAKEN ME?" At that Cross God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Judgment has been executed, righteousness has been accomplished, God has been glorified, and He who submitted to that judgment has been glorified by God, and now God can take the place of A JUST GOD AND A SAVIOUR.

All this has been accomplished through the Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus, the Man of God's counsels, who gave Himself for our sins, who took the place of the sinbearer, that God might show in the judgment that fell upon Him how loathsome sin was in His sight, and how fearful the judgment that He should mete out to it. But first of all, He, the Son eternal, the Creator of the universe, passed through this world making the Father known in His true character, and bearing all the indignity that those who hated God could subject Him to. He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; He hid not His face from shame and spitting, and was led to the cross as a lamb to the slaughter.

The work has been done, and God is glorified by it, Satan is defeated. The love of God has been fully declared. It is now seen that God loved a world that hated Him. Christ is on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. Sin no longer stands as a barrier between God and the blessing of the sinner, grace has found a righteous channel through which it can flow to the ends of the earth. Is not this a matter for rejoicing? But who are

to rejoice in it? Who are the gainers? We know who it was who suffered to bring glory to God and blessing to men. Then let the work be celebrated. God calls us together to rejoice with Him. Should our hearts not be glad? Should we not shout aloud for joy? Let us come to this great supper. The God of all grace is now free, and not only free, but gloriously ready and willing to bless needy sinners. God desires all men to come, and with hearts responsive to the grace that calls them, partake of the rich provision He has secured for them at the infinite cost of the suffering and death of His only begotten Son. God is now, through the work that Christ has accomplished, as just in showing grace to the sinner, as without that work He would have been just in His exercise of judgment. He would have all men to be saved, and the ransom of the Mediator having opened a way of salvation for all, He freely invites all to joyfully partake with Him in His celebration of the glorious accomplishment of the work of redemption.

To the religious leaders of the Jewish nation He first sent His hearty invitation: "Come; for all things are now ready." But every one of them had something else to attend to. They coolly refused to pay the slightest respect to the glorious work that has opened a way of salvation for a race of fallen sinners. No wonder the Master of the house was angry when the servant reported to Him their disrespect of His gracious message. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so

great salvation?' Escape is impossible for us, "If we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven" (Heb. 2. 3; 12. 25).

Nothing but a sense of the need of our immortal souls will cause any mortal man to embrace God's way of salvation, and enter into the joy that God has in our deliverance. Therefore He sends the second time His servant, not to the proud, religious leaders of Jews, but to the needy. In this message sent by the Master we can feel that the Spirit is feeling the insult offered to Him by the bidden ones. He says: "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind." It is now—*Bring them in.*" The servant was to take no refusal. Indeed needy souls do not refuse the grace of God. Those that feel no need are ever full of the spirit of refusal. "The full soul loatheth a honeycomb, but to the hungry every bitter thing is sweet." The servant has now only to say: "Lord, it is done as Thou hast commanded, and yet there is room." Now the needy are to be found where they wander on the highways, or where they shelter under the hedges. These are to be *compelled to come in*, in order that the house may be filled; for those who were *bidden*, not one of them are to taste of the supper prepared by the Master. They could do without Him, and therefore He shall do without them. Those found upon the highways, or under the hedges, represent the far-off Gentiles, and they are brought in last of all.

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A young man's question, "*Wherewithall shall a young man cleanse his way?*"

A wise man's answer, "By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word."

# THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS.

J. T. Mawson.

No. 7. Continued from page 180.

*Ques.: There will be many who will enter into blessing under the reign of the Lord in the Millennium; if the judgment is to be world-wide, who will these be?*

They will be a remnant of Israel, and a great company of Gentiles, and as God's dealings with these two will be different, it will be well to consider them separately. For this the Lord's words in Matthew 24 will help us. Under the godless, devil-inspired domination of the Beast and Antichrist there "shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (verse 21). These words are from the Lord's own lips, which fact gives them a special force. But in the midst of that tribulation which will beat more fiercely on the Jews than upon any other people, the Lord will have His elect, and for their sake the days will be shortened (verse 22). The elect of this verse will be found among the Jews, and in verse 31 there are others who are to be gathered together from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other; these are probably not only Jews, that is, men of the tribe of Judah, but also of the whole of Israel. They are elect, which means the Sovereign mercy of God has chosen them. But how will they be distinguished from the rest of the rebellious people? God's way has always been to bring such to light by a testimony from Himself, and the testimony then will be the gospel of the kingdom. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a wit-

ness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (verse 14).

This gospel will not be the gospel of the grace of God, which tells of full redemption in Christ, and the sealing of the Holy Spirit and of heavenly hopes, which we have heard and believed; though it will be a gospel of grace surely, and Christ will be the theme of it, or it would be no gospel at all, but it will tell of the coming of the Lord as King, of His kingdom to be established on the earth as John the Baptist and the Lord Himself and His disciples proclaimed when He was here. It will be the proclamation of His supremacy over all, and the test will be, whether this Word of God and testimony of Jesus is received or rejected. Those who receive the mark of the Beast in their foreheads and hands and worship his image, will not receive it, but those who refuse that delusion of the devil will; and by this testimony, not only the nation of the Jews, but all nations will be sharply divided. And as those who will be for the beast and Antichrist will at that time be in the ascendancy, those who are for Christ will suffer great persecution. Many will be martyred, and have a heavenly reward, for they will have part in "the first resurrection and shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years (Rev. 20. 4). Others will be preserved and sustained by the Lord through the tribulation and will endure to the end, and they shall be saved for the Millennium kingdom (Matt. 24. 13). We must bear in mind that Matthew 24 has this time of tribulation in view and

does not apply to the present time.

*Ques.: Two questions arise in the mind from what you have said. 1st. Does it mean that there will be a second chance for those who reject the gospel now and may be alive then? 2nd. Who will preach this gospel of the kingdom?*

There will certainly be no second opportunity for those who have refused God's salvation as it is now preached, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" The gospel of the grace of God is God's best; if the best does not appeal to the heart of a man, nothing else will. But there are hundreds of millions in the world who have never heard the gospel, and who know nothing of the Christian faith, except as some of them have seen it, so horribly corrupted as in Roman Catholic and Greek church lands. Pernicious books have been published in which it has been taught, that some who do not receive Christ as Saviour now, will refuse to yield to antichrist and suffer martyrdom, but the Word says, "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess. 10-12). That surely is conclusive, as are many other Scriptures.

As to who will proclaim this gospel, we learn from Revelation 11. that a new testimony to God will be given in Jerusalem by two witnesses, raised up and empowered by God, and though the majority will rejoice when they are slain, we may be sure that their witness will not be in vain. The Spirit of God will use it and the remnant will be born

again. They will be "an afflicted and poor people and they shall trust in the Name of the Lord" (Zephaniah 3. 12). The Lord's words to His apostles in Matthew 10 and Luke 21 will have a special reference to them, and they will go forth to speak with "a mouth of wisdom" that He will give them. In Matthew 25. 40 the Lord speaks of them as "these My brethren." "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it"

*Ques.: How will the Lord appear to this elect remnant?*

He will appear when the tribulation-persecution of the Jewish nation under the Antichrist will have reached its height, and His coming will bring it to an end. All nations will be gathered against Jerusalem and the city shall be taken, "then the Lord shall go forth and fight against those nations" (Zechariah 14). His appearing will be the destruction of those foes, but it will be the deliverance of the godly Jews who are looking for Him. "To them that look for Him shall He appear unto their salvation" (Heb. 9. 28). "His feet shall stand in that day on the mount of Olives . . . and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley . . . and they shall flee the valley of the mountains . . . and the Lord God shall come and all the saints with Thee" (Zech. 14. 4-6). This passage throws light on the Lord's words in Matthew 24. 15, 16. "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand). Then let him that is in Judea flee into the mountains." And it will be the fulfilment of

Acts 1. 11. "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." He will return to the very spot from which He went up, His feet will stand again upon the mount of Olives.

As Joseph revealed himself to his guilty brethren of old (Genesis 45) and they confessed their sin in selling and persecuting him, so will the Lord reveal Himself to Israel who betrayed and sold Him into the hands of the Gentiles, and they will repent and mourn and confess. "The spirit of grace and supplications" shall be poured out upon them, and they shall look upon Him whom

they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son and is in bitterness for his firstborn" (Zech. 12. 10). "And they shall ask what are these wounds in Thine hands? Then He shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends" (Zech. 13. 6). It is thus that they will be brought to own the once crucified Jesus as their great Messiah. And it shall be said in that day of Him, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord: we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Isa. 25. 9).

*To be continued.*

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## BRETHREN.

It was THE LORD Himself who said to His disciples, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are *brethren*."

The first man in the Bible who seemed to have a true idea of what "brethren" means was ABRAHAM. He said to Lot, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between thee and me . . . for we are *brethren*."

JOSEPH knew that his brethren had not learnt the meaning of the word, hence as he bade them farewell, his last word to them was, "See that ye fall not out by the way." He was a wise man and wanted to teach them a great lesson.

DAVID had learnt its meaning, when he wrote, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for *brethren* to dwell together in unity."

PETER desired that his friends might live up to their privilege when he wrote, "Have compassion one to another, *love as brethren*, be pitiful, be *courteous*."

The church for which of all the seven in Asia the Lord had the greatest commendation was Philadelphia. It means "brotherly love."

An elderly native, formerly a cannibal, was addressing some fellow Christians. He began, "Brethren," and paused for a moment, then continued, "Ah, that is a new name, we did not know the meaning of that word in our heathenism; it is the gospel of Jesus that has taught us the meaning of "brethren."

## "HONOUR THE SON."

H. J. Vine.

*"That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him" (John 5. 23).*

"All the Father's counsels claiming  
Equal honours to the Son,  
All the Son's effulgence beaming,  
Makes the Father's glory known."

IT is a cause for thanksgiving and rejoicing that this true note of praise, together with the truth concerning the Son's glory according to Scripture, is still sustained by the Holy Spirit among His saints on earth. All the more so because it is being questioned, undermined, attacked or openly abandoned on all hands. The verse quoted at the head of this paper shows that those who honour the Son honour the Father also. How precious therefore it must be to the Father, who loves the Son, to see Him honoured, and what joy it gives to the loyal believer.

We are speaking of our Lord Jesus Christ as "the Son," and not of His distinctive glories as "the Son of David," "the Son of Man," and "the Son of God," nor even of Him as "the Son of the Father," but rather of His Deity as God the Son. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God; yet there are not three Gods but one God: "God is one" (Gal. 3. 20; 1 Tim. 2. 5). Baptism is to "the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," we are told in Matthew 28. 19. This indicates for us the trinity of Persons in the Godhead, all of whom share in that supreme glory.

Only in one other place does *Matthew* speak of Christ as "the Son" (11. 27), and there we are told that one alone fully knows Him.

In the impenetrable depths of His holy Person none but God could perfectly comprehend Him. In one passage only does *Luke* so name our Lord Jesus Christ (10. 22), and there it is said also, "No one knows who the Son is but the Father." Nor does it say that the Father *thus* reveals Him, although He reveals the Father to whom He pleases. In all His counsels, in all His love, in all His glory, and in His own home the Son knows the Father, and it is His Divine pleasure to reveal Him to others. True freedom before the Father and the Son in the power of the Spirit may be enjoyed even now. To know "the truth" secures for us freedom from things that hold the soul in bondage, and that is a great matter; but it is the Son Himself who brings the soul into real freedom in the presence of the Father, therefore it is said, "If therefore the Son shall set you free, ye shall be *really free*" (John 8. 32, 36). What light, liberty, life, love and exalted blessedness this involves; and what wealth of praise, song and worship would flow where this is known experimentally in spite of the ecclesiastical failure and apostasy in Christendom! But how can this be where the Son is not honoured?

In the second Psalm (the only place in the Old Testament where the Son is so named) the dignitaries of the earth are exhorted to show fealty to Him—to do homage—to

“kiss the Son”! The coming great apostasy is described first in that Psalm, and then, at such a time, kings and judges are commanded to be wise and own the greatest Dignitary of all, lest they perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but a little! Hebrews 1 shows us that Psalm 45. 6 also speaks of the Son without naming Him thus. To Him it is said, “*Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.*” The deity of Christ is thus plainly stated, just as it is in John 1. 1 and Romans 9. 5 and elsewhere. Christendom abounds with teachers who profess to uphold the divinity of Christ, speaking of Him as a divine Person, hiding at the same time the fact that they do not own the *Deity* of our Lord and Saviour.

To have a Saviour who is simply *divine* would not be sufficient, for even believers are said to partake of the “*divine nature*”; but to have a Saviour who is God as well as Man settles satisfactorily every question, and gives rest to the heart and mind also. It was the Son who said, “I WILL GIVE YOU REST.” Who else could do so?

It is significant to observe what is said in the Scripture which last mentions Christ as the Son in the Bible, for it has the apostasy in view like the second Psalm which first mentions Him thus. THIRTY-THREE times is the Son so named in the inspired volume! 2 John 9 is the last. A loud voice as of thunder warns the “modernist” by it, for thus it speaks of the advanced thinker, “Whosoever goes forward and does not abide in the doctrine of the Christ has not God”; but it continues with words of divine assurance to the true believer, breathing peace like the calm which follows the angry storm, “He that

abides in the doctrine, he has both the Father and the Son.” In John 5 the Son is named more often than in any other chapter, and there we are told that all judgment is given to the Son, “that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him” (verse 23). This should speak eloquently to every heart.

It is to be observed that the Son is the Person in the Godhead who became Man, and knew the sorrows and grief of this world. The One too, who was despised and rejected of men: reviled, defamed, outcast and treated by His creatures as worthless! Spat upon, smitten and scorned and scarred by human beings, the Father’s counsels determine that all must honour Him. How just! how becoming! how cheering to the believer! and what glory to God the Father! The Gospel of Mark which shows the Son who had become the Servant of God’s pleasure—but once mentions Him as the Son, and that in perfect consistency with his wonderful Subject, for he tells us that the day or hour of the coming of the Son of Man with great power and glory is known only to the Father (13. 32). The angels of God, who are told to worship the Son of God, know not that time; neither the Son who, in becoming Man, took the place of the Servant of God, in divine perfection and marvellous grace to speak and do only what He heard of the Father.

In having the Son we have the Father (John 14. 9). It is never put the reverse way by the Spirit of God in Scripture. We are shut up to the Son for the full revelation of God, and the Father is made known

and glorified in the Son; moreover, He said Himself, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father unless by Me." The redeemed who know His grace and love, have found in Him not only the way to heaven, but the way to the Father. He is also the truth which has made the Father known to their glad hearts, and they have Him as the *life* in which His presence is realized and enjoyed. To those who believe on the Son, and consequently have eternal life, all this is plain enough, for the Spirit teaches them. They felt their need, they turned to God in faith and repentance, they received the gospel of His grace, they trusted in Christ and were sealed by the Spirit, the Son of the living God was revealed to them by the Father, and they have believed on the Son in whom the Father is made known. It is their joy therefore to see the Son honoured, and the Spirit is here to glorify Him. "The Father loves the Son" we are told by the Spirit, and "has given all things into His hand" (John 3. 35); yea, a stronger term of affection still is used in John 5. 20, where it is said, "The Father *dearly loves* the Son." How precious

it is to read of the Son, who loved the Father with a perfect love, once saying, "*I love the Father,*" and that just as He was going to supply the Father with a fresh motive to love Him by laying down His life as He had received commandment (John 14. 31). He glorified the Father on the earth in the place of subjection which He willingly took, and now the Father has glorified Him with the glory which He had along with the Father before the world was. He has given to Him also authority over all flesh, and the Son gives eternal life to all those who are given to Him of the Father, and the Spirit is here to bring the Father and the Son before our hearts.

How beautiful it is to behold the glorious harmony of counsel, service and power blended in the wonderful operations of the Persons of the Godhead! What will it be when all is brought to eternal fruition according to eternal purpose, when God is all in all? when God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit shall rest and rejoice in eternal blessedness? Then indeed, all shall honour the Son even as they honour the Father.

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"*The Father Himself loveth you because ye have loved Me*" (John 16).

Is there not awakened in your heart, as there was in the heart of Philip, the cry, "Lord, show us the Father"? The Father's heart has been revealed to the full, but we must take in that revelation. How can we do that? "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," said the Lord, and "I am the way" and "Come unto Me." That is how you are going to learn more of the Father's love. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give

you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me." A Christian yoked up with the world is a sight that might well make angels weep. We need to examine our hearts to see whether there is not with us, in some measure, the unequal yoke. How the unequal yoke chafes! If you are a child of God and you have links on with the world, in your heart there is the chafing and the heart-ache. "Take My yoke upon you . . . for My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

## THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT. No. 3.

James Green.

WE have considered the Holy Spirit as, 1. The power of knowledge, 2. The power of revelation and communication. Now we come to, 3. *The power of demonstration.*

By which we mean that experience in practical life of the action of the Spirit of God as dwelling with, and in those who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in considering this we must take into account the hindrances that oppose the experience which would normally follow from His presence. These hindrances to the Spirit may be found with assemblies or in individual saints and they may be summed up under three heads—

- a. Resisting the Spirit.
- b. Grieving the Spirit.
- c. Quenching the Spirit.

a. *Resisting the Spirit.*

How often does one hear the complaint that in such a day as we now live in there is a lack of power. A lack of power in the gospel preaching to convert souls; a woeful want of it in our meetings for prayer; or in the ministry of the word to produce more devotion to Christ, and the cry is, oh! for more power. But would it not be well to consider whether such a remark does not reveal a very serious lack of apprehension of the presence of the Spirit, and in reality cast a slur upon His Divine all-sufficiency. Surely there can be no limit to the power of God, we are not straitened in Him. "Twice have I heard this," said the Psalmist, "that power becometh longed unto God" (Psa. 62. 11). Therefore we must seek in another direction for the solution of the question of the barrenness in regard to demonstration which exists. On our side it is possible that a resist-

ance may be present which like a stone before the wheel, needs to be removed if power is to be evidenced in movement. We need not go outside of Scripture for an example of this, it is found in the epistles to the Corinthians, and surely the lessons which the apostle sought to teach those brethren is still to be learned in our own day. At Corinth resistance was manifest in fleshly activity. The meaning of the cross had not been accepted as ending this in judgment. Consequently sects and parties, worldly associations, strifes, seditions, heresies, afforded a resistance to the Spirit which prevented the furtherance of proper growth in Christ. Resistance has two aspects; in the first case it is seen in such men as Stephen addressed in Acts 7. 51: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost," and this character is still manifest in a religious profession which is devoid of life. But in the second case, may not the powerlessness of Christian service be traced to a lack of heart and desire to leave the beginning of the doctrine of Christ and to go on to perfection. Such resistance may express itself in a wish to remain in the simple elements of the gospel, when the urge of the Spirit is onward and upward. The need of the sinner is great, but to be occupied solely with the relief that forgiveness brings, is to remain in the condition of a babe. Milk is excellent provision for such a state, but something more is wanted for the permanent sustenance of those who are growing up into perfection, namely the strong meat which gives the full knowledge of Christ in heaven, in whom dwells all the ful-

ness of the Godhead in bodily form and the completeness of the saints in Him. If this is neglected the energy of the Spirit is obstructed.

b. *Grieving the Spirit.*

Moral character is more in view in this. The allowance of the flesh and its desires, a lack of separation from the world concerning which the Spirit testifies of sin, righteousness and judgment. From all this, that characterises the old man, the cross has separated those who are Christ's. For let it ever be kept in mind, that the Spirit dwells within us on the ground of the judgment of the flesh, and all its works in the cross. To allow therefore in practice the things which have been so condemned, must ever be a cause of grief to the Spirit whose name is Holy. Yet again in another way the Spirit is grieved, by a lack of diligence in following on to know the truth to which He calls attention. Much time perhaps spent in listening with great pleasure to the ministry of some gifted servant of God, and little time spent in the presence of God, and personal study of His Word. Then again there is the danger of giving more attention to the literature of the world in which the opinions of men is expressed, than to the holy writings of the Spirit, and so the ear becomes dull, and the eye dim, to the eternal realities the Spirit is desirous of revealing, and hence He is compelled to leave His office of Teacher, and sorrowfully to become a Spirit of reproof.

c. *Quenching the Spirit.*

How many forms this may take; for instance, a holding back from taking the path which the Spirit indicates as the way of the will of God, by the Scriptures of truth.

The consideration of consequences is one of the snares in so doing; then there is the thought of what others may say or do; or human traditions may so obsess the mind, that the free ministry of the Spirit is restricted by sectarian barriers and party folds. In this way that which the Spirit provides for the edifying of the body of Christ, is restrained within the narrow channels of human devising. The church, the body of Christ, is that in which each part functions for the good of the whole, and in which the joints of supply present no hindrance to the operations of the Spirit.

Nothing so quenches His action, as division and segregation amongst those called to so high a privilege as to be members of the body of Christ. There is no doubt also that the prevalence of a clerical system, and the maintenance of a priestly caste, in contrast to the so-called laity, is one of the most effectual means of nullifying the power of the Spirit in distributing to every man severally as He will. So skilled is the enemy in the use of this weapon, that it may often obtain in places where the outward form of it is denied. All such considerations must cast us anew upon the written word for instruction, as to the lines upon which the power of the Spirit is directed, and here there is great need of rightly dividing the word of truth, for a brother would be very ill advised, if he deemed it necessary to follow even in a less materialistic way, the command to Levi in Exodus 32. 27, to slay his brother, companion, and neighbour; indeed he would in so doing greatly quench the Spirit of our Lord's command to love one another, even to the extent of laying down one's own life (John 15. 12).

Then the power of the Spirit is quenched when it is not directed in the Spirit's own way. A locomotive under full steam is helpless, yea even dangerous when it is off the rails and in the ballast of the road. Too true it is, that many good men with the best of intentions have sought to arrange matters, and plan directions for the Lord's service, and having done so have expected their scheme to be filled with the power of the Spirit, when after all that which they have done, and which they thought would further His operation, have in result only quenched His energy, though at the same time they have given rise to much applause and self-congratulation.

Let us beware then of these three things, if we would experience the power of the Spirit, so that in meekness and lowliness of heart we may discern in the "still small voice" the presence of the Lord. 1. The working of natural thoughts expressed in a religious way (see 2 Tim. 3. 8; 4. 15), for such things are a resistance to the Spirit. 2.

The allowance of sin and the workings of the flesh, which are a cause of grief to the Spirit. 3. Attempting to use the methods of the world and its philosophy to further the work of God, for in so doing the Spirit will be quenched. The only sure antidote to all these subtle devices is that which proved so effectual in the hands of the great apostle of the Gentiles, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified" (1 Cor. 2. 2). With him this was mighty to the pulling down of strongholds, and in this he gloried. Not for him the glamour of human eloquence, with its appeal to the flesh; not for him the wisdom in which human intelligence could boast; but rather the claim of the cross of his Lord, by which the world was crucified to him and he to the world; and in this he found the effectiveness of the service he filled, and in this the demonstration of the Spirit and of power, in the gospel (Rom. 15. 19), and amongst the saints (1 Cor. 2. 4, 5).

*To be continued.*

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*"Blessed are they that seek Him with the whole heart."* Whosoever would have much happiness must have a sound heart. The measure of our sincerity will be the measure of our enjoyed blessing, and according to the measure of our hypocrisy will be our misery.

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Ask the Lord to revive His work in your soul; ask for a quickened spirit, for more zeal, more devotion, more love to His cause. Awake from slumber! Shake off all earthly, carnal sleep! Thousands are perishing around you! Thousands are dying in sin! The angel of death is on the wing, and the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Up, and warn the world! Be active, diligent, persevering for Christ.

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An immature state of knowledge serves to render men susceptible to doubts but incapable of their solution.

# THE LAST WORDS OF THE TESTAMENTS. T. Oliver.

"CURSE" is the last word of the Old Testament, even as the closing idea of the New Testament is "grace." Although these occurrences may seem to be accidental, the words are really representative of the aspects of the truth unfolded in the Books they conclude.

The word "curse" and its relations occur 171 times in the Old Testament and only 19 times in the New Testament, while the latter are mainly references to the former or relative to human affairs. On the other hand, the word "grace" occurs only 12 times in the Old Testament, but is found 125 times in the New Testament. In the former the usage is confined in some instances to the idea of "personal charm" merely and does not convey the New Testament idea at all.

The Old Testament is the record of "the first man" and his posterity, and is full of incidents showing man's continuous sin against and disobedience to God, so that the curse of God on man was the only logical conclusion. Indeed it is the end of man after the flesh (Deut. 28). Its infliction by God in His governmental dealings was necessary when all His offers of mercy had been rejected. Moreover, what had merely a temporal bearing in the former dispensation, acquires an everlasting character in the full light of the truth in the New Testament. So that there will yet be those who will hear the Lord's final pronouncement on their case, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire" (Matt. 25. 41).

Grace is the all-pervading thought of the New Testament. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned

unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Rom. 5. 20-21). The expression at the cross: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do!" was indicative of the new quality introduced, viz., that grace would displace law.

The death of Christ comes in between the dispensations as that which explains the complete change in their characters. In grace Christ took the sinner's place. He redeemed us from the curse of the broken law, being made a curse for us (Gal. 3. 13). As such He bore the judgment of God on sin, which should have fallen on man, but fell on Him instead. God in His infinite holiness is a consuming fire (Heb. 12. 29). That fire after the consumption of every other fuel would have continued in unabated fury. But at Calvary it spent its utmost force on Christ.

Him who knew no sin God made sin for us, that we might become God's righteousness in Him (2 Cor. 5. 21). So that every attribute of the majesty of God was fully vindicated in the death of Christ.

There was such a superabundance of grace over sin and its cognate curse, that after the complete solution of the problem of sin in righteousness, grace is dominant. Every one who comes into its realm finds that unexhausted increment of grace is inexhaustible, and that grace acquires a specialised character in being the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. That caused Him to come down from the infinite position of riches and majesty to the poverty of a homeless path which found its climax in the death of shame on the

cross, in order that we might become partakers in the riches of His grace and glory. The grace which is our normal enveloping atmosphere is the same grace which so marked our Lord Jesus Christ in

tracing out that course to the glory of God. May we therefore be found growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3. 18).

## MY DESIRE.

My God, in me Thy mighty power exert.  
Enlighten, comfort, sanctify my heart.  
Sweeten my temper and subdue my will—  
Make me like Jesus; with Thy Spirit fill.

I want to live on earth a life of faith,  
I want to credit all the Bible saith;  
And meditate upon my Saviour's life,  
Avoiding lightness, gloom and sinful strife.

I want to bring poor sinners to Thy 'throne,  
I want to love and honour Christ alone;  
I want to feel the Spirit's inward power,  
And stand prepared for Advent's glorious hour.

I want a meek, a gentle, quiet frame;  
A heart that glows with love to Jesus' name;  
I want a living sacrifice to be,  
To Him who died a sacrifice for me.

I want to do whatever God requires,  
I want a heart to burn with pure desires,  
I want to be what Christ my Lord commands  
And leave myself, my all, in His dear hands.

O Lord, impress Thine image on my soul,  
My will, my temper and my tongue control.  
Help me through life to glorify Thy grace,  
And then to know as known, and see Thee face to face.

“SHE spake of Him.” That is our mission. We have found the answer to all our need in that blessed Person. Thank God there are, through His grace, empty, longing, needy hearts in this world, hearts that are sick of the pleasures and weary of the bondage of sin, hearts

that cannot be satisfied with the empty shell of the temple ritual. Thousands, too, of His own who long to know Him better are waiting for the “word in season.” Oh, that we may have our hearts filled first, and then go forth, whether to saint or sinner, to speak of Him.

The following Addresses were given at Bangor, N. Wales, at a Conference for help of younger Christians, July 29th to Aug. 4th. Others will appear in due course.

## THE MEEKNESS AND GENTLENESS OF CHRIST.

J. J. Anning.

2 Corinthians 10, verse 1.

**THIS** is the first night of our week of Addresses and, God willing, truth and doctrine are to be expounded to us from this platform. At the commencement therefore I wish to stress a matter that is much on my own mind. It is that truth and doctrine as given to us in the Holy Scriptures are revealed or taught with one purpose. That purpose is that there might be a formation of Christ in us.

A question that has been exercising us to-day in our Bible Reading is, "Why are we as Christians so ineffective in our witness and service?" It is imperative that we should face this enquiry. We are privileged above many others, most of us know a good deal of truth theoretically, but how far has it got hold of our souls to make us more like Christ? It is not impossible to be ecclesiastically correct, to know the truth, to be soaked in doctrine and yet be powerless! And may not the answer to our question be that we are so unlike Him? It seems to me that one of the crucial points to be considered is, How far are we like Christ in this world?

My message therefore is that we might consider Him and gain thereby more intimate knowledge of Him.

The Apostle Paul's great aim and object in life, after his conversion,

was to know Him. We would like to follow in this respect in his steps, and be like those disciples also, whom their Judges, the Jewish leaders, took knowledge of, that they had been with Jesus. It is remarkable that in the Epistle to the Philipians, in which we read of this objective of the Apostle, there is little unfolding of doctrine, but a glorious exhibition of Christ.

The Apostle was a man of power and he could have addressed the Corinthians with some weight on his own account, but he takes another way and brings to bear upon their conduct what their Lord and Master was. He says, "I beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ." I wish that I had the power to bring home to you something of the character of the Lord Jesus. It might be good for us to read and study the Gospels, not in a critical or analytical way, but simply to see and learn how the Lord Jesus Christ conducted Himself when He was down here on the earth. To note how He did things, how He spoke and what His demeanour was.

If we consider the truth and doctrine given to us in the other Epistles and notably in that to the Ephesians, where the truth reaches the highest heights, we find that it is usually followed by exhortation as to living and walking consistently

with the truth revealed. Surely this means that if received spiritually an effect will be produced, there will be a formation of Christ, and in character we shall be more "Christ like."

Why did the Apostle begin this chapter with these words that we read—"I beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ"? Do you not think that it was because he wished to remind these wayward Corinthians and us of the Lord Jesus and His words as recorded in the 11th chapter of Matthew's Gospel, that we know so well, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me"? You and I want to "learn of Him," we would not be here if we didn't. We have not come here just for a holiday, have we? "Take My yoke upon you"—what was His yoke? It was indeed the entire will of His God and Father, an absolute submission to that will. He asks us to come under that yoke to learn of Him and do God's will.

We cannot learn of Him theoretically; books won't teach us to know Him, we must take His yoke, and then in His company and in communion with Him He will reveal Himself to us.

He shews us too His character—"I am meek and lowly in heart." How wonderfully true are these words; we recall the meekness with which He ever met His foes, whether it were Devil or man. Perfect indeed was that meekness of spirit that depended on God for every word He spoke. As we think of Him, how condemned we feel with regard to our usual attitude and

speech when up against anything like persecution. How little are we like Him.

The Apostle also besought the Corinthians by the gentleness of Christ; this I take expresses what His manner was towards everyone He came in contact with. As the outcome of the verse of a hymn, you know very well, I once tried to give an address to young Christians on manners. It runs—

"He did kind things so kindly,  
It seemed His heart's delight  
To make poor people happy  
From morning until night."

He did kind things so kindly—the gentleness of Christ! much could we say about it. Is it exhibited in our lives? Is Christ so formed in us that those we daily come in contact with know us as belonging to Him?

These are searching questions and I think it is because we represent the Lord Jesus so poorly that we are so powerless. The real reason for this is a far too imperfect knowledge of Him. It is best to face facts, and my idea in speaking to you like this is on the lines of what the Lord said when He was here on earth, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

During this week, God willing, the Holy Spirit is going to present Christ to us and we are responsible as to the reality of the response. Is Christ going to be everything to us, are we going to take His yoke and learn of Him?

We are certainly here to represent Christ during His absence, may we know Him better and be more like Him in our everyday lives.

## GREAT LOVE.

Robert Whyte.

Read John 3. 16; Genesis 24. 2; 2 Samuel 24. 24; Romans 32; 8;  
Ephesians 5. 25-27.

**M**Y Address will come under three heads; Love's sacrifice, Love's service, Love's satisfaction. I do not begin with our love, for if we are lovers of God it is because He first loved us. I begin with God's love and the love of our Lord Jesus Christ; then shall follow our response to it and the great recompense that this Divine love will secure for itself.

How wonderful are those words to which some of us owe our salvation. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." There is no verse in the Bible more familiar to us than that, but it still speaks to our souls. It is well worn but it will never be threadbare, indeed, it seems to shine all the brighter with use. But the seeking Nicodemus, had also to hear other words which were the death-knell to his hopes from his religious standing and works. "Ye must be born again," meant that even religious flesh could not appreciate what was from heaven and of God.

God's love is not in word only. He has given a full and complete expression of it in giving His Son. He could not have done more. We turn onward from that text to another. "God commendeth His love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." What joy it must have given Paul the Apostle, who was the chief of sinners, to dictate words like those to his amanuensis; we can understand his pausing for a moment to exclaim, "God has proved His love indeed!" Such was love's sacrifice.

But think of the One who brought this love from heaven, the Messenger of it. If you turn to Ephesians 5 you will read, "Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it." Long before you and I had being, before the dispensations of time began, in that far away eternity, Christ saw the church, in its fair beauty, as He would make it, the object of His love.

He, the only-begotten Son, the eternal Son, who came as God's gift of love to the world of sinful men, had an object upon which *His love* was set and for which He would sacrifice Himself. He came from the palace of His glory to find those upon whom His heart was set, that it might be written on the Sacred Page and engraved on our hearts, "Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it." The church, how wonderful, how precious to Him, what dignity He has invested it with! It is not something beautiful according to man's judgment—as stained windows, showy ritual, wonderful architecture. It is made up of living stones, made beautiful by the love of Christ, sanctified and cleansed by Him, to be presented to Him all glorious, "not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish." If we realize that we have our part in that church we shall have a holy dignity about us, because the love of Christ rests upon it and He wants us to know it and enjoy it even now.

We say to this Apostle, You have told us great things, you have told us that God commends His love to

us while we were yet sinners, and that Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it, have you any thing more to tell us of this wonderful love? And he draws us aside to Calvary, and says to us as we behold the Sufferer on the centre cross, "The Son of God loved me, and gave Himself for me." And you can take up his words, fellow Christian, can you not? As Paul knew that that love was his own portion, so may you. You can say "He gave Himself for me." What a sacrifice was that! And John comes to our aid again and says, "Hereby perceive we the love, because He laid down His life for us," and "in this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Never in the New Testament do we find the love of God or the love of Christ spoken of without there is added the way in which that love has been expressed. We may talk love, and love in word, which is no love at all, but it is in what He has done that God tells us His love. He leads us to the place called Calvary, and shews it to us there.

What shall the effect of this love be in us? You answer, there must be on our part, love's response, love's service. This story of love is not fiction in which unreal characters talk and move. It is a story in which God has His part, and in which you and I have our part. We are the loved ones to respond to the love. Here is truth and reality.

The first time the word "love" occurs in the Bible is in Genesis 22,

where God said to Abraham, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest." Abraham deeply loved his son. Was there any person *in the world* that he loved more? There was not, and he was not only the object of his love but of all his earthly hopes. But was there anyone that he loved more than his son? Yes, Abraham loved God more than he loved Isaac. And God claimed Isaac: what will Abraham do? We are not told what Abraham's feelings were, but whatever they were he owned God's claim, God was first with him. Here comes the test as to how far the love of God is real to us. What response have we made to it? How do we answer to His supreme claim? Before father, mother, wife, child, His claim of love stands. He who gave all for us, claims all. Love can be satisfied with nothing less.

The story of David and the threshing floor of Ornan illustrates the service that love renders. Ornan would have given everything to the king, but David shews his kingliness. "I give it all," said Ornan. "No," said David, "I will verily buy it for the full price; for I will not take that which is thine for the Lord, nor offer burnt offerings without cost. I will not put my hand into your purse and hand what I get to God." And on that spot that David bought at its full price there grew up a glorious Temple; but the one who dedicated it to God said, "Of Thine own have we given Thee." What a liberal Giver is God, He is "the giving God"; are we "cheerful givers"?

There are some who give God the oddments, what they can well do without. A little bit of Sunday perhaps, because it is a dull day.

God often gets the leavings instead of the first-fruits. How often when weighing the pros and cons of our service to God, self comes first, and God's service loses, self wins. Does not everyone here know it?

We need another sight of Love's sacrifice at Calvary; we need to see the once crucified Lamb, now crowned with glory and honour, and have the love of Christ as the constraining power within us. The Apostle says, "I beseech you by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." Not your money only, or your labour, but yourself—your body. You are His, spirit, soul and body. The word means that you put your body on the altar, as Abraham put Isaac, to be at your Lord's disposal in Love's service. This is your intelligent service.

Now we come to Love's satisfaction. "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied."

We are waiting for the Lord's shout, in response to which His church will rise up to meet Him, without spot or wrinkle. All traces of the wilderness journey gone. It will be like Himself and for Himself for ever. There will be more than that, the Lord shall have a glorious kingdom. He shall have universal dominion, the crowns are His by right; in all these things His love will have some recompense, but brighter and better than all will be His church to Him—the vessel in which the exceeding riches of God's grace and His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus will be displayed, and in which His manifold wisdom will be seen, but better than all will be what it will be to Him as His bride—the Lamb's wife. In that church His love will find its full satisfaction.

Meditate upon these things, Love's sacrifice, Love's service, Love's satisfaction—the sacrifice, the response and the recompense.

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Come quickly, blessed Saviour, come!  
 With one accord we cry to Thee,  
 Long have we hoped that Thy return  
 Would bid the night of darkness flee.  
 The shadows still are o'er the vale,  
 Where Thy beloved ones watch and weep  
 And till the morn's first blush we hail  
 Untiring vigil would we keep.

Lord as we muse, our torches burn—  
 Thyself, Thyself, we long to see;  
 For Thee our hearts responsive yearn,  
 Our wistful eyes are unto Thee.  
 O open Thou again the skies!  
 O leave again for us the Throne;  
 O Well-beloved, once more arise,  
 Come! To Thyself receive Thine own!

## THE DEVIL AND HIS ACTIVITIES.

J. T. Mawson.

2 Corinthians, 2nd chapter, verse 11; 4th chapter, verses 3-6; 11th chapter, verses 2, 3, 14; 12 chapter, verses 6-9.

**I**T is my intention to talk about the devil. A strange subject, you say. Yes, but a most necessary one. It would serve his purpose well if we ignored or forgot his existence, for he would then be able to carry on his activities against us and we would be entirely unaware of them. And it is a fact that nobody was ever of much use to God who did not believe in the existence and malignant activities of the devil.

In Revelation 20, we are told that he is to be bound with a great chain and cast into the bottomless pit. When that judgment is executed upon him his character and work will be fully exposed, but it is there already revealed for us who believe. He is "the dragon, that old serpent, the devil and Satan." As the dragon he is the *destroyer*; as the old serpent he is the *deceiver*; as the devil, he is the *accuser*; as Satan, he is the *adversary*—the adversary of God, and of all good, and of our souls. Here then is his four-fold character—destroyer, deceiver, accuser, adversary. Now I want you to see how our Lord Jesus Christ stands out in contrast to the devil. If the devil is the destroyer, our Lord is the Deliverer; and if the devil is the deceiver, our Lord is the Truth—the Holy and the True; if the devil is the accuser—the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12), our Lord is the Intercessor and Advocate; and if the devil is the adversary, our Lord is the Friend. You must choose, young Christians, under whose control you will come. If you go in for the world you will come under the devil's control, for he is the

"god" and the "prince" of it; if you seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness you will come under the control of Jesus, the Saviour, for He is Lord in that realm.

From this second Epistle to the Corinthians we learn that the devil is active against us in four distinct ways. The Epistle shews us Christian character—that is why the writer speaks in it of "the meekness and gentleness of Christ." There is in it also a remarkable autobiography of the Apostle Paul, in whom Christian character was so clearly displayed. Now the thing the devil hates above all else is that Christ should shine out through us in this world. He cannot shine out if He has not shone in, so the first great effort of the devil is to prevent Him from shining in. "*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 that believe not, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*" The first of his activities is to **BLIND** the minds of men against the light of the knowledge of God.

How exceedingly devilish is this work of the devil. He would keep men in ignorance of the God who loves them, therefore he blinds their minds against the light that shines in the face of Jesus, for it is from His face that the light of what God is is shining now—from that face that smiled upon the children, that looked with compassion upon the leper, and was wet with tears at

the grave of Lazarus, and was marred more than any man's when He gave Himself to suffer for sinners! The devil uses all his subtlety and power to blind men to the light of grace that shines in that most blessed face. This is confirmed by the Lord's own words, when He interpreted the parable of the Sower to His disciples. He said, "Those by the wayside are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." There is no pity in the heart of the devil, he labours for the damnation of men's souls; he wrought on us with this end in view, and succeeded for a while, but, thank God, we have been delivered from his blinding influence.

"Jesus, the Lord, our night broke  
through  
And gave us light divine."

And we know God now; we can say with rapture, "God is love," and in that we rest.

I speak to those who are specially interested in the going forth of the gospel, and I trust that is true of everyone of us. Let us remember that in preaching the gospel we have not only to meet the increasing indifference to God in the hearts of men, but we have to contend with the blinding power of the devil. How are we going to deal with that? That is not going to be overcome by eloquent words, and clever arguments. Fine singing and bright services cannot deliver souls from that darkness. This is a spiritual conflict, and we shall have to remember that we possess a pair of knees and we must use them in the presence of our God. We must learn what that means. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down

of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." With man it is impossible, but not with God, and if we preach the word in dependence upon God, and carry on our service through God, we shall not be ineffective, but shall have the joy of seeing sinners turned from darkness to light, even as we were. Blessed be the Name of our God!

Think again of the face of Jesus, and of the grace that has beamed upon you from it; think of the fact that He in that glory is your righteousness, that in Him you have a righteousness that is without a flaw, and that you know now that God is for you, revealed to you in His grace in your glorified Saviour. How attractive is your Saviour, and how glad you are that you have escaped from the blinding power of the devil and that you live now in this glorious light—the light of the grace of God that shines in His face. But now follows a marvellous thing; and I beseech you to lend me your ears while I tell it to you; **YOU ARE TO BE MARRIED TO THE MAN WHO HAS SAVED YOU!** Yes, it is that that chapter 11 tells us. "*I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*" Let that statement arrest and rivet you. The Man in the glory whose love and beauty have won your heart, the Man to whom you owe your deliverance from Satan's darkness, and to whom you owe your eternal salvation, is the One to whom you are to be bound by a bond that can never be dissolved. Not only are you going to bow in everlasting worship before Him, exult

ing in the fact that He is your Lord, but you are to be brought into this most intimate relationship with Him. The marriage day is not yet; these are the days of the espousals, but they are blessed days, and have their own peculiar sweetness.

Now the devil takes a hand in this business, he has set himself to mar these days of the espousals. He has been beaten in his efforts to blind you, and he cannot prevent the marriage day, but if he can BEGUILE you from your wholehearted devotion to Christ, to whom you are espoused, he will do it. "*I fear,*" wrote the Apostle, "*lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from your simplicity as to Christ.*" He will come to you with enticing words, and "a besugared mouth"; and shrewd old John Bunyan tells us that he is never so dangerous as when he comes like that. He will insinuate that you may have something else as well as Christ, and that your Christian life will be none the worse for it, indeed it will be all the better; he may even use doctrine, and make you into a theologian; or service, and make you into a preacher—proud of yourself, your knowledge and your work. Then it will be self and not Christ. He will get the world into your heart if he can; it is this he desires above all things, and here his subtlety has full play; it will not seem to be the world at first, it will be the thin edge of the wedge that he will insinuate, but having accomplished that he will handle the beetle with force, and drive home the wedge, and thus he will separate you in your affections from your great Lover. It was thus with the church at Ephesus, to whom the Lord said,

"Thou hast left thy first love." Oh, what a fall was there, my brethren, and what a grief to the heart of Christ; and how did it come about? Satan who beguiled Eve had beguiled them from their devotion to Christ. Are you safer from his wiles than they were? Are you stronger than they? In no wise. If Christ is the absorbing Object of your love, the devil is watching for an opportunity to beguile you; if Christ is not your absorbing Object, he has found that opportunity and has succeeded in his effort, and you too have fallen.

I am not urging you to be diligent in service, nor am I asking you to be valiant in fight. What I am pressing is—that you keep yourselves for Christ. That is the greatest thing you can do. Everything else will be right if you are right as to that. How can that be done? You will have to keep His company and listen often to the words of love that flow from His lips. Hear Him say to you, for instance: "As the lily among the thorns so is My love among the daughters." What words of love are these! and what do they mean? Dr. Thompson, in his well-known book, *The Land and the Book*, says of this lily, "Our flower delights most in the valleys; but it is also found on the mountains. It grows among the thorns, and I have sadly lacerated my hands in extricating it from them." Do you now see the meaning of the words? Ah, it cost your great Lover something to secure you for Himself. How sorely lacerated was He, when He set Himself to extricate you from the thorns in which you grew, that you might be His, His wholly, now and for ever. His flesh was lacerated, for He shewed to His disciples His

wounded hands and side, and you will see those same wounds one day, but who shall tell what He suffered when His soul was wounded and bruised, when He was made an offering for your sin? Will you be indifferent in respect to Christ? Can you be fickle, or lukewarm towards Him who has suffered so much in His love for you? Resist the devil when he would beguile you from Christ; cleave close to the Lord, and then even if Satan comes as an angel of light, you will detect his wiles, and to detect him is to defeat him.

There was one man whom he could not beguile from Christ, and that man was Paul. Then he would BUFFET him, "*There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me.*" You must be prepared for like treatment; if the devil cannot beguile you he will buffet you. As we read in this Epistle what Paul suffered for Christ's sake, we wonder that mortal man could have survived it; yet we never hear of him praying for relief from those sufferings, or complaining of the hardness of his life; but when this messenger of Satan began to buffet him it was different. This was something so terrible that he began to pray for himself. Behold him bowing down on his knees and stretching imploring hands to his Lord and beseeching Him to deliver him from this thorn in the flesh and the buffeting of it. It is an affecting sight, what shall be the issue? Three times he urges his case and then there comes the answer. Oh, wonderful answer! "My grace is sufficient for thee." "My grace" and "thee." How those words throb with the tenderness of a perfect love. And consider them: The Lord at one end

of the sentence and Paul at the other, and an all-sufficient grace between The Ocean and the thimble, and the ocean enough for the thimble! And Paul cries, "I glory in my infirmities." He exults; he hugs his thorn as a great treasure, and the devil is beaten. "Buffet as you will, O Satan, you do but drive me nearer to my Lord," is the triumphant cry of this weak saint.

Are you being buffeted, some of you? Are you undergoing some peculiar trial, perhaps something that you had dreaded, some special form of suffering, it may be physically, or spiritually, or through your circumstances; are you being battered and buffeted? Satan hopes that you will compromise in your faithfulness to Christ, or seek desperately for relief from your trial and get it. He hopes to make you murmur, or be discouraged, and give up. Consider buffeted Paul, and consider his Lord and yours, and let the words that stilled the storm in Paul's heart sing their peace-giving melody to you. "My grace is sufficient for thee, My strength is made perfect in weakness."

If the devil attacks the saints of God, he gets the worst of it. He is already a defeated foe; he knows that he has met his match and Master. The devil's Master, who is your Saviour and Lord, ever liveth for you. If the devil desires to have you that he may sift you, your Intercessor has prayed for you, and through Him you may be more than a conqueror. And that is a great word. It belongs to the Divine Scriptures, and would have no meaning in mere human literature. There have been conquerors in the world's history; some of them have been great conquerors, such as Alexander,

Cæsar, Napoleon, but they were not more than conquerors. What then is it to be more than a conqueror? To be buffeted and yet sing praises, to be going through the storm and yet rejoicing in the Lord; to have escaped the blinding, resisted the beguiling, and rejoiced in the buffeting of Satan: that is what it is to be more than a conqueror, and that you may be through Him that loves you.

Now a brief reference to his fourth activity, which was not individual but aimed against the whole company of the saints at Corinth. They were slow to forgive a repentant brother; it may be that their zeal for righteousness, for discipline, for correctness, was outstripping their grace and love; anyhow, wrote the Apostle—*FORGIVE, lest Satan should get an advantage over us: for we are not ignorant of his devices*" (ch. 2. 11). God had for-

given them, they were an assembly of God, to shew forth His character; Satan's purpose was to blur that image, to BESMIRCH the Name of the Lord. He want those saints to give a blemished representation of God and of Christ. He is just as busy at that to-day. "Him that has an ear to hear, let him hear."

Now see how this Epistle of the devil's defeat and of the saints' triumph closes. It begins with "Blessed be God," and it closes with our greatly loved benediction, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." We are marching home to glory, and our great enemy besets us and ever hangs on our flanks, but God is round about us. Father, Son and Holy Ghost attend us, and grace, love, and communion fill us with triumphant song. Blessed for ever be the Name of our God!

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A real workman, a "man of God," is a great, one of the greatest treasures in the world.

It is needful for us that we should pass through the sorrows as well as the joys of the work of the Lord, if the sorrows and the joys are His; this is fellowship with Him.

Be ever content with quiet service and seek much communion and constancy with Christ in His work. He is goodness itself.

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Bright, bright home! Beyond the skies  
 Where Jesus is enthroned in glory:  
 Thy beauty gleams before mine eyes,  
 Thy portals glisten now before me.  
 Bright, bright Home!

Come, Lord, come! We wait for Thee,  
 We listen still for Thy returning;  
 Thy loveliness we long to see,  
 For thee the lamp of hope is burning,  
 Come, Lord, come!

## ROYAL SERVICE.

Frank B. Hole.

2 Kings, chapter 5, verses 1-4. John, chapter 6, verses 5-9.

THE normal and proper result that should flow from our meetings is that we should on our part be stirred up to serve more diligently our Lord Jesus Christ. I remember, of course, that there are two ways in particular in which we may serve Him. We may serve Him in what the Apostle Peter speaks of as our "holy priesthood" capacity. Thus there is a service, the main drift of which is *upward*, in responsive praise, adoration, worship; and there is the service, the main drift of which is *outward*, in which we show forth, as royal priests, the excellencies of the One who has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light (1 Peter 2).

This evening I am going to deal with the second of these two ways in which every one of us is privileged to serve the Lord, and I want to begin with the fact that *everyone of us is privileged to serve Him*. So I have chosen a Scripture in the Old Testament that shows the way in which a little maid served the interests of her God, as also a Scripture in the New Testament which shows how a small boy did likewise.

The *little maid*, and a *small boy*. Speaking generally, little maids are not noted for anything of a striking order. You do not expect the little maid, the little drudge of the household, to make very striking remarks. But if she is taught of God that is what she does. You do not expect much of a small boy. He is generally considered a very troublesome appendage. He makes a noise and distracts the proceedings when he

should be quiet; and, as the older people would say, makes himself a regular nuisance. But again a small boy may be a vehicle of very, very good things; and if the little maid and small boy may serve the interests of God then no doubt *there is hope for everyone of us*.

Let me point out one or two things about the little maid, which show how very strikingly she was characterised by the *essentials* of true service; in other words, how excellent was her spiritual state. It is only, of course, when you sit down and think about it, that these things strike you. Here was a little maid who had been captured by a marauding band of Syrians. Poor thing—carried ruthlessly away and possibly her parents slain—separated from her loved ones, and now a little slave girl whose duty it was to wait on the wife of the man, who above all others in Syria was the cause of her troubles. The irony of it! That of all people in the world she should be the little slave girl to wait on the wife of the man who had taken her away from her home. I ask you, how would you have felt? I fear I should have been nursing very dark thoughts of revenge in my heart. I should not have loved Naaman, or Naaman's wife.

One day the news goes round the household that Naaman was smitten with the dread disease of leprosy. He had allowed the fact to leak out, and even the most menial in his household knew all about it. It touched the heart of the little maid, and one day evidently in the most artless way possible, when waiting

on her mistress she said, "Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy." She had a *great heart of compassion*, and here she is desiring the welfare of the man who might be considered her greatest enemy. There was something of the kindness of God in her little heart. She was little, but morally and spiritually she was great. She evidently had great thoughts of God, and she had entered very largely into His divine compassion. She desired blessing for the one that most she might have hated; and not only had she very great love, but she had *the most amazing faith*. Elisha, said she, "would recover him of his leprosy." How did she know that? Even had she lived somewhere in the vicinity of Elisha's house, she had never seen the good man do it, She had never even heard of it. The thing had never been done.

Our Lord has told us that, "Many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and *none of them was cleansed* saving Naaman the Syrian." Naaman came in and seized the blessing that possibly a thousand Israelitish lepers missed. Now what possessed her to talk like this, and assert that the prophet *would* recover him of his leprosy. It was either madness or very great faith. I can tell you what it was—it was very great faith, and underneath that very great faith lay *very great courage*. She added to her faith that virtue or courage of which Peter speaks in his second Epistle. She had the courage of her faith.

Why did she not say to herself, "Well I think our God is a very great God. He is infinitely greater than those sordid gods of the heathen world. I believe our God

*could* cleanse a leper. But would He? Well, I *think* He would. But I had better not say anything, because *supposing* I make some remark of this kind, and *supposing* Naaman pays attention to it, and in consequence starts to the land of Israel, and *supposing* he does not get it, my life would not be worth ten minutes purchase"? No, she rather said with sublime assurance, without the flicker of an eyelid, without a tremor of doubt:—"He *would* recover him of his leprosy." AND SO HE DID! God took the little maid at her word. He accepted her bold witness.

What great faith! Behind the curtains in the quietness of her life, whether before her captivity or afterwards I do not know, she must have had transactions in her spirit with the God that Elisha knew and served. And she had such sublime confidence in the compassion of God! She boldly spoke as she did not on a public platform but in the quiet of the women's quarters, in the presence of her mistress; and by these few words she set in motion the whole sequence of events which was for Naaman's blessing and to the glory of God.

The little maid ought to teach you and me this lesson, that which counts in the service of God is that *we know the God whom we serve*, and we have *faith* in Him, and courage to confess our faith, and that our hearts are *overflowing with love and compassion* for those whom we seek to serve. I verily believe that the secrets behind the words of the little maid are those which lie behind successful service. He serves best and most effectively in this world who has faith in the greatness and glory and grace of our God, courage with his faith and a heart

of compassion that leads him to speak as the little maid spoke.

Then we turn from the little maid to the small boy. Here was the Lord Jesus Himself, multitudes thronging around Him. The incident is well-known for it is recorded in all four Gospels. The Lord distributed the loaves and fishes through His disciples, for normally He carries on His operations through His people, but only in John's Gospel do we read about the small boy. How was the multitude to be fed? "Whence shall we buy food for this great multitude?" He said it to prove His disciples, because it significantly adds, "for He Himself knew what He would do." The initiative ever lies with Him. He knows, but He delights to take up and to use His people, and He would even use a small boy. Andrew said, "There is a lad [small boy] here, which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes." From the human standpoint that sounds a very ridiculous proposition. Yet the little boy brought these to the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I would like all of you to remember this, especially those who are young in the faith, that the Lord is not looking for great people to serve Him. He is great enough Himself. The greatness, that is required, is found in Him. He is so great that He can afford to take up and use what is very small. Our Lord Jesus Christ is supremely great. He carries on His service with very small instruments. He can afford to do so. As one looks over the history of things we see again and again the most disastrous things happening—things turning in the wrong direction. Again and again evil raises its head, threatens to engulf everything. Again and again just

those people, whom you and I would have marked as being the key men, are removed from the battlefield.

It so happened at the very beginning of the world's history. If we had to choose which of the patriarchs before the flood should live a long life of witness, we should have said, "Enoch of course, Enoch is the man. He is the man who walks with God; he is the man who bears unswerving witness." We should have been wrong. Enoch was taken in early life. Look at Methuselah—969. Enoch has 365 years and he is gone. The very man we want is gone! Have you found that happen? You have seen it again and again.

Ever since sin entered it has looked as though our Lord is fighting a losing battle. His greatest servants go when most needed, yet He will bring victory out of what looks like defeat. We have an *immensely great Lord*, One who is big enough to bring about glory all along the line. Consequently He can do with *very small servants*.

You should not be precluded from serving the Lord because young and likely to make mistakes. Do not be like the boy who would not come into the water until he had learnt to swim! You remember that Solomon said, "Where no oxen are the crib is clean." Here is Solomon's recipe for a clean stable—keep nothing in it! Those who keep no oxen, however, lose their useful labour. Let us not do nothing, for fear we will make mistakes. Go ahead in dependence upon God.

It says, "Jesus took the loaves." If Andrew had tried to take them, or if impetuous Peter had grabbed the little boy's bag, there would have been a commotion! No one could say the Saviour nay. The little lad

was brought near—"There is a lad here." He was on the spot when wanted; he was ready. Would to God that we were like this little boy. What a lovely thing to be as he was, on the scene when wanted and able to see and hear the Lord Jesus. "A living dog is better than a dead lion." A small boy who is *here* with his loaves and fishes is better than a whole convoy of provisions ten miles away.

The boy was small, the loaves were only of barley and not wheat, the fishes were small, yet when the Lord Jesus said, "Let me have your loaves," how quickly he handed them over; and in His sacred hands the loaves and fishes were multiplied, and the great crowds were fed, and more was recovered than they had at first. They started with five loaves and two fishes and they ended with twelve baskets full of fragments. Remember the normal way of the Lord Jesus is to work through His people, especially now that He is seated in His glorious seat in Heaven. He is God's right-hand Man; He knows all, and all the planning lies with Him, but He works through His people.

God help us so that we may not miss the opportunity. You and I

have got opportunities now that we shall never have in Heaven. We are not going to speak a word to a weary soul in Heaven: there are no weary souls to speak to. There will be no opposition in Heaven: there is no one to oppose. If we miss these present opportunities of serving the Lord Jesus Christ, if we don't yield ourselves to Him, that our members may be His servants in righteousness and holiness, we shall miss them for ever. Don't let us miss the opportunity.

We shall praise Him soundly above, but we shall never be able to serve Him as we are given the opportunity of serving here, in the place where He was rejected, and in the day when the great masses forget Him and turn their backs upon Him.

God give us greater affection for the souls of men and for the God whom we serve. God give us grace in our day to be humble and simple, not waiting for the opportunity to be great or to do something great, but being little and doing the little things brought to our hands in devoted service to our Master. In due season, if we are faithful, He will find greater things for us to do.

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Consider the Lord of Glory who humbled Himself for your blessing and let His mind be in you.

Does Christ appear for us in heaven? Then let us not be afraid of appearing for Him on earth.

Beware of the world, it will betray you with a kiss. Nothing destroys spiritual life so effectually as its embrace.

It is not the Bible in the hand, nor yet in the head that will keep us from sin, but, "Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee."

## FIRE.

A. J. Pollock.

1 Kings 18. 21-24. Acts 2. 1-4. 2 Corinthians 5. 10.  
1 Corinthians 3. 11-16. Mark 1. 49, 50.

**FIRE** plays a larger part in the earth than most people realize, and fire is used symbolically in Scripture with equal or even greater importance in the spiritual world. "Doth not even nature itself teach you?" links up what is material in the way of illustration and what is spiritual, which is infinitely more important.

Four is the number in Scripture which stands for what is universal. It is remarkable that four things make up the material universe, viz., matter, water, air, fire. You may think that matter and water and air are more important than fire, but this is not so. Without fire we should have no universe. What is the sun in the heavens but a mighty globe of fire? Without the fire of the sun we should have no life on this planet. We should have no crops, no clouds drawn up by the heat of the sun, distilled from the mighty oceans, to water the ground. There is fire in our bodies. The food we eat is turned to heat among other things. If fire were out of our bodies we should be dead.

Then without fire as a destructive agency we could not live. If all rotting putrid things were uncountable we should be overwhelmed by matter setting up most insanitary conditions, rendering human life impossible. Fire is our greatest friend, without which we could not live.

In the spiritual world fire is just as important, and as much our friend, without which we could not be blessed. But let us turn at once

to the greatest expression of God's love as seen in fire symbolically expressed.

Briefly let a few words describe the scene. There stand 850 false prophets of Baal, spiritist mediums everyone of them, unspeakably wicked, the sport of Satan, along with wicked king Ahab and the thousands of Israel gathered on Mount Carmel. On the other side stands Elijah, magnificently courageous, for had not Ahab searched for him for years to put him to death?

Elijah cries aloud, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him." Then follows the challenge for each side to take a bullock, cut it in pieces, lay it on the wood upon the altar, and put no fire under, and said Elijah,

"And call upon the name of the Lord: *and the God that answereth BY FIRE* let Him be God" (1 Kings 18. 24).

The prophets of Baal call upon their false god. No fire leaps from a cloudless sky. They become frenzied in their call upon Baal. But Baal responded not. He was only an imagination of the devil.

Then Elijah called upon God. In a few well-chosen words of prayer he beseeches God to honour his faith in the eyes of these idol worshippers. The fire falls on the sacrifice well-saturated with water. *God answered by FIRE*, and the people cry aloud, "The Lord, He is the

God." The prophets of Baal spake not. They refused to acknowledge that the challenge had gone against them, and they paid the penalty with their lives.

But let us here carefully follow the meaning of the fire consuming the sacrifice. Is it not an amazing illustration of the mighty love of God? If righteousness alone and not mercy were in question the fire would have consumed the guilty sinners that stood by their thousands round that altar. But righteousness AND mercy were in question at that hour.

Transfer your thoughts to what is here so wonderfully foreshadowed and illustrated. See the fire of God's judgment descend on none less a Person than the Divine Son of God, become Man, taking in wondrous grace the sinner's place, enduring the fire of God's judgment that the believer may be blessed. Let that scene awe you, fill you with adoring gratitude! Fire is indeed your best friend.

You must either accept the blessed Saviour, who endured the judgment of God on our behalf, as *your* Saviour, or else the judgment will descend on you to your everlasting ruin.

But all this has a very practical side to it. If the fire has fallen upon the Sinless Victim for our salvation, fire must mark us as believers in the way of bringing us into moral accord in our lives with the will of God. This brings us to our second Scripture.

On the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended upon the believers, "there appeared unto them cloven tongues as of *FIRE* and it sat upon each of them." Here we get a plain intimation of the holi-

ness of God's indwelling the believer by the Spirit, that the Spirit is there to consume that which is of the flesh. This is done by bringing the believer into exercise by the Word and by the discipline of the Father to self-judgment as to ways and things about us not worthy of God, refusing them in our lives, leaving the Spirit free to be engaged in His delightful occupation of guiding us into all truth.

This brings us to our third and fourth Scriptures. Believers must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, our fourth Scripture bringing before us a very striking verse,

"If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; *yet so as by FIRE.*"

Saved by grace we all understand, but what does it mean by being saved by *FIRE*? It means that at last the Lord will bring us to the same judgment as Himself as to all that has been unworthy in our lives, and we shall see the last of it destroyed by fire, that is, we shall bow to the judgment of God as to it, the rubbish, in that sense, will be consumed.

But let us be very clear. The truth that is brought out in these Scriptures is intended to have a *PRESENT* effect upon our lives. It is a terrible thing if we know about the judgment seat of Christ, if it does not affect us. In such a case we may well stand in doubt as to the salvation of the one so characterised by utter lack of conscience as to this solemn truth.

But some young believer may say in bewilderment, "I thought when I was converted that I was saved for ever. I remember the preacher quoting to me the words of our

Lord, 'Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life' (John 5. 24). Now if our Lord says that I shall never come into condemnation or judgment, how is it that you say I have to appear at the judgment seat of Christ?"

The answer is, As a believer you will never come into judgment, the words of the Lord must be true; and yet you must appear at the judgment seat of Christ. Weigh over this statement and as you grasp it you will see how both Scriptures are true, and how the one does not in the slightest degree contradict the other. The believer's *person* will never come into judgment, but his *works* will be manifested, then he will suffer loss for every action in his life that has been of the flesh and sinful, and he will receive a reward for all that has been of the Spirit of God in his life.

An illustration will help. Years ago there were two kinds of judges in a northern city. There was the Lord Chief Justice of England sitting on the bench at the assize court. A celebrated murder trial was on. The man charged with the murder was found guilty. The judge sentenced him to death. His *person* was judged, and he well knew what that meant.

Now the person of the believer will never be judged. That would be to call in question the finished work of Christ on the cross. Moreover, when we appear at the judgment seat, we shall have been caught up at the second coming of Christ, and be already with bodies of glory like our Lord. There can be no

question as to our salvation in such circumstances.

Now at the same time that the judge was sitting on the bench at the assize court there was a flower show in the same city. The judges came along. What did they come for? Not to judge the exhibitors, but the exhibits; not to judge *persons* but *works*, to manifest by their awards what was worthy of a prize, and set aside as unworthy of reward that which would stand for loss of money, time, and skill. You can understand that the exhibitors were not anxious about themselves, but greatly interested as to the award of the judges as to their exhibits.

Our fourth Scripture speaks of the two classes of deeds under six symbolical figures—gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble. Gold, silver, precious stones can stand the test of fire, so all that is in our lives of the Spirit of God will stand the test of the Lord's scrutiny, and will receive a reward, though it is not wrought of ourselves but by the power of the Holy Spirit, such is the grace of God. But wood, hay, stubble, are consumable, and set forth that in our lives that is of self and sin, and will come under the condemnation of the Lord, and, thank God, our commendation, too. And in coming to the same judgment we shall see the last of it. We shall rejoice that rubbish and worse shall be consumed. We shall be thankful for the fire that can consume. Then not a question will be left to disturb throughout eternity.

But the judgment seat is set before us in order that we might be encouraged to please the Lord, and refuse in our lives all that is of self and contrary to Him. So we see how fire symbolically has a large

place in Scripture, and sad it is for us if it has not a large place in our desires and prayers.

This brings us to our last Scripture. It is a truly remarkable statement,

*"Every one shall be salted with fire."*

Now salt is a preservative agent, whilst fire is destructive. How solemn it is when we find in the next world that fire can have a preservative power. "Salted with fire." This alas! will be the everlasting fate of the unbeliever, forever under the judgment of God. The poet Keble wrote truly,

"Salted with fire they seem to show  
How spirit lost in endless woe,  
May undecaying live."

Then the believer is told that every sacrifice shall be salted with salt, and to have it in himself. Salt is a preservative. The believer is in a scene

where moral decay has set in, and the Lord would have the preserving power of divine energy that links up everything with God, binding the believer in heart with God and holiness of walk, rejecting all that is of the flesh.

The question is asked,

*"If the salt have lost its saltiness, wherewith will ye season it."*

Is this not a searching word to us, Christians? The essence of salt is its flavour. Without it it is of no use, neither for the land nor the dunghill. What use is a Christian, if he has not some testimony for Christ? What use is a carnal saltless Christian? So we are exhorted to have salt in ourselves and have peace one with another.

May the solemn, yet blessed teaching about fire, symbolising the judgment of God, be profitable to each one of us.

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## Pure Gold.

"I will put my trust in Him" may be said to have been the language of the life of Jesus. But His faith was gold, pure gold, nothing but gold. When tried in the furnace, it comes out the same mass as it had gone in, for there was no dross. Saints have commonly to be set right by the furnace. Some impatience or murmur or selfishness has to be reduced or silenced, as in Psalm 73 and 77. Job was overcome: trouble touched him and he fainted, though often he had strengthened the weak hands, and upheld by his word them that were falling. "The stoutest are struck off their legs" as an old writer has said. Peter sleeps in the garden, and in the Judgment hall tells lies and swears to them; but there has been One in whom the furnace, heated seven times, proved to be precious beyond expression.

J. G. B.

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The prouder you are of your Bible knowledge, the better pleased the devil will be.

If your Bible reading does not humble you and make you think less of self, you are not reading it rightly.

# “HE THAT HATH EARS TO HEAR, LET HIM HEAR.”

R. Turnbull

The Revelation—2nd chapter, verses 7=11=17 and 26=29.

3rd chapter, verses 5 and 6, 12 and 13, 21 and 22.

**THOUGH** the seven Assemblies which are addressed in these letters have long since passed away, the seven letters are preserved in the Word of God, from which I take it that though they were written to those different Assemblies which were in existence at that time, they remain for the consideration of all who have ears to hear.

These meetings are for our encouragement, and we know that God delights to encourage, and will encourage, for He is the God of all encouragement; but we are also here to be pulled up—to take account of ourselves; to consider our ways; to go afresh into the presence of God, and allow Him to search our hearts, which are so susceptible to other things, and that our ears so ready to listen to other voices, may hear His voice, correcting and reproofing if needs be, and preparing us for the encouragement He has in His heart for us.

Seven times over have I read to you the words, “He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear”; and I want ours to be opened to hear His voice, to hear it in a right way, for it is only as we hear His voice, that our hearts will in any wise be responsive and ready for that blessing which He is so ready to bestow.

The first letter is to the Assembly at EPHESUS. It is remarkable that the Lord Himself should address this letter to that Assembly. It was, as we see from the Epistle to the Ephesians, a very favoured Assembly. It was to that Assembly the Apostle

Paul wrote of their high calling; that they were blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ. It was also to that Assembly He wrote, “Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, 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 what has the Lord to say to that Assembly that had received the highest truths? “I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience and how thou canst not bear them which are evil . . . and hast borne and hast patience, and for My Name’s sake hast laboured and hast not fainted.” “A worthy commendation,” you say. Yes indeed, but when you compare it with the words of commendation to the young Assembly at Thessalonica that knew not as yet the great things which were ministered to this Assembly, we see a difference. The Apostle in writing to them spoke of their works, but they were “*works of faith*”; he spoke of their labour, but it was “*labour of love*”; he spoke of their patience, but it was “*patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

In this Ephesian Assembly, the faith and love and hope had declined. The activities remained, but the spring behind them was gone! Then come the solemn words, “I have against thee,” the word “*somewhat*” should not be there. It was no light matter the Lord had against

them. His heart was grieved. "Because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen." Has that a voice to us? Could it be said of us that our outward activities are right, but there is missing the first freshness and fulness of love? That word "Remember" strikes at our conscience. When the Lord says "Remember," He means it for us, and if we need that word tonight, let us take it home to ourselves. Do you remember those early days in the brightness and freshness and full joy of salvation, when Christ was everything to you, when you delighted to witness for Him, and allow Him from His Word to speak to your heart, and when you turned with such readiness in prayer to God? You loved the Lord Jesus Christ in those days when you were in the youth of your salvation and your new life. You sang heartily, " 'Tis the treasure I've found in His love,  
That has made me a pilgrim below."

REMEMBER, "Remember from whence thou art fallen"! Has His love changed? Thank God NO. His is an unchanging love. It is as great to-day as when He went all the way to Calvary for you, and yet has your love, your first love, waned? Does someone ask, how can I get right? Listen to the answer. Repent—"Repent and do the first works." Turn afresh into the presence of God, review your life from His viewpoint, allow the knife of self-judgment to cut away all that is contrary to Him, and the joy of His salvation will be restored to you, and you will be restored to first love. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear!"

"To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life," not

now the old Adam life, so marred in the Garden of Eden by sin, when Adam was forbidden the tree of life, but the present enjoyment of *new life*. The life that now is ours in Christ, and which in the coming day we shall enter into, to the full. It is only as we feed upon Christ and are ready and willing to allow Him to operate in our lives, that our first love will revive, first works will characterise us, and through us the blessing will flow to others.

In the letter written to the Assembly at SMYRNA, there is apparently nothing to correct, but we have an intimation of the Lord's perfect knowledge of the details of their life—present and future—and His encouragement in their tribulation and suffering.

We might think that in our day there is nothing in this letter to apply to us, as our lives as Christians are quiet and peaceable, but may I remind you of the Scripture which says, "They that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." If we do not know what persecution is, is it not because our lives are not so godly as they ought to be? Does it not suggest that if we are not receiving some measure of persecution for Christ's sake, we are not so faithful as we might be? Tribulation is certainly promised to us; the Lord Himself said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, *but be of good cheer*, I have overcome the world." He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.

What encouragement there was to the Assembly at Smyrna, for although their tribulation and persecution might mean the martyr's death, it meant the martyr's crown! Their lives here might be taken, but to the overcomer there was the

promise that they would not be hurt by the second death.

To PERGAMOS the Lord writes as the One which hath the sharp sword with two edges. He takes account of that Assembly as dwelling where Satan's throne is, and Satan as we know is the god of this world. Is it possible that some of us are finding interests and associations in the world that crucified the Lord of Glory? Are we like Lot of old who first of all looked towards the well watered plains of Sodom, and ultimately became submerged in those wicked cities? "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear."

Let the Word of God come home to us. If we have inclinations towards the world, let us remember that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. The Lord's call again is, "Repent or else I will come unto thee quickly and will fight against *them*." This is a call to us to withdraw from the world. "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing." We cannot go two ways at the same time. Either we are going God's way or the world's way.

To the overcomer there is the delightful promise that there will be given to him the hidden manna. The hidden manna reminds us of the pot of manna which was put into the Ark in the wilderness and carried into the Land of Canaan—a reminder to Israel of their pilgrim days when God in His mercy cared for them and sustained them. To us the hidden manna speaks of Christ, Who though ever the Eternal Son, came down from Heaven, and was seen here in lowly Manhood. The four Gospels present Him to us in this way, and what

a contrast there is between His spirit and the spirit of the world. All we enjoy and appreciate of Him now will be the portion we shall enjoy to the full when with Him in the Father's House. The white stone, on which is written the new name, suggests that personal intimate fellowship with Him which is ours in measure now, but will be enjoyed by us to the full by-and-bye. The hidden manna is our appreciation of Christ, and the white stone is Christ's appreciation of us.

To the Assembly at THYATIRA He speaks as the One to Whom all judgment has been committed. What characterised them was a condition which was seen full blown in the Romish Church, and history records the power she wielded in her day of apparent supremacy. There was a denial of the Lord's authority, and the putting of man in His place, which thing is hateful to God. To-day history is repeating itself, and the Lord's place of supremacy is denied Him, but God has decreed that every knee shall bow to Him, and every tongue shall confess Him Lord to the glory of God the Father. Everything will be put in its proper place; in judgment all will be dealt with, and every evil will be righted.

To the rest, the overcomers, He presents Himself as the coming One. The Morning Star is the herald of the coming day, and though we may find around us to-day those who usurp the Lord's place, and everything appears to be out of order, the day is coming when He Who shall come will come, and will not tarry, and all shall be in accordance with His will. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear!"

To the Assembly at SARDIS, He has to say, "I know thy works,

that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. I have not found thy works perfect before God." Solemn and searching words! As the Lord searches your heart and mine, is this the condition He finds, are we appearing to be what we are not? "Be watchful, strengthen the things which remain, remember how thou hast received and heard." Let us see to it that our names are registered with the few in Sardis who had not defiled their garments, for to them was the promise that "they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy." The darker the days, the greater the opportunity to shine for Him, as it was in Malachi's day, when they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard. May the thought of His love and His commendation create in your heart a longing to walk with the Lord in garments suited to His company. This is the promise to the overcomer. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear."

To the Assembly at PHILADELPHIA He presents Himself as the Holy One, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth. To them He says, "I know thy works." Nothing is hid from Him. "I have set before thee an *opened* door," and here we have very special encouragement to those who seek to serve the Lord. We may wonder at times whether our service for Him is in accordance with His will, but in reading these words, we realize that in turning to our Lord and Master, we turn to One who opens and shuts, and shuts and opens, and those who seek His face shall find not only an open door, but an *opened* door (as our verse really

should read), a door which *His* hand has opened; passing through that, we are assured of His presence and support. It is our desire to be in the company of those spoken of as having a little strength (power) as having kept His Word, and not having denied His name. We shall be characterised by endurance, we shall hold fast.

To the overcomer there is a promise of association with Himself suggested in verse 12. "I will make him a pillar in the Temple of *My God*, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon him the name of *My God*, and the name of the City of *My God*, and I will write upon him *My new name*. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear."

To the last Assembly, LAODICEA, He has to write some very sad words. He speaks as the Amen, the faithful One, the Beginner of God's creation, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot, I would that thou wert either cold or hot." I wonder if I am speaking to someone (and here I include myself) who though outwardly right, and associated with the people of God, is in heart neither cold nor hot? It is possible for us to get into that condition of soul. You may say you do not wish to be an extremist, but does your heart not long to be hot—hot in His love—in the full blaze of the sunshine of it? that alone will keep you in a world where indifference to Christ abounds. A luke-warm Christian is obnoxious to God. "Because thou art luke-warm, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Am. I a self-satisfied Christian, one who says, "I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing"? Do I need this Word? Let us take heed to the counsel, "Buy of Me, gold tried in

the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love (and He loves you and He loves me) I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore and repent." He desires that we should be brought into that condition of soul, which is pleasing to Himself, and that our lives should be afresh dedicated to His glory.

The remedy is in our own hands, for the blessed Lord Himself is standing at the heart's door, saying, "If any man hear My voice, and will open the door, I will come in to Him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." He does not say here that He will open the door, that

is for you and me to do. "If any man hear My voice, and will open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with Me." That is true fellowship—communion with the Father, with the Son, and with one another. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear."

"Behold I stand at the door and knock—if any man hear My voice, and will open the door, I will come in." Do you know what that means? I believe the door of your heart and mine can only be opened by us in the quietness of His own presence. I pray that to us may be given here and now, strength and purpose of heart to swing the heart's door widely open. Let Him enter and take possession, for that is pleasing to Him! "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear."

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## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

### Fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ.

"There is an impression among some that the fellowship spoken of in 1 John 1:3 was entirely confined to the Apostles. It seems clear to me that this fellowship is the common heritage of every true believer. I shall be glad if you will say something about this in your next issue"—PRESTON

**WE** should say that John referred specially to the Apostles when he spoke of "our fellowship." It is similar to, "he that knoweth God heareth us" in ch. 4:6. The Apostles had a unique place; they had actually heard the words of the Lord in which He declared the Father to them, and they had heard Him speaking to the Father. They were not mystics declaring something that they had imagined, or that they thought that they had discovered by a long and secret contemplation, but were authentic witnesses of what they had seen and heard. And what they had seen and heard was the

revelation to them of the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, and they were brought in the power of the Holy Spirit to the enjoyment of this revelation. They had seen and did testify, and had known and believed (ch. 4:16). They entered first into this wonderful fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, outside this world of disappointment and change. But their privilege and mission was to declare unto us what was so real to them, that we might also enter into and enjoy it. It was not for themselves only but to be declared in the power of the Spirit, that others might share

in it. Share in what? The revelation of the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. This knowledge of the Father and His Sent One is eternal life, it is our Christian faith.

We should be able to discern the importance and perfection of the way Scripture puts it. The truth has been declared to us by reliable witnesses. It is in the Scriptures now for us and only there. To turn to others than the Apostles for it, is to grope

in darkness, and fall into devilish snares. All the truth is there in the Apostolic writings—in the Holy Scriptures, and nowhere else—given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and when we hear and believe the Apostles' testimony, we are led into their fellowship, and that is for us as it was for them, fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. Anything less than that is not the Christian faith.

## Psalm 119.

“Please give us the meaning of Psalm 119, and specially that section 97-104. I have been told that it was only Christ who could have the law of God in His heart so as to meditate on it all the day?”—A BROTHER.

IT should be easily understood that the words of that section of this Psalm specially, were definitely and fully the language of the Lord Jesus in His life of obedience and dependence upon God; but none who walk in His steps are excluded from the blessings of it. Just so far as the Word of God is their daily meditation will be the measure of their spiritual intelligence and preservation from deception and evil ways.

As to the psalm itself, it is placed in the 5th Book of the Psalms, in which the nation of Israel is seen redeemed from their enemies and restored to the promised land. When that happens—and it will most surely—a new heart will be

given them and a new spirit (Ezekiel 36), and God will make a new covenant with them and will write His laws, not on tables of stone, but in their hearts (Hebrews 8. 10). His laws will then be their constant delight and Psalm 119 will be the language of them all. The Psalm is composed of twenty-two stanzas, the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet being used in acrostic fashion. It has been remarked that “Every letter of man’s language is taken up to praise that which was an intolerable yoke before.” So that the Psalm belongs in the first place to regenerated, redeemed and restored Israel, but it belongs also to everyone to whom the Word of God is precious.

I have a mighty Friend  
 In heaven above;  
 All who on Him depend  
 His care shall prove:  
 In every trial here  
 All through the desert drear,  
 I can have nought to fear:  
 His Name is love.

Only a little while  
 He is away:  
 Soon shall my Saviour’s smile  
 Turn night to day.  
 O joy beyond compare  
 To meet Him in the air,  
 His home of light to share—  
 Soon and for aye!

The Three following Addresses were given at Bangor, N. Wales, at a Conference for the help of younger Christians, July 29th to Aug. 4th.

## “BEHOLD, HE COMETH.”

J. T. Mawson.

*Revelation 1. 5-8.*

WE are gathered together as those who have believed in our Lord Jesus Christ, and yielded ourselves to Him, and as such we do not belong to “this present evil world,” for He gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from it, according to the will of God and our Father (Gal. 1. 4). We do not belong to this dying dispensation; we are children of the day; we are waiting for God’s Son from heaven; we belong to the new era, which has as its chief feature joyful submission to the will of God. This era has not yet been introduced and established publicly in power in the world—for we see not yet all things put under the feet of Jesus—but it most surely shall be, for the will of God must be done on earth and His kingdom must come. Christ must have the glory and dominion according to God’s decree and Word and in answer to the countless prayers of His saints for nearly 2,000 years.

We have already entered into the kingdom of God; we were “born again” for this, and it is right that we should understand what things are necessary to its establishment on the earth. They are three in number. 1. God must be glorified. 2. Death must be defeated. 3. There must appear One who shall be the all-wise, all-sufficient Leader of the nations of the world. And these three things meet in our great Saviour, they are the triple crown that He wears as He appears at the opening of this Book which unrolls for us the way that God will take to His fore-ordained end. Of these three things I speak with the earnest

desire that they may have a definite effect upon our present lives.

Let us consider Him. He is the faithful Witness; the First-begotten of the dead; and the Prince of the kings of the earth. He has glorified God on the earth; He has conquered death, and He shall rule over men with justice, and lead princes in the way of righteousness.

One of the leading statesmen of this country used to quote in his speeches a part of the Angel’s declaration at the birth of the Lord. His aim, he averred, was, “Peace upon earth with men of good will.” I suppose that that is the aim of all statesmen, but he overlooked the first part of that declaration, “Glory to God in the highest,” and there can be no peace on earth as long as God’s glory is left out of men’s scheme. But who can glorify Him? Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, has done it. The first man did not do it, though he was created in the image of God, which meant that he was created to represent God in this lower creation and fill it with what God is, and so glorify Him. He did the exact opposite; he magnified himself and has filled the world with pride and lust, but Jesus Christ came, the second Man, and He is the faithful Witness. He did always the things which pleased His Father; He glorified Him on the earth, and finished the work which He gave Him to do.

I am sure that we all have found pleasure in retracing the path

“Which He on earth has trod.”  
We wonder at the deep humility

and extreme poverty of His birth in the manger, and discern in it the fact that the world into which He had come would give Him no place, and that neither would He seek a place for Himself in it, though He was its true and rightful Lord. He might have had a place in it and become the head of all its kingdoms by the easy way of subservience to the Devil—at least, that was what the Devil proposed in the Temptation, but then the Devil is a liar and a deceiver, as multitudes have proved by a bitter experience and as our Lord knew well. But Jesus Christ was the faithful Witness and would not compromise with evil to exalt Himself. He was unmoved by Satan's subtle wiles, and the great enemy, grown insolent and strong by his forty centuries of success over men, and with the world at his disposal and the powers of darkness at his back, was baffled, beaten and bound by one solitary and hungry Man in the desert.

His witness was to men. He had come to declare the acceptable year of the Lord; the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him for this mission, but how strange was the reception that the men of His home town gave Him, when first He declared His mission. Being the faithful Witness He could not tone the truth to their prejudices, and they, enraged at His faithfulness, attempted to hurl Him headlong over the precipice upon which their town was built.

He did not come expecting to be popular in the world, and His path of faithfulness to God was

“Uncheered by earthly smiles.”

And though He felt this with a holy sensitiveness, yet it did not deter Him, or turn Him from His mission. In spite of the contradiction of sinners against Himself He

blessed their children, fed the multitudes with bread, healed the sick, cleansed the leper, bound up the broken-hearted and preached the gospel to the poor. Never word or act of His was out of place; His words were the Father's words and His works were the Father's works. No man had seen God at any time, the only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father He hath declared Him, and that so perfectly that those that looked on Him saw the Father.

But if that witness was to be complete, and God was to be fully revealed, the faithful Witness must go to the cross, and from this He did not draw back. He set His face as a flint and went, as it was determined of Him in the Counsels of God and as it was written in the infallible Scripture. At His cross the thoughts of many hearts were revealed. What man was was manifested; there was no pity in his heart; never before had he been permitted to go his unrestrained way. Always had God kept a check upon his wickedness, saying, “Thus far shalt thou go and no further,” but at the cross the reins were thrown free, and the evil of his heart was unbridled that he might fully declare himself. Then his hatred of God rose up in a mighty wave to overwhelm and annihilate God's faithful Witness; but the tide of love rose higher when Jesus prayed, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Nor was that the end. He gave Himself and died for His foes. “And God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Thus was He faithful unto death, that God might be fully revealed and that men might know that “God is love.” Thus has God been glori-

fied, and the work that glorified Him is the foundation of the new era, and what was revealed there will be the light and the glory of it

But God's faithful Witness, the sinless Sin-offering, could not be holden by the power of death. The great king of terrors has been made to yield to a greater than he. Death has met its Master; it is now a crownless king, without a sceptre, without a throne. Our Lord has triumphed; He is the First-begotten from the dead. He lives! I was delighted recently, in reading somewhere of an answer that a Christian gave to the challenge of a Mohammedan. Said the Mohammedan, "You Christians have no tomb, where is your Jesus? how do you know He ever lived? The tomb of our prophet is with us to this day, we know that he lived, and his tomb is the Mecca of every true Moslem, but you Christians have no tomb." The Christian answered, "We have no tomb because we have no corpse; our Jesus is not a corpse but a Conqueror." Yes, that is it; we do not preserve a tomb, we celebrate a triumph. The faithful Witness is the First-begotten of the dead. O Christians, do we sufficiently appreciate and glory in the triumph of our Saviour? If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins. If Christ be not raised, the devil has triumphed and death is supreme. If Christ be not raised, God has lost His Son and we have no Saviour. But now is Christ risen, and death is defeated; the power of the devil is annulled, the grave has been robbed of its victory, and Christ has become the Firstborn from the dead, and His being the Firstborn means that others are to follow and to share in His triumph.

But see the place that this triumph has in relation to the coming kingdom of peace. I quote from Isaiah 25 First, the faithful witness of Christ will be the light and the power that will "destroy the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations": they will know the Lord from the least to the greatest; but second, "He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces." That could not be unless the power of death had been broken. It has been broken, thank God, for Jesus Christ is the First-begotten from the dead.

And He is "the Prince of the kings of the earth." Not yet is He acknowledged as such, but to this place has He been ordained, and in view of it "God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." The One who was perfect in His obedience shall be absolute in His power, and apart from Him there can be no peace upon earth. The world ought to have learnt this long ago, but it will not learn it; it prefers its miseries and confusion to His intervention, for it has not yet repented of having crucified Him. And lest the glamour of the world's leaders and their plausible words and efforts should blind us to the true condition of the world, let us remind ourselves that it was the princes of this world that crucified the Lord of glory. Not the rabble led in this greatest of all crimes, but the princes, the leaders, the best that the world could produce; they were so blind, so foolish, that they did not recognise the Lord of glory, and they crucified Him. Every effort that the world's leaders can make to patch it up after such folly as that can only make it worse. The faithful

Witness, the First begotten from the dead, is the only hope. Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other Name under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved." In Him infinite wisdom and omnipotence reside, and when He takes the throne He will rule in righteousness, and the effect of righteousness shall be peace.

The praise that pours forth from His blood-washed people in this Scripture is an interruption in the declaration of His glories, if we omit that for a moment, the declaration runs on. 'Behold, He cometh with clouds' It must be so, it is inevitable, nothing can be right for the world until He is accorded His rights in it. The kingdoms of this world must become the kingdoms of God and His Christ. The first prophet that ever prophesied bore witness to this Coming. "The Lord cometh," said he, "with ten thousands of His saints to execute judgment." That word must be fulfilled. And the fact that He is coming to judge, exposes the delusion that the world is to be converted by the gospel and so prepared for His coming. If it is to a converted world that He comes, why should all the kindreds of the earth wail because of Him? If the world were a converted world it would surely receive Him with glad acclamation, but because it has rejected Him, and refused the mercy of God through Him, it will wail at the sight of Him when He comes.

But we who believe are not afraid of Him, we shall not wail when we see Him. We can sing even now this song of triumph. "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood." What cause for praise is this. We stand clear of all judgment, and it is the

coming Judge who has cleared us, and that by His own blood, and He has done this because He loved us. He who will judge the world in righteousness, has not passed lightly over our sins, He has paid the price of them in His own blood. And He has done this that He might bring us nigh to God and His Father—cleansed, clothed and crowned. Can we do other than exult in His greatness and ascribe to Him glory and dominion for ever and ever?

But if we do that sincerely we shall be willingly subject to Him now. Nothing can be right in the world until His supremacy is owned in it, nothing can be right in our lives if we are not owning His Lordship over us. It would be gross hypocrisy on our part to sing this song and yet live unto ourselves.

Brethren, we belong to the new era, we are children of the day. The faithful Witness has brought the light of it to us. As the First-begotten of the dead, He has imparted to us His own life, in Him we live the life that belongs to the day, and He must be our Leader, our Prince. If we yield our lives to Him He will direct us and we shall live wisely and walk wisely, and the peace that belongs to the day will be in our hearts and the light of the day will shine in our lives to enlighten those who are groping in the night. And meanwhile we shall look for His coming. And if we are challenged as to this our hope, we can answer that we have it on the authority of the Lord God Almighty, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Alpha and the Omega, who must have the last word about all things. It is He who says, "Behold, He cometh with clouds . . . Yea, Amen."

## "RECOVERY AND REVIVAL."

David Ross.

*"Wilt Thou not revive us again; that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?"*  
(Psalm 85. 6).

*"The spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. . . But God"* (Ephesians 2. 2 and 4).

IN the recent Dublin Medical Congress one doctor made the startling prophecy that the day was not far distant when the pedestrian would require to wear a gas mask as a protection against the spirit of petrol. An exaggeration doubtless, but an exaggeration of the truth. But there is a worse spirit against which the Christian must protect himself—the Spirit of the Age. Recently while lamenting the lack of spiritual growth in the young men, I asked a sister the question, "Do you think it is the fault of our ministry? Is there a lack of iron in it?" "No," was the answer, "it is just the spirit of the Age."

We live in a scientific age, and I have nothing to say against true science, for between Christianity, which is truth, and true science, there can be no opposition. But men with their wonderful discoveries and achievements have almost succeeded in denying God a place in His own creation. It is the Age of the Machine, the Robot, the Automaton, and Christians stand in grievous danger of substituting mechanical for spiritual values. If therefore there is to be revival there must be the recovery of GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS, of the sense that behind things seen and felt there is the mighty Spirit, the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only-wise God. To-day it is fashionable to speak slightly of the old Hebrew prophets to whom the fact of God was as obvious, as axiomatic, as the fact of the sun. We moderns are somewhat like a

people of whom I read recently who, living in Africa, the land of sunshine, had nevertheless built for themselves a vast underground city in whose obscurity many of them passed the whole of their lives. How much more tragic is it that men to whom God has given both Reason and Revelation should love darkness rather than the light which shines in the face of Jesus Who is the Image of God. Hear the pathetic words of the London professor who, once a High Churchman, had thrown Christianity to the winds.

"We have seen the spring sun shine out of an empty heaven to light up a soulless earth; we have felt with utter loneliness that the Great Companion is dead. We are all to be swept away in the final ruin of the earth. The thought is a sad one; there is no use in trying to deny this."

Contrast with this gloomy utterance the eloquent expression of God-consciousness uttered by the Psalmist,

"O Lord, Thou hast searched me,  
and known me.

Thou knowest my downsitting and  
mine uprising,

Thou understandest my thought afar  
off.

Thou compassest my path and my  
lying down,

And art acquainted with all my  
ways.

For there is not a word in my  
tongue,

But lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it  
altogether.

Thou hast beset me behind and  
before  
And laid Thine hand upon me.  
Such knowledge is too wonderful  
for me;  
It is high, I cannot attain unto it.  
Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit,  
Or whither shall I flee from Thy  
presence?  
If I ascend up into Heaven Thou  
art there:  
If I make my bed in hell, behold,  
Thou art there.  
If I take the wings of the morning,  
And dwell in the uttermost parts  
of the sea;  
Even there shall Thy hand lead me,  
And Thy right hand shall hold me.  
If I say, Surely the darkness shall  
cover me;  
Even the night shall be light about  
me.  
Yea, the darkness hideth not from  
Thee;  
But the night shineth as the day,  
The darkness and the light are both  
alike to Thee."

How blessed it is to have something of this experience and to be able to say with the student, whom the aforementioned professor led into years of spiritual darkness, "I believe in God because I have felt the Divine Presence, and if to love and adore is to believe, I believe in Christ, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that taketh away the sins of the world."

And if despite the fogs and deadly miasma of this world which obscure our vision and poison our souls, we recover the sense of the presence of God we shall also recover something else which this age has lost—THE SENSE OF SIN. Again let us look at the Hebrew prophets, let us read the penitential Psalms and see how these men who so understood God realized accordingly the exceeding

sinfulness of sin. They repented in dust and ashes and besought cleansing and forgiveness; the moderns have no such need, for they have explained sin away. The Old Testament writers use three words to describe sin (Exodus 34. 7; Psalm 51. 1 and 2). (1) Sin was for them a missing of the mark, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever," and the sinner has come short of God's purpose in creating him. (2) Iniquity is a swerving from the straight path, going astray, turning aside from Jehovah like a deceitful bow. (3) Transgression is rebellion, violation of God's law. There is a fascination about sin which appeals to our fallen nature for "stolen waters are sweet and bread eaten in secret is pleasant, but the dead are there"; "Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." In the New Testament sin is described by two words, (1) Failure, fall, false step; (2) Lawlessness. But it is when we come to the cross that we see sin in all its heinousness as it demonstrates itself there as Deicide. Sin would hurl Almighty God from His Throne. There too we see God's judgment of sin at that awful moment, the mystery of which we shall never be able to fathom, when "God made Him to be sin for us Who knew no sin."

How shall we learn the heinousness of sin? By plunging into it? No, for sin deadens sensibility. Rather let us keep close in fellowship with the holy spotless Son of God, like Saul of Tarsus who, as the result of years of such fellowship, abhorred himself as the chief of sinners. What this age needs is to recover the sense of absolute uniqueness of JESUS AS THE SON OF GOD. High thoughts of self and low thoughts of sin accom-

pany the modern theology which degrades to a mere humanitarian level the Eternal Son of God. The confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," is the only foundation for the Church which will stand all the assaults of hell's artillery. The only life worth living is that in the faith of the Son of God, "Who loved me and gave Himself for me." The sense of the mighty love and wonderful sacrifice of the Son of God will not only preserve us in this world, but also make us a preservative influence in this age.

But this age has lost the sense of the greatness of the Son of God because it has lost the sense of THE VALUE OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. This age no longer burns the Holy Book but has sought to rob it of its divine authority. Rome still proclaims its belief in the inspiration of the Bible but withholds it from the people. Protestantism on the other hand has largely paralysed itself by its acceptance of modern criticism. And the tragedy of it all is this, that the reasonings, which have been employed to rob countless numbers of their faith in the Book, are such as would not stand in an ordinary law court. Just recently a lady author accused H. G. Wells of plagiarism. She employed a learned professor, an expert in the higher critical methods, who proved, to his own satisfaction and hers, the truth of her charge. The case was tried before three of the highest courts of the Empire. The judges gave their opinion of these critical methods as applied to a book written in our own day as "fantastic hypotheses," "solemn nonsense," "an insult to common sense," etc. Yet these clever people can "hear the grass growing two thousand years

ago," can dogmatically make assertions about the compositions of ancient books which they would not dare to make about writings of their own time. Let us rather follow in this respect the Psalmist who says, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. How sweet are Thy words unto my taste, yea, sweeter than honey unto my mouth."

Another feature which characterised the men whom God used for spiritual revival in days of old was *separation* from evil. Separation as practised by those who like the Pharisees make a creed of it and say with pride of heart, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou," is utterly obnoxious both to God and man. But if we are to be any good in the world, even though living in it, we must be separate in heart and mind and principle. The Psalmist who was so conscious of the presence of God had an abhorrence of all that was contrary to God.

"Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee?"

And am not I grieved with those that rise up against Thee?

I hate them with perfect hatred, I count them mine enemies."

"How intolerant and unchristian!" exclaims the Christian of this age. But let him be honest and ask himself if he has not done a good bit of hating himself of those who hate him, before he condemns the utterly disinterested hatred of the Psalmist. Hear the words of another writer, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." A hard saying but a true one. There are three ways in which we may have to do with the men and women

of this world. (1) In our business life, when by our straightness and kindly consideration we may convince even the gainsayers. (2) In Christian service, where we seek in the compassions of Jesus Christ to save the perishing. (3) In the intimate and sacred friendships of life. These a Christian ought never to make with those who in the fundamental issues of life are of diverse principles. "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing." And this separation from evil is rewarded by fellowship in God's family, for He says, "I will be a Father unto you and ye shall be My sons and daughters." It was not Lot who joined hands with the wicked Sodomites but his separate Uncle Abraham who was able to intercede on behalf of these wicked people. The Christian who is truly "separate from sinners" as the Lord was will also be like Him, "going about continually doing good."

Finally, if the spirit of the age works in the children of disobedience, we who have believed have received another Spirit which is given to those who obey. He is the Spirit

of Christ and produces His characteristics in all who yield to His sway, the Spirit of life and maintains us in a world of death. For revival we must recover the sense that the Spirit within us is the Holy Spirit to preserve us from the defilements of an unholy world, the Spirit of Truth to guide us aright in a world of error, the Spirit of Liberty in a world where men are in bondage, sensual and spiritual, the Spirit of Sunshine who leads us into the place where there is fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore. The Spirit within us is the Spirit of Sonship, whereby we cry Abba, Father, and know that of this Fatherhood we can never be orphaned. The mighty men of old whom God used for revival were men filled with the Spirit.

Thus we see that if there is to be Revival with its consequent Rejoicing, there must be Recovery of God-consciousness, of the realization of sin's heinousness, of the value of the Holy Scriptures, of the truth regarding the glorious Person of the Son of God and of the separation which is the result of the in-filling of the Holy Spirit of God.

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## "With Christ."

I suppose some of you have watched a dying saint. I have often done so and, the most wonderful thing that has presented itself to me is that when the last pulse beats that soul is with the Lord. It shows not only the Lord's triumph over death, but His triumph over death in the saints, so that you stand by the bed-sides and say, "They are gone." Ah! it is better to say, "They are with the Lord." There is no possible interval, for, I repeat, death is gone for the believer. "He died," we may say; no, he sleeps. Some one once wrote to Mr. Wigram when he lived in London, "You will be grieved to hear that our dear sister So-and-so has died." He wrote back, "Died! No, she has gone to a fuller life. Our sister is living as she has never lived before"

E. D.

# THE SECRET OF DEVOTEDNESS.

Arthur Pollock.

John 1. 1-9; 15, 16, 19, 23, 27-29; 35-37; 3. 25-30; 5. 33-35.

**A**T our opening meeting of this Conference we had brought before us in a forceful way the supremacy of Christ and of the necessity of its acknowledgement if there is to be peace and goodwill. In our reading meetings we have been occupied with the subject of the Holy Spirit and there has been pressed upon us that apart from Him there cannot be service acceptable to the Lord.

I want to follow up these two thoughts and to illustrate their importance from incidents in the life and testimony of John the Baptist, believing that we see in them the secret of his devotedness.

That his witness was of no mean order, we have strikingly set forth in the testimony of Jesus—touching as we notice the circumstances in which it was given. John was in prison because of his faithfulness in rebuking Herod for his sin and was evidently cast down—he who had announced the coming King seemed much perplexed to find himself in a dungeon and no sign of the Messiah being acknowledged, so that he sends two of his disciples to Jesus with the question, “Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?” (Matt. 11. 3). Giving the messengers a gracious message for John, Jesus says to those around, “Among them that are born of women there has not arisen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he” (v. 11). With such a testimony from Jesus, we may well take a lesson from John, though we are in a place of greater privilege and nearness, as being in the Church—the

bride of Christ. John describes himself as “the friend of the Bridegroom”—if then he was so devoted, the believer’s position calls for a still greater devotion.

John is introduced to us with the words, “There was a man sent from God,” and he is described as filled with the Holy Ghost.

Do we know what it is to be full of the Holy Ghost? We may be, for Scripture bids us to “be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5. 18). Let us challenge our hearts as to whether we desire this and are ready for it!

Then again are we impressed with the thought that we too are sent of God? In His prayer in John 17 Jesus says, “As Thou has sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.” Some may think that this statement is confined to the Apostles. Even if that be so, we have this further Word of Christ spoken on the Resurrection Day to those into whose midst He appeared, “As the Father has sent Me, even so send I you” (ch. 20. 21).

Thus we have authority and equipment like John, but have we an appreciation of the Person of Christ like he had? May we be stirred by John’s example!

We find too, that he had a very deep impression of the deity and consequent greatness of Christ as the Son of God. The consequence was a distinct sense of the great dignity that lay in the humblest act of service done for such an One, saying, “Whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose.” May we not learn that a great appreciation of the

greatness of Christ would enhance in our minds the privilege of service even in that which ordinarily would appear little, and that such appreciation would produce a greater eagerness to avail ourselves of the smallest opportunity to serve the Lord Christ: we would never consider the service beneath our dignity.

Further, this produces true humility, for when John was asked who he was, he replied, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness: make straight the way of the Lord." Yes, he was ready to serve unseen (for who ever saw a voice?) and his one aim was to call upon men to make way for Christ. When, therefore, they sought to arouse jealousy in John (ch. 3. 26), he replies, "He must increase, but I must decrease." Surely the spirit of a true servant!

Then as to witness, do we not find the conscious and unconscious testimony? His witness, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," suggests the former, and surely the exclamation out of a full heart, "Behold the Lamb of God!" suggests the latter, which proved so powerful in attaching to Jesus two of John's disciples. The servant must have a distinct message, and the former reminds us that the centre of all Christian testimony is the Cross of Christ. Let us not forget that if the Word spoken is to be truly effective, the Cross must never be lost sight of in our daily lives.

A devoted preacher bought a house in Scotland from a Roman Catholic, who had laid out the ground in front of his house so as to give the appearance of a large cross, which he would see daily as he looked out of the front window. The new owner did not alter this

but left it as it was. As the weeks passed he noticed that the outline of the cross began to fade and soon was not easily traced. Nothing much had happened, only weeds, tufts of grass and seedlings had begun to grow where the bare ground had been and the cross was obliterated. I use the incident merely as an illustration of how the Cross of Christ in its deep spiritual meaning may fade out of our lives though still the subject of our preaching. Not because of great evils, but by the allowance of a little worldliness and a little self-seeking, till we lose the sense of what the Cross means in its practical bearing, and its power dies out of our testimony.

I have been told of a church in the East End of London. It was poor with little money to spend on repairs. They found one day that the flagstaff on the tower had rotted and become a danger, so they said, "We will take it down." It was not long before a gentleman called, who said he came from the Admiralty. The Vicar said, "What can I do for you?" His visitor replied, "You used to have a flagstaff on your church, and you have removed it; we want you to replace it." "But we cannot afford to do so," responded the Vicar. His visitor then explained that the flagstaff had been visible from a certain point on the river and pilots had for years taken their bearings from it, enabling them to guide vessels safely into dock, adding, "It must be put back again."

Those who put up the flagstaff were quite unconscious of the great service it had and we, if we take a firm stand for our Lord and Master, may be quite unaware of our influence, yet by our unconscious testimony we may guide a soul on

the way to Christ and heaven just as John's exclamation did, as he looked upon Jesus as He walked. May the Lord keep our whole lives firm and faithful to Him and our hearts true to Him and His Cross, so that souls may find their way to Christ through our unconscious testimony.

What high commendation did the Lord express when He said of John, "He was a bright and shining light" (John 5:35), and how good was the

testimony rendered by those among whom John laboured, "John did no miracle, but all things that John spake of this Man were true." How happy the result, "Many believed on Him (Jesus) there" (John 10:42). Surely we can say that the secret of John's devotedness sprang from a right appreciation of Christ in His sacrifice and the greatness of His Person and he a Spirit-filled vessel. May we learn from his example and be more characterised by a like devotion!

## "HE IS RISEN."

H. J. Vine

Our risen Lord, victorious,  
Has left the tomb behind,  
Ascended now, all glorious,  
Life, honour, fame combined  
His diadem adorning  
Rejoice the blood-redeemed,  
And risen life's new morning  
With peace on them has beamed

Oh, blessed resurrection  
Of Him Who died to save!  
How hopeless the reflection,  
Had He not left the grave,  
But great our joy in knowing  
From death our Saviour rose  
With gladness overflowing  
Our hope yet deeper grows

My Father and your Father,  
My God and yours, He said.  
The oil of endless favour  
Anoints our living Head:  
His cross removed the judgment  
And put our sin away  
We sing Him now triumphant  
The risen Star of Day.

Awake! O vast creation!  
Utter His glory forth!  
Sing, sing, His great Salvation,  
His counsel, wisdom, worth!  
Behold your blest relation  
To Christ the risen One!  
See, see the revelation  
Of God in Christ the Son

## The Inner Place.

We may not know how deep and wide are God's thoughts in connection with men, but as to ourselves who have believed, we know that the Father has given us to Christ, and that we are to be like Him, and that we are to be with Him where He is in the Father's house. We are to see fulfilled all God's intentions for men in this world and to share the glory of them all, but this inner place—the Father's house, the Father's heart, this close relationship with His beloved Son, for we are His brethren—this should move us greatly, for it is in this that the exceeding greatness of divine love and grace are revealed. Nor need we be ignorant of the joy of it now; we are already in the relationship, though not in the place of it, and the Spirit of it all has been given to us. Now are we the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be—this is beyond all our comprehension; but let us dwell upon it, as we surely may by the Spirit.

## “MY BELOVED SON.”

J. W. Ryan.

LET us listen to the Father's voice proclaiming all His delight in the One He calls "My Beloved Son." And ask who is this blessed Man that gives such joy to the heart of God, and what is the occasion that causes heaven to be opened over Him?

The voices of an angelic multitude, filled the air with praises to God, at His birth, declaring that He would bring "Glory to God, and on earth peace, good pleasure in men." But for a time He is hidden from our eyes, until we see Him going down into the waters of Jordan, not to confess His own sins—for He was holy and sinless—but to identify Himself with the remnant of Israel, who were owning their moral condition before God. "Straightway" He leaves the water and prays—evidence of His perfect Manhood—and lo, the heavens parted asunder, and the dove-like Spirit descended upon Him; and the voice of the Father declared, "Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I have found My delight."

What that moment must have yielded to Father, Son and Holy Spirit! "Immediately" the Spirit led Him into the wilderness to meet the enemy He came to overthrow, and the first encounter must be won where the wild beasts live. How significant is the "straightway" of the Jordan and "immediately" of the wilderness. It was the purpose of the Godhead and there must be no delay. With the Father's approval filling His heart, and anointed with the power of the Spirit He went forth to tread the path of the Father's will—the Father's Well-Beloved Son.

Again we hear that voice, but now in a scene of glory. We see the same blessed Man near the end of His path and service in the world, in which, though He had bound the strong man, Satan, and entered his palace, and spoiled his goods, setting many captives free, yet men would not have Him; they preferred their chains to His mercy. "He is despised and rejected," but though earth-rejected the glory Mount declares that He was heaven-accepted.

He ascended a mountain with three of His disciples to pray—still the dependent Man—but as He prayed His face shone as the sun and His raiment became white and effulgent. Two glorified men talked with Him. Were they there to accompany Him back to the glory? No, they talked not of glory, not of the Kingdom, but of death—"His departure which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." The great victory had yet to be won. The enemy had to be met in his stronghold, and his head crushed, before the kingdom could be set up; "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death."

But here we have a gleam of the glory, a foreshadow of "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," as Peter tells us, and those chosen three were "eye-witnesses of His Majesty." But the vision passed. The disciples awakened out of sleep, gazed with wonder at His glory, and the two men that stood with Him. Then Peter as he saw them departing, and "not knowing what he said," proposed three tabernacles. But while he spake a bright cloud enshrouded them, and they feared as they entered into the cloud. Then the Father's voice was heard out of

the cloud. He will not suffer His Son to be placed on an equality with even Moses and Elias, but declared that all might hear, "This is My beloved Son in Whom I have found My delight; hear ye Him." The cloud disappeared, the voice passed, and "Jesus was found alone"—significant words. Our blessed Lord, the glorious Son of God, must stand alone as the object of the Father's full delight and the object of worship for heaven and earth. As Peter tells us, "He received from God the Father honour and glory, such a voice being uttered to Him from the excellent Glory." He claims for Him, His Son, the only One worthy of honour, and the only One entitled to be heard. "That all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father."

But He could not then enter into His glory, for alone He must face the foe, and gain the final victory, until He can say, "It is finished." From the holy mount He descended and set His face stedfastly to go to Jerusalem, encouraged again by the Father's voice of approval.

"Alone He bare the cross,  
Alone its grief sustained;  
His was the shame and loss,  
And He the victory gained,  
The mighty work was all His own,  
Though we shall share His glorious throne.

Praise for ever be to His glorious Name!

But is this voice not for us? Surely it is. The "hear ye Him" of the Father commands our attention. Peter says, "that voice we heard." It was intended for them, but surely also for us. The disciples, still on Jewish ground, could not bear the Shekinah glory, but now the fear is gone, and the Father welcomes us in to tell us of His delight in "His Beloved Son."

But why should He declare His delight in the One who had been this eternally? In those past ages there had always been that Divine joy between Father and Son. A ray of it shines for our illumination in Proverbs 8, the Son, Wisdom, was daily His delight. But now the conditions are changed; He who ever dwelt in the bosom of the Father was here, Man, and the Father hastened to make it known who that Man was. But more—He was here, a Man, to bring about all the desire of the Father's heart, to fulfil those eternal counsels expressed in those words, "His delights were with the sons of men." He was the only Man in whom the Father could find His full delight, but His purpose was that others should be like Him, and so "He did predestinate us to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the First-born among many brethren." What a word. Brethren! That Beloved Son knew well the need of the Father's heart, and, with gladness, the moment He could communicate it, He sent the message, "My Father and your Father, My God and your God." Into that wonderful relationship we are brought, to share the intimacy of the Divine affections. The Father wants us to know the worth and glory of His Beloved Son, whilst the Son delights to make known the Father to us, that the love wherewith He has loved Him may be in us; and He in us, and that we might enter into these thoughts of Divine love, the Holy Spirit has been given to us. What thoughts crowd into our hearts as we meditate on such a marvellous revelation. Can we fully understand it? Never. But the Father wants us to enjoy it, and counts upon our hearts entering into it, and appreciating it for the Divine

joy, and as we gaze upon, and are absorbed with the beauty and glory of that Blessed One, what can we do but bow in worship and adoration to the Father and the Son.

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.

But the cost we must never forget. He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. The corn of wheat had to die to bring forth much fruit. He must go down into death to associate others with Himself.

*To continue.*

## FROM THE HEART OF AFRICA.

I QUOTE from a letter received this morning from Congo Belge. "On Sunday last I had the opportunity of speaking in a village where there is no teacher so far, and I don't think I'll ever forget the experience. I chose Acts 17, Paul at Athens, and the subject suited the village well. The chief was there to listen and as he sat there and heard the word I watched him. His whole attitude was, Why did you take so long to come? After the meeting he begged me to send him a teacher, 'To build a school and a house is a small affair,' he said, 'the big affair is to get a teacher to our village.'"

I do not give this item with the view of stirring up people to go to Africa; it is not my business to do that, but to ask if we, where the light has shone so long, are not treating it as a mere matter of course. Out there they are longing for that which we appreciate so little. May the Lord pardon us for our casual treatment of the delivering gospel of His glory, and stir our hearts to

love it, to value it, to live it and spread it.

Here is another extract. "One of the natives with me gave two excellent addresses. One on Lot's choice (Genesis 13), and the other on Ruth's choice (Ruth 1). Had it not been for the difference of language I could have imagined myself in one of our conference meetings at home."

Evidently that truth of God is as applicable in the heart of Africa as in the British Isles. But who are they who make Lot's choice, either there or here? Those who look upon the things that are seen and live for time and self, they are shortsighted people. And who are they who make Ruth's choice and follow the Lord wholly, as she followed Naomi? Those who are looking on the unseen and eternal things, who have found a treasure in the love of Christ that takes the value out of the things of the world, and who want Him above all else. And which of the two are we?

Be of good cheer; our God is never baffled in His ways: not a sparrow falls to the ground without Him—but He calls us His "dear children," can any one tell how dear? Can any measure His love or the tenderness of His cherishing? What blessing it must be to be wholly yielded to Him.

## "IT MATTERS TO HIM ABOUT YOU." Inglis Fleming.

"IT matters to Him about you."

So stands a free translation of part of 1 Peter 5. 7. (In our valued authorized version the verse is, "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.")

"It matters to Him about you." He has a care, a solicitude for your welfare. Then leave all your concerns in His hands. He will not fail you, or forsake you.

The hireling, of whom our Lord speaks, flees when he sees the wolf coming. He cares for his wages. He cares for the safety of his own skin. But he cares not for the sheep themselves save as a means of livelihood for himself. He is not concerned in reality for the sheep. He will not put himself to pains for their welfare, but deserts them in the hour of their need. Not so the true Shepherd. He gives His life for the sheep. They are the objects of His tenderest thought and desire. "*It matters to Him about*" them.

In the knowledge of this we may rejoice. The integrity of His heart and the skilfulness of His hands are ever on behalf of the least of the lambs and sheep of His flock. In love He has died for them. In love He now lives for them. And the activities of His love are shown in

His present ministry of prayer and advocacy on their behalf.

"*It matters to Him about you.*" The world troubles itself little if at all with regard to you. It does not understand, or appreciate you. Whether you live or die is a matter of indifference with its votaries. It pursues its pleasures of sin and race for wealth and fame and position. In Christ and in Christians who are true to Him it has little if any interest.

"*It matters to Him about you.*" Your spiritual well-being is dear to His heart and He moulds your circumstances in view of your growth in the knowledge of Himself.

"There is nothing too great for His power,  
And nothing too small for His love." in all that is connected with the life of any one of His own.

"*It matters to Him about you.*" Then roll upon Him your every burden and leave all in His hands. Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him and He will act for your good and blessing. Put your whole affairs in His hand. You may rely upon His wisdom, His strength and His grace to bring to pass that which will be for your present and eternal good.

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Love to all the saints is a necessary ingredient in the heart's going up to God.

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The Word of God is always new, and His love always more precious. I continually find something new in the Word which nourishes the soul and reveals to it the love of God and His ways. J. N. D.

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Confess that your best thoughts of Christ are poor, but if Christ is the object of them, then the object of your thoughts is not poor.

## THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.

James Green.

*John* 15. 1-7; *Gal.* 5. 22.

“THE tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth.” How much is contained in this first mention of fruit in Gen. 1. 11. In it is the indication of a spiritual reality which is at last fully displayed in the city of God (Rev. 22. 2). “In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river was there the ‘tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month.” In Genesis the process of formation is seen in action; in Revelation we view the fulfilment of purpose for which this process is carried on, and in Galatians is displayed the constant activity of the Holy Spirit in the production of fruit to the glory of God.

Fruit is the result of the husbandry of God. It is that for which He works and waits, and it is that which the power of life within alone can produce, and which being brought forth is for the pleasure and satisfaction of Him who cultivates it. No tree becomes a fruit tree by having fruit hung upon it, it can only be such by the fact of its own nature. No tree has fruit other than after its kind and according to the character of that which is within itself. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit, and so by its fruit the tree is known. Fruit has also inherent in it the reproductive principle of the life of which it is itself the product, it has within itself the power of multiplication, and the reason for its existence is the perpetuation of its kind. Lastly the sphere of its development is upon the earth. These suggestions may guide us in the consideration

of our Lord's instructions as to fruit bearing in John 15. He had previously told His disciples of the Spirit who would be power in them; now He tells them of the nature that already was theirs, that they were clean through the Word He had spoken to them.

He had already warned them He could not say this of all, and here the contrast is important, for flesh can only produce the fruit of the flesh. In the case of the traitor there was no implanting of the new birth and consequently like the Israel of which he was representative, his grapes were grapes of gall and the clusters were bitter (Deut. 32. 32), a branch of the vine in outward appearance but having no vital union with its fruit bearing system. Judas was a man of great opportunities and if outward conditions or circumstance could have changed his nature, such would have been the case in the three years he spent in company with his Master. In this is very seriously pointed the lesson, that not by outward profession and privilege, but by being born again from above is there any possibility of bringing forth the fruit that will give pleasure to God. A new nature and a new power is needed for this. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The tree yields fruit after its kind, and its seed is in itself. Of such an one it can be said, “Whoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (1 John 3. 9). Such a nature can only reproduce the character of life of which it is itself the product. That at the same

time there is also present a nature which if its workings are allowed will produce very opposite result is another serious consideration.

The prophet Ezekiel, ch. 15, tells us of the uselessness of a vine which bears no fruit, for any other purpose it is of no avail, and in spite of all the cultivation bestowed on them such were Israel's sons, and such will they be, until they find their place in Him who is the true vine; then shall they discover that their fruit is not the result of their own righteousness, but is from Him in a new power of life: "From Me is thy fruit found" (Hosea 14. 8).

Apart from the Spirit of God the new nature is powerless, and in fact at the outset is unable to cope with the old energy resident in the flesh, producing the distress which is so vividly portrayed in the seventh of Romans. It is not until the condemnation of sin in the flesh in the cross of Christ is seen and accepted, that the energy of the Spirit working by a superior law, sets the soul free to live the life that is in Christ Jesus; and, giving the consciousness of being married to Him who is raised from the dead, gives the enabling grace to bring forth fruit unto God.

In Rom. 6. 22 this fruit is seen in its character of holiness.

In 1 Cor. 13 it is shown to be the produce of love, God's own nature.

In Eph. 5. 9 its expression is in all goodness, righteousness and truth.

In Phil. 1. 11 the fruits of righteousness are to the praise and glory of God.

In Col. 1. 10 it is furthered and increased by the full knowledge of God.

In John 15 the condition of fruit bearing is that of abiding in personal contact with Christ.

In Gal. 5. 22, 23 its true character is seen in the reproduction of every beautiful grace that is in Christ Jesus.

The elemental principle, then, without which all is empty, barren, profitless, is the presence in us of the Divine nature of love. Of this we were made partakers by being born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the Word of God. The secret of this new birth unto a life which is capable of responding to God, is with Him who is the Author of it. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit (John 3. 8).

Every seed needs food and light for its development, and so the spiritual seed must have its sustenance and increase by the knowledge of the full revelation of God in Christ. God is its origin, God is its increase, God is its object; it exists for His praise and glory, therefore the character of the fruit produced from the seed of God, must correspond to Himself in goodness, righteousness and truth. In consequence of this it of necessity stands in contrast to the Adam character of the old man, which fills the world and corrupts itself according to the deceitful lusts. It is wholly separate from this and belongs to the realm of eternal life where God is all and in all. While that is indeed the end of this fruit unto holiness, it is here on earth amidst contrary surroundings that its cultivation is carried on, and in wilderness circumstances the north wind awakes,

and the south wind comes to blow upon the garden of God, that the spices may flow out. Thus it is evidenced by its conformity to the character of Him, the fruit of whose life here on earth, growing as a tender plant out of a dry ground, was ever the delight of the Father's heart. Beautiful was the expression in all His ways of the moral qualities, combined and inseparable in the perfection of His Manhood, which is the unique pattern of the life now lived in flesh, which the Spirit produces in those who abiding in Christ bring forth much fruit.

Wondrously perfect in harmonious relation is the cluster of ninefold graces, the fruit of the Spirit, described in Gal. 5. 22, 23. And truly beautiful is the exhibition of these in Him in whom there was nothing to oppose their development by the Holy Spirit. The second Man out of heaven was heavenly in His origin, purpose and object. His spirit, soul and body each bore its appropriate fruit in perfect adjustment to every circumstance. Let us contemplate with reverence the inner life of love, joy, peace in which in Spirit He ever lived with God.

Love to God was the spring and motive which formed the natural growth of His humanity; He grew in favour with God in the atmosphere of Divine affection, and so great was the attraction of this that the Spirit adds also in Luke 2. 52, in favour with man. At twelve years old it was His Father's business which absorbed Him. How fragrant with such fruit must have

been the hidden years at Nazareth, for when He came forth from their seclusion into the gaze of men, they saw One who set Jehovah always before Him, whose one delight was to do the will of God. In a nearer way still, the men who companied with Him could not help seeing, even though their eyes were dim, a Son whose love was ever in perfect response to the heart of the Father. Even at the long last not even the death of the Cross could cast the least shade upon the twin graces of love and obedience, which shone the more brightly in that awful hour.

It was in Him the old commandment of love, old as the eternal place He the Son ever had in the bosom of the Father, but now seen shining radiant in His Manhood amidst the uncongenial circumstances which surrounded His path. Can it be possible that fruit of such character can be produced in such as ourselves? Yes, for all who receive Him are born of God and have in consequence a nature capable of loving God, and indeed do so, for we love Him because He first loved us. The commandment of love and life is true now, says the beloved apostle, "In Him and in you," and as we gaze upon that flawless exhibition of love to God, seen in the Christ of God, so shall we by His Spirit reflect something of its beauty, even as the plants which drink in the sunlight, return in their blossoms the colour they receive from its rays.

*This consideration of the fruit of the Spirit in the life of the Lord Jesus will continue in our next issue.*

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Often when rightly seeking to do good, we do not sufficiently expect and leave room for God to act, Who alone is able to do good.

## SATISFACTION.

James Boyd.

“Thou hast made known the Father, whom we've seen  
 In Thy blest Person—infinite delight!  
*It more than satisfies*, as here we glean  
 The foretaste of His love, till all be light.”

**SATISFACTION** is a flower that springs not out of the soil of this world. Happiness, felicity, bliss, joy, are utterly unknown in this garden in which man hopes to find all his delights, but finds instead of these things, grief, worry, affliction, misery, wretchedness, bitterness, and despair. Satisfaction cannot be found in this world, that is, as belonging to it, or as having originated in it. It belongs to another world and another order of man than can be found amid the strife and contention of a world at variance with God. The characteristics found amongst men of this world are murmurings, complainings, grumblings, groanings and fault finding with others, and self-justification regarding themselves. Satisfaction could not be found by the greatest moral analyst, however determined he might be to discover it. In vain he would seek for it. It is a plant that does not grow out of the soil of this world. “The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing” (Eccl. 1. 8). “He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase” (Eccl. 5. 10). Lust and pride know nothing about satisfaction; and that is all that is in this world (1 John 2. 15).

But why cannot satisfaction be found in this world? It cannot be found where it does not exist. If God tells me—and He does tell me—that all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, and I

plead that satisfaction is found here, and that I have found it in this very world, I must set forth God as a liar, or an ignoramus, for He denies that it can spring from anything that belongs to this world of men.

Can satisfaction be found in a world of which the Devil is both prince and god? The world is the outcome and growth of man as broken loose from God, but not by the craftiness of the mere child of Adam, but by the subtlety and ingenuity of the old serpent. And whatever may be said on the subject, man refuses to be dictated to by his Maker, he is determined to carry out the thoughts and imaginations of his own godless mind.

The knowledge and enjoyment of God is necessary to the happiness of every intelligent being, and every such being feels he must give an account to God for his deeds done during his responsible career, for we must all be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each may receive the things done in the body, according to those he has done, whether it be good or evil. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord we persuade men. But ourselves, that is, true believers, have boldness in the day of judgment, for as He is we also are in this world (1 John 4. 17). We give thanks to the Father, who has made us fit for sharing the portion of the saints in light, who has delivered us from the authority of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of

His love (Col. 1. 12-14). Are we terrified when we think of our Lord? Not likely. His perfect love has driven away every element of fear out of our hearts, and has filled them with His unspeakable love. We know that we are children of God, even now while we are still in this world; we know that our Lord and Saviour loves us as the Father loves Him: that we are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He should be Firstborn among many brethren: that when He, God's Son, appears we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is, and we shall dwell with Him in that place He has prepared for us, and there we shall be for ever with Him: the Father gave us to Jesus, and He gave us back to the Father to be in His care as long as we are in this world. How blessed it is to be brought into the knowledge of the Father, and to abide in the blessedness of that love, in which the Eternal Son abides!

Surely each one of us can with gladness say—"I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness." But we can say more even than that for "Jehovah is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup. . . My cup runneth over" (Ps. 16. 5). "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over" (Ps. 23. 5). "It more than satisfies." Blessed be God! It does indeed. But as to this world, had one all that it contains, his happiness instead of being greater would be infinitely less. One may consider himself rich and increased in goods, and in need of nothing, but when he awakes to the reality of things, he finds himself wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. Nothing on

earth can satisfy the human heart. Our Lord said to the poor woman at the well of Sychar—"If thou knewest the gift of God and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink: Thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water. Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4. 10-14). To get perfect and eternal satisfaction one must drink of that water that Christ gives, which more than satisfies. By thus having to do with the Son of God you are brought into fellowship with the Son and the Father, and your satisfaction is measureless and endless. Your cup of infinite and eternal love is always running over; and apart from this man can never be satisfied. No man can be happy away from God, for God is absolutely necessary to his happiness. Without Him he must be eternally miserable. Nothing and no one can fill the human heart but God, and the cup of him who trusts Him He will keep for ever overflowing. Adam and Eve knew not what want was until they abandoned God, and then they came to know the misery of hungry hearts, and every one of their posterity must learn what the wretchedness of a hungry heart is as long as they are away from God. The whole world, and all the worlds in the universe, would fail to satisfy one human heart away from God. We can quite understand the deep distress of a soul who breaks out in the words of Psalm 42—"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living

God: when shall I come and appear before God?" (Ps. 42. 1). And in Psalm 43. "O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy holy hill,

and to Thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise Thee, O God my God."

## PRAISE.

James Boyd.

ETERNAL Father, unto Thee we raise  
 Our gladsome song, tho' impotent we be,  
 And truly feebleness our song displays,  
 Tho' unto Thee we gladly bend the knee.  
 Thou art so marvellous in our creature sight  
 We tell abroad the glory of Thy might.

And Thou hast called us in Thy grace divine,  
 And met us with a love that knows no end,  
 Thou hast, Almighty Father, made us Thine,  
 And proved Thyself to be the sinner's Friend.  
 We bless Thee Thou hast shown Thy great delight  
 In leading sons to worship in Thy sight.

Thou art our Father, we are now Thine own,  
 As in a Father we rejoice in Thee,  
 The Love so great that Thou to us hast shown  
 Calls us to bend before Thy face the knee.  
 Thine, Thine we are, yea, Thine for evermore,  
 And Father, Thy compassions we adore.

Thou lov'st to have us thus before Thy face,  
 And therefore hast Thou brought us to Thee nigh,  
 And given to us as sons an endless place  
 And we rejoice with everlasting joy.  
 The morning comes, the night shall soon be gone,  
 The Star of morn shall bring an endless dawn.

We wait that day, it shall not tarry long,  
 Eternal day shall quickly usher in,  
 The good shall take the place of cruel wrong  
 For good the battle in the end shall win.  
 And righteousness shall reign, for Christ shall bring  
 This evil world in bondage to the King.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

### Fitness for the Lord's Work.

"Paul told the Corinthians they were carnal (iii 3), they had terrible evil among them, yet were puffed up (v 2), they were going to law, and defrauding their brethren (vi 8), they were substituting an orgy of eating and drinking for the Lord's Supper (xi 21), and had amongst them some who denied resurrection (xv 12) We should have thought that after all this Paul would have exhorted them to fasting and humiliation, but his exhortation is that they should be "always abounding in the WORK of the Lord" We should have thought that they were not the kind of Christians to put their hand to the holy work of the Lord The question is, Wherein lies the suitability of this exhortation?"—BRIMSCOMBE

WE suggest that the solution to the difficulty raised by our correspondent is to be found in the 2nd Epistle. In ch. 2. 3, the Apostle declares his confidence in them that what rejoiced him would be also their joy. It is evident that he fully expected that his letter to them would produce fasting and humiliation, even though he did not exhort them to it, and he was not disappointed in this, as chapter 7 shews. There he can speak of the obedience of them all (verse 15), of the godly sorrow and repentance that his letter had wrought in them (verses 9-11). His letter had made them careful to clear themselves of those things which were so inconsistent with the Name and work of the Lord. That 7th chapter is a wonderful chapter, shewing what results may be produced in the saints by the Word of God, and also the agony and joy that the Apostle experienced in his care for them.

His exhortation therefore as to "always abounding in the work of the Lord" flowed, we believe, from his confidence that they would heed the letter and be affected by it, as they were. Now they might have felt that since they had dishonoured the Name of the Lord in so many ways, it would be no use their continuing in His service, and this would have been one of the Devil's wiles of which the Apostle speaks in ch 2, and this exhortation would circumvent such a wile. But we may be sure that he did not mean that they should abound in the Lord's work while going on in sin. It is by separation from evil that one is "a vessel meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (2 Tim. 2. 21) And we know that the Holy Spirit is the only power for acceptable service, and if a saint of God is in a backslidden state, the Spirit is grieved and quenched. No backslider could abound in the Lord's work.

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### The Lord's last words to Peter.

"In the article 'The Unchanging One' pages 130-131, the writer in explaining John 21. 18,—'The change was wrought in Peter, in the school of God, and by Him who Himself changes not,' makes the passage mean that Peter's will was to be subdued and broken as the result of Divine schooling. I had always thought in view of verse 19 and 2 Peter 1 14, that it was the Lord's intimation to Peter that he would be taken by force and martyred for His sake"—CAMBERWELL.

THE Lord's words were undoubtedly an intimation to Peter as

to the death that he should die, as the Scripture says, but there seems

to be more in them than that. Peter had missed the opportunity of standing for the Lord; instead of dying for the Lord, as he had boasted he was ready to do, he had denied Him, and his heart must have been very sore about it. The Lord's words would encourage him, by shewing him that that true desire of love should be realized at last, but it would not be according to his own strength and will. When he had girded himself for the conflict, he had fled before the foe, but he would

yet learn as taught of God, that in his own strength he could only fail, then he would stretch forth his hand, and another should gird him—give him strength—and he should glorify God by his death. The words that follow are significant, "Follow Me." If he did that he would never boast again, but be wholly dependent on the will and power of God. The words shew us in arresting fashion, first, strength defeated, then, weakness triumphant.

## The Healing of the Body.

Correspondents ask for some help as to what is called "faith healing." Ought we to expect it now? And what should we learn from Scripture about it?

**T**HERE are three cases of sickness mentioned by Paul in his Epistles, and as he is the Apostle to the Gentiles, his references to these sicknesses should be of great help to us in considering the question.

1. Epaphroditus was sick unto death as a result of his zeal in the Lord's work; he had overtaxed his strength and nature broke down. Paul did not heal him, but we should judge that he prayed for him, and tells us that "God had mercy on him; and not on him only but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow" (Phil. 2). In this case we have God's intervention and nature did not take its course

2. Timothy suffered from a weak constitution, probably inherited. Paul did not exercise any healing power on him, though he had been his constant companion, nor did the Lord intervene to strengthen his weak body; he was probably a better servant with the weakness; but he

had to take available means to alleviate his sufferings. In this the Lord's compassion was manifested (1 Tim. 5. 23).

3. Trophimus was left at Miletum sick. No relief is indicated in his case, nor do we read of him being raised up at all (2 Tim. 4. 20).

First it was God's will for reasons clearly stated that Epaphroditus should be healed. Second: It was God's will that Timothy's weakness should remain, but be mitigated by natural means. Third: Trophimus was not healed; a sick man was more use to God at Miletum than one healed. We conclude from these cases that it is not God's will that all His people should always be in vigorous health, they are subject to the ills of humanity as are other people, but it is His will that they should be subject to His will. If the body is yielded to Him for Him to do with it as He pleases, and if we recognise that it is His, and so do not abuse it, we

shall prove that His will is good and perfect and acceptable, whether we are sick or well.

It is a mercy of God when we are well, and if sick, when we are raised up again. It is also a mercy of God that nature has not only produced food for us but medicine, and Timothy's case would teach us that we must thankfully receive such as God's provision; but subjection to His will, even where there is permanent invalidism, must yield greater blessing. God has His own way of disciplining His children, and whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth. He has not only our present good but our future in view, and we know that all things, be they sickness or health, are working together for the ultimate good that He has purposed.

It is not good for the soul to be running after these sensational "healing" meetings. It is better to quietly commit one's way to Him. It is right that we should wish one another good health as John the Apostle wished for Gaius; but suffering and weakness among the saints of God draw out the sympathy and compassion that otherwise might find no expression, and it is often in suffering and sickness that saints learn what Christ can be to them in His priestly grace and sympathy as they could not know Him in health and strength, and this is of eternal value.

God can and does heal His children and that often in answer to prayer, but prayer to be effectual must be according to His will in this matter as in all others (see 1 John 5. 14-16).

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## Our Example.

When you are not appreciated, when you are thrust aside, or quietly relegated to a minor place, when others supercede you and when those you desire to help ignore you, then think of the One you rightly call—Master and Lord.

"He made Himself of no reputation" (Phil. 2. 7).

"And Herod with his men of war set Him at nought" (Luke 23. 11).

"The Stone which was set at nought by you builders" (Acts 4. 11).

"He was despised and rejected of men, a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53).

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow in His steps" (1 Peter 2. 21). It means that He is the headline that you must diligently study and carefully copy. As you diligently study Him you will forget yourself, and the sting and smart will be taken out of your trying experience.

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Do not be continually occupied with evil, even in the hope of putting it right or in combatting it. It is not the way of communion. It spoils the soul for communicating positive good.

## “THE MAN THAT IS MY FELLOW.”

J. T. Mawson.

*“Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the man that is My fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered”* (Zechariah 13. 7).

THERE can be no doubt that this prophetic word was spoken concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, for He quoted it and applied it to Himself, as He walked with His disciples to the Mount of Olives on the night of His betrayal. They are wonderful words, and bring out the divine glory of the Lord, for the Lord of Hosts, speaks of Him as “the Man that is My fellow” which surely carries the meaning of equality. But I suggest that it means more than that; that it means absolute accord with God’s thoughts and will. There has been a Man upon earth, between Whom and God in heaven, there was a perfect community of thought, and complete fellowship. He was God’s Fellow, answering to every desire in the heart of God, as a well-tuned harp answers to the touch of a master’s fingers—“He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth Mine ear to hear as the instructed,” was the language of this wholly subject Man. And He continues, “I was not rebellious, neither turned away back,” even when with an ardent, but merely human love, Peter urged Him to pity Himself. The will of His God was supreme for Him and not to be challenged or questioned, so He says, “I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not My face from shame and spitting” (Isa. 50). But the will of God carried Him into deeper suffering than that which men inflicted upon His exquisitely sensitive frame. Harken to His words to His disciples at the Supper table: “Hereafter I will not talk

much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given Me commandment, even so I do, Arise, let us go hence.” Steadfast as the throne of God, the devil neither by wile or menace could make Him waver, or destroy that most perfect fellowship which from eternity bound the Father and the Son in one. As Abraham and Isaac “went both of them together” to the place of sacrifice, so did this blessed Man tread the Father’s way with the Father to fulfil His will to the last letter of it. “Arise, let us go hence”—that hence was Golgotha, where Jehovah’s rod smote Him, when He was lifted up, the Son of Man, for our transgressions and sins; and when as the Shepherd He suffered for the flock. The disciples could not travel with Him to the end of that road, for the sheep were to be scattered at His smiting. “Behold,” He said to them, “the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.” The man that was Jehovah’s Fellow had company to the very end of the way. “And He, bearing His cross, went forth into a place called in the Hebrew Golgotha: where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.” But there was no weakening even then of that perfect acquiescence in God’s will or break in that holy oneness between Him and His God. Hear His words,

"MY God, My God. . . . O My God—Thou art holy . . . Thou art He . . . Thou didst make Me hope. Thou art My God . . . Thou hast heard Me" (Psa. 22).

We cannot know, nor may we presume to attempt to discover what were the feelings of the Lord of hosts as He raised His rod to smite the Shepherd—the Man that was His Fellow, but we are permitted to hear these words—"THEREFORE DOETH MY FATHER LOVE ME, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. *This commandment have I received of My Father.*" And again, "I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." And we may see the great result of that one obedience; the scattered sheep were to be gathered again into an indissoluble unity through that very smiting and death. "It is expedient," said Caiaphas, "that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." But he did not speak

this of himself, impious hypocrite that he was, but he prophesied—he was made the mouthpiece of the Holy Ghost for the time being—that Jesus should die for that nation, and not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad (John 11, 49-52). It is the risen Christ who becomes the object of His people's faith and the Centre to whom they gather. God is gathering to Christ, but He could not have gathered apart from the cross. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me," are words that we should ponder often and well. And God will be glorified in the multitude of His sons, conformed to the image of His Son, the Firstborn among many brethren.

It was the Man that is Jehovah's Fellow that suffered the smiting, and He it is that will fill the universe with a glad surprise when He brings all things in heaven and on earth into reconciliation to the will of God, in which He ever delighted, and to which He was entirely subject.

## God's Joy.

"Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15. 10).

These touching words unfold to us the deep joy of the Lord Himself in the matter of our salvation. This is not sufficiently seen or thought of. We are apt to forget that God has His own especial joy in receiving back to His bosom of love the poor wanderer—a joy so peculiar that He can say, "rejoice with Me," "let us eat and be merry." He does not say, "Let him eat and be merry." This would never do. God has His own joy in redemption. This is the sweet lesson taught in Luke 15. The shepherd was glad to find his sheep. The woman was glad to find her piece of silver. The father was glad to embrace his son. God is glad to get back the lost one. The tide of joy that rolls through the hosts above when a sinner returns finds its deep, exhaustless source in the eternal bosom of God.

# THE GREAT WORKER.

David Ross.

Scriptures read. 2 Cor. 3. 18; 4. 17; 5. 5 and 21; Rev. 22. 3 and 4.

IN the days of Victoria, on the royal estate of Balmoral a "small boy" or a "herd laddie" was left one day in charge of the hillside hut sometimes used by the royal hunting parties. Proud of thus working for his Queen, he carefully followed the instructions he had received, and when a lady appeared to prepare a meal for some of the guests he helped most diligently in the preparation. When all was in readiness, the lady said, "That will do now, my boy, but before you go, I wish to give you my photograph." With these words she placed a sovereign in his hand, thus discovering to him that not only had he been working *for* his Queen, but that she had been working *with* him. He carried with him the *image* of his fellow-worker, and afterwards reckoned the *value* of that sovereign as worth more than fifty times its intrinsic value.

I wish to dwell upon four propositions in conjunction with the word working:—working *for*, working *with*, working *out* and working *in*. God is the great worker, and the work of the Eternal shall stand for ever.

I trust we all desire to work for our blessed Lord Himself, but let us see to it that the impelling power behind our work *for* Him is that we have known the blessedness of His work *for* us. How many there are who are seeking to work for God in order to merit salvation, not realizing that God in Christ Jesus has wrought a wonderful work which has procured for us eternal

salvation. Have we all come in simple faith to realise that the work of salvation was completed by our Lord Jesus when God made Him sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him?

"I would not work my soul to save  
For that my Lord has done."

And no power in Heaven, or earth or hell can ever destroy the work that He has done.

"But I would work like any slave  
For love to God's dear Son."

Oh that we might come to Calvary and there realise what it cost God the Father, what it cost the only-begotten Son, as He through the Eternal Spirit offered himself up without spot to accomplish salvation's work.

But it is the second point I want to stress. Ours is the privilege—having been saved—to serve. We are not saved merely to go to Heaven when we die, we are saved to serve while we live. Now the little fellow in my story who was willing to work for his Queen, discovered that in doing so he was also working with her. And that is a thought which Paul stresses very much while speaking of his ministry or service in the second Corinthian epistle. What a thing it would be to carry on alone in this service. As we think of our poverty, our littleness, we are crushed and distressed; but, when we realise that the Great Worker is with us, we know that our "little is much when God is in it," while "man's busiest days are not worth God's minute."

Work on, then, realising that behind your feeble, seemingly futile effort, is the Almighty God.

Let not the thought that He dwells and works with us lessen our conception of God's greatness. A Christian workman was asked by a sceptic, "What kind of God have you got, a big one or a little one?" He answered, "My God is so great that the Heavens cannot contain Him and yet He condescends to dwell in my *little* heart." A great God indeed who works in and through and with little people. Condescension is the mark of true greatness. It is littleness which is puffed up when "dressed with a brief authority." How proud we puny creatures are—while He Who thought it not robbery to be equal with God humbled Himself and became a bondservant. He came not to be served but to serve and He is still serving and serving with us.

During the American War of Independence a party of soldiers were labouring to lift a great log of wood. Someone came along, and, as he saw a soldier standing by, he said, "That is too heavy for these men, why are you not helping them?" Drawing himself up to his full height the other answered, "Don't you know that I'm the *Corporal*?" He was too big to serve. The visitor then said, "Well if you won't, I will help them." When the job was finished the corporal then asked the question, "And who may you be?" and received the astounding reply, "I am *General Washington*!" Condescension is difficult for us little people, but humility and also courage will come to us when we realise the grace and might of Him who works with us.

In this epistle the Apostle uses very frequently the Greek prefix, *syn*, i.e. with or together, thus indicating his fondness for that "togetherness" or "withness" which is the true Christian idea—fellowship with God and with one another. In Mark 16. we find this striking statement,

"So then after the Lord had spoken unto His disciples, He was received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working *with* them . . ."

Strange is it not that He should be sitting in heaven and yet working with His disciples on earth!

A lad named David Livingstone living in a poor cottage, in a Scottish village heard the imperative call of God and went right into the heart of darkest Africa, a *terra incognita*, plagued with the unspeakable horrors or the slave traffic. He went in the assurance that the Lord would go with him and years after he wrote under the words, "Lo I am with you always"—"These are the words of a gentleman." A gentleman keeps his word. Livingstone left home and kith and kindred and for a long time disappeared from the ken of his countrymen, but he was not lost to God. On the morning when he left his home he read with his parents Psalm 121, a psalm beloved in Scotland,

"The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth and even for evermore."

And when the final going out took place, he was on his knees engaged in prayer; gone from his labours but still with his Lord.

But though the Lord is not calling all of us to go to Central Africa, He is saying to us none the less—"Go, go. Darkest England, darkest Scotland, central London and central Glasgow are calling, and He says to us "go." But if we go what of the sacrifice involved? Dare any of us speak of sacrifice? Think of the sacrifice that Paul made. Thrice scourged by Roman rods, five times by his fellowcountrymen, once stoned, imprisoned, in deaths, in perils by robbers, in perils of waters, in perils in the wilderness and in the sea, and yet he describes all these afflictions of the gospel, "Our light momentary affliction." Let us read the eleventh chapter of this epistle to learn what he describes as light, and then let us cease to grumble for the rest of our lives. Paul knew something about divine arithmetic. The little momentary affliction, put out to compound interest for all eternity, was going to work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. He is as fond of the prefix *hyper* meaning over or above, as he is of that one meaning—together, and uses it repeatedly in his effort to describe the indescribable and to compute what is above all computation—the glory that is to follow.

Our little lad carried on his person the image of his sovereign and valued it highly. Do we sufficiently appreciate the fact that the God Who is working out for us eternal glory, is also working in us to reproduce the image of His Son? "Changed from glory into glory till in heaven we take our place." Are we waiting till we get to heaven before there is any semblance of that image in us? No, we all with open face beholding the glory of the Lord are transfigured into the

same image from glory to glory. The risen glorified Lord is the object with which the Spirit engages our hearts and minds, and while we are beholding He works in us subjectively the change which conforms us to the likeness of that with which we are occupied.

The consummation of all this we see in the verses read from Revelation 22. 7. In the glory we shall never forget the work for us that secured salvation, because when we look for the Lion of the Tribe of Judah that prevailed, we shall see a Lamb as it had been slain, "God and the Lamb shall there the light and temple be." We shall still continue to serve him although it may be not in the same way as here for his servants shall worshipfully serve Him, "and we shall see His face" and what greater glory can there be for us than that, "and His name shall be on our foreheads." His lineaments, His loveliness, His love perfectly reflected in us, no need then to tell others we are Christians and surprise them perhaps with the information. His name not only on our lips in endless praise but imprinted on our being for all eternity. God grant that something of His name may be seen in us here and now till the day dawns, "when His servants shall serve Him and they shall see His face and His name shall be on their foreheads."

Like Jesus in that place  
Of light and love supreme,  
Once Man of Sorrows, full of grace,  
Heaven's blest and endless theme.

Like Him! O grace supreme!  
Like Him before Thy face,  
Like Him to see that glory-beam  
Unhindered, face to face.

O love supreme and bright!  
Good to the feeblest heart,  
That gives us now, as heavenly light,  
What soon shall be our part.

## THE REMEDY GREATER THAN THE RUIN.

*"And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee" (Luke 10. 30-35).*

HERE man's ruin is fully depicted, and here we shall find the remedy is in divine perfection in every part. Where the ruin is sensibly felt, where the sinner is consciously awakened to his state, he feels he is painfully incapable to refuse any relief, and he feels he wants it. No state could be more deplorable. He needs relief, and yet he would refuse it if he could. If he were not so broken down he would not accept it, so that it is his very misery that makes him fit for grace. He has the wounds, and wounds only. He has nothing to commend him but his need.

And now he received wine and oil into his wounds. Christ comes as the neighbour. He comes under the law, but not confining Himself to the limits of the law, He magnifies the law; and while He meets man according to the measure of the law, He travels out beyond it into the depth and breadth of God's love. He makes the law honourable in the way He fulfils and magnifies it; whilst He meets with a divine remedy the entire state of the poor sinner. He not only pours oil and wine into his wounds,—that

is, CURES HIM. That, of course, is the first thing; the man is cured. But were I to limit the remedy to this, while I admit much would have been done for the sinner, yet I should come very short of the remedy given me by God for him.

If I am sent to a suffering person with three or four distinct gifts which the mind of the donor (who is fully acquainted with the need of the sufferer) considers requisite, am I at liberty to give him only one, because that one gives great relief, and to withhold the others? Certainly not. I should err in a double way. I should not fulfil the commission entrusted to me, I should misrepresent the donor; and I should deprive the needy one of the favours given me for him. The remedy that Christ brings reaches not only to the cure of the sinner, not only to an assured rescue from the judgment, and unquestionable safety, but it meets him in his powerlessness, as we read in our parable, he sets him on "his own beast."

The ruin of the sinner is only partially relieved if he be only cured.

It is undoubtedly most necessary, the first necessity, but it is not enough for a perfect remedy, which God in His grace supplies. We learn from the parable that the cured one is set upon a new power—figuring the power of Christ; he is now to be borne along by the power of Christ, entirely in a new way, not according to man's power or ways. That is the teaching. First the sinner tastes the bitter end of all that is of man. In his calamity neither the priest nor the Levite can help him, religion and the law are vain, but as a cured one he enters upon a new course—a new life and a new ability are given him. He may very partially avail himself of it, but this new power is as much part of the remedy as the cure is.

I must not limit it. The sinner should be impressed and convinced of the fulness and largeness of grace. Not only is a cure for the heart's misery sent through the work of Christ, but the life and power of Christ are also given to meet the powerlessness of his state. Otherwise, as we often see, a soul may be assured of cure—of forgiveness of sins—and yet have no idea of the power or walk which should characterise him now as a cured one. This part of the remedy may never have been known to him. The remedy is one whole though divided into parts, and I am not at liberty to insist on one part of it, namely, the cure, and be silent about the other parts of it.

Were I sent to minister medicine, money and a home to any indigent person, should I consider I had properly executed my work because I had given the medicine? Surely I should, in such case, have de-

prived the invalid of two very important items necessary for his state. No one with any integrity would excuse himself for so grievous a defalcation of service.

Now in ministering to souls, there is not only the loss of the benefits of the remedy if any part be omitted or withheld, but there is a correspondent deficiency or lack of testimony to the grace of God in the life and ways of the convert.

Suppose I tell a sinner that Christ, through His work, will cure his sin-distressed soul, and he received this truth in faith, he is cured. But if I say no more about the remedy, this cured soul seeks to drag on in his weak powerless state, the only real improvement in him being that he has been relieved of the fear of judgment—the penalty of his sins. How differently such an one would feel were I to insist that the same One who had cured him would now confer upon him His own power. For his ruin would not be adequately relieved unless he were given new power.

And this power is an entirely new kind of power—a power unknown before—the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, which necessarily would lead him into His line of things, outside and apart from man, to walk here as Christ walked.

And this power is not only offered, it is conferred. Thus it is shewn in this parable. The relieved sufferer is set on "his own beast," the figure of the power in which Christ walked here. He brings him to an inn and takes care of him. Then his miserable condition is entirely met: CURED,

CARRIED, AND CARED FOR. If the ruin have been terrible, the remedy is most effectual in every point.

Every convert may not enjoy the greatness or perfection of the remedy, yet it is important to assure every perishing soul of the full nature and scope of the remedy, so that he may be convinced, at least, that there is no limitation on the part of God, though he have not faith to grasp it. There is a vast difference between the state of the soul of the one who, though converted, never heard of the fulness of the remedy as set forth in this parable, and the one who, though he have heard it has not sensibly entered into it. In the former there is no exercised conscience; there is no sense of failure, because not enjoying what has been conferred upon him; but there is a sense of lack continually—a feeling of wanting something to render him fully happy; for he does not know and has never heard of the fulness of God's remedy for him, and hence he turns to earth's mercies to fill his cup. But the one who has been taught the fulness of God's remedy, even though he does not enjoy it,

is continually warned by his conscience of the greatness of the mercy vouchsafed to him. The one may not have, as far as his knowledge goes, the land from which he could produce all he requires; while the other knows he has the land and that, if he would but till it, he would have all he needs.

How differently each must feel! The one craving and pining because he does not know what would fully satisfy his heart and relieve him of all the consequences of his ruin; the other knowing it, and as he uses the gift through Jesus Christ, appearing before men in a new and wonderful condition. Intensely happy, because not only cured of his wounds, but invested with the power of Christ; thus set in superiority to all that affects and overwhelms man here; and consciously, under the care of Christ while pursuing his pilgrimage through this dreary world, he is a beautiful testimony on the earth of what Christ has done,—of God's remedy for man's ruin; so that every one seeing him will greatly marvel and glorify God.

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*“Keep thine heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.”*

It has pleased the Lord to teach me a truth, the benefit of which I have not lost for more than fourteen years. The point is this: I saw more clearly than ever that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was to have 'my soul happy in the Lord.' The first thing to be concerned about was, not how much I might serve the Lord, or how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man might be nourished. For I might seek to get the truth before the unconverted, I might seek to benefit believers, I might seek to relieve the distressed, I might in other ways seek to behave myself as it becomes a child of God in this world, and yet not be happy in the Lord. G. M.

## KEPT.

Inglis Fleming.

"KEPT by the power of God,  
through faith unto salvation"  
(1 Peter 1. 5).

What words of power and grace  
are these!

"God. . . power . . . faith . . .  
kept . . . salvation."

Consider them for thy comfort,  
O my soul!

"GOD." Almighty, all knowing,  
ever-living, ever-loving. He is thy  
God. It is He who gave His only  
Son to meet thy need. It is He  
who sends His servants with the  
glad tidings of His grace. It is  
He who brings thee near to Him-  
self in righteousness. It is He who  
has "blotted out as a thick cloud"  
thy sins. It is He who cleanses  
thee from every stain through the  
precious blood of His beloved Son.  
He has taken thee up for bless-  
ing, and He will carry thee through  
all the changes of thy life.

POWER. All power is His. In  
heaven and on earth He rules and  
overrules. He is above all. Though  
He be unseen His hand controls.  
And He works all things together  
for the good of His dear children.  
Their ultimate blessing is ever be-  
fore Him. If they pass through  
trial and tribulation He will order  
from His throne on high so that  
what seems evil is turned into good.  
Remember this that "the Lord on  
high is above the noise of many  
waters; yea than the raging waves  
of the sea" (Psa. 93. 4). Never is  
He weary. The worlds were made  
and are upheld by His might, and  
He can maintain the weakest be-  
liever.

FAITH. Faith is the link with  
Him. As the electric current flows  
through the wires from the power-  
house into the lamps which light  
our houses, so the power of God  
flows into our lives as we believe  
upon Him. And He maintains our  
faith, as He maintains all else. In  
Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress"  
Christian is viewed standing amazed  
as he sees a fire burning brightly,  
and even more brightly, although  
water is being thrown upon it plenti-  
fully. He cannot understand the  
matter, until taken to the back of  
the fire. Then he is shown that oil  
is being poured upon the flames  
and that thus the fire is maintained.  
So the enemy of our souls is ever  
wishing to extinguish the fire of  
grace in us, but the power of God  
is ever put forth to maintain us.

KEPT. "Kept by the power of  
God." Through thick and thin,  
fire and flood, amid foes and fears,  
we are preserved—guarded by the  
power of God.

In glory above, the inheri-  
tance is *reserved* for us, for  
ours is a heavenly portion. And  
here, while pilgrims still on earth,  
and "surrounded by a host of foes,"  
we who believe are *preserved*. The  
inheritance is kept for the heirs.  
The heirs are kept for the inheri-  
tance. It is the same almighty power  
which is exercised in heaven and on  
earth. If it were not for this we  
should fall out of rank and perish.  
We need to be kept and are kept.

"SALVATION." In this passage,  
as in many others in Scripture is  
looked at in its completion. Al-  
ready the salvation of our souls is

ours. Jesus is our Deliverer from the wrath to come. We fear not now the judgment soon to fall. But while this is true—most happily true—yet we wait for the full, final salvation, the salvation of our bodies, at the coming of our Lord. Every day brings us closer to the glad hour of His return. "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed" (Rom. 13. 11). The believer is viewed as being saved from the fear of wrath, and already

saved from the power of Satan, from the power of sin, from the present evil world. But he waits for the Lord Jesus as Saviour to complete His gracious design, to fashion our bodies that they may be made like unto His own.

Glorious consummation! Till then we are

"KEPT

BY THE POWER OF GOD  
THROUGH FAITH."

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## OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST.

THE divine reasoning in the Epistle to the Hebrews, among other things, evinces this: that the efficacy of the priesthood of Christ depends entirely on His person [who He is]. Read the first seven chapters: what a writing it is! In our Priest we must find a *man*; one capable of succouring the brethren, from having been tempted like them. So that we must see our High Priest passing into the heavens *amid the sufferings and sorrows of the scene here*. But in our Priest, we must find *the Son* also, because in none other partaker of flesh and blood was there "the power of an endless life." And, accordingly, Melchisedec represents the person as well as the virtues, dignities, rights and authorities of the true priest of God, as we read of Him, "Without father, without mother, without descent,

having neither beginning of days or end of life; but made like unto the Son of God" (ch. 7). And what a sight does all this give us of the High Priest of our profession! He came down from heaven, in the full, personal glory of the Son; and in due time He went up to heaven, bearing the virtue of His sacrifice for sin, and those compassions that succour the saints. Faith acquaints itself with this whole path of Jesus. It owns in Him the Son while He tabernacled in the flesh among us; and when His course of humiliation and suffering had ended here, faith owns the once rejected and crucified Man now glorified in heaven—the One Person: God manifested in the flesh here, Man hid in the glory there.

J. G. B.

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"Oh how great is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that trust in Thee before the sons of men!" (Psalm 31)

## MY BELOVED SON.

J. W. Ryan.

(Continued from page 252.)

LET us contemplate some of the glories of the Beloved Son, for the Father wants to engage our hearts with Him and the Holy Spirit has been given to us for this purpose.

The mystery of His eternal Being as the Son with the Father, is only known to the Father above for "No man knoweth the Son but the Father."

We know that He was the Son with the Father before time began, not because we can understand and explain this eternal relationship, but because the Scriptures shew it to be so, and that as being in that relationship of eternal love and life He came forth, sent by the Father, to reveal Him to us. "The hidden things belong to Jehovah our God; but the revealed ones are ours and our children's for ever." But we can come with holy boldness into the very presence of God Himself, for He has invited us to draw near, and behold the glories of His beloved Son, who has opened up the way into His presence for us. The Father desires that we should contemplate Him in the way He has told us about Him, and as we do this, we know what God is, for "He is the effulgence of His glory and the expression of His substance."

What glories are unfolded in the first of Hebrews. Being the Son He is the established Heir of all things; by Him the worlds were made, He was antecedent to the universe for He made it. He is the upholder of all things by the word of His power. God has given Him a higher place than angels, for He has a

Name more excellent than they. He can say to Him "Thou art my Son," and "Let all the angels of God worship Him." Then come the emphatic declarations of God from Psalms 45 and 102 to the greatness of His Son, prefaced by those words, "As to the Son" "Thy throne O God is for ever and ever." It is the Son who is thus addressed, proving, surely that His Sonship is His personal glory in the Godhead. He has founded the earth and heavens, He is eternal and immutable, for when everything else is rolled up and changed it is said of Him, "Thou art the same [the self-existing changeless One] and Thy years shall not fail." What an accumulation of glories are here! And God links up all the past with the present when He says, "Sit Thou on My right hand."

In the second chapter He is Son of Man, Jesus, crowned with glory and honour; a place and glory that He won, when for the suffering of death He was made a little lower than the angels. His glory as Son was not lowered or tarnished by His stoop to manhood, but His work was adorned by the glory of His Sonship.

The Hebrew Epistle was written first for the Jewish believers to impress upon them the glory of the Person who was their Messiah; but in the Colossian Epistle the Spirit speaks of Him in His great glories to shew how mean and beggarly are the traditions, the philosophy, and vain deceit of man in which Christians are always in danger of being ensnared. We are introduced to Him by the assurance that we are made meet by the Father to share

the portion of the saints in light, for we have been translated into the kingdom of the "SON OF HIS LOVE." And who and what is the Son of His love? He is the image of the invisible God. It was impossible for man to see God, but here is One who as His image came to make Him known. "The only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." He is the Firstborn of all creation; because by Him were created all things, and all things subsist by Him. Head of the Body; the beginning; Firstborn from among the dead, because He must have the first place in all things, and all the fulness of the Godhead was pleased to dwell in Him. This is the Son of the Father's love into whose kingdom we have been brought.

In John's Gospel we see how our Lord delighted in the intimacy of Father and Son, but through it all there is interwoven the longing of His heart to bring others in it. He has made us His own, and desires that we should have part with Him in what He delights in, and for this

reason He has revealed the Father. As we read His words to the little flock He was leaving behind beginning at chapter 14, and above all the breathings of His heart to His Father in the 17th, we are amazed at the love He had for those poor disciples who then could not understand or appreciate it. And we know as those who have believed on Him through their word, that we have our part in it.

He cannot do without us. "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." He has given us all that love could give and "the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given them." He shares with us all that He can share, but there is a glory that none but He possesses and which He cannot impart to others, a glory which He had with the Father before the worlds were founded. This the greatness of His glory. Ever blest—He is the Son.

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## Carrying your bed.

What can the power of the Holy Spirit who dwells in every believer do for you? He can make you superior in grace to whatever you have been most defective in in nature. The palsied man carried his bed; that was the proof that the Lord had blessed him. He was a poor weak man who could not do without his bed, but, when he came into contact with Christ he carried it. And the Lord did not tell him to carry it about the streets either, but to go to his house. A christian husband is to be a singularly good husband; a christian wife is to be a singularly good wife, and a christian child is to be a singularly good child. It is in the inner circle where your chief besetments shewed themselves, it is there where the new power must be displayed.

## OUR INCARNATE LORD.

James McBroom.

THE way our blessed Lord is presented in the holy Gospels has for the devout heart a peculiar charm. The heart dwells with delight upon the glories, both divine and human, that the Spirit of God presents in Him. He came to fill full as well as fulfil the whole will of God, as before written. He was the embodiment of every promise, prophecy, type, symbol and shadow, before outlined in the Book of God.

It is remarkable that while presenting Him in all the riches of glory, the Holy Spirit seldom or never uses the word "as" to distinguish between Godhead and Manhood. Instead of saying He speaks here as God, and there as Man, the Spirit shews Him acting in His own unique Personality, always the same One glorious Person, the Son become a Man, the Word become flesh. At one time He is spoken of in word or act when the fountain of Deity is the source from whence the word and act flow; at another the gracious activities are those of a veritable Man, while in the greater part of that life, the union of both natures are evidenced in such a way as to present the Divine-Human Personality of our Lord, in all the mystery of its holy glory.

This calls for careful consideration, but one or two passages may be suggested before passing on. Speaking of Himself as "I am" and in raising the dead, it is the Son speaking and acting in His Godhead power. "Shew Me a penny." "I thirst," or sleeping in the ship, portray the same blessed One in the grace of Manhood. But "Come unto Me," "Ye believe in God, *believe also in*

*Me,*" "I give unto My sheep eternal life," are statements which clearly cover all that He is both Divine and Human. This last, as we have indicated, places Him before us in both natures and covers the greater part of the Gospel records. This may be clearly apprehended if we remember that whether "Shepherd," "Lord," "Head," "Saviour," "Prophet," "Priest" or "King," He must be both God and Man. In any one of these positions, let us say "Saviour," He is not seen in Godhead only, nor only a Man, but in all His Mediatorial fulness, able, in Godhead fulness, to stand on the part of God, and in the perfection of Manhood to undertake everything for man.

What is before us is the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are not attempting to intrude into this holy mystery of the Divine and human in Him or vainly seeking to discover how such a thing could be. Many prefer to hold back on account of the solemn grandeur of the theme. This indeed is praiseworthy, and more so when we think of the many who have made shipwreck. But after all it is set before us for instruction and blessing, and if taken up in the spirit of worship and holy reverence, it becomes the most soul-enriching of all that Scripture presents of the precious things of heaven.

Each member of the Blessed Trinity speaks of our Lord as uniting in Himself both the Divine and Human natures. The O. Testament anticipated this and the New is full of it. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever," is said by the Father to the One He speaks of as "the Man who

is My Fellow" (Ps. 45. 6, 7; Heb. 1. 8; Zech. 13. 7). The blessed Lord says "I am" and yet "the Son of Man who had no where to lay His head." The Spirit speaks of "the Man Christ Jesus" as "Who is over all, God blessed for ever" (John 8. 58); Matt. 8. 20; 1 Tim. 2. 5; Rom. 9. 5).

This opens up a glorious range of truth which claims our attention, engages us in devout meditation, and produces in us deepest praise. We are apt to forget, however, that the Person is One; and doubtless the word "as," which we often use, betrays our inability, unconscious even to ourselves, to hold the truth of the Person in true balance. The word "Person" is not used in Scripture of any Godhead Being, but the pronouns "I," "Me," "He" and "Him" are used by and of our Lord in such a way that we can apprehend (though never comprehend) Him, God become Man.

The import of the above may be seen by calling attention to the statement that "It was as Man only that our Lord died." One has heard this asserted and strenuously maintained by true-hearted saints who were jealous of the Lord's glory. The statement falls short of the truth. If the Cross is nothing more than the death of a Man we can have no atonement. That His death is limited to our Lord's Manhood in many minds may be gathered from the retort (as soon as it is questioned) that He could not die as God. No one affirms that death could touch Godhead in Him, but while avoiding such a thought it does not follow that His death was only that of a Man.

The blessed Person Who died is

God as well as Man, the Word become flesh: and unless we keep this clear we cannot have an apprehension of the glory of the Cross. Scripture says, "We were reconciled to God by the death of His Son" (Rom. 5. 10). "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8. 3). The Lord of glory was crucified (1 Cor. 2. 8). The Son has made purgation for sins (Heb. 1. 3). And Paul has said, "The Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2. 20).

These passages and many more shew the glory of the Cross, for although God cannot die, He has in wondrous grace taken His own way to come right down into death in its deepest and most solemn sense, even that of His own offended majesty and judgment against sin. It is here that the Incarnation fits in with divine precision. The Son, who is God, becomes Man to bear, on the one side the judgment due to man, and on the other, to give effect, on the part of God, to all the purposes of eternity.

The miracle of Incarnation is the outstanding wonder of the Godhead and of eternity. Around it all Scripture pours its treasures. God's purpose had man in view for a place and relationship infinitely beyond his created standing. He had fallen from the created place, and death, the judgment of God, rested upon him. Man needed One who could meet the death state and remove it, while God called for One, who, while meeting the fallen state, could give effect to all His counsels of eternal love.

Who can estimate the terrors of that hour, or stand in the judgment

with God? His majesty outraged, the glory of His throne trampled upon, His Name, His Character, His Being, all profaned and outraged. Had God executed judgment upon man it would have swept him away for ever, the result from which would have been the Creator's defeat in the sons of men in whom He delighted. What then? JESUS. Here is One who is God and Man, the Son become a Man, and all is met, perfectly and for ever met in Him.

Judgment is divine and infinite, so also the Sacrifice. No Theophany—Divine manifestation as seen in the

Old Testament again and again, will suffice. No, it must be the great and glorious *Theanthropos*, which is God and Man in one glorious Person for ever. But while insisting on the divine side nothing must be allowed to weaken the other. It was a Man who died, not merely a Divine Person in a human condition. A condition could not die for sinners, nor be nailed to a tree. No, we adoringly behold in Him who hung there, God, in the full revelation of all that God is, while we see Him a Man, the first to enter into all that that revelation unfolds.

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Where can you look and what will you do when the blight of death falls on your life? You will tread a solitary path until you realise that the Lord walks at your side, as He walked with Mary of Bethany—then you will know Him as she did, not only as a relief to you in your sorrow, but as your resource.

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If Christ is the object of your life you will begin the day not by saying, I hope I shall behave myself well to-day, but, I have to live Christ to-day. You ought to begin your day with the confidence that you have enough in Christ to meet every difficulty that may befall you, just as you know that you have enough light to do your work by. You never think of wanting another sun. The day may be bright or cloudy, but all you want is clearer light, not a new light.

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Be sure that God knows how to manage His own affairs. There are some things that are better left with Him. We are often too busy with and pen; prayer would become us better; we should by it be less self-portant, more dependent, and perhaps we should learn that often our thoughts are not God's thoughts, and our ways are not His ways.

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Pray for the saints—all of them. Carry their sorrows to Christ, and you will be able to carry Christ to them in their sorrows.

## THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT. 2

James Green.

*As seen in the Life of the Lord Jesus.**Continued from page 258.*

**JOY** is the accompaniment of love, where it is lacking the reverse follows. Again let us look upon Jesus as He walks His face is marred more than any man's, His form more than the sons of men, so that they who observed Him, thought Him nearer fifty than thirty. Tears are upon His cheeks, He is a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, but all was on account of others, and such sorrow left untouched the spring of joy arising from a heart that worshipped God with pure delight. How evident it was that this joy was not drawn from outward circumstance, for see Him when rejected by the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, and what sorrow must He have felt on account of this; nevertheless, in that hour rejoicing in spirit, He said, "I thank Thee, O Father." Is it too much to say that His tried and troubled saints likewise may find in character, if not in measure, something of His joy? Yea, did He not say to such, "These things I have spoken unto you that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. Filled full from the same source as His, by the same Spirit, in face of that which would surround them in the world where they would have tribulation.

*Peace*, again His own legacy, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." The peace that could sleep calmly as an infant on mother's breast, amidst the storm that struck terror to hearts that knew not as He, the depths of God. His was

a peace, no bitterness of words could disturb, no wind of enmity or opposition ever ruffle. Love to God and joy in God, kept Him as in a sanctuary from the strife of tongues, and in the confidence that had nothing apart from God; His was surely a peace, the peace of God which passeth all understanding. As we think of Him our thoughts turn to Phil. 4. 6, 7, to see the door wide open for us into that same peace, and to learn that in us by His Spirit it may also dwell richly. Thankful indeed should we be that we are called to this peace of Christ in one body (Col. 3. 15, R.V.), one circle of His saints where God has His habitation in Spirit. Oh! blessed home of peace, where peace for ever abides to the exclusion of all strife and the silencing of every discord.

The next three graces are manward, the outgoings of His soul towards those who in presence of His grace, only yielded Him rejection, hatred and scorn.

*Longsuffering*: how perfectly was He the example of the love that suffers long and is kind. His earthly path was marked by continual suffering. The nearer the heart is to God, so much the more shall suffering be experienced in a world of evil. Nor was it the publican and the harlot that were the chief cause of sorrow to our Lord, though grief He ever felt for the fact of sin that could so debase, yet to such the kindness of His tender grace was ever shown to bring them to repentance; truly a receiver of sinners He ever was. But it was the refusal of His love by the pride of Phari-

saic conceit; the sneer of the Sadducee; the contempt of the Scribe; the scorn of the Herodian; the Jerusalem ignorant of its day of opportunity, over which His tears fell: in these lay the cause of His suffering and how long it was. Again, how often the dullness, the misunderstanding of His disciples, touched to the quick His sensitive soul, and yet with what patience He bore all without complaint. Yet deeper still as the hour of hours drew nigh, and His soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death; when He looked for comforters but found none, there was no turning aside however long the path might be. How truly was He a long sufferer. Blessed Master, can Thy Spirit produce anything like Thyself in such as we? Yes, if so be we are kept near to Thee, then the contact of Thy presence will do its work, for no strength for longsuffering have we apart from this. But let indeed the fact that Thou art near possess our souls, then most surely we shall be strengthened by Thy glorious power unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness. It may be that the path of sharers of Thy rejection may open before us, for the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord, or perhaps it is the way of weary days of bodily pain in which this grace of longsuffering is called into exercise, yet ever shall Thy presence our comfort be, and this fruit of Thy Spirit shall be developed to the praise and glory of God.

*Gentleness* most surely, for no roughness, harshness or haste were ever seen in the ways of God's beloved Son. His life was the true meat offering of fine flour mingled with oil. Gentleness was the true nobility of His character. Gen-

tleness made Him great, the opposite belonged to lesser man. His words betrayed no acrimony, but were ever directed to the turning away of wrath. But the beauty of this quality must never be confounded with the softness which rebukes not sin, and fails to expose hypocrisy. In presence of this His speech was scathing, but to the outcast and the weak, who had nothing to hide in their helplessness, how gentle yet how strong. How pure and lovely was this grace of the Spirit in Him, the tenderness of sensibility united to unswerving firmness, in perfect harmony. Never perhaps was His gentle consideration more wonderfully shewn than in His thoughtful care for the mother who bare Him, when in the agony of the cross, He committed her to the devotion of the disciple whom He loved. Truly beautiful is the reproduction of this fruit in the dealings of Paul with the Corinthian saints. He beseeches them by the meekness and gentleness of Christ (2 Cor. 10. 1). His rebukes to them, never savouring of bitterness, are full of the attractive grace that woos and wins. To this end also did he exhort the Philippians. "Let your moderation (gentleness) be known unto all men." It belongs to the wisdom that is from above to be gentle (Jas. 3. 17). It should mark all our dealings with men (Tit. 3. 2), and for one who would care for the Church of God, it is an all-important grace, a bishop must be gentle (1 Tim. 3. 3, R.V.).

*Goodness.* Blessed Master, Thou wentest about doing good, ever active in dispensing to needy souls the bounty of God. Such never found Thee wanting; Thou didst fill the hungry with good things, and if any went from Thy presence empty it was because they closed the avenues

of their lives, with the bars of the riches of their own self-sufficiency. To bring men to repentance Thou didst ever show them the goodness of God. Precious is this fruit seen in the Master, which should and may in the power of the Spirit mark those who learn of Him to ever follow that which is good, never rendering evil for evil but contrariwise blessing. Goodness is the virtue which thinks of others, which communicates. It is God-like for He is good, the source of all good, and able to make all grace abound, that in the sufficiency of His supply, His children may abound unto every good work.

Then lastly there are the inner personal qualities which like the sweet spices of the incense lent their fragrance to the matchless character of the Sent One of God.

*Faith:* rather perhaps fidelity, for He who was the truth was marked in every way by truthfulness. A Man whose word was never broken, whose promise could be depended on, whose footsteps were unflinching, in Whom there was no element of change, and who in purpose was not turned aside by obstacle or opposition. Faithful in all His house, the very opposite of those who though armed by the Lord, turned back in the day of battle. So is He still, a faithful and merciful High Priest in things pertaining to God, never repenting of the choice of His own, but in patient purpose carrying on the work of His Spirit that His own fidelity may be reproduced in those who partake with Him of holiness. Faithfulness is the girdle of His reins. In truth that makes no compromise with sin, and at the same time displays the fulness of grace

that shrinks from no suffering on behalf of its object. "Let every man speak truth with his neighbour," for fidelity produces the transparency which is acceptable with God. This will be the outstanding feature in the heavenly city, "Pure gold like unto clear glass." Nothing shall be there that is hidden from God, and nothing shall obscure the pure white light which radiates from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Yet because truth will often be the avenue which leads to suffering and loss, it must be combined with another grace which the human heart so seldom associates with greatness, viz.,

*Meekness.* The absence of resentment, the yielding up of rights, the patient acceptance of the ignominy and scorn of men, and even in the presence of such, praying for those who were wreaking their will upon Him. "I am meek and lowly in heart." It was what He was, and all the more wonderful because of who He was, and such as He was He would have us to be, to the extinction in us of all the pride and self-assertion which in Him had no place. "Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me." His meekness flowed from the fact of His submission to the will of God, and to that He was devoted because He knew the end and object of that will was the expression of perfect love. Love that cannot rest until its will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven, and a universe of bliss shall proclaim the blessedness of God. To bring this to pass no path of suffering meekness seemed too hard, and for this He would be led as a lamb to the slaughter and like a sheep dumb before its shearers did not open His mouth. Feeble may be our measure, but in the same knowledge of how good and acceptable

and perfect is the will of God, our bodies may be held as presented to Him a living sacrifice to the testimony of His grace. All is now summed up in the final grace of this fruit of the Spirit;

*Temperance or self-control.* How absolutely selfless was that spotless life in all its motives and actions. With a will that was perfect yet never using it for His own advantage. With a self power that moved only on the lines of absolute right, yet saying, "Of mine own self I can do nothing." Pure in every thought and purpose of His heart, yet *come not to do His own will, but the will of the Father who had sent Him.* Ever the Christ who pleased not Himself, His was a life in which there was no ingredient of self-seeking for peace, or gain, or the applause of men. How great the contrast, for in us there is a will, a purpose of desire that is ever self-centred; a way that is our own; in our motives this factor is con-

stantly present, our thoughts move always in relation to it. But the same Spirit that displayed the perfection of Him who was perfect, dwells also in us for the working out of the life of Christ, by a power that is adequate for the displacement of self-movements, bringing this to pass by turning our gaze upon the glory of the Lord, so that little by little we may be become conformed to the same image in the progress of growth which is characteristic of the ripening of fruit, as it gathers colour and fragrance from the sunlight in which it is bathed. Blessed Master, Thou art the perfect pattern of that moral beauty which should shine forth in the members of Thy body. Be Thou to the hearts of Thine own who are yet treading the rough road tracks of this wilderness of Engedi, as a cluster of henna flowers, that we may become by Thy Spirit,—

"Like Thee in faith, in meekness, love  
In every beautiful grace,  
From glory unto glory changed,  
Till we behold Thy face."

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"*The devil . . . whom resist steadfast in the faith.*" Be sure, not to disconnect this word from what precedes it, being a christian you must, of course, expect the devil to be your foe but you may resist him, and James tells us he will fly from you, but if you are not humble before God, your resistance will soon give way. Conscious of your own weakness before God, you will have His power in the conflict and the devil is no match for the power of God. Hold to the faith, the great facts of it will enable you to triumph if you are humbly dependent upon God.

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If you complain of your foes either inwardly or from outside, your strength is less than theirs. You are unwittingly making Christ inferior to them.

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The great attempt to-day is to Christianize men; but God's way is to make a man a christian. The attempt to Christianize men is all wrong. A christian is a man of an entirely new stock and a new lineage; he is of Christ, who is the beginning of the creation of God.

## IGNORANCE AND DISCERNMENT.

*"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*

"THEY are foolishness unto him."

The ignorance of the natural man is appalling. Mark, God does not say, the *unlearned* man or the *ignorant* man, but the *natural* man. A natural man may be highly cultured, have vast stores of learning; yet cannot know the things of the Spirit of God. Why? "because they are spiritually discerned, and he is destitute of spiritual discernment. This accounts for the ignorance of these persons in regard to spiritual things. They will display it by such remarks as these, "I've done my best, what more can anyone do?" "I am sure I ought to go to heaven, for I have suffered so much." It is vain to quote Holy Scripture which says most clearly that "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God," and "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6. 23). That, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Rom. 3. 20). They are willingly ignorant of these illuminating and saving truths—indeed—"they cannot know them." Apart from the mighty operations of the Holy Spirit their case is hopeless. Let my reader lay well to heart our Lord's Word to the learned Rabbi Nicodemus (John 3. 3, 5, 7), "Ye must (imperative mood) be born again." A new life, a spiritual perception is essential. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3. 36). Solemn words! "I have done my best." Your best is *sin* in God's sight, for He saith, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8. 8), and "Whatsoever is

not of faith is *sin*" (Rom. 14. 23). Thus the wisdom of this world is not only *useless* in God's sight, but he regards it as an enemy, for He saith, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise" (1 Cor. 1. 19). Then, pointing backward, He cries, "Where is the wise." O Greece! Where are Socrates—Plato—Homer—Sophocles—Demosthenes—Diogenes—Pythagoras? Bones and worms. O Rome! Where are Andronicus—Virgil—Cicero—Seneca—Pliny? Where? Dust. Dust. Dust.

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise." Eternal Wisdom does not merely refuse to use it—and is not content with prohibiting it, but destroys it. Scripture repudiates science and the philosophies of men not only as *co-ordinates*, but even as *sub-ordinates in spiritual things*. "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world." God actually prohibits worldly wisdom, saying, "Not with wisdom of words." Yet this is the stock-in-trade of the modernist preacher, and this is the craze of the modern hearer. It is quite otherwise with the "saved" for he has SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT.

He knoweth that "Without THE WAY there is no going; without THE TRUTH there is no knowing; without THE LIFE there is no living; that Christ is the Way which he ought to follow, the Truth which he ought to receive, and the Life which he ought to live." He knows that the work of a true man is not to amuse the "goats," but to feed

the "sheep." He knows that the modern Laodicean church with its riches is *poor*—with its boasted knowledge is *blind*—with its hollow gaiety and social pleasure is *miserable*—with its outward show of Sunday piety is *naked*—that it is destitute

of both divine righteousness ("gold") and practical righteousness ("white raiment").

The wisdom of the ancients cannot  
save us

Nor scientific lore for sin atone;  
I'll turn then from them all to Jesus,  
And trust in Him alone.

## CHRIST OUR OBJECT.

J. B. S.

IT is great moment to the soul when Christ first becomes your object; it is then that you can count all things but loss for His excellency, so that He may be your gain.

But many persons ask the question, How can I have Him in such a distinct way that I may know Him as my object? Well, there are two ways. When Jonathan saw David with the head of Goliath in his hand, and knew that he had delivered him—brought relief to him—he loved him as his own soul. He stripped himself of his robe, and his garment and his sword and his bow and his girdle and put them on David. It might have been said, What an improper thing for the king's son to do! But Jonathan cared not for that. His heart was won by David because of what he had *done* for him, and he loved him as his own soul.

But there is another kind of devotedness, of which I will also give an example in the Old Testament which will make it clear to you. Ruth says to Naomi, "Where thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." This is a deeper thing. It sets forth one to whom the Lord becomes the object of the heart for what He *is*, and not only for what He has done.

Now you will find saints rarely arrive at the second of these, though

every true-hearted saint knows something of the first. You may know Christ as your relief, but it is quite another thing to know Him as your resource. It is one thing to know Him as the One who has relieved you of every pressure; it is another thing to know Him as the one attraction of your heart. If I know Him thus, I ascend as a balloon with not a string left to tie me to earth. All my links were to earth, but now I have Him, not only as my relief from the judgment and fear of death on myself, but as my resource from the death and ruin on everything around me, He satisfies my heart. I will try to explain the difference.

I might say to Jonathan when he began to strip himself. Do you know David? No, he say, I do know him, but I love him; he has relieved me from the dreadful pressure that was upon me. I love him as my own soul.

I say to Ruth, Do you know Naomi? Yes, she says, I *know* her, and I *love* her too. I say to her, "Where you go, I will go, and where you dwell I will dwell; your people shall be my people, and your God my God" you are more to me than any other tie, I turn my back on all for you.

Now this is an example of a heart not only attracted by what a person has *done*, but by what he *is*.

# ONESIPHORUS.

T. Oliver.

THE name of Onesiphorus is mentioned in tender appreciation by the Apostle Paul while encouraging his young successor Timothy to increased fervour in Christian service (2 Tim. 1. 16). Scriptures names have significant meanings. The name Onesiphorus means "profit-bearer." His character was evidently true to the meaning of his name. To be a bearer of profit to our associates is an excellent qualification! As such we shall be in the lineal descent from the subject of our article. Unfortunately, in amongst many Christians, there is an abundance of "tale-bearers." But where these are found, there is a paucity of "burden-bearers" or "profit-bearers."

However, the Lord does not remain indebted to anyone in His service. He gives mercy to His servants and also continues mercy to the next generation too, in answer to prayer. Hence the Apostle expressed his desire that the household of Onesiphorus might be granted mercy. Mercy relates to our circumstances. We shall see at the judgment seat of Christ an unerring retrospect! We shall then see how through mercy our circumstances have been marvellously adjusted so as to promote our real interests.

We know very little of the history of Onesiphorus. But Scripture is not written to gratify curiosity. We are told therein exactly sufficient to enforce the lesson the Lord would have us to learn. Certain beautiful characteristics are tersely reviewed.

(1) The Apostle says, "He oft refreshed me." The word (*anepsuxen*) rendered "refreshed" is a compound word conveying the idea

of a person who has fainted in a hot foul atmosphere being revived by giving him fresh air. In the intense heat of his trials, Paul had been often revived by the fresh air of the kindness of Onesiphorus. It is well to observe the untiring zeal evinced in helping the afflicted Apostle. Evidently it was esteemed an honour to do so. How many afflicted Christians there are imprisoned by painful conditions of life. Let us oft refresh them!

(2) Onesiphorus was not "ashamed of the Apostle's chain." Adversity is the real test of friendly attachment. A man may have many friends when his star of fortune shines high in the firmament, but they will vanish for the most part when that star is eclipsed by misfortune's cloud. The Apostle frequently alluded to the shame which attached to the testimony of the Lord and to his prisoners consequent on his connection therewith. Many shrink from the shame indissolubly connected with the presentation of the gospel. The honours list of the gospel will be published in a day yet to come. Faith's assessment alone will enable us to esteem the reproach of Christ as greater enrichment than the sum-total of the world's treasures!

(3) The kindness of Onesiphorus was unwearied. Because when he came to Rome, he sought the Apostle very diligently and was not content until he found him. The task was difficult. The Roman Government was fierce and suspicious. The prisoners were numerous and despised. He might well have found that his other business in Rome precluded a persistent search which in

volved much risk from contact with the servants of a hostile regime. Yet he brushed aside all such considerations. What a joyful reward must have been his when he found his old friend! But he has a greater joy yet in store for him when he will receive his Master's commendation in the day of review. In this reference we have an inspiring example of diligence in well-doing.

(4) His service in Rome had been no new experience. The general nature of his consistent service at home in Ephesus was better known to Timothy than the writer could tell him, since Timothy was a resident, while the Apostle had only been a visitor. To be well commended from one's own locality is good.

The Apostle could only recommend Onesiphorus by praying for him and for his household. The expression of the wish, "The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day" (2 Tim. 1. 18), has provoked more controversy than has arisen on perhaps any other passage in the New Testament. That the dust of theological strife should have settled on this precious gem of Scripture is not to be wondered at. Because men make theories and they will indulge in endless wrangling to prove that their ideas are right.

The above expression divorced from its context would seem to support the Romanist theory of prayers for the dead. Because the weight of evidence is in favour of the opinion that Onesiphorus was dead when the Apostle uttered the wish. The writers in the New Testament usually invoked immediate rewards

for the living. But the Apostle Paul can only speak of reward for his good friend in "that day" of everlasting prize award. The controverted passage offers too slim a foundation for the Romanist contention! Moreover, to put a construction on an isolated passage which does despite to the body of Scriptural argument is illogical.

The ablest Protestant critics do not deny the Romanist contention that Onesiphorus had passed away from the scene of his earthly labours, but quite rightly they will not admit the conclusion that the latter found thereon. In Scriptural exposition we must not allow ourselves to be influenced by sectarian bias. We should abhor prejudice. Truth, not accepted orthodoxy, should be the ideal towards the elucidation of which our efforts should be directed.

The usual evangelical Protestant explanation is that this solitary instance does not sanction general prayers for the dead, it is limited to prayer for the dead in Christ and that there is no warrant to intercede for those who may have died in their sins. That prayer can secure the salvation of those who have died deliberately rejecting Christ is unwarranted by any Scriptural statement we endorse fully. Yet we cannot support the relationship of the text to prayer for the dead in Christ either. As aforesaid, they do not now need mercy!

It is well to observe that the primary context of the passage is relative to the house of Onesiphorus. The head of the house had passed away, but the Apostle would have the house blessed for the sake of its departed head. Probably some

members of the family were Christians, others perhaps were not. Many a Christian has gone home to be with the Lord and in spite of godly walk and earnest prayers, members of his family have remained unsaved. After the death of their father, through mercy they have been saved. Will not some of the credit "in that day" be apportioned to the conduct and prayers of the father? Assuredly he will find mercy of the Lord awaiting him in rich profusion in the day of assessment. So we are assured will be the case of Onesiphorus!

Moreover, the saved members need mercy too, so that they may be found adorning the doctrine, and

that there will be results for the day of display. There is undoubtedly a rich heredity of blessing. Many are receiving "mercy" every day because of the godliness of loved ones who have gone before. People put great store on the transmission of material legacies through the generations. Yet the process often yields sorrowful results. However, we see here a process of unmixed blessing emerging. A continuous stream of hidden mercy is flowing under the sands of time. The day of display will show its source and course. Perhaps neither have been detected by anyone here. May we be found putting emphasis on the importance of such legacy!

**Editor's Note:** We suggest that the Apostle's words, "The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day" simply mean, "I cannot recompense him for all his love and care to me, but may the Lord do it in that day; may the favour of the Lord rest upon him then." The word rendered 'mercy' is sometimes given as 'kindness' or 'favour.' And nothing could be more natural than this expressed desire of the Apostle's. "He has been kind to me and showed me great favour. May the kindness of the Lord and His favour rest upon him in the day of rewards."

This note in no wise neutralises what our contributor says as to the blessing that comes to a household through the godly life and prayers of the Christian head of it.

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*"In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."* Don't forget past mercies—give thanks. Keep up a recollection of God's goodness; there is nothing better for the soul than to keep up the remembrance of the goodness of God. Are you in difficulties and are you going to God about them? Remember that you have been in difficulties before and He succoured you; that will make you a thankful soul and an expectant one.

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*"Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."* You are not to have no care, but what care you have you are to cast upon God but do not divorce the exhortation from what goes before it, *"Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God."* If you are a humble person, so little and so weak that you can not help yourself or carry your own burden, you may and will cast it upon the One who cares for you.