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**SIMPLE TESTIMONY;**  
FOR THE  
**COMFORT AND PROFIT**  
OF THE  
**CHILDREN OF GOD.**



PUBLISHED CHIEFLY FROM PAPERS SENT FROM DEME-  
BARA, AND WITH A VIEW TO CIRCULATION AMONG  
BRETHREN IN THE LORD IN THAT LAND.

**VOL. III.**

**LONDON:**  
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# I N D E X.

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	PAGE
A little Inquiry . . . . .	207
A Thought on the Lord Jesus . . . . .	247
Extracts from a tract entitled "the dispensation of the kingdom of heaven" . . . . .	33
Extracts from "Short Meditations on Elisha" . . . . .	252
Extracts from a tract headed "Number XI. on the Parables" . . . . .	37
Extracts from a tract headed "Number XIII. Para- ble of the Sower." . . . .	44
Extracts from "V. The wheat and the tares." . . . .	50
Extract from a letter . . . . .	234
Extracts from a letter by J. N. Darby. . . . .	177
Extracts do. do. . . . .	193
Fragments . . . . .	150
Fragment . . . . .	190
Fragments . . . . .	210
Mary Magdalene . . . . .	232
Noah's Dove . . . . .	254
Notes on the Tabernacle, No. 1. . . . .	1
Ditto. No. 2. . . . .	13
Ditto. No. 3. . . . .	18


## ii.

Notes on the Tabernacle . No. 4. . . . .	85
Ditto. . . . . No. 5. . . . .	87
Notes of a lecture by J. N. Darby . . . . .	142
Ditto. . . . . " . . . . . on Acts vii. . . . .	90
Notice of a Tract . . . . .	32
Notice of and Extracts from a Tract . . . . .	228
On the combined teaching of the Parables of the Sower in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke . . . . .	65
On the interpretation of Matt. xiii. 30. . . . .	24
Rahab . . . . .	225
Saul and David . . . . .	19
Ditto. . . . .	129
The vision of the abominations of the house of Israel . . . . .	161
The Cave of Adullam . . . . .	225

## POETRY.

A Hymn :—Heaven is our home . . . . .	191
Ditto . . . . .	255
Hymns . . . . .	27
Ditto. (copied) . . . . .	63
Ditto. Washing the disciples' feet . . . . .	237
In prospect of departing . . . . .	236





SIMPLE TESTIMONY.

No. 23.

AUGUST, 1846.

VOL. III.

NOTES ON THE TABERNACLE.

No. I.

*Extracts from Notes of Lectures.*

THE ARK AND THE MERCY SEAT—THE TABLE OF  
SHEW-BREAD—THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.  
EX. XXV.

BELOVED brethren in Christ—That word is a wondrous word, "Let them make me a Tabernacle that I may dwell among them." When we are saved, then God can walk in us and dwell in us. But how is this done? What is the way? By our faith taking hold of Jesus.

God had given them a law on the burning mount, and they thought

that they could stand in their own obedience, but they could not: and then He took up Moses into the mount, and was preparing an emblem of the man Christ Jesus, and His purpose to tabernacle with His creatures in the new heavens and the new earth.

*The ark and the mercy-seat—verses 10 to 22.* There was first the ark. It was made of shittim wood and overlaid with gold, representing thus Christ's human nature and His divine. Christ is as truly man up there in heaven as He was God down here on earth. The two tables of testimony were to be put into the ark. Christ came to be the preserver and keeper of God's testimonies.

The ark was the support of the mercy-seat. God's purpose in Jesus was to have a firm basis for His exceeding mercy and grace.

There were to the ark rings of gold, and staves of shittim wood overlaid with gold to bear the ark. Jesus is with His people in their journeyings. As we abide with Him up there: so He travels with us down here.

When the journeyings of the children of Israel were over, and the ark was set in the most holy place in the temple, then they drew out the staves, that the ends of the staves were seen out in the holy<sup>1</sup> place before the oracle: and they were not seen without. 1 Kings viii. In this there was a memorial kept of Christ's journeyings with His people.

On the two ends of the mercy-seat were the two cherubim. The cherubim were first seen at the fall to shew what sin is; they were at that time set with a flaming sword to prevent man from taking of the

tree of life, but the cherubim are now on a mercy-seat of gold—the witnesses of the grace of God.

*The table of shew-bread—verses 23 to 30.* In considering the table and its furniture, we are led to the way that God has found to bring back His banished ones. God has found a way by which His fallen ones can come before Him without any fear at all.

A table with the bread was a fit emblem to represent Christ.

There was put to it a crown of gold round about. Great honour is put upon this table. It is Christ's glory to be this ever-spread table before God.

There was a border to the table and a crown upon the border: for Christ keeps this bread safely and it is His glory to do so. This bread is precious unto God.

The bread was set in order every sabbath—every rest day.

Aaron and his sons fed on it—it is our food as priests—we can feed on it with God. There you have bread—one in whom your soul can delight. Aaron was feeding on it, too, together with his sons: for we can do nothing without Christ. He takes His stand with us. He rejoices that His Father has got service from Him, and we rejoice too. In this world where men care not for Jesus, you may be cast down: but you can go into the sanctuary and say, God has got one that can please Him there.

All these things are in resurrection and look on to perfection by and by: but they are all for present enjoyment now. There were the four rings of gold and the staves of shittim wood overlaid with gold—all are

brought down to us in our wandering state by the Holy Ghost, and Christ is journeying with us down here.

In connection with the table there were the dishes, the spoons, the covers, the bowls: all these vessels represent Christ. The dishes were to serve up food. Christ is the dish. You cannot do any thing without Him: He serves up to us all our food. It is in uniting yourself to Jesus you take your food. In teaching us Christ, God has so many representations to show us all the offices Christ has to fulfil in redemption.

There was also the golden bowl. Jesus will drink the new wine with us—the joy of the kingdom. Who can hold our joy for us? and who can take all the joy of the earth and present it to God? Jesus, our golden bowl. At the marriage in Cana of Galilee, He showed that He could

turn our water into wine, and He manifested forth His glory. Christ comes to serve the joy and pour it out before God. This joy is very precious, and God would keep it for Himself in Jesus.

*The golden candlestick, verses 31 to 40.* See also Chap. xxvii. 20, 21. xxx. 7, 8. Num. viii. 1 to 4.

Beloved,—This candlestick of pure gold was made to light up the holy place—to bear up seven lamps of gold before God, and to light up every thing in the sanctuary. It was an emblem of the Lord Jesus Christ standing before God, and in it there is the church, the branches, coming out of the candlestick which is called the shaft.

It leads on to that time of perfection when Christ and the church shall be the glory of the new creation.

It is what God has wrought out

for Himself, and the saints are wrought out of the same piece, getting life of His life and bone of His bone in resurrection — Christ and His members.

It takes the form of a fruitful tree, having buds, flowers and fruit—an ever blossoming, ever fruitful tree. It is like Aaron's rod, having buds, blossoms and fruit. See Num. xvii. This fruitful tree is not seen yet: it is death that is seen now. When we break bread we show forth Christ's death until He come. Carnal men cannot understand the life that is there.

The Holy Ghost, the Comforter, would lift us up above the world, above ourselves, by showing us what we are in Christ—the seven golden candlesticks.

The light of the candlestick was the result of the oil: there must be



this oil, or there can be no light. Every true believer has this oil: in his union with Christ he has it in him, and then the light shines forth without him.

In the Revelation the seven candlesticks are seen as distributed here; and in Zechariah there is the one candlestick — Jerusalem as God's candlestick on earth. When the Jews failed, the seven candlesticks of gold were then distributed over the earth, all one, in one sense, but in locality distributed.

But when we see this golden candlestick in the holy place, we see what God's purpose is, what will be manifested. There will be the church in glory, and the Jews in lesser glory answering to the candlestick in Zech. iv.

There was the golden snuffers. In this there is seen Christ's office towards the candlestick—what will

be done once and for all, and what is done now—what was done in the churches when they were as candlesticks.

If there is no oil, and if the candle is going out, then there is no good in snuffing it; but if it is giving light, and the wick wants trimming, then there are these golden snuffers. We are often impatient under the action of the snuffers; but we should be glad, and we should remember that word to the church at Laodicea, "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." If there were not candlesticks, there would not be snuffers. And there is the snuff-dish to carry away the dead wick. Christ has to take it away. If you are cast down at what caused your light to burn dim, you have Jesus, as your snuffers, to take it away.

Aaron was to burn sweet incense every morning when He dressed the

lamps. In the morning of the resurrection, when He shall perfectly dress the lamp, when the savour of the grave shall be put away, when those vile bodies shall be changed, then the cloud of incense will go up.

The perfectly trimmed lamp will be the result of all that is going on now. Our place is always in the light: there ought to be no night in us; but the lamp burning all the night, and then dressed in the morning. This is what will be by and by: we are to embrace it as things to come—the hope of the glory—the resurrection of the saints—the sleeping saints rising, the living saints changed in the morning. This should teach us that we have not yet attained, but that we should be pressing onwards, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before.

In redemption we have not the old nature refined, but the pure lump of gold—the divine nature, Christ's nature—the branches formed of the same lump with the shaft. We are created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works.

The candlestick and its seven branches are Christ and His members. How precious all this is to a believer! It should lift us up above worldly things.

God is going to make this golden candlestick to shine over the earth, and His Jewish candlestick to shine in it. This golden candlestick leads on to the glory. And who are they that are wrought into this candlestick? Poor sinners that fell in Adam. That you are a poor hell-deserving sinner, only puts you in reach of this salvation. Nothing but unbelief hinders.

Believer, think of the golden candlestick — Christ in resurrection. Think of the branches, think of the oil, think of the light shining in God's sanctuary, that we may thus think of ourselves in Him, and rejoice in His work.

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## NOTES ON THE TABERNACLE.

## No. II.

*Extracts from Notes of Lectures.*

## THE ALTAR OF INCENSE.

EX. XXX. 1 TO 10 AND 34 TO 38.

BELOVED Friends, — We are met together before God to consider Jesus. Happy it is for us that God presents Christ to us, and not a fiery law. Whether He speaks to a saint, or whether He speaks to a poor lost sinner, it is Jesus still that He presents. He speaks to men to draw

men's hearts to Himself, all through His dear Son.

We have been considering the golden things in the sanctuary—as the ark and the mercy-seat, the table of shew-bread, and the golden candlestick. We now are about to consider the altar of incense. The altar of incense was of shittim wood, signifying Christ's human nature, and overlaid with gold, signifying His divine nature. It was *four-square*, showing an equal bearing before God for all the saints in the four quarters of the earth.

It had *four horns*, signifying the strength of the altar.

It was the altar of incense—it is in the perfume of that incense that prayer goes up unto God. There were three things in the Tabernacle crowned—the mercy-seat, the table of shew-bread, which had two crowns,

and the altar of incense. To keep the sweet perfume there, is Christ's glory.

The horns we should lay hold of by faith : and very blessed it is to take hold of that altar. Its place was just before the mercy-seat. Jesus is there keeping a sweet perfume continually.

Let us look at the incense itself. It was composed of four sweet perfumes : of each there was a like weight. They were tempered together, pure and holy. All His graces are equal, all tempered together. Among believers, some are too little ; but in Jesus there is nothing lacking. In the saints often there is much lacking.

The altar of incense presents Christ's present active service. We are to learn what He has done, what He is doing, and what He is about

to do. In this the Holy Ghost takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us.

They were to offer no strange incense thereon. You are not to mix any thing of your own there. When you want to be happy in communion with God you must not go up in complacency in yourself, but you must go up happily in Jesus, and know that He is there, happily for you ever since you have believed. Do not think you are to draw nigh to God in complacency in yourself; but the more you exalt Jesus, the more you glorify God for giving you that altar.

They were not to offer a burnt sacrifice there. At the incense altar is seen what He is doing, a present Jesus standing there for you continually.

I would make another remark on



Christ's intercession. You have the incense always going up. When you go to pray, you have the incense going up and your prayers going up in it.

A believer, when conscious of sin and failure, and cast down, should remember the four-square altar. You have this altar and you have the horns of the altar. The horns are strong for a poor sinner because of the blood of atonement on the horns of that altar (see verse 10); therefore never slack. Lay hold on the horns of the altar, the strength of the altar. The sweet incense is always going up, and our prayers ought to be continually found going up in it.

They were not to make the sweet perfume to themselves. It is altogether Godward; and the true way to enjoy it is to know that God has relish for Jesus, and you go up in

that relish. The more a believer walks in Christ, the less he thinks of himself and the more he thinks of Christ.

The Pharisees, trusting in their own righteousness, were more melancholy objects to Jesus than the publicans and harlots in the streets.

May we, as believers, cleave to this incense altar.

Blessed are we when a sense of weakness makes us cling to Him.

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NOTES ON THE TABERNACLE.  
No. III.

*Extracts from Notes of Lectures.*

THE CURTAINS—THE BOARDS—THE VAIL.  
EX. XXVI.

We have been considering the inside of the Tabernacle—its golden furniture—we now come to consider the Tabernacle itself. The object

with which God set out was to make a Tabernacle in which He could dwell with His people. There were the metals, gold, silver and brass, representing the divine nature, and the shittim wood representing the human nature. The gold the divine nature in heaven, the brass the divine nature on earth : there was the brazen altar which was set on the earth : and when He comes to tread the wicked down here, His feet are of brass. The silver related to redemption—the silver was given as an atonement for their souls. Chap. xxx. 11 to 16. Christ's life was not ours till He rose : then we stand with Him in redemption, and the value of it is shown out in the silver.

There were the golden boards to hold up the Tabernacle, and there were the beautiful curtains for display. In the curtains we have the

displayed character of the Lord Jesus Christ—God dwelt in that. This character required something to sustain it: this was Christ's divine nature and His human nature. In Christ's character there are these beautiful curtains where God can dwell. They were made of fine linen. The fine linen is the righteousness of saints. See Rev. xix. 8. Christ is this perfect man, the separated man, who never had any defilement in Him. They were made of blue and purple and scarlet. The blue is the heavenly character,—the scarlet represents the regal dignity of man. This was set up in Adam, but Adam broke down, he could not sustain it, but Jesus will.

The curtains were measured—what God measures he values. There were ten curtains in two, five in one; but they were united firm in one—no one could make two of them. God

made them one. In the Tabernacle, when inside, there were the beautiful curtains and the gold. God was there, well pleased with those beautiful curtains.

Next to the curtains of fine linen, there was another curtain of goats' hair: this also was for a covering. In this there were eleven curtains, and the taches were of brass. The goats were used in the atonement, therefore the taches were of brass, marking the character of Christ's work down here on earth. God could not dwell among us in that other covering without the atonement. That covering was measured too. The length of one curtain was thirty cubits and the breadth of one curtain four cubits. With it the Tabernacle was well covered.

The taches of brass that bind this curtain tell that the work of redemp-

tion was done on earth. In Rev. v. John saw the lamb as it had been slain, but slain down here.

The covering of rams' skins dyed red marked Him as a victim. Then there was the covering of badgers' skins, marking Him as poor and despised. Pilate could see that.

The boards were also measured, and all the sockets were arranged—There is no random work in what has been set up in Christ. God has all His plans ordered and fixed in Him.

*The vail: verses 31 to 35.* This vail has been rent—for us it is done away—it is not between us and the mercy-seat.

The vail was something to keep people out; but when Christ was offered up on earth, then the vail was rent from top to bottom: it was not there any longer to keep us out.

God could let nothing near Him but perfection. God estimated Christ as the heavenly man—the perfect man—with whom God was well pleased: but that perfect man in the flesh would shut me out. But the beautiful character of Christ was rent from top to bottom, and thus we go in. The perfect character of Jesus was to shut me out, but then He was made sin, and rent for us, that we may take His character and go in.

When considering the Tabernacle, let us remember that the boards are lost, but the blessed Jesus signified by them is in heaven. May you all form part of that Tabernacle.

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ON THE INTERPRETATION OF  
MATT. XIII. 30—

“GATHER YE TOGETHER FIRST THE TARES,  
AND BIND THEM IN BUNDLES TO BURN THEM.”

*An Extract from a Letter.*

RESPECTING the work of the reapers at the end of the age, I cannot yet see ground for the statement that the angels will take out the tares, and burn them, before the wheat are raised. For when the Lord explains to His inquiring servants, what was to be their conduct in reference to the tares, He says, “In the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them.” The commission of the angels does not appear to go beyond the binding them in bundles, at least, at that time. But this is the first thing to be done with the tares: there is neither first nor second act-



ing with the wheat ; for they are gathered at once into His barn.

When the Lord thoroughly purges His floor, He will gather His wheat into the garner ; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Surely the first thing with the husbandman is to secure his precious crop before he destroys the trash. I notice the word "*but*," — "*but gather the wheat into my barn.*" Here is the contrast and difference between them at that time, the harvest time ; but how much greater the difference between them afterwards : for when the tares are cast into the furnace of fire and are wailing, then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Thus while the former are being burnt as unprofitable, the righteous will be shining as the sun, bright orb of day, enlivening, warming, and enlightening all beneath its

rays. For while to shine as the moon is glorious, yet how much more to shine as the sun—the greater light to rule the day. Marvellous grace ! that we, who were by nature so dark and vile, should have such glory revealed in us.

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*From a Tract entitled " Brief Exposition of Matt. xiii. By J. N. Darby." Page 17.*

As regards the judgment, the parable states that there is a time of harvest, and not the harvest merely. At that time the tares are first gathered and bound in bundles *for the purpose* of being burnt : the corn is laid up in the granary.

The natural state of the tares is destroyed, but it is not removed from the field. This, then, is the result in the world—the field which belongs to Christ,—the sowing which He has performed.

HYMNS (*Copied*).

FROM PAGE 92 OF "SONGS IN THE WILDERNESS."

*Love not the world, neither the things that  
in the world."* 1 John ii. 15.

A hope, of heavenly birth, is ours,  
We have no portion here ;  
Our hearts would seek the things above,  
Till Jesus shall appear.

The world through which we pass, is that  
Which crucified the Lord ;  
And how can we have any joy  
Where Jesus is abhorr'd ?

The time is hasting swiftly on  
When He will come again,  
And o'er the earth, renew'd and bless'd,  
With all His saints He'll reign.

To us 'tis giv'n to suffer still,  
Till that auspicious hour ;  
And greater glory this we deem,  
Than earthly pomp or pow'rs.

## PRAISE TO JESUS.

- 1 How happy are we, our election who see,  
And venture, O Lord! for salvation on  
Thee!  
In Jesus approv'd, eternally lov'd,  
Upheld by Thy power, we cannot be mov'd.
- 2 'Tis sweet to recline on Thy bosom divine,  
And experience the comforts peculiar to  
Thine,  
While born from above, and upheld by  
Thy love,  
With singing and triumph to heav'n we  
move.
- 3 Our seeking Thy face was all of Thy grace,  
Thy mercy demands and shall have all the  
praise;  
No sinner can be beforehand with Thee,  
'Thy grace is preventing, almighty, and free.
- 4 Our Saviour and friend His love shall  
extend,  
It knew no beginning and never shall end;  
Whom once He receives His Spirit ne'er  
leaves,  
Nor ever repents of the grace that He gives.

- 5 This proof we would give that Thee we  
receive,  
Thou art precious alone to the souls that  
believe ;  
Be precious to us ! all besides is as dross,  
Compar'd with Thy love and the blood of  
Thy cross.
- 6 Yes ! One thing we want, more holiness  
grant,  
For more of Thy mind and Thy image  
we pant ;  
Thine image impress on Thy favourite  
race,  
O fashion and polish Thy vessels of grace.
- 7 Thy workmanship we more fully would be,  
Lord, stretch out Thine hand and conform  
us to Thee ;  
While waiting in hope for thee from above,  
O fill us with holiness—fill us with love.
- 8 Vouchsafe us to know more of Thee  
below,  
Thus fit us for glory and glory bestow ;  
Our harps shall be tun'd—the Lamb shall  
be crown'd—  
Salvation to Jesus thro' Heav'n shall re-  
sound.

## SURE FOUNDATION.

- 1 LORD, Thou dost show a corner stone,  
Which we have built our hopes upon,  
That the fair edifice may rise  
Sublime in light beyond the skies.
- 2 We own Thy work of sovereign love,  
Nor death nor hell those hopes shall move  
Which fix'd on this foundation stand,  
Laid by Thine own almighty hand.
- 3 Thy people long this stone have tried,  
And all the pow'rs of hell defied ;  
Floods of temptation beat in vain ;  
Firm doth this rock Thy house sustain.
- 4 If storms and tempests should prevail,  
Whirlwind and thunders, fire and hail,  
'Tis here our happy souls shall hide,  
And here securely they'll abide.

## DELIVERANCE AND TRIUMPH.

- 1 Though dwelling with strangers around,  
And foreign and weary the land,  
I homeward to Jesus am bound—  
The day of release is at hand,  
A Captain almighty I own,  
And banner'd by faith in His name,  
I shout ere the battle is won—  
I more than a conqueror am.

- 2 Perplexings though often I feel,  
And mazy the paths that I tread,  
My God has been leading me still,  
And still He has promis'd to lead.  
The crooked shall all be made straight,  
The darkness shall beam into light ;  
I have but a little to wait,  
And faith shall be turn'd into sight.
- 3 If weeping and fearing I pass  
Through changes, in feeling or frame,  
Yet, constant in power and grace,  
My Saviour is always the same.  
No shadow of turning He knows  
Whose bliss is the fountain of mine,  
And while His eternity flows  
My happiness cannot decline.

## SAFETY.

- 1 How firm a foundation, ye saints of the  
Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word !  
What more can He say than to you He  
hath said,—  
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled ?
- 2 In ev'ry condition—in sickness, in health,  
In poverty's vale or abounding in wealth,

At home and abroad, on the land, on the sea,  
As thy days may demand shall thy strength  
ever be,

- 3 Fear not, I am with Thee, O be not dismayed,  
I, I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;  
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause  
thee to stand,

Upheld by my righteous omnipotent hand.

- 4 The soul that on Jesus hath lean'd for  
repose,  
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;  
That soul, tho' all hell should endeavour  
to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never forsake!

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*Notice of a tract entitled Objections to a Christian's joining Temperance Societies.*

London: 1, Warwick Square. 1d.

This little tract is commended, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to those who either may still be in darkness as to the evil of Temperance Societies, or who may desire to have a faithful testimony against the evil to lay before others.



## SIMPLE TESTIMONY.

No. 24.

SEPTEMBER, 1846.

VOL. III.

EXTRACTS FROM A TRACT ENTITLED "THE DISPENSATION OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN."

MATT. xiii.

*Reprinted from the Christian Witness, Vol. 1, Page 125.*

The phrase "kingdom of heaven," and also "kingdom of your or their Father," is peculiar to St. Matthew.".....In these parables we have both—the term "kingdom of heaven" being common to all save the first; that of "kingdom of your Father" being found in the explanation of the second of the parables. The importance of the former ex-

pression is seen, not only in its being the positive subject of the parables, except the first, but from the emphatic declaration of our Lord; "every scribe instructed into *the kingdom of heaven*, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." The scribe being well taught in the law of Moses, who could therefore bring forth the old things; and being instructed into the kingdom of heaven, could bring forth out of his treasure, therefore, new things. He was to have, indeed, new things, but he was not to give up the old; when he had learnt as a scribe, they were treasures in the estimation of Christ, to be brought forth by the scribe "instructed into the kingdom of heaven." I consider these parables, then, as a full prophetic statement of the character and detail of the cir-

cumstances in which the kingdom of heaven would be placed. There are seven parables in all—a circumstance of common perfectness in prophetic statements, as the attentive reader of scripture cannot fail to observe; of these, six are similitudes of the kingdom of heaven,—the first, not.”

The *rule* of heaven is the simple force of the expression “*the kingdom of heaven.*”

We have here two other kingdoms —“the kingdom of their Father,” i.e. of the righteous; and “the kingdom of the Son of man.”

The kingdom of heaven we have as a state of things during the period when the Son is sitting on the Father’s throne. During this period the children are in the Son’s, but heirs of the Father’s kingdom—a period during which the world is not ordered according to the righteous judicial

power of the Son of man's kingdom—the interval between the rejection of the Son of man upon earth, and His reigning upon earth in which the saints are sustained by the Spirit, in the midst of the world—by the Spirit sent of the Son by the Father, the witness of His exaltation there. Of this state of things, this chapter is the full prophetic announcement. The external character which it assumes in the world, being the first three, the real blessing and value and the judgments of its results, its internal character in God's sight, the last three of the six parables. It closes in the setting up of the Son of man's kingdom upon earth, and the assumption of the righteous during its continuance, to the Father's kingdom in the heavenlies. The first parable is the word of the kingdom.—the expositions and internal view

of the church or kingdom are given to the disciples—the judicial blindness of the Jews is declared, and the special privilege of the saints—and the parables are spoken distinctively as the utterance of hidden things from the world, which the Spirit reveals to those “who have ears to hear.”

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EXTRACTS FROM A TRACT HEADED “No. XI. ON THE PARABLES MATT. XIII. 1 to 50.”

*The tract here mentioned is one of a series of thirteen containing discourses on different subjects. As the tracts were printed from notes that were not revised by the preacher, more liberty has been felt in making a few slight alterations in these extracts.*

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Here we have the perfect summing up of the dispensation which is characterized in scripture by “the kingdom of heaven,” and into the

admission and enjoyment of which, all blessedness is founded.

It is for the joy and comfort of disciples, though spoken to multitudes in parables : they press in the general throng, but they understand them not, for they are in parables. But says Jesus, "unto you it is given to *know* the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." The world may despise them, (it does despise them)—it may heap obloquy and contempt on them. But the saints have the inestimable, the profound, the incalculable blessing of being children of the kingdom—children of God ; they have a joy and heavenly delight in retirement with Jesus—of fellowship and communion with Him, of which the world knows nothing ; of which it is as unable to form any conception as "the beasts that perish :" but they are conscious of their association with Him,

of being in the same position with Him, of being assimilated to Him.— This is the constitution of their joy. They are in the situation like Abraham when the Lord said, “Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?” The Lord condescends to open out His mind—His plans—to them. Abraham was called “the friend of God.” In the same way does the Lord now spread out the plan of His dispensations to His own, as He says, “Henceforth I call you not servants ; for the servant knoweth not what His Lord doeth : but I have called you friends : for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you,” John. xv. 15. Now, this is said for the joy and comfort of you who are His disciples ; treasure it up in your hearts,—and O, feel the blessedness—the wondrous blessedness—of being made

the depositories of the Lord's mind. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that He may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." 1 Cor. ii. 16.

Since this is your position, dear friends, be jealous of squandering your affections, lest you dishonour your trust, and disable the Spirit of confidence in your integrity. If you mix in the cold heartless world, if you lightly esteem, or seek not continual enjoyment in, your high privileges, if you are amusing yourselves with the things around you, (no matter what,) your minds must be opened to the world, and this leads to the love of it; and this is direct usurpation of Christ's prerogative. Christ's mind is not opened to the world, but it is open to His own. He reveals their portion to them, and He sends the Spirit into their hearts, enabling



them to cry, "Abba Father." He makes known to them that they have the inheritance of sons—shows them their family interest in it; tells them that they are heirs of this inheritance, and have a part and portion with Himself.

If this is our situation (and it is so, if we are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ,) should we not be very jealous of admitting any thing into our souls that might disturb this harmony, and so disable us from receiving communications with delight, with the filial fondness of children?

This is what the world knows nothing about. This is the saint's privilege and lot, and neither Satan or the world can take it from Him.

The parable with which this chapter begins, introduces this glorious dispensation of which we have been speaking, "Behold, a sower went forth to sow."

The great principle upon which all the blessing of the kingdom of heaven is founded, is the sowing of the seed ; there is no external development of the position of man till it is sowed.

The Lord Jesus Christ goes forth as the sower. The seed in itself is a perfectly new and distinct thing ; it is not in principle assimilated to any thing that was there previously ; it finds nothing there that it can call its own : it is not a seed of the soil springing up from it ; but it is the seed of God—it comes down from heaven. It is not a principle in the soil which the Lord acts on and improves : when it comes, it finds nothing akin to it there—nothing even like it. It comes *from* heaven, and leads *to* heaven ; for it is the seed of eternal life.

Now in all, naturally, there is *no* seed of eternal life, *as life*. We may

have the seed of eternal endurance, but not of life. But this life is wrought by the implantation of a holy seed, by the power of the word of God revealing what Christ is to the soul. It is planted by the word of God, watered by the Spirit of God, derives its growth and culture from the same God, and is found bearing fruit to the glory of God until the end.

Now this, which is God's truth, breaks down all the natural hopes of aspiring proud man, who thinks there is that within himself which will lead to this, ignorant that the only principle within him is one of death: but let him once experience the implantation of this new seed, he will then think very differently. He will find that he has now a new life; that it is a given life, consequently could not have been there before; and moreover

that it is "eternal life," and that life is in Jesus. "He that hath the Son hath life."

The world is a lost world and Satan reigns : there is only one way of escape, by being taken out of the position in which the world is placed, and planted in Christ's kingdom. There is no life but in Christ.

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EXTRACTS FROM A TRACT HEAD-  
ED "XII. PARABLE OF THE  
SOWER; MATT. XIII. 1—9."

*The tract from which the following extracts are taken is No. xii. of the forementioned series.*

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In those who receive the word as on stony places, natural feelings and dispositions give it influence ; but observe, dear friends, it is nature still : that which is unlike God—what is entirely *opposed* to Him, and there-

fore the seed sown in such a heart cannot take root, and must wither away . . . . The natural man can receive the word by the exercise of his intellect, and have his natural affections so influenced by it, as for a while to resemble those in whom the seed has a divine root. I say, dear friends, the intellect and affections of the natural man, according to his particular disposition, whether more influenced by his understanding or feelings, may, for a while, be so moved by divine truth as to cause him to resemble those who receive the seed into good ground, no apparent difference between them.—I speak of what they are in our sight.

All is well with such as receive the word with joy, but have no root, while they live at ease in the world ; but when they are exposed to worldly loss and persecution for their profes-

sion of Christ, when trials and afflictions and the cross meet them in their path, they are offended. These are the scorching sun which wither the seed. If had no root which could assimilate the heart and mind to the mind and will of God, and here they must prefer all that nature *loves* and God *hates*, to a knowledge of Him through Christ, and all the glories of His kingdom. This seed was soon received, had no root, and when tribulation and persecution arose, soon perished. Unless God Himself gives us deepness of earth, by leading us into a knowledge of what *we* are and what *He* is, and an apprehension of the glory of Christ, the seed sown in our hearts will wither away ; these are things which are too deep for the sun of the world to reach and affect ; without them we cannot endure. In obeying Christ, He may require

us to act as though we hated father and mother and brethren and sisters, yea, and our own life also ; and unless prepared for the sacrifice, He declares we cannot be His disciples. How can he be prepared for this, who loves nothing but sin and the present world? and therefore, dear friends, I again say, that unless God Himself plant and root the word of His truth within us by a power that assimilates us to Himself we cannot endure or forsake all that He requires of us as followers of Christ, and as His children, called to communion and fellowship with Himself.

Some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprung up and choked them." What are these thorns? They are more particularly described in Mark iv. 19. "And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in,

choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful." Observe, dear friends, the lusts of other things ! What are these other things ? *Other* is here contrasted with *every thing* of which the word testifies : it signifies every thing *but* the word, all that is *not* the word. To be plainer, *all that is not Christ*. The word signifies the testimony concerning Christ, but Christ Himself is the word presented to us in this testimony.

To reveal Christ, to bring us into fellowship with Him, to form Him within us, is God's purpose when He plants in us the seed of divine truth ; and therefore, dear friends, I say again, the lusts of other things signify any thing and every thing but Christ. What the natural man calls his lawful duties are among his lusts which choke the seed of the word ; they proceed from nature, they serve



and please it—a nature which is unlike God and Christ.

The Christian has lawful duties to perform duties to parents and children, and other relatives, and the Spirit of God will teach him to discover and fulfil them. These duties proceed from Christ living in Him, are done in obedience to Him, and are the effects of His wisdom and power.

In the seed falling into good ground, God Himself imparts the power by which the seed has root and grows. This power, as proceeding from Himself, is like God, and loves every thing that He approves: hence it is the very opposite of all that is in the natural heart—it brings into fellowship with Christ. “Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures.” Jam. i. 18. “Being born again, not of corruptible seed,

but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." 1 Pet. i. 23. It is the creating vivifying power of God that provides a root in the heart of man through which the seed abides there.

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EXTRACTS FROM  
"V.—THE WHEAT & THE TARES."

*Another of the forementioned tracts.*

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There is something wonderfully gracious in the way the Lord waits upon His people, to instruct them. The way in which He leads us, the particular circumstances in which we are placed, the situations we are in,—are all so many methods and means of divine instruction planned by a God of love. The believer longs for rest from all that now offends, but

God leaves him here to teach him many lessons. This world, constituted as it is at present, is a *means* by which God teaches us what we could not thus learn in a world of glory: the believer is instructed in the long-suffering, patience, and love of God, in a way he never could have known elsewhere—his wants, his weakness, his barrenness, display the wonderful patience of God. There is no feeling of hostility in God's mind toward us—not even an impatient word or look—all is love.

It is in the weakness and wants of His children that God's manner of love is even more drawn out. As the Father of a family the affections of a parent are the same for all His children, but under different circumstances are differently manifested: the long and weak childhood of a child calls forth all the tender sym-

pathy and watchful care of a parent, and knits the affection of a child to him.

This is the manner and blessedness of God's love to us ; and if the believer is insensible to this, he is in a sadly low state—for nothing so much evidences the soul's not being in a healthful state, as to be insensible of the manner of God's love toward us—to be engrossed with what is about us here—and not to be sensible that we are nearer to God than even we are to the circumstances in which we are placed.

How wondrous !—to behold God taking pleasure in opening out His mind and His plans to man which we see in this 13th chapter, as in the explanation to His disciples of the parables spoken to the multitude.

In what situation then is the believer while here ? Holding commu-

nion with an absent Lord in heaven—brought into His family here, and into His kingdom, and taught not to look for blessings simply upon earth during His Lord's absence, but to look for a time when His saints shall know Him even as they are known, and shall never be absent from Him.

That is what they are looking for, and into that situation they have been placed by an introduction into His kingdom here.

“The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field.” From verse 24 to 30, and 36 to 43, we have the parable and its signification, as explained by our Lord Himself. He says, as putting any other construction aside, “The field is the world.”—that is its meaning and no other, which brings before us the theatre—the scene where the transaction recorded here takes

place—"the world." It presents us with a view of a person sowing good seed in his field—he that sowed the good seed is the Son of man, the Lord Jesus Christ. It was good seed He sowed, and He sowed it in His field, and that is the world. He was entitled to this field, it belonged to Him—the field was Jesus's and He sowed good seed in it, something which was not indigenous to the soil.

The world which is here mentioned is spoken of as a place, not where the seed had been sown and grown up, but where good seed, not yet planted, was now to be put in—and this then is the world.

The world then is His,—the Son of man's field. This baffles the wisdom and power of those who pretend to claim any portion of it as their own, and who seek to have it all, and are described as saying,—“This is the

heir, come let us kill Him, and the inheritance shall be ours."—It is not theirs—it is Christ's. His by an undefeasible right—by an indisputable title His.

This indeed overthrows the pride of vain man who puts in *his* pretensions for a share, who calls the world his own, but it is not—it is Christ's—and every one who takes it as his own individual right, is meddling with things that belong not to him, and of which he must give account to the rightful owner.

The world then is this field, and the field is Christ's. "While men slept His enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat." Here we have the character and circumstances under which this change came about: these men—these field labourers were put in trust, and the enemy brought in the evil seed while *these* men slept.

Oh ! how little are men aware of the indefatigable perseverance of the enemy of souls.—It is while men sleep that he does the mischief. It may not for a time be manifested, but he has sown it, and it will soon spring up. The enemy entered unperceived, sowed the tares among the wheat, and then went his way, having done the mischief. And that man that cannot see that these tares are now occupying the ground and springing up, must be wanting indeed in spiritual discernment.

The men slept and let in the enemy ; but it was *his* enemy ; as the Psalmist says, “Remember how the foolish man reproacheth *thee* daily.”

The Lord makes His cause, and His people's one ; they are His, and therefore their enemy is His. He calls them brethren—“I will declare Thy name unto my brethren.”



The saints of God get much courage from this declaration, when they know that the battle is in the Lord's hand. The saints look on this little word "his enemy," with great delight. If sensible of our deficiencies and failings, and conscious that while we slept the enemy came in, yet let us look to the Lord; even though filled with shame in ourselves, yet let us look to the remedy, and we shall learn here by this one little word that it is *his enemy*, and consequently we have the strength of Christ against him.

The servants come and say, "Sir, didst not Thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this"—but though in that position, we find it is not the wisdom of God to set the world to rights by plucking up the tares—the

servants said, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?—This is according to man's wisdom, who would set the world to rights again by plucking up and rooting out heretics and purging out the wickedness according to their own desire. "Nay," said the Lord, "if I were to give you power now to pluck up the tares, you might unconsciously root up the wheat with them, Let both grow together until the harvest."

The Lord has graciously explained the meaning of this word in the 39th verse,—“The harvest is the end of the world.” The term “world” here, is not the same word, as that used previously, where it is said, “The field is the world.”

This unquestionably is, as the literal translation signifies, *the age*, or dispensation, and should be read, “the harvest is the end of the age.”

In the first instance where it is used, it renders the meaning simply "the world," which is the *scene* of this great transaction. In the latter instance it is quite unconnected with the idea of *place*, and conveys the *time*, when it was to be thus manifested.—At the end of the age, or dispensation—and at the time of the harvest, says the Lord, "I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

The tares are making their progress, being brought together ripe for destruction, though they may think it is well and no fear is to overtake them, yet certain and sudden vengeance awaits them.

There are the tares then ripening, thinking no harm shall happen unto them — strengthening themselves in

their iniquity, and counting the very providence of God (their being bound together in bundles) the very occasion of their strength and power, which is to prove their utter destruction—"The heathen have fallen into the net which they have digged for themselves"—"though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished." The wheat are not left in the general conflagration—they are gathered into the barn, and "then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." When the clouds of vengeance which now threaten an ungodly world shall have been discharged in just judgment on them—when these clouds shall then be carried away and dispersed, and all iniquity cast out—*then* shall the righteous flourish—then comes his time of much delight!

Further to remark—it is said,—

“In the kingdom of their Father”—here is great blessedness to the child of God in this appropriating word—great happiness—it shows the position in which the Lord Jesus has placed them, associated with God as their Father in His kingdom. We see the mighty result, not only that they shall be righteous—shall shine as the Sun of righteousness, but in the kingdom of their Father, and brought into their Father’s house. “In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you.” And again, “I ascend unto *my* Father, and *your* Father; and to *my* God, and *your* God.” This is the portion of a child of God, a portion we are called to rejoice in even here, for it is *our’s*—it is an inheritance reserved for us, and we are reserved to shine as the sun in the kingdom of our Father.

Here, then, is the position of the Church with Christ, one body, one mind, one in all things, one in tastes, one in desires.

The wisdom of God will soon be seen in the world to the destruction of all that opposes it. Would you like to have the world thus sifted, and all iniquity purged out? Would it rejoice your heart that Jesus was now coming? In fact would you like Him to come now? Oh! how sad, how very sad is it, that, when He is just about to come, and His saints about to be made entirely like Him, they should be mixed up in any way with the workers of iniquity, practising their habits, pursuits, or satisfactions.

Pray, brethren, and hope that you may be led to a more simple and entire conformity to the image of your Saviour—that you may be cleansed from the unsatisfying and unsanctify-

ing desires of the world, so that you may be ready to meet your Lord.

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HYMNS. (*Copied.*)

## SATISFIED WITH CHRIST.

- 1 O LORD, we would delight in Thee,  
And on Thy care depend :  
To Thee in ev'ry trouble flee,  
Our best, our only friend.
- 2 When all created streams are dried,  
Thy fulness is the same ;  
May we with this be satisfied,  
And glory in Thy name.
- 3 Why should the soul a drop bemoan,  
Who has a fountain near,—  
A fountain which will ever run  
With waters sweet and clear.
- 4 He that has made our heav'n secure,  
Will here all good provide :  
While Christ is rich can we be poor ?  
What can we want beside ?
- 5 O Lord ! we cast our care on Thee,  
And triumph and adore ;  
Henceforth our great concern shall be,  
To love and please Thee more.

## IN THE SHIP WITH JESUS.

- 1 Jesus, at Thy command  
We've launch'd into the deep,  
And leave our native land  
Where sin lulls all asleep.  
For Thee we would the world resign,  
And sail to heav'n with Thee and Thine.
- 2 Thou art our pilot wise,  
Our compass is Thy word :  
Our soul each storm defies,  
While we have such a Lord.  
We trust Thy faithfulness and pow'r  
To save us from the trying hour.
- 3 Tho' rocks and quicksands deep  
Through all our passage lie,  
Yet Christ will safely keep  
And guide us with His eye.  
Our anchor—hope—shall firm abide,  
And we each boist'rous storm outride.
- 4 By faith we see the land—  
The port of endless rest ;  
Our souls their sails expand,  
And fly to Jesu's rest,  
Longing to reach the blissful shore,  
Where winds and waves distress no more.



# SIMPLE TESTIMONY.

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VOL. III.

## ON THE COMBINED TEACHING OF THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER IN THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW AND LUKE.

MATT. XIII., LUKE VIII.

THE parable of the sower is given in three of the gospels, and in each of them is followed by the words, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." We are called to hear it in each of those scriptures where the Holy Ghost has seen well to record it; and where He has given it its different aspects, it is our blessing to have His teaching in the same. . But we need to watch and pray against

the temptation of being carried away from the teaching of the Spirit by the working of a carnal mind, and the temptation of making systems of one's own, instead of being in subjection to the word of God.

One of the subjects of the teaching of God in Scripture, is His different dispensations; and this is more the subject of Matthew's gospel than of any of the other three.

Messiah was rejected by the Jews, the generation of Israel was judged, and the kingdom of heaven was set up as a dispensation in the world. This is more the subject of Matthew's gospel than of the other gospels, and it is in this aspect that the parable of the sower is there seen.

In Luke's gospel Christ is seen more in reference to the family of man at large, as redeeming a people unto God out of an evil world; and

in this aspect the parable of the sower is there more especially seen.

In the parable of the sower in these two gospels, there are two aspects of the different modes of the reception of the word of the gospel as ministered in testimony—an aspect toward the fleshly generation of Israel as then judged, and an aspect toward the world at large, from whose misery and ruin sinners are redeemed unto God.

The world, the flesh, and the devil have their field for opposition to the gospel of God in fleshly systems of religion, such as the generation of Israel when judged and the abode of unclean spirits, as well as in the world at large in its more open character of undisguised unbelief and enmity to God ; and redemption unto God is from both of these, as but two aspects of the same thing, a

standing in the flesh and in the world: for they that are in the flesh cannot please God, and the whole world lieth in the wicked one.

In the circumstances immediately preceding and connected with the parable of the sower in Matthew's gospel, there is, on the one hand, the "*wicked generation*" of Israel, on which judgment was pronounced, and "*His mother and His brethren,*" whom Christ disowned as such; and, on the other hand, "*His disciples,*" toward whom He stretched forth His hands and said, "Behold my mother and my brethren! for whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

The circumstances preceding this parable in Luke's gospel are thus told, Luke viii. 1—3. :—"And it came to pass afterwards that He

went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God : and the twelve were with Him ; and certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto Him of their substance. And when much people were gathered together, and were come to Him out of every city, He spake by a parable," &c.

The seven wicked spirits were about to enter into the wicked generation of Israel ; but the seven devils were cast out of Mary Magdalene, in whom they had been as a vile sinner in the world ; and while Christ refuses to own a Jewish fleshly connection of His mother and His bre-

thren, He does not refuse the services of Joanna because of her worldly connection as the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward. In deliverance from all the evil of such connection, she ministers to Christ of her substance. There is also Susanna—and what is there to be said of her? Nothing at all! She is a poor obscure creature, of whom nothing is known in the records of this world; but in the records of the church, she ministered unto Christ. Her obscurity was no hindrance: her genealogy could have no place in her qualification.

The Spirit of God has mentioned certain names of those who ministered unto Christ of their substance, and in connection with those names there is personal evil in one, there is bad family connection in another, and nothing at all is known of a third

because of insignificant obscurity, that no flesh should glory in His presence.

There is that in fleshly generation, such as the generation of Israel, though there is none like it, which both was and will be highly honoured of God, and in fleshly relationship, such as motherhood and brotherhood, after the flesh, to Jesus, and need it be said that there is none like this, but however good it may be, there is that in it that is the occasion of the work of the wicked one as well as in the world abroad with all its flagrant evil.

The one is more confined and deceitful, the other more enlarged and undisguised.

In Matthew's gospel the seed is expounded to be "*the word of the kingdom*:" in Luke's gospel it is expounded to be "*the word of God*."

It is the same seed—the same word. As the word of God it is a living and a saving word, as the word of the kingdom it brings you *there* in the salvation in which you are saved, and in the life with which you are quickened by the word of God.

In Matthew's gospel, he that receives seed by the way side is he that hears the word of the kingdom, but does not understand it, and then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in the heart. In Luke's gospel the seed by the way side are they that hear, then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. In the one he *does not understand the word of the kingdom*, and the wicked one taketh the word away; in the other the devil takes the word away lest he should *believe* and be



*saved.* The one is characterized as not having intelligence of the word of the kingdom, the other as not having faith unto salvation.

Suppose two poor lost sinners hear the gospel preached: the one has some form of fleshly religion, the other is a profligate, profane man of the world; and neither of them receives Christ: the one holds his fleshly religion, for he does not understand the word of the kingdom; the other holds his profligate course in the world, for he does not believe the word of God. The word has been taken from both of these: the aspect of the mode in which it was done may thus differ.

He who is described as not understanding the word of the kingdom may be in no less alarming a position than he who is manifested as kept by the devil in unbelief lest he should

be saved. The one may be more of a fleshly religious character, the other more profane and worldly; but the word has been taken from both, and both are way-side hearers.

In Matthew's gospel some seed is said to fall "*on stony ground where it had not much earth;*" but in Luke's gospel it is said, "*Some fell upon a rock.*" A rock is more hopeless in its appearance for the reception of seed than stony ground not having much earth; but it comes to the same thing in both, "*it withered away.*" The one may be the aspect of the withering in connection with fleshly standing which God has renounced, though it may have a religious form: the other is its aspect in reference to the world in its reprobate state. And so in Matthew it is said, "When tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word,

by and by he is *offended*:" in Luke it is said, "in time of temptation they *fall away*."

A position wrong in principle is held when persecution for the word's sake becomes *a stumbling-block*. Persecutions for the word's sake are not a stumbling-block to one who rejoices that he loses nothing, but rather is a gainer through them. They are no *stumbling-block* to him who takes up his cross and follows Christ, knowing that where He is there shall also His servant be. They are no *stumbling-block* to him who glories in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. But they are a stumbling-block to him who takes a stand in the flesh—who would make "a fair show in the flesh." (See epistle to the Galatians.)

*To fall away*—the expression in Luke's gospel—is more reckless in its appearance than *to be stumbled*.

Yet may they be most closely allied.

The same thing that would stablish a man in Christ would stumble a man in the flesh.

When the disciples came to tell Him that the Pharisees were offended (or *stumbled*) after they heard His saying, (Matt. xv.,) He answered and said, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. Let them alone." Plants of His planting will be watered and nurtured by Christ's words, but not rooted up; but the words of Christ were a denial of the foundation on which these Pharisees sought to have a standing before God, and therefore they *stumbled them*. So Christ Himself, who is the chief corner stone, elect, precious, is also a stone of stumbling and rock of offence to them that stumble at the word.

So it is that when Christ is hastily professed, but with no deep intelligence of His person as the word of the kingdom, but in connection with the flesh and the world, then persecutions for the word's sake will stumble, while those very persecutions would be the rather for the establishing of a man in Christ, like those who, when they were beaten, departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. (Acts v. 40, 41.) For, says Christ, "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John xv. 19.)

In Matthew's gospel the aspect of the thorns is more curtailed and apparently less evil than in Luke's.

In the one there are "*the cares of the age;*" in the other, "*cares:*" in the one there is "*the deceitfulness of riches;*" in the other, "*riches.*"

*The cares of the age* characterize those who belong to this age, not to the age to come. This is rather a position wrong in principle than one of gross evil in the eyes of men, yet it is one of the grosser evils in the eyes of God. The children of the kingdom are not the children of this age. It is in the intelligence of the word of the kingdom that there is a deliverance from being choked by the cares of the age. If there is not a deliverance from the age, then its cares will choke the word. So also "*the deceitfulness of riches.*" If your treasure is on earth, not in heaven, then riches have a special power of deceitfulness in them: you will so connect the unsearchable riches of

Christ with the perishing riches of this life, that the word will be choked, though there may be much that is plausible because of the deceitfulness. In Luke's gospel they are more generally stated as "*cares*" and "*riches*;" and here it is further added, "*pleasures of this life.*" These may include balls, parties, theatres, and the other profane amusements of those who love the world. There is a manifest ungodliness of character in "*the pleasures of this life,*" beyond that of "*the cares of the age:*" this latter may be in connection with fleshly religion, the other not; yet after all, they are but different species of the same thing—thorns—and the result on the word with both is, that it is choked.

In Matthew's gospel the seed on the good ground is he that heareth the word and *understandeth it*, which

also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty." In Luke's gospel it is, "That on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."

In being delivered from a vain form of fleshly religion through *understanding the word of the kingdom*—through the knowledge of Christ as not of this world—we have that which the wicked one cannot touch; and we are in a course in which, through the grace of God, we will not be stumbled if persecutions for the word's sake come; and we have the word where, through the grace of God, it will not be choked by the cares of the age, we ourselves being the children of the age to come; and then there is fruit.

But in being delivered from a state



of profaneness in an ungodly world, through faith unto salvation by the word of God, when temptations come we shall not fall away, being strengthened of God through His word abiding in us ; neither, through the grace of God, shall we be choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, being kept by the same power, in the salvation of God, but fruit will be brought forth, yet with *patience* : for there are many sore trials and ensnaring allurements of the world, the flesh, and the devil, to be endured and overcome ; and yet their undisguised ungodliness of character makes them the less dangerous, because the less deceitful.

It is to be observed that there is nothing said here about thirty fold or sixty fold, as in Matthew ; for there is less hindrance to a saint from the open ungodliness of the world

than from the subtle working of fleshly religion. It was through this that Peter's fruitfulness was hindered when he withdrew from the Gentiles and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision. (Gal. ii.) It was through this that a yoke was about to be put on the necks of the disciples. (Acts xv.) It was through this that they whom Christ had made free were about to be entangled again in a yoke of bondage. (Gal. v.) It was through this that some were turned aside unto vain jangling, desirous to be teachers of the law. (1 Tim. i.) And it was through this that there were many unruly and vain talkers, chiefly they of the circumcision. (Tit. i.)

Some there are who, not seeing their deliverance from this age nor their identification with Christ in suffering now and in glory to be re-

vealed, get their hearts so engrossed with the political and commercial interests of this world, as to have the amount of their fruitfulness much hindered, if not destroyed altogether.

In those scriptures in which the destructive power of the enemy is more especially brought out, and as connected with the latter days, it is more in the aspect of this parable as in Luke's gospel that the seed with its obstacles is seen. The same things that mark the character of the reprobate Gentiles in Rom. i., also mark those who have the form of godliness in 2 Tim. iii., and these are in the perilous times of the latter days. The thorns are there seen in the aspect of Luke's gospel—"the pleasures of this life"—for men are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." In Babylon the great, we are presented with one great field

of thorns in their worst aspect—  
“Cares, riches, and pleasures of this  
life.” (See Rev. xvii. xviii.) And  
the voice from heaven says, “Come  
out of her, my people.”

I would add a word as to the con-  
nection of these two forms of evil.  
If the word is hindered by a fleshly  
form of religion, then there will not  
be power to withstand the horrible  
evils of the world abroad; and if  
those evils are yielded to in the heart,  
then the conscience will get satisfied  
with a powerless form of fleshly re-  
ligion, more decent in the eyes of  
man, but fruitless in the sight of God.

The Lord keep the feet of His  
saints in those evil and dark days.

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NOTES ON THE TABERNACLE.

No. 4.

*Extracts from Notes of Lectures.*

THE COURT OF THE TABERNACLE.

EX. XXVII. 9 TO 17.

Beloved brethren and friends, May the Lord give us help in meditating on the things of the Tabernacle, and in them learning Christ, and in learning Christ, learning our own blessedness.

I have been speaking of the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle stood in a court one hundred cubits long and fifty cubits broad. In the midst of this court was the Tabernacle. The hangings of the court were of fine twined linen. There was a gate to the court. This represents Christ. Outside Christ there is no worship, no salvation, no blessing. All without this fine twined linen was a wil-

derness. All inside was for worship and joy. We are all born outside, and never get in till we get in through Christ. Inside there is no condemnation—all is for worship. The fine twined linen of the court was suspended on hooks of silver ; but their pillars stood on sockets of brass. The hooks were all made of the atonement money, Ex. xxviii. 25 to 29. Every one that came in to worship could say, The ransom for my soul is there. Each individual Christian can say so for himself: he can realize his own individual redemption in that money.

There is an individual character in redemption: no one can worship God except he is saved.

All inside the court were worshippers, blessed people, kept in from the world outside.

Only those inside the court, the worshippers there, realize the world

outside to be a wilderness. You get the wilderness and Christ together. Redemption was in Egypt, and then they got into the wilderness; and then all this court and Tabernacle were brought out.

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NOTES ON THE TABERNACLE.

No. 5.

*Extracts from Notes of Lectures.*

THE BRAZEN ALTAR—THE LAVER.

EX. XXVII. 1 TO 8—XXX. 17 TO 21.

The brazen altar was for righteous worshippers in happy acceptance. The sin-offering was not burned here: it was burned outside the camp. The brazen altar is our happy worship place. A man could not come near the brazen altar till inside the court. This brazen altar and all its vessels represented Christ. There were its

shovels to feed the fire : and there were its flesh-hooks to turn the sacrifices to the fire—He learned obedience by the things which He suffered—He was His own flesh-hook to turn Himself to whatever suffering God had for Him to go through.

Then there is the bowl to receive the blood—Christ is the brazen bowl that carried the blood in.

*The laver.* In Titus iii. we read of the laver of regeneration. “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing (laver) of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost ; which He shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. The laver had a foot. It is the only one mentioned as having a foot ; and there is no order mentioned for carrying it. It stood on the ground. You look back at your re-



generation—You look back at what Christ has done a great while ago : you know it done for you and you have new life in Him.

Before a man served as a priest he had to wash at this laver—Before you can do a thing to the glory of God, you must first realize that you are dead with Christ, and that you are a redeemed man. It is a thing to be realized while on earth, for the body is not redeemed ; and we are walking having both the old man and the new.

The laver was made of the lookingglasses of the women who assembled at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation. Lev. xxxviii. 8 com. Jam. 1. 22 to 25. In a looking glass you behold your natural face. Let a man see what he is in Christ and remember what he is in Christ, and he will see what his walk and service should be.

ACTS VII. 37, &amp;c.

*Notes of a Lecture by J. N. Darby.*

WE have here, that which you have before been told—that which brought to a *crisis* the rejection of the Jewish people—their rejection of the testimony of the Holy Ghost. v. 51. The stoning of Stephen being the rejection of the Spirit, as the cross was the rejection of Messiah. Therefore what I desire to rest upon is the connexion in which Stephen stood, as also the church of God. The effect of what Stephen was in communion *with* was the *power* of his testimony, not heeding even death itself. Manifestation of the glory of God is what sets the church in the place of testimony; but we have something more than this in the joy and intimacy of worship. GLORY is the *subject-matter* of the Spirit's testimony in this viith of Acts; so in

the 2nd verse "the God of glory" appeared. Joseph's testimony was "glory"—see his dream in Gen. xxxvii. 9, so also Moses; both types of Christ noticed by the Spirit here. Exactly analagous to the case of the Lord Jesus—rejected, and afterwards returning to be the deliverer and ruler of His people. During the rejection of Christ by the Jews, glory is brought to the Gentiles; therefore Stephen takes it up and says, v. 51, "Ye do *always resist* the Holy Ghost; as your fathers *did*, so *do ye*." The office of the Holy Ghost is to bear testimony to the *glory* not manifested. Jesus's glory was not manifested, and the world rejected Him. The church has now to witness to the *glory* of Christ, not *yet made manifest*. To Abraham "the God of glory appeared," and *typically* by David and

Solomon. They were but *creatures*, and never passed out of their creatureship. God gave this testimony only by the creature, which could not enter into the thoughts of God. What God always gave and delighted in was what the world always rejected, that is, the testimony of the Spirit, the only thing since sin came into the world that could bear testimony. God passed sentence on all these earthly things as entirely useless as a way to Him. v. 48—50. “Hath not my hands made all these things?” The Jews looking to their Temple, said, “what goodly stones are here!” Luke xxi. 5. These outward things hinder the testimony of the Spirit. Stephen now *sees* the glory of God IN HEAVEN. *Jesus, the son of man* THERE, which now takes the place of what God’s hands had made here. v. 50. They had rejected

the Holy Ghost, and therefore they could only speak of *EARTHLY things*; but Stephen being FULL of the Holy Ghost looked up stedfastly INTO HEAVEN, and to him the HEAVENS were OPENED. The heavens opened on Jesus when on earth in *two ways*, first in Luke iii. 21, 22, "being baptized and praying, the heaven was opened—a *voice from heaven* which said, "thou art my beloved Son"—recognizing the *man Jesus then on the earth* as the *Son of God*; second in John i., 51, "hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending *upon the Son of Man.*" This was true of Jesus *then*, though not visible to the world, for angels ministered unto Him. Matt. iv. 11. The word "*Hereafter ye shall see*" a thing yet to be fulfilled. But when He comes from heaven, as in Matt. xvi. 27,

*with* the angels in the glory of His Father, it will be a *manifested* glory—another thing—angels of God—angels of His power. We now stand between these two—“Jesus standing at the right hand of God” and His coming with power and great glory, when *we shall come with Him*. The present position of the church is like that of Stephen—being full of the Holy Ghost, looking up *into heaven within the veil*—to her the heaven is opened, and looking *into heaven*, she sees that the church, though *not owned as just here*, is seen by God *in Jesus*, and *owned as just there*. Then she says, “*behold I see heaven opened*,” and simply tells out what she *saw there*. In John i. 29, 30, when John the Baptist said of Jesus, “this is *He of whom I spake*,” none followed him, v. 35, 37: when looking on Jesus as

He walked, he said, "behold the Lamb of God," they followed him : when his own soul gave out what *his own soul* felt and saw, it had power on others. The church now on the earth has to *witness* to those on the earth the *glory of Christ hidden from them in heaven*, the effect of which will be as in the case of Stephen (51—60) the hatred and rejection of the world, and from the church herself the spirit of intercession, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." But *besides this*, there is another thing as our proper portion more intimately — "our fellowship is with the Father and His Son" — not as "the God of glory appeared," not "filled with the Holy Ghost" to bear testimony to the glory only : this does constitute worship, but that we may have fellowship with the Father and His Son Christ Jesus—

our blessed fellowship in the knowledge of our eternal life in the Son—the Father loved the Son, therefore bore testimony to his *delight* in Him—"thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased." This is a question of *delight*—now in bringing us into fellowship with God—joy within *his own proper delights*. Prov. viii. 31, John xvii. 24. "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world"—the delight of the Father *in* the Son—we brought into the fellowship *with the Son*. Our worship is for the *moment* as if no *world* at all, forgetting every thing but what the Father sees in Jesus before Him.

This is life eternal to know the Father as the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent.



# SIMPLE TESTIMONY.

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VOL. III.

## SAUL AND DAVID.

In learning the lessons of warning and blessing which God has given us in the history of Saul and David, we are taught the solemnity of a diligent heed to the word of God in walking before God in a life of faith and of holy obedience: and in this we are at once and for ever connected with Him whose name is called the Word of God, and in whom all the purposes of God for us are set up.

The details of the transgression of Saul are given in 1 Sam. ; but the outline and character of his trans-

gression is thus recorded in 1 Chron. x., in connection with his miserable end, "So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord; even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it; and inquired not of the Lord: therefore He slew him, and turned the kingdom to David the Son of Jesse." It is in vain to talk of honouring God while not honouring His word. If God is honoured, His word will be honoured, and nothing will be substituted for it. "Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name." Ps. cxxxviii. 2. Christ cannot be honoured if the word of God is not honoured, for He is The word. The Holy Spirit cannot be honoured if the word of God is not honoured, for He is the Spirit of truth—He leads into all truth.

Salvation cannot be known if the word is not known ; for it is the word of Salvation. There cannot be new life without the word, for it is by the word of God we are born again ; neither can we maintain our place as new born babes without the word, for it is "as new born babes we must desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby."

If you see a man telling you that salvation is in Christ, but that you get the salvation through ordinances performed for you by a man, not through the word of God received by faith in your own heart, you may in that man see a minister of Satan transformed into an angel of light.

The history of Saul has been written for our admonition, to warn us against seeking for blessing, or expecting to find it, in any course in which we deviate from the word of God.

Saul was one who could not plead ignorance, though he was always ready with an excuse for what he did ; but God never took one of the excuses. He sinned against the light of known testimony and in this was his transgression.

Saul is first seen as an amiable natural man respecting his father : but when he is tried, he is not seen to respect the Lord : and though he was a choice young man and goodly, yet the Lord had to set him aside. He did not show himself a man who feared the Lord or cared for His people : and to see such an one in an official place, where it was only in the fear of the Lord he could act at all, was to see him on the road to ruin.

Real blessing can only be in the subjection of the heart to God, but never in an official place apart from that subjection : for such place can

only prove an occasion of increased transgression. And as connected with this principle the servant of Christ should not seek an official place beyond His power. In this he might pray "Lead us not into temptation;" and this has no connection at all with hiding a talent in the earth or calling Christ a hard master; for it would rather be acting without reference to the talent given or to the will of Christ as a master.

When Saul was taken up, it was plainly taught him that he was to stand by faith, because by the word of God: this he would not do, and so down he came, and the ruin of that man was great.

Saul could look for his father's asses at his father's bidding, and desire to spare his father's feelings: lest he should leave off caring for the asses and take thought for him and

those with him : but in referance to the word of God or the glory of God, he was stubborn and rebellious ; and thus he plunged himself into misery and ruin.

When Saul was seeking his father's asses, it was the proposal of his servant, not of himself, to go and enquire of the man of God. The servant said unto him, "Behold now, there is in this city a man of God, and He is an honourable man ; all that He saith cometh surely to pass ; now let us go thither ; peradventure He can show us our way that we should go." But Saul showed but little inclination to go to this man of God. He at once raises a difficulty, He says "But behold, if we go, what shall we bring the man ? for the bread is spent in our vessels, and there is not a present to bring to the man of God : what have we ?" Excuses are generally ea-

sily made for not doing a thing for which there is no desire : but generally where there is a will there is a way ; and the servant silences the objection of Saul by telling him that he had something to give. This little incident recorded by the Spirit of God at the commencement of Saul's history is full of profitable meaning for us. It is also recorded of Saul that when he met Samuel he said, "Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house is. And Samuel answered Saul and said, I am the seer." He did not know Samuel. How common is it to see people know little of those in whom they feel no concern, and specially with the men of the world towards the servants of God.

But now Saul is tried ! Is he a man of God ? He that is of God heareth God's word. Well, Samuel says to him "Stand thou still awhile,

that I may show thee the word of God." 1 Sam. ix. 27. And then the word of God is declared to him. The prophet tells him that the Lord had anointed him, and he shows him the way wherein he should go. He tells him what people he would meet, what they would say, and what they would do, and what he would do in the successive stages of his journey; and then the prophet closes his words by saying "and behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings: seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee; and shew thee what thou shalt do."

Saul then sets out on his journey, and the Lord proves His faithful word in accomplishing all that His prophet had said. But what of the faithfulness of Saul? Does he give heed to the word of God as Samuel had said,



“Behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace-offerings: seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come unto thee, and show thee what thou shalt do.” 1 Sam. 8. Some would say of Saul, that he did give heed to the word of the Lord, for “he tarried seven days:” but then the same scripture which acknowledges that he tarried seven days, also charges him with not keeping the commandment of the Lord his God which He commanded him. 1 Sam. xiii. 8 to 14. Together with the trial of his faith, there was also the trial of his patience; for these two go together in the dealings of God with us. “Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.” Hab. ii. 3. Let no one vindicate Saul, or seek to vindicate himself on like ground; for God has

condemned Saul, and caused it to be written for our admonition. Saul tarried for the seven days, and then when he was pressed by circumstances of trial he would not wait any longer, though after all he had but very little longer to wait; for when he had tarried the seven days, he offered the burnt offering; and it came to pass, that, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, behold, Samuel came. How often when, according to sight, all help is gone, the moment of deliverance is then at hand. This is very much God's way, to get glory for Himself in the faith and patience of His people, as also in the more manifest overthrow of His enemy's plans. But Saul set the appointment of the Lord aside, to do the Lord's work in his own way, not the Lord's way: but it was not the Lord's work, and the Lord

could not have such a servant. Yet, as is often the case, Saul appeared to have much self-complacency at this time, and to be not at all conscious of what he had done : for as soon as he saw Samuel he went out to meet him that he might salute him, but Samuel at once accosted him with, What hast thou done ? and then comes Saul's excuse, no doubt, a good one in the eyes of many, but the Lord gave no heed to it at all. "Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash ; therefore said I, the Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord : I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering. And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly :

thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which He commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought Him a man after His own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee." 1 Sam. xiii.

Saul then goes on without much demonstration that the Lord was working with him until the great trial of his faithfulness comes, in chap. xv. "Samuel also said unto Saul, the Lord sent me to anoint thee to be king over His people, over Israel; now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the Lord." He who is the Lord's anointed is also the Lord's servant—because

the Lord had anointed him king, he was therefore bound to hearken to the voice of the words of the Lord. It was not to be a question of what Saul pleased, but of what the Lord pleased, save so far as having communion with the mind of the Lord, his own will should he so led: but the source of the choice must be the Lord's will, and all other wills and purposes must be in subjection.

The Lord had unchangeable purposes about Amalek. He had said unto Moses "Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." Ex. xvii. 14. The prophecy of Balaam was also recorded, "Amalek was the first of the nations; but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever." Num. xxiv. 20. Now if Saul had been a

godly king he should have known these scriptures; for God had ordained in reference to the king thus, "And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the levites: and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes to do them." Deut. xvii. 18, 19.

Saul should have known from the book of the law what the purposes of God about Amalek were: but Saul may have had little acquaintance with or concern for these scriptures even as for the word that now comes directly to himself: and if the one was not heeded, neither would the other: this connection is most important: if

the word of God, as in the scriptures, is not valued, neither will it be valued any where else. Christ could say of the Jews in reference to Moses, "If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words," John v. 47 : and to the rich man in hell it was said in reference to his brethren, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke xvi. 31. This same principle is shown out in Saul. The words of the prophet were, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have and spare them not ; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." 1 Sam. xv. 2, 3. But

then Saul was not remembering what Amalek had done, and it had no such force in his mind; and he gave such an accomplishment of this service as satisfied his own mind; and so "Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and of the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them; but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly." In this sparing act of Saul he was setting aside the judgment of God, and setting up instead thereof a judgment of his own respecting the Amalekites; [and query, In sparing Agag the king of the Amalekites did he spare some remnant of Agagites from whom sprung Haman the Agagite, the Jews enemy? see the book of Esther.]

But we should here notice in Saul



the blind self-complacency and the obstinate self-defence that attends a spirit of insubjection to the word of the Lord. At the time when Samuel was sent to Saul to pronounce judgment on him for his disobedience, Saul was at that very time boasting of his obedience. "Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord," verse 13. But how often does a very little incident detect the falsehood of a bold boast; Samuel said, "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" The bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the oxen made it very plain that Saul had not destroyed both ox and sheep as the Lord had bidden him, notwithstanding the forwardness with which, when unasked,

he could face even the prophet of God and say, "I have performed the commandment of the Lord." And not only this, but when after giving his own excuses, his disobedience was still further set before him, he still further persists in maintaining his obedience, trying to throw the blame on the people: but all was useless; he could not throw it off himself: the prophet does not withdraw the charge, nor allow any palliation of it, but maintains Saul's personal transgression in the matter, and the judgment of God thereon, "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king." He further replies, in answer to Saul's request, "I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel."

A natural man would often say to a faithful servant of Christ, what harm is such a person doing to you that you treat him so harshly? It may be—the greatest possible harm! in rejecting the word of the Lord. Alexander the coppersmith did Paul much harm; for he greatly withstood his words: but these words were the Lord's words.

If there is a disposition to please oneself; then there may be very little of such experience as, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." Where it is only "The reproaches of them that reproached me"—these should be of very little moment to a faithful servant of Christ, if the honour of his Master is not affected thereby.

But this is further shown in the next chapter (chap. xvi.), where the Lord not only countenances this con-

duct in his servant, but rebukes a departure from it, "And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel." Samuel was so called into communion with the righteousness of the judgment of God in the rejection of Saul, that it should now cease to be a subject of mourning with him: and his affections must turn to the man whom God had chosen—the man after His own heart.

In David you see a man who was little in his own eyes. This Saul appeared to be for a while; but when put into circumstances where he had an opportunity of raising himself up, then nobody appeared so great in his eyes as his own self.

Saul and David are both seen at the commencement of their regal history, as little in their own eyes;

but because Saul was a man after the flesh, he did not continue so when brought into circumstances of official greatness, while David, as a man after God's own heart, is the humble obedient servant of God.

An official place is the occasion of varying and enlarging the acts of responsibility ; but never of setting aside the responsibility itself in the slightest degree: and if under God one is set over many, it is to be the servant of God towards each of the many.

Saul held his official place apart from the service of God, and to the setting aside of that service—he held it for the setting up of himself, and for doing what he liked. But the contrast to this has been recorded for us in the history of David, as the pattern of Him who set us an example that we should walk in His steps—that we never should use an

official place for the establishing of ourselves in importance and in power, but be seen as humble and self-renouncing in such place, using it only as a responsible position of faithfulness and service for God.

At the anointing of David there was special and conspicuous honour put on him. He was anointed in the presence of his rejected brethren. Each of his seven brethren had first passed before Samuel and been allowed to hear "Neither hath the Lord chosen this," when David was then brought forward, after his father had apologized for his absence by saying that he was the youngest, and that he was keeping the sheep; but when he was brought forward, the Lord said, Arise, anoint him; for this is he. Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and now

David is in an office great and glorious, given him of God.

There is another circumstance in the history of David recorded immediately after his anointing, and that is, the place of greatness he gets in Saul's house, and in Saul's army. But where do you next find David after all this? You see him keeping the sheep again! What! the man whom the Lord had anointed, and whom Saul had chosen to be with him, keeping the sheep again? Yes. The Lord's time had not come for setting him over the kingdom; and Saul's time had passed away for a while for feeling any urgent need for David; and David in quietness and humbleness keeps his father's sheep again.

Saul forgot David when his selfish need of him, for the moment, was over. The Lord did not forget Da-

vid, but His time for setting his servant over the kingdom had not yet come; and meanwhile David is seen neither claiming the kingdom, nor looking for his place in the house of Saul, but minding the sheep as the place of his present peaceful service in communion with God.

In the next chapter (chap. xvii.) may be seen the way in which God displayed David in service and power to His own glory, at a time when he was not about to display himself.

For truly it is astonishing to think that David should be so disrespected and forgotten, while at the same time so satisfied and without a murmur, as he is here seen; but God is showing us in him what is after His own heart.

The brethren of David had been refused, and David had been anointed before them; and yet these brethren



go to the battle, and David goes to mind the sheep ; and that, after he had been appointed armour-bearer to Saul, having had this witness given of him, that he was a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and that the Lord was with him.

But while David's brothers were gaining a character for themselves as men of war, God was giving a character to His king as a feeder of sheep, because he was to feed Jacob ; and as he was also to be a man of war, He was training him in the character of that war, to save His lambs from the lion and the bear : and the power of the presence of God with him in these scenes, left no place for concern about the honour of Saul's house or the respect of his family, while, in the same power, he could

step beyond them all when an occasion for faithful service called for it: such was the case in the matter of Goliath the Philistine.

In the power of communion with God He looked on the Philistine, and pronounced him to be uncircumcised: and in that was his judgment of the Philistine in the sight of God. The Lord had shown His judgment as to height and stature, at the time of the refusal of Eliab, David's elder brother; and now David has communion with the mind of God in His judgment of the Philistine, for he looked not on his height of six cubits and a span: he was uncircumcised, and that was enough.

As to the hosts of Israel, had David looked on them as the servants of Saul, then he might also have been indignant that Saul should have so neglected and forgotten him; but in

the estimate of David, these armies were the armies of the living God ; and as to himself, he knew that God had not forgotten him ; and he could go on, following the ewes great with young in the assurance of that ; or he could leave the sheep and go and carry an ephah of corn to his brethren who had followed Saul to the battle ; or he could go and fight with the Philistine : for your estimate of respectable occupation, or of a great undertaking in that which is too great in his eyes, much depends on whether you are serving God or man.

Had David gone to the battle to exalt himself, then, when upbraided with pride, his conscience would have smote him : but this not being so, when rising up in the energy of faith against the uncircumcised Philistine, and when charged with pride for do-

ing so, he could then very peacefully reply, "*Is there not a cause?*"

And had David gone to this battle as the armour-bearer of Saul, then he would not have been in such a manifested position of the power of God in opposing the Philistine, as now with the five smooth stones taken from the brook, and put into his shepherd's bag. David could say to the Philistine, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied." To this the Philistine could not possibly say, "But you are doing the same thing yourself—" and to such species of charge from those ready to bring a false charge, we too often expose ourselves, by not walking in the simplicity of faith.

David would not go against Goliath with a sword which he had not proved ; but the need was supplied with the sword of Goliath ; for God could make Goliath an armour-bearer for David, and carry his own arms for the destruction of himself ; while Saul, who supplied David with a sword against the Philistine, was the man who afterwards died by his own sword ; and his armour in which he trusted became the boast of the Philistines in the house of Ashtaroth their god.

After this victory over Goliath, David and Saul are brought together by circumstances, but not in heart : this could not be ; for David was the man after God's own heart ; and Saul the man whom He had rejected ; the one seeking the glory of God ; the other seeking his own glory, and hating the servant of God because of

those faithful acts of service which appeared to hinder him in exalting himself.

The first aspect of the victory of David over Goliath, was not displeasing in Saul's sight, because he had thereby got rid of his enemy who tauntingly had said "Am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul?" But then another aspect of the same victory soon appeared, that more honour was ascribed to David than to Saul in this matter, and then the enmity of Saul toward David began. The same selfish spirit that before had manifested itself in forgetfulness of David, now shows itself in bitter hatred of David: for now he cannot forget him, circumstances having set David too near to him, as also the songs of those who were singing in his hearing, "Saul hath slain his thousands and David his ten thou-

sands." Saul had no single-eyed fellowship with the taking away of reproach from the armies of the living God; the associations connected with the thought of servants of Saul, had more weight with him; and if the same circumstances that were for the glory of the God of Israel did not also at the same time tend to the self-exaltation of Saul; then his wrath and displeasure were raised.

And here the faithful servant of God must know that if he is used of God in any energetic service for the glory of God, that he will thereby provoke those who find it to interfere with the glory of themselves: and that the same energy of faith that was exercised in that act of service may afterwards be called out in the trials which such acts will subject one to because of the pride and evil

of the flesh. A servant of God must know that the service of God is a thankless one here in this world among men; but He for whom the service is done will sustain His people under the trials that are the consequences of it.

He who strengthened David to fight against the giant Goliath, also sustained him in patient endurance of the hatred of Saul. In the one whom he openly encountered there was the manifested enemy of the God of Israel: in the one whom he patiently endured there was rather in manifestation the personal enemy of David himself. It is in the patient endurance of such that a Christian shows his strength, "Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness." Col. i. 11.

*To be continued.*



# SIMPLE TESTIMONY.

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VOL. III.

## SAUL AND DAVID.

*Continued.*

In the profane world outside, hatred is more manifested toward God and His truth: but in an official place among the servants of God, the flesh shows itself rather in envy and hatred of the most faithful of God's servants.

The Lord's recognition of His faithful servants tends to put those in the back ground, who would exalt themselves; and then the enmity breaks out because of insubjection to God.

The contrast of this spirit was manifested in Jonathan. The very same circumstances that stirred up the envy of Saul against David was the occasion of knitting the heart of Jonathan to the heart of David. "As David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. And Saul said to him, whose son art thou, thou young man? And David answered, I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite. And it came to pass that when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David; and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because

he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garment even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle." There was no knitting of the soul of Saul with the soul of David. There was no communion between them. David sought the glory of the God of Israel; but Saul sought the glory of himself. And when they sung, "Saul hath slain his thousands and David his ten thousands," David could hear it without being puffed up because the glory was the Lord's; and Jonathan could hear it without being hurt because the glory was the Lord's; but Saul could not hear it without indignation, because the glory was not his, and Saul eyed David from that day and forward.

As David was the man after God's

own heart, so Jonathan in communion with God, and in subjection to God, showed he was the man after his heart too; and therefore he both loved him as his own soul, and he also acknowledged his title; and so he stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle. But while David here made no return to Jonathan of his sword or girdle or bow, for in subjection to God he could not do so, for the Lord had anointed him and not Jonathan, yet afterwards in their expressions of sympathy and love, they not only were mutual but the abounding of them was in David, "They kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded."

But there was none of this love or sympathy in Saul's heart, though for

a while there were a few acts of attention and respect. Saul was in no way guided in his choice by the sense of what was the Lord's choice: there was no solemn exercise of conscience before the Lord, but the painful sensation of mortified pride in seeing another greater than himself: and so when David had a harp playing with his hand to charm Saul, Saul had a javelin in his hand to smite David. Yet, just after this it is said, "Saul was afraid of David!" but why was he afraid of David? Did David throw a javelin at Saul? No. Why then was Saul afraid of David? The reason is given, "Because the Lord was with him and was departed from Saul." And what did Saul do then? He removed David from him; for as the Lord was not with him, he did not like to have David with him; for the Lord was

with David. There are solemn and awful considerations in this, but so it is. Soon after this Saul is again represented as being afraid of David, and why? "David behaved himself wisely in all his ways, and the Lord was with him: wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him." And why should this make Saul afraid? Because he feared for the loss of self exaltation in seeing another wiser than himself. But a further gradation of Saul's fear of David is noted in the same chapter, "And Saul saw and knew that the Lord was with David, and that Michael, Saul's daughter, loved him. And Saul was yet the more afraid of David; and Saul became David's enemy continually." The knowledge of the Lord's being with David should have produced love toward David and confidence

in him on the part of Saul : but this not being so, he became afraid of David, he did not like to have David near him, and at length he broke out into open hostility — another awful consideration—It was a plain declaration that he was the Lord's enemy ; for he was the enemy of the man that he saw the Lord was with.

But God would teach us what safety there is in being under His protection, and how vain are the attempts of that man who tries to oppose the purposes of God. Saul then tried to smite David with his javelin : and then tried to let him fall by the hand of the Philistines : he then spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants that they should kill David : he then sought again to smite David with his javelin, but he slipped away out of Saul's presence : he then sent messengers to David's house to

watch him and to slay him ; but this failing, he said, Bring him up to me in the bed that I may slay him : He then sent messengers after him to Naioth ; and he then went there himself : but each of Saul's attempts was a fresh occasion of another interposition in behalf of David till he at last escaped to the cave of Adullam ; and there a new scene opens to our view. There were those who did not prosper under the reign of Saul ; and many such resorted to that cave —“Every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was bitter of soul, gathered themselves unto him ; and he became a captain over them : and there were with him about four hundred men.” \*

\* In Is. cxlii—a prayer when he was in the cave—after pouring out his complaint before the Lord, he uses these words. “*The*



They who were happy and satisfied under the government of Saul, had no inducements in the cave of Adullam. Doeg the Edomite would not like to be there. He was the chiefest of the herdmen that belonged to Saul; and he was set over the servants of Saul. Saul could get services from Doeg that he could not get from those that feared the Lord; and Doeg could get advancement from Saul that others could not get. Saul had those among his servants who felt obliged to say, "No!" to some of his commands. When he turned to his footmen and said, "Turn and slay the priests of the Lord," he could find no response to his command—the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall

*righteous shall compass me about,*" in which the character of righteous is given to those that thus compassed him.

upon the priests of the Lord. And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests of the Lord. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day four-score and five persons that did wear a linen ephod." Doeg might now expect another step in his promotion ; but not so those poor footmen who feared to kill the priests of the Lord : they might the rather be found among those that were in distress, and those that were bitter of soul, but had they been in the cave with David, they would have got no such command : there they could serve in the fear of God, being partakers with David of the blessing of God.

The enmity which before was shown to David personally is now shown to David and his men : they are joined with David in faithful

service for God as also in gracious deliverance at his hands. David and his men went to Keilah to fight against the Philistines and to save the inhabitants of Keilah, according to the word of the Lord: but Saul called all the people to go down to Keilah to besiege David and his men. But David associates them with himself before the Lord and says, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said, They will deliver thee up. Then David and his men, which were about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. Thus there were the two formed companies, David and his men, and Saul and his men—the one waiting on God as patient sufferers, the others fighting against those whom God was maintaining. When David was in

the wilderness of Maon, then Saul and his men compassed David and his men round about to take them. How much bitterness of soul did the righteous escape in being delivered from such a service as this in their servitude to Saul. But while those with Saul were thus forced into unrighteous service, they who were with David, being sustained above the weakness of their own faith, were led on into blessed services to the glory of God, as in saving the inhabitants of Keilah, they were also checked through the wisdom and faithful patience of David from the evil which their own rash zeal would have led them into in killing Saul. Saul on the other hand imposed services on those who followed him, contrary to the word of God and contrary to his own conscience, till at last he asked counsel of one that had a fa-

miliar spirit and enquired not of the Lord, and ended his course and ruin : but David and his house were established for ever.

Ours is the stability of Christ and his house. May we walk in subjection as identified with Him and with His according to the will of God in all things.

May He so sustain us according to the power of God. Amen.

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#### COMMUNION WITH GOD.

Communion with God maintains two things,—the sense of blessedness in His presence, and separation from the world.

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## NOTES OF A LECTURE

By J. N. Darby.

## GEN. XII.

THIS chapter occupies a place of great importance, being the first *public* call by which the saints are separated from the world. Genesis brings out the great principles of God's actings with those taught of the Spirit to know His mind: the God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob—not as the God of the whole world, though this is true, but specially of individuals. God is not ashamed to identify himself with them: God is not ashamed to be called our God, because we are not of earthly but heavenly calling. A time is coming when He will be God of the whole earth, when Satan is bound; till then, God of those called out to Himself. Abraham, the depository of promise—Isaac, in resurrection—Jacob, election of God and type of Israel's history, cast out, brought back again. Thus God gives the principles of His dealing with men (single individuals were called

before.) In Noah another principle is brought out—government for the restraint of evil—the whole order of earth formed by families. After this corruption comes in—man is set in responsibility and he fails. Up to this, the history of the world—the violence of men in Nimrod, and the rebellion of men in the confederacy of Babel. Another evil came in—Satan set himself up as head of power—Gentiles worship him—“the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to devils, and not unto God.” 1 Cor. x. 20. Then came this delusion—ascribing those things which God did to Satan, and setting Satan in God’s place (Joshua xxiv. 2, 3,) “they served other gods.” Hence we see an important principle—false gods—the introduction of Satan, as it were, in heavenly places, and worshipped as God. God’s people must be called away from this—“they served other gods.” Joshua xxiv. 2, 3. In the midst of this, God calls Abraham out. In this chapter there is a division—

what Abraham was, blest in connection with God, and what in failure as to his own thoughts. In the first part two things—God calls to Abraham to come into the land; and the worship of Abraham when *in* the land. “The Lord had said, Get thee out, &c.” This calls for separation from all God’s natural order of things. God did not say, leave worshipping Satan, but leave thy kindred—the Jewish system, God’s natural order—“when Jesus putteth forth His own sheep He goeth before them.” God’s ties before were by natural order, by family blessings and inheritances. Out of *all* this (not only the evil) Abraham is called: he breaks the link of idolatry. Not correct your ways in the land where you are, but “get you out of the land, and go into a land that I will shew you.” The law was given to Israel in the place where God was to keep them, as a rule for them in that place where they were. Grace brought them out of Egypt—the law was to guide them where they were afterwards.



Moses pitched the tabernacle *without* the camp, and every one who sought the Lord *went out*. So there is nothing for us now but the word of God to rest upon. What God calls us to is to believe on His word—by the word of God all things subsist—by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water, overflowed, perished. The word of God is a necessary authority to the believing soul—as under the responsibility of the obedience of faith. The ground of the conduct of faith—“God had said.” Abraham could not get into the land of Canaan, because Terah was with him. He went with Terah to go to Canaan, but not in faith, and therefore did not get there, nor yet get the blessing, for they came to Haran and dwelt there. Now Haran was not Canaan. Nature cannot break from nature, but faith can. Here we find natural order—all within the limits of flesh—and therefore no faith in it at all, not faith in the word of God. Nothing

can set aside the immediate and personal responsibility of obedience to God's word—nothing between the soul and God but His word. The error of the church in all ages springs from putting something between these. All instrumentality is to bring the soul to God. This is a simple principle God will never give up—the immediate claim of obedience to His word. Nothing in nature according to purpose—God says, "I create," and "I destroy;" but God never says "I purpose," and "I set aside"—the purpose of God can't alter—His calling is without repentance. He calls man out of that which was corrupt through Satan. There are two parts in blessing—first to be recipients of blessing, second, to be the instruments of blessing others—"in thee"—the occasion of blessing—the divine joy of bringing into blessing. Luke xv. 9, 25. Abraham could not come into the land while one link of natural ties remained unbroken. God had called Abraham out by His word, therefore he had no-

thing but the word to trust to, which told him he could not have blessing but out of flesh. "Get out of thy country and thy kindred," so Abraham departed as the Lord had spoken. Gen. xii. 4. "Salvation is of the Jews"—the moment the Shepherd came—"I am the door"—the sheep must go out at it, recognizing the voice of Christ—"my sheep hear my voice." Abraham got to Haran with his father, then had to begin again: when done with his father "unto the land of Canaan he came." v. 5. The second part of the position of Abraham—now called—our position now in heavenly places while Satan is yet there. Eph. vi. 12. So it is with Abraham called to Canaan while the Canaanite is yet in the land. Gen. xii. 6. Abraham here presents to us our actual position—the position of faith—to be in conflict with the wicked spirits in heavenly places—our bodies not yet in Canaan, but in spirit we are there. Faith acts upon the word—receiving the testimony, finds it is in heavenly

places—not of the world, as Christ was not of the world—only in heaven, so we in heaven. We walk by faith, and not by sight—not earthly but heavenly things. v. 7. “The Lord appeared unto Abraham”—here all true worship begins, the Lord revealing Himself. Faith taking God at His word, and acting on it. Faith finds itself in heaven with Christ. So the manifestation to Abraham was the source of worship—“he builded an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.” So we seeing the glory—worship in heaven—the heavenly Canaan. Worship supposes a man to be at peace—that goes on properly in heaven, where Jesus is, because we worship in Him. This is unfolded at large in Ephesians. In that epistle it is not grace to the world, but manifesting to principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God. The prodigal son came to his father—he fell on his neck and kissed him. This was not worship, but when in the house then the music and the dancing—that is

worship—communion with the father in the house. We are called as knowing ourselves put into the father's house in heaven, and then, being there, He reveals Himself to us there. A very different thing to be on the way to God, and being in spirit there, and having the full revelation of God to our souls, brought to God in spirit, at home there, and what accompanies this is the perpetuity of the blessing, "eternal redemption for us." Then we can worship. The same love when the father fell on his neck and kissed him, as when He had him in the house—but a different thing—the music and the dancing—the adoration and the praise—when God is appearing in His own house to those He has brought there. We should be at home with God now, rejoicing in what the Father is at home in His own house, and not be occupied with what is passing in our own hearts.

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## FRAGMENTS.

EFFECTS OF JESUS FILLING THE  
HEART.

As knowing Jesus to be precious to our souls, our eyes and our hearts being occupied with Him, they will be effectually prevented from being taken up with the vanity and sin around. And this, too, will be our strength against the sin and corruption of our own hearts. Whatever I see in myself, that is not in Him, is sin. But then it is not thinking upon my own sins—upon my own vileness, and being occupied with them, that will humble me ; but thinking of the Lord Jesus, dwelling upon the excellencies in Him. It is well to be done with ourselves, and to be taken up with Jesus. We are entitled to forget ourselves,—we are entitled to

forget our sins,—we are entitled to forget all but Jesus. It is by looking unto Jesus that we can give up any thing, that we can walk as obedient children,—His love constrains us. Were it simply a command, we should have no power to obey.

The Lord gives us thus to be learners of the fulness of grace which is in Jesus, the beloved and elect one of God, so that “we may be changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

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#### SATAN'S TEMPTATIONS.

We are still “in the *world*,” the *flesh* is unaltered, and the *devil*, though triumphed over by Jesus, has not been removed, but is going about as a “roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour ;” or, what is worse, as the wily and seducing serpent. We,

exposed to his devices and his "wiles," have no strength in ourselves to withstand, but Jesus has prayed "keep them from the evil"—and the word is, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might,"—take unto you "THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD."

Satan aims his temptations at different parts in different saints. While the natural constitution of a person is of little matter as far as the Spirit of God is concerned, it is of much as to Satan. The Spirit of God strengthens that which is weak, and brings down that which is high in a man; but Satan suits his temptations to the natural character, so far as close observation, and the subtlety of the creature (for after all he is but a creature) can enable him to do. It needs "THE WHOLE ARMOUR" to meet Him, and that "ARMOUR" is ever ours.



## WHAT WE LEARN IN CONFLICT.

That which is ever the result of conflict and exercise of soul before the Lord, in standing against Satan, whether learnt through the display of his power or the grace of Jesus, is the knowledge of our own emptiness, and the Lord's fulness. It is not merely that we gain the victory over Satan, but that in all our conflicts we are continually learners of what the fulness of the grace of God is, through finding out our own emptiness and weakness. The more thoroughly we feel this, the more we feel our own nothingness, that we have no strength at all in ourselves; the more simply and entirely we lean for *all* our strength on God. "*My grace is sufficient for thee*"—there is nothing so weak that His strength cannot give it might; nothing so

empty that His fulness cannot fill. And yet how slow are we to reckon thus upon His grace ; how prone to trust to something of our own. Is it not so ? notwithstanding oft repeated proofs of mercy and loving-kindness, are not our souls still apt, even in the very least thing, to doubt His love ?

In conflict we find out practically what is our own nothingness, nay our worse than nothingness ; but, whilst learning it, we are brought also to see what is the patience of God's love towards us, what the riches and fulness of His grace. It is of vast importance that we should thus *know* God. The character in which, during this present dispensation, we have especially to learn and to do with Him, is that of "*the God of all grace.*"

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## A GROAN TO GOD.

*My groaning is not hid from thee.*

Ps. xxxviii. 9.

A groan to *God*, however deep the misery, however prostrate the spirit, however unconscious that we are heard, is always received above as the intercession of the Spirit, and answered according to the perfectness of God's purpose concerning us in Christ; therefore the charge is, "They have not cried *unto me* with their heart, when they howled upon their beds:" and there is no consequence of sin which is beyond the reach of this groaning to God, nothing but the self-will which will not groan to Him at all. This is a blessed thought! Such is our intercourse with God in joy and in sorrow; and I doubt not that in us poor

blessed creatures, the truest, the most blessed (what will shine most when all things shine before God), are these groans to Him ; they cannot indeed be in their fulness but where the knowledge of the glory of blessing is. I can see them precede the greatest works and words of Jesus. The sense of the wilderness, taken into His heart, made but the streams which could refresh it, flow forth in the sympathy of the Spirit which it called forth ; and now the Spirit is IN US.

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#### GOD'S HEART.

How can I know God's heart ? Is it by looking at my own heart ? No ; but by learning it in the gift of His Son. The God we have to do with, is the God who has given His Son for *Sinners* ; and if we do not know

this, we do not know Him at all.—  
 “He that spared not His own Son,  
 but delivered Him up for us all, how  
 shall He not with Him also freely  
 give us all things?”

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#### THE HIDING PLACE.

The LORD is always a Sanctuary, “a hiding place,” to his children. In every place, in every company, they may hide in the secret of His presence from the strife of tongues about them. Better never enter into company at all, even with Christians, if we cannot take our “HIDING PLACE” with us. Psalm xxxii. 7. cxix. 114.

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HYMNS. (*Copied.*)

## PEACE ON EARTH WHEN CHRIST REIGNS.

- 1 SEE that mountain high exalted,  
'Tis the mountain of the Lord ;  
Much exposed and oft assaulted,  
Lov'd of God—by man abhorr'd.  
Now it stands above the hills,  
Now its destin'd place it fills.
- 2 O ye mountains, strong and tow'ring,  
Boast no more your triumph now ;  
Zion's head sublimely soaring,  
Leaves your summits far below.  
Know ye this is God's own hill,  
Here Jehovah loves to dwell.
- 3 Hark ! a cry among the nations—  
“ Come and let us seek the Lord ;  
“ Vain our former expectations,  
“ Vain the idols we ador'd ;  
“ Zion's king is God alone,  
“ Let us bow before His throne.”
- 4 Weapons meant for mutual slaughter  
Now are instruments of peace ;  
They who taste the living water  
Learn from war and strife to cease.  
Jesus reigns—the earth is still ;  
All the nations do His will.

## WALKING WITH GOD IN JOY AND PEACE.

- 1 By faith in Christ I walk with God,  
With heav'n my joyous end in view ;  
Supported by His staff and rod,  
My road is safe and pleasant too.
- 2 I travel through a desert wild,  
Where many round me blindly stray,  
But He vouchsafes to be my guide,  
And will not let me miss my way.
- 3 Though snares and dangers thron'g my path,  
And earth and hell my course withstand,  
I triumph over all by faith,  
Guarded by His almighty hand.
- 4 With Him sweet converse I maintain,  
Great as He is, I can be free,  
Tell Him of all my grief and pain,  
And He reveals His love to me.
- 5 Some cordial from His word He brings,  
Whene'er my feeble spirit faints,  
At once my soul revives and sings,  
And yields no more to sad complaints.
- 6 I pity all that worldlings tell  
Of pleasures that will quickly end :  
Be this my choice, O Lord, to walk  
With Thee, my guide, my guard, my friend.

## JOY.

- 1 Joy is a fruit that will not grow  
In nature's barren soil;  
All we can boast till Christ we know,  
Is vanity and toil.
- 2 But where the Lord has planted grace,  
And made His glories known;  
There fruits of heav'nly joy and peace  
Are found, and there alone.
- 3 A bleeding Saviour seen by faith,  
A sense of pard'ning love,  
A hope that triumphs over death,  
Give joys like those above.
- 4 To take a glimpse within the veil,  
To know that God is mine,  
Are springs of joy that never fail,  
Unspeakable! divine!
- 5 These are the joys which satisfy  
And sanctify the mind;  
Which make the spirit mount on high,  
And leave the world behind.



## SIMPLE TESTIMONY.

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VOL. III.

### THE VISION OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL.

Ez. viii.

IN some of the worst principles and actings of departure from God, there is often very little departure from what men approve of among themselves; and then being ignorant of God or of His mind in these things, they are satisfied with themselves: but it matters little how far any man is satisfied with himself if God is not satisfied with him, for not he.

that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth. 2 Cor. x. 18.

In these things the chastenings and judgments of the Lord come in; and the blessing of the brethren is to see the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy. It is in thus seeing the end of the Lord that we can enter somewhat into His mind, when He said to Israel, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." Amos iii. 2. "For the Lord will not cast off His people." Psalm xciv. 14: but He will purge out the rebels from among them and cause them that are His own to fear His name. Compare Ez. xx. 38.

The prophet Ezekiel wrote his book of prophecy when he was among the captives by the river Chebar in

the land of the Chaldeans. He was among the first captives that Nebuchadnezzar brought to Babylon. Part of his prophecy was written before the overthrow of Jerusalem ; and part was written after it. In the course of the prophecy he is twice brought in the visions of God to Jerusalem. At the first time (chapters viii. to xi.) Jerusalem was not yet entirely overthrown ; and he then was brought to witness her abominations and her judgments at the hand of the Lord. At the second time (chapters xl. to the end) Jerusalem was overthrown ; and he then was brought to witness her restoration and her glory at the coming of the Lord.

God does not leave His people in the dark about their sins, and the sins of those around them : His testimony about them is clear and dis-

ting. He also marks the beginnings and endings of a course of evil, that His own people may have warning as to the flesh for themselves : and have an understanding before God of the awful and ruinous course of the ungodly.

Ez. chapter viii. verses 1 to 6.  
“And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord God fell there upon me. Then I beheld, and, lo, a likeness as the appearance of fire : from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire ; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber. And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head, and the Spirit lifted me up between the earth

and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north, where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy. And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the vision that I saw in the plain. Then said He unto me, son of man, lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and, behold, northward at the gate of the altar, this image of jealousy in the entry. He said, furthermore, unto me, son of man seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? But turn thee yet again and thou shalt see greater abominations."

God is a jealous God and He claims the worship and love of His

people. He has so proclaimed Himself, "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God," Ex. xx. 5: and again, "Thou shalt worship no other God; for the Lord whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God." Ex. xxiv. 14. He has claimed the worship of His people for Himself alone. He has also claimed their love with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their might. But while love was His claim on Israel under the law, love is the manifestation of Himself to us in Christ, for God is love. 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. We love Him because He first loved us. 1 John iv.

These two things, love and jea-

lousy, are connected: jealousy proceeds from love. "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." Cant. viii. 6; 7.

The image of jealousy in the entry of the gate of the altar, and the seat of that image, were the witness of their departure from the worship of the Lord their God, and serving Him alone: if it was not so, they would have allowed no seat for the image of jealousy at that gate: but because the image of jealousy was there with all its attendant abominations, He had to go far off from His

sanctuary—the sanctuary where He promised to dwell among them.

When the love of God declines in the heart there is an activity of evil, as otherwise there would be an activity of good. He who was the wisest man, became in conduct an evil man, when his heart was set on forbidden objects: for it is the love of Christ that constrains us. When the prophet beheld the image of jealousy, the Lord then said to him, son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? But, he adds, “Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations.”

*Verses 7 to 12.* “And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold, a hole in the wall. Then said he unto me, Son of



man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold, a door. And he said unto me, go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. So I went in and saw; and, behold, every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about. And there stood before them thirty men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up. Then said he unto me, son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, the Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth." When the affections are set upon

sinful objects, there is then at first a concealment of the things done. The dread of detection is often in itself a witness that the things are not right in the sight of God, and that the sense of His presence is not recognized. They who provoked the Lord to jealousy by worshipping that which was not Himself, were to be approached through a hole in the wall, to witness the objects and the acts of their worship. No simple or natural way of access could be had to them; and the prophet was commanded to dig in the wall that he might reach the door through which he could go in to witness the abominations that they did there. It might have been very provoking to them that the prophet should have taken such a liberty with their wall: but that was no matter: it was the Lord that said, Son of man, dig now

in the wall; it was the Lord that also said, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.

When once the hole in the wall was dug, and the door entered, then there was no doubt at all as to what was going on there—concealment then was impossible—the creeping things of every form, and the abominable beasts, and all their idols were pourtrayed on the wall round about. The real objects of their worship were now plainly detected, and their idolatrous worship equally so, for there were the seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel with every man his censer in his hand, and the thick cloud of incense going up.

The Lord then opens to the prophet the character of all this work, saying, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of

Israel do *in the dark*, every man in the chamber of his imagery? for they say, The Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth." It was in the dark they acted, therefore the hole in the wall was only to be seen; and the prophet had to dig in that hole, before the door could be got at: it was because they said, The Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth. When the heart goes away from God, then there is a course of idolatrous worship acted in a hidden way, in a setting aside of the acknowledgment of the eyes of the Lord, and of responsibility to Him.

*Verses 13, 14.* "He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north:

and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz." The Lord is showing the prophet the great abominations of the house of Israel: He first showed it in seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel; He now shows it in the conduct of certain women, in both the abominations of the house of Israel are seen. Although the tears of a few women might not seem to have anything so positive in it, yet their weeping for Tammuz was a witness that their hearts were after Tammuz not after the Lord. They were at the door of the gate of the Lord's house, where no association with Tammuz could be found; but their hearts were not there, they were in the place of Tammuz.

The Lord showed his estimate of the tears of these women by pointing in them to the abominations of the

house of Israel. They were not like the tears with which the woman who was a sinner washed Christ's feet: neither were they like the tears of Mary when she stood without at the sepulchre weeping. These are tears which the Lord could put in His bottle; but there are also tears to which He could call the notice of His prophet after showing him certain abominations, and say, "Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do—that is—the house of Israel, not the women merely. There was a fellowship of the house of Israel in the tears of the women weeping for Tammuz, at the gate of the Lord's house, as well as in the idolatrous worship of the seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, which they did in the dark.

One more abomination remains to

be shown. There was no need to dig a hole in the wall to witness it, for it was not done in secret: and this is generally the progress of evil, that the things that at first are allowed and done in secret, are afterwards done openly: and that those things which are done in mere formal profession, are at length entirely renounced. In this last abomination, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east. They openly denied the Lord in the very place which He ordered for the worship of Himself. They stood at the door of His temple, that they may turn their backs to His temple; and instead of worshipping Himself in

redemption, they worshipped the works of His hands in creation. Such persons might talk of the light of nature, being blinded by the devil to the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.

May the Lord keep us under the constraining power of the love of Christ.

May He cleanse our feet from the first steps in this course of evil, in which they who need not to be washed save in their feet, will be kept from proceeding.

“If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.”

All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death. We



know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness (the wicked one). And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

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## EXTRACTS

FROM A LETTER ON THE PRESENCE OF THE  
HOLY GHOST IN THE CHURCH.

*By J. N. Darby.*

**THERE** is most clearly a great ques-

tion of principle regarding the position and walk of the saints which has arisen wherever that testimony of God specially committed, as I believe, to the brethren has existed. It is a question of vast importance: a principle resisted abroad as well as in England; and the resistance to which is always connected with the establishment, in one shape or other, of a clergy under the title of ministry. All I shall attempt here is to set the principle clear. There is, I fully believe, as real a question of God's truth as in Luther's days, I do not say as important a one; because in Luther's time the question was one of the ground of individual salvation, of the basis of our standing with God. Whereas the question now at issue is the position and standing of the Church of the saints, gathered when they are saved. But

no one will think this a trifling question. It is closely connected with Christ's glory, and the doctrine of the Holy Ghost. The question in Luther's time was the value and efficacy of Christ's work, or, in other words, justification by faith. He assumed what existed to be the Church. The question now is the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, as forming and embodying the Church in unity. This evidently is important, while it has been accompanied among the brethren with the revival, as I judge, of the clear doctrine of justification by faith, which was much buried under other collateral doctrines, as regeneration and its proofs, which had really taken the place of justification by faith; so that, in general, assurance of salvation was rare, and considered to be a matter of spiritual attainment.—

Besides, there are truths to which God recalls the saints, as being important at such or such a time, as leading to peculiar and needed blessings, or as bearing on peculiar evils or dangers, and against which, therefore, the malice of the enemy will be particularly directed, to oppose or undermine them. Such I believe the doctrine of the Holy Ghost's presence in the Church to be at this time. The unity of the body as Christ's spouse, *separate from evil*, is closely connected, yea, indented with this great doctrine, which is founded on the exaltation of Christ, as Son of man, to the right hand of God, in testimony of the full completeness of His work, and His infinite favour with God. And hence its connection with the full, free, assurance of salvation in the soul, and the joy of adoption by the Holy Ghost. No

one taught of God could knowingly undervalue such a doctrine: and I do believe, especially, that no one specially taught of God now, "men having understanding of the times," but will on the contrary feel its peculiar vital importance, as ministered of God in the Church, for saving souls, and the Church itself, from the current delusions of the day. This is the question before us. There are three great points connected with the doctrine of Christ; or positions in which He may be viewed:—A crucified Christ accomplishing the work of redemption; in virtue of which, as testified of in resurrection, justification is the portion of the believer. An exalted Christ; in whose name, and by whose sending, the Holy Ghost the Comforter is come down on earth, and dwells in the Church. And, Christ coming again in person.

Now the first of these, namely, justification by faith, was preached distinctly by Luther, and souls were delivered, and many peoples set free from the burden of Popery. But the Holy Ghost sent down here, though taught in a measure as a truth, formed no part of that which characterized the Church; and therefore it fell under the power of the magistrate, when delivered from the Pope. The doctrine of the Lord's second coming fell into the hands of real fanatics, who would have set up what they called the fifth monarchy by the sword; and in Germany did attempt it, and held a city they called their Zion for some time under Munzer.

That which characterized the ministry of the brethren, however feeble, and feeble they were, was, with the accompanying revival of assurance

by faith in the simple testimony of redemption, the bringing out, and walking in the faith of, the two latter doctrines:—namely, the Holy Ghost in the Church, and the coming again in person of the Lord Jesus Christ. And this ministry was blessed, both in gathering many into a simple position by it, and extending the happy influence of these truths among many who are not so gathered. With this connected itself the unity of the Church, as the body of Christ, by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and that separate from the world, as the bride of the Lamb. A comparison of what the Church was at first, when filled with the Spirit, led them to the sense of our present ruined state, and to seek in earnest devotedness more conformity to its early path, and that nothing should be owned which was not of

the Holy Ghost. And they waited for God's Son from heaven. If the presence of the Spirit gave them the consciousness of being the bride, He made them also earnestly desire the coming of the Bridegroom, and the joy of that day when Christ should come and receive them to Himself, and take the kingdom and the glory.

They entered in spirit, in their little measure, into that word: "The Spirit and the bride say Come," and they were happy and blessed.

Now the presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church, as one body, was (with the waiting for Christ's coming,) the grand doctrine on which the whole testimony of the brethren was founded. But it has been distinctly taught that the acting of the Holy Ghost in the body, being in the members, the presence of the Holy Ghost practically was by the teachers.



No doubt when there, He acts, among other things, by teachers, &c. but He is present in the body of the Church. Any one can see, that, assuming His acting in the teachers, and denying His dwelling in the body, as such, or denying His acting properly in the way of gift in any, but that grace just sanctifies natural talent and education; and that there is no dwelling in the body distinct from the members, (these teachers being the members who are to act,) is throwing the whole matter into the hands of certain persons who have more natural talent, to the exclusion of the body. It is the reconstituting a clergy, who form the Church, and who are to judge of the qualifications of others whom they admit into their ranks: for this is demanded also. It is just the clergy over again. I recognize that God

forms the vessel individually for service, as well as puts a gift into it, when I look at the individual. I have no doubt that the blessed Apostle Paul was a man of most extraordinary natural character. But this truth, which I find in Scripture, does not make me deny that the Holy Ghost dwells *in the Church*.

The main doctrine, as to the actual condition and existence of the Church, is the presence of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven: as truly and really the presence of God in the midst of His people as the Shechinah of glory. If God was in His holy temple then, God is in His holy temple now—most truly, though after another manner. Not merely in individuals, the aggregate of whose individual blessing is the blessing of the whole; but in His spiritual temple—the Church of the

living God. And now to the statements of the New Testament on the subject. The presence of the Comforter is the distinguishing truth of this dispensation, founded on the work of Christ. It is on the fact of this presence that the Lord grounds the advantage of His going away. "If I go not away the Comforter will not come to you, but if I go away I will send Him unto you." And all the blessing, communion, and testimony (save the personal testimony of the disciples as living with Him,) is founded on the presence, personal presence, of this other Comforter. This is evidently of the last importance. Here it is well to remark on the force of this word Comforter. He was one, who, *by being down here*, was to take the place of Jesus when He went away; and was to take up, and carry on, the cause of the disciples as Christ

had done ; only more powerfully, in a certain way, because of Christ's work and exaltation. It is the same word as is said of Christ: "we have an *advocate* with the Father,"—one who is charged with, and maintains, our cause. This the Holy Ghost was to do, and guide, comfort, sustain, direct the disciples, as Jesus had done, with the difference noted. And further—He was not to leave them, like Christ. He was to abide with them for ever. This name—of one come down to take Christ's place and abiding for ever,—is of all moment in this case. For the Holy Ghost, come as the Paraclete in place of Christ, was to be among them as Christ was. Christ had acted among, and by, and for them too. Now they were to have another Paraclete who was to be among them in His stead, (though glorifying Him) and to act among, and for, and by them, and

lead, and guide, and correct, and direct, and sustain them, and to be with them *for ever*. This was not merely natural qualities sanctified by grace, and man acting by the Spirit; it was a living divine person acting for them, and by them. That He, being grieved, and withal in the sovereign counsels of God, much of that in which He showed His power is lost, is true: but to say, because man has abused this grace, and feebleness has followed—because God has not honoured those who did not honour Him—or because the flesh has abused the doctrine—that He does not dwell amongst us, is merely that kind of unbelief, hateful to God, which is called in Scripture, “tempting God.” The place was called Massah, and Meribah, because there they tempted God, saying, Is the Lord amongst us or no?

*To be continued;*

## FRAGMENT OF TRUTH.

THE WORD.

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*Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live.—Deut. viii. 3.*

*As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.—1 Pet.*

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JUST as the babe is constantly receiving nourishment from the mother, so need we to be constantly receiving spiritual nourishment from the word of God. Having "tasted that the Lord is gracious," we come to His word and receive from Him that which we need to comfort, nourish, and refresh our souls. The word always comes with savour *from Himself*; it is known as the "word of His grace." I may study the word again and again, but unless I get

into communion with Him: by it, it will profit me nothing—at least at the time.

God reveals not His things to “the wise and prudent,” but unto “babes.” It is not the strength of man’s mind judging about “the things of God,” that gets the blessing from Him; it is the spirit of the “babe desiring the sincere milk of the word.” He says, “open thy mouth wide, and *I* will fill it.” The strongest mind must come to the word of God as the “new-born babe.”

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## HEAVEN IS OUR HOME.

A HYMN COPIED.

- 1 We are but strangers here;  
    Heav'n is our home!  
Earth is a desert drear,  
    Heav'n is our home!  
Danger and sorrow stand  
Round us on every hand;

Heav'n is our father-land,  
Heav'n is our home!

- 2 What tho' the tempest rage;  
Heav'n is our home!  
Short is our pilgrimage;  
Heav'n is our home!  
And time's wild wintry blast  
Soon will be overpast;  
We shall reach home at last;  
Heav'n is our home!

- 3 There at our Saviour's side,  
Heav'n is our home!  
We shall be glorified,  
Heav'n is our home!  
There, with the good and blest,  
'Those we've lov'd most and best,  
We shall for ever rest;  
Heav'n is our home!

- 4 Therefore we'll murmur not;  
Heav'n is our home!  
Whate'er our earthly lot;  
Heav'n is our home!  
For we shall surely stand  
There at our Lord's right hand;  
Heav'n is our father-land,  
Heav'n is our home!



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VOL. III.

## EXTRACTS

FROM A LETTER ON THE PRESENCE OF THE  
HOLY GHOST IN THE CHURCH.

*By J. N. Darby.*

*(Concluded.)*

I will here remark on the “with us” and “in us.”

Christ was yet dwelling with them, but another Comforter was to come whom they would know, (though the world would not, because it did not see Him,) because He dwelt with them: and then He adds, as to the manner, (which was not yet so of Jesus come in the flesh,) a new thing, and therefore put in the fu-

ture tense, "He shall be *in* you." This new Paraclete was to be thus their counsellor, guide, orderer, as Jesus had been, manage their cause and affairs as dwelling with them. Hence we see the importance of distinguishing this living presence *and acting* of the Comforter from a man's using his talents in a sanctified way by grace. But further, this is fully brought out in Scripture as a distinct thing from being in individual members. Both are spoken of; but they are spoken of to different purposes in Scripture. "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," &c. (1 Cor. vi. 19). Here, accordingly, it is applied to *personal sanctification*. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy. For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are," (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17). Here it is clearly the Church of God—the building of God which some might corrupt by false doctrine. They were God's building. The Spirit of God does then clearly distinguish the dwelling in the individual and the dwelling in the body. And this is so much the same thought, and connected with the idea of the presence of God in Israel, that in 2 Cor. vi. 16 it is distinctly introduced. "For ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said: I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." The Scripture does speak of both distinctly, that is, that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and that the body the Church

is so too. I would quote some passages which speak of both one and the other, that we may see that both are fully taught in the Word. We read (John iv.), "the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John vii. "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters; and this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive." These are evidently personal and individual. And this presence of the Holy Ghost is connected with life, joy, the sealing of our persons, and the certainty of salvation, and that, known in our own hearts, and strength to resist temptation, and fruits against which there is no law. He that stablisheth us together with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest

of the Spirit in our hearts. So that we know that all the promises of God in Him are yea and amen, to the glory of God *by us*. We are strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith. Here He is acting in, and on, and in testimony with, the individual, as himself livingly united to Christ. But there is another truth besides. God is to be in His temple. What is a temple without God? There was *Israel* where God dwelt; and a *temple* built with hands, where God vouchsafed in a certain manner to dwell. Then Christ was the true temple, as we know, when he was here; as He took the place of Israel as the true vine. Is there none now? Or is it only the individual poor weak saint that is so? No. God has broken down the middle wall of

partition, and through the glorious, though seemingly debasing, work of Christ has made both one, making peace, and reconciling both Jew and Gentile in one body to God by the cross, and has built them up together to be His habitation through the Spirit. In a word, the Church of God, not looked at as individuals, but on the contrary as brought together into one body by this glorious work of Christ, is God's habitation through the Spirit. So, as the Apostle draws the consequence, there is one body and one Spirit. A body formed into one by the cross of Christ breaking down the middle wall of partition, and the presence of the Holy Ghost upon earth consequent upon the exaltation of the Head, so that there should be one body and one Spirit: God having exalted Christ above all principality

and power, and given Him to be Head over all things to the Church. The same doctrine is taught in 1 Cor. xii. xiv. as in Ephesians. Now, the Holy Ghost so dwelling in the body acts in the members. But, though He acts in the members, His dwelling is in the body. And hence, I am persuaded, it is that one can be made partaker of the Holy Ghost, as in Heb. vi., and yet lost. Looked at as an individual seal and earnest, by which, after believing, we are sealed to the day of redemption, that cannot be: but as dwelling in power according to the principle of this dispensation in the Church it is supposed we may partake of it, not as the power and seal of living union (in that case it would bring forth fruit meet for Him by whom it was dressed), but acting in divine ministry in the

midst of the Church as a person dwelling there.—God making it His habitation by the Spirit, so that one could lie to Him. For in lying to the Holy Ghost they had lied to God. So the stranger fell down and confessed that God was in them of a truth. Not merely in the individual who spoke, but in the body, as He was lied to not in any working in a member; **HE WAS THERE.** There might be persons, (we know there were,) who were false brethren, in whom He did not dwell as a seal or earnest at all, but He was in the Church. And it is this presence of the Holy Ghost in the body as sent which constitutes and is the power of its unity. Grace acting in the members may aid to maintain this in the bond of peace, but the great and blessed doctrinal truth we have in the Ephesians, and 1st Corinthians,



and elsewhere, is that the Holy Ghost, the other Comforter sent down from heaven, is the constituent power of unity to the body. No grace in the members, nor sanctifying natural talents, save as practically maintaining it, has any thing to do with this. They are in this individuals as before. And now suppose man has grieved this Holy Spirit, that the Church has lost many of His manifestations; supposing this practical unity is gone and scattered—that the wolf, because there were hirelings, has caught the sheep (though not out of Christ's hand) and scattered them, and the ruin is felt. Am I to confess the sin of man, and say, "let God be true, but every man a liar," and therefore recur in faith to the promise that the Comforter should abide for ever with us? Or to say that unity is gone, and therefore that we not having

New Testament directions must make arrangements for ourselves as to ministry? I shall not deny God in His truth and blessing because man knows not how to use it, if it even be so, but I do not believe it. We may be humbled, but God will help and meet us according to our faith. I own a ministry, have always owned it: but I cannot deny the blessed truth of the Holy Ghost dwelling in the body. And here I will add, I do not say among the gathered brethren. The only difference as to those is, they have acted together on this truth. And let it be here remembered that stated ministry has never been denied, but always in exercise, amongst us, always owned in principle. In half, or more, of the services one who had gift has exercised his gift on his responsibility to Christ. This is known to every

one. And for my own part I recognize it fully, be it one or two if they agree together to do it. The teachers have waited on their teaching. It is only in the meetings for worship that this has not been the case. The profit of a stated ministry, all that is true in a one man ministry, has been in the fullest exercise among brethren. In their worship they have not sought sermons, but the presence of God, the accomplishment of that promise, that where two or three are gathered together in His name He will be in the midst of them. I avow I do not go there to hear a sermon; nor do I like to hear one. I go to worship, to find the Lord, and worship Him. And I judge if brethren are become incapable of enjoying this, it is a very bad sign. I do *not* go there to hear man, however gifted, but to worship

God; and I beg to press this on brethren. I feel thankful if any one be led of God, to give a word of exhortation, or comfort. I know that the flesh has abused this, forgetting the word "swift to hear, slow to speak," "my brethren, be not many teachers." But I add *most decidedly* that though I have seen liberty used for licence, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty, I have found where God was owned incomparably more of His presence and blessing than where man's arrangements have taken the place of God. There might be evils to deplore and to correct, but there was God to enjoy, because God was owned. Elsewhere I have found decent things of man, a fair shew in the flesh, but a sepulchre. The God I found my delight in was not there. For even God's grace, or gift, in

teaching, is a wholly different thing from God's presence in the way of worship. But I add, that, where in worship this latter is slighted I never found even the former. It is written, "cursed is the man who putteth his trust in man." Correct the evils, brethren; but let us not disown God nor his His goodness. If you cannot know His presence in worship, nor what the blessing of this is, humble yourselves. You have suffered great loss, you have spiritually declined. Forgive me. And, if I am to take my place among you, I shall freely exercise, when the just occasion offers, the ministry with which I believe God has entrusted me in my weakness, the gift of His grace; and, when we meet as saints, I shall be glad often to wait, not merely, to compose my spirit, to gather up my strength from the

Lord, before I enter on His work, or open my mouth to speak in His name, but to wait in the hope to gather up strength through the blessing conferred upon some other beloved one of God, or by our joining together, whoever may be used as our mouth-piece, in thanksgiving, and prayer, and praise. For the joy of the Lord is our strength. I do not expect to be edified if the flesh act amongst us, and we should do well to own where it has been so. But I do expect the Lord's presence, and His acting amongst us, if we wait upon Him, to guide, to use, and to bless us. And to Him, and to that hope, I cleave.

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## A LITTLE INQUIRY.

What various departments of inquiry and knowledge there are in the fruitful and beautiful oracles of God ! 2 Tim. iii. suggests this. There is the devotional, the prophetic, the practical, and the doctrinal. Each of us, it may be, has a tendency to nourish our souls with one or other of these, somewhat out of due proportion. And the character of our mind will form itself accordingly, and the character of our communion also. Some of us will be known rather as orthodox, some as spiritual, some as practical, some as intelligent. Might we not pause for a moment, and look not only at ourselves, but at the "brethren," as we are called, and ask, have we been unduly feed-

ing our souls with one or other of these meats from off the table of the Lord, to the damage of the full health of the soul?

And can this be discovered from the character of mind which prevails among us, and from the character of communion which our own souls have with the Lord, and one with another? I believe this would be profitable. And is it so? Is the mind and the communion which has been produced among us (let me so express it) of so marked a character that we can discover from them the food we have been living on, and the air we have been breathing?

There is a variety of character among us surely—we need not question that—it must needs be so, I might say. But still, is there not something prominent, something pervading? I believe there is, and I



am disposed to express it in this way, —That we have been looking more at our *social* than our *personal* standing, and cultivating *knowledge* rather than *devotion*. The result as to our communion one with another, has been marked accordingly. We find, on social occasions, very generally points of inquiry, pointed and nice distinctions (correct also I allow) taken and discussed; but the exercises of the soul in conflict, or the experiences of the soul about the virtues of the “kingdom of God within us,” are less our material. We have been wanting in “fervency of spirit,” and have talked, and talked accurately, about truth, but have not *broken the heart over it* sufficiently.

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## FRAGMENTS OF TRUTH.

## RESTING-PLACE OF FAITH.

If my soul rests entirely on the work of Christ and his acceptance, as the one who appears in the presence of God for me,—that is a finished work, and a perfect infinite acceptance,—“as *he is*, so am I in this world :” so that “herein is love made perfect with me, that I should have boldness in the day of judgment.” Now what men substitute for this, is the examination of the effects of the Spirit in me ;—the effects of regeneration are put as the ground of rest in lieu of redemption : whence I sometimes hope when I see those effects, sometimes despond when I see the flesh working ; and having put the work of the Spirit in the place of the work of Christ,

the confidence I am commanded to hold fast never exists, and I doubt whether I am in the faith at all. All this results from substituting the work of the Spirit of God in me, for the work, victory, resurrection, and ascension of Christ actually accomplished—the *sure* (because finished) resting-place of faith, which never alters, never varies, and is always the same before God. The discovery of sin in you, hateful and detestable as it is, is no ground for doubting, because it was by reason of this, to atone for this, because you were this, that Christ died, and Christ is risen ; and there is an end of that question.

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THE CHRISTIAN AND THE  
NATURAL MAN.

The courage, patience, firmness, and zeal of a Christian, are a perfectly distinct *order of character* from the courage, patience, firmness, and zeal of a natural man : self-confidence, self-glory, self-preservation, self-exaltation, are the essential principles of the one ; confidence in God, self-renunciation, subjection to God, glory to God, abasement of self, are essential principles of the other. So that the essential principles that formed the character of Paul as a natural man were destroyed through the cross, in order that his soul should imbibe the life of Christ, which was the principle that formed his character as a Christian ; “ I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.”

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## GOD'S SEARCHING LOVE.

Is it not a comfort to the soul that really loves holiness, to know that God will come and sweep the house, lest there should be a thing left there to offend his eye, or hinder us from walking in the light in which he dwells? Grace emboldens the saint to say, "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." What amazing confidence! Could any, who thought God would impute the sin, say this? And God does search us, and that by the light of the word. This is the use the Spirit makes of the word: "For the word of God is quick and powerful, 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." We are brought into God's presence; we have, as it were, God speaking to us. He searches my heart, even by the sweetest testimonies of his grace: and then, having discovered to me the evil, does he speak about it in judgment, as that which is imputed to me as sin? No! He says, "Here is something not in accordance with my love, something that does not satisfy my love."

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### JESUS PRECIOUS TO GOD, AND TO THE SAINT.

By learning of God, through his teaching me by the Holy Spirit, I come to have the same thoughts about Jesus that he has. Here I find my strength, my comfort, my

joy. That in which God delights, and will delight for ever, is now my joy also. God says, "this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" "mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth;" and, working these (His) thoughts into my soul, I too see Jesus to be precious, and find my delight in him. Thus He who was crucified for me—who "bare my sins, in his own body on the tree"—is precious to God and precious to me. God could find no rest save in Jesus. We may look throughout the world, we can find nothing which can satisfy our hearts—but Jesus. If God looked for truth, for righteousness—all he could desire he found in Jesus, and he found it *in him for us*. Here is that which gives comfort to the soul. I see Jesus "*now in the presence of God for us*," and God is satisfied, God delights in him.

## CONVICTION OF SIN.

When conviction of sin comes, that is, when the Spirit of God sets a man, in conscience, in God's presence, he finds out both what he *has been doing*, and what he *is*. He finds out that he has been treasuring up for himself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, (though God may have mercy on him); and, more than this, he finds out, also, that his *natural* condition is a condition of sin and rebellion against God, and that he cannot remedy it. Now, whilst this state of soul is ever painful, (and it often drives a man nearly to despair,) it is a salutary, a blessed thing. Wherever there is a clear sense of position, there is the desire to *go to* God, though with the consciousness of having no title to be there. Just as with the poor prodi-



gal—"I will arise and *go to my Father*, and will say unto him, *Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son.*" So also Peter, at the feet of Jesus,—*"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"* There is this consciousness of the unworthiness of condition before God, because of having recognized God's holiness, and that he ought to be holy, but, along with it, the desire to go to God, —a seeming inconsistency, but that which is really of the Spirit of God. It is very natural where the Spirit of God works, to desire to go to God, because we feel he is needed by us, although conscience says we are unfit to be there. The heart is *turned to God*, it sees God's holiness, sees he ought to be holy, and so takes God's part against itself. There is

no desire that God should be less holy, so that it might, so to speak, slip into heaven; and therefore it justifies God instead of seeking to condemn him that it may justify itself, that which many a poor sinner does—which Adam did when he said, “The woman whom *Thou* gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat.” Instead of justifying self, there is the justifying God and condemning self. Thus the heart is set right. It has not, it is true, learnt *redemption*—what God has done for it in Christ; it is occupied with its state before God as a present thing, but that is salutary. There is not the peace that God does give, and will give; still the heart is set right.

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#### CRISTIAN HUMILITY.

By *Christian* humility, I mean

that humility which a saint has because he is a *saint*, and not because he is a *sinner*. A sinner saved by grace ought indeed to be humble; but the humility which a saint has because he is a saint and an heir of glory, is of a much deeper kind than that which is occasioned by the discovery of sin. There is nothing will bring a soul so low, and make him willing to serve another in the meanest of service. Mark the Lord Jesus Christ here. He stands forth in conscious possession of all things; "all things are delivered unto me of my Father," and yet he says, "learn of me, for I am meek, and lowly in heart." Can you put these two together? I believe you can; the soul of the really instructed saint discerns their needful connection. The Lord Jesus in conscious possession of all things, *could afford* to

humble himself. What was it that enabled him to do it, but his real greatness, because God was caring for him—"which thing is true in Him and in you." Nothing enables us to go and wash the saints' feet, to lay ourselves down to be trampled on, but the knowledge of our real greatness. We can then afford to be humbled; we can then afford to come down and minister unto others, instead of wanting others to minister unto us. A child of God needs not anything to add to his dignity, because of the dignity which is given him of God; he has all dignity, "all things" in Christ. This is the real power of truly humbling ourselves to serve others. That which will enable us to put ourselves lower than anything is, the consciousness that "all things are ours, for we are Christ's, and Christ is God'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. xxii. 17.*

The person just spoken of is the bright and morning star, the joy of the bride's soul. I believe the Spirit and the bride say come to the Bridegroom, to Christ. Christ having spoken of His coming, the moment that He announces Himself in the character in which He is associated with her—the morning star; for he gives to them that overcome the morning star—she does not wait till He says He is coming. Her desires, sanctioned and inspired by the Spirit that dwells in her, demand his coming. The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And to whom does the bride say Come but to the Bridegroom? It is not as bride particularly she calls sinners.

As the bride she longs for the Bridegroom. But this desire is not a mere gracious, but unsanctioned affection. That Spirit whose mind He knows, who searches the heart, moves and thus sanctions the cry in her. It is a cry "according to God." The passage shews the whole position of the Church. Where there is the understanding of her privilege as bride, the presenting the thought of the morning star at once awakens this cry of the Spirit in her. The next thought of the Holy Ghost is to summon those whose ears were opened, who heard, to join in the cry, to say, Come—not to preach. It is not calling every one that hears to preach, but to join the bride in the cry of Come. Then, indeed, the Spirit turns round, not to urge others to say Come, but inasmuch as the Church possesses even before the

Bridegroom comes, the rivers of living water, the Spirit turns round to those athirst, and says to them, Come. The Church can look up and say to the Bridegroom, Come: she can look down or around her, and say to the thirsty soul, Come, yea, to whomsoever will, to come and drink of the water of life freely. It is a most lovely picture of her whole position. Longing for Christ herself, she stands for Him towards thirsty souls, the happy instrument of the grace which she enjoys, and of which she is conscious in all its freeness and refreshing power; for the stream of eternal life flows in her. Such is her position. Let her know what she may of the counsels of God, it is Christ Himself, the morning star, that awakens her desires, and unlocks her tongue; and the coming of the Lord is to her not a warning,

as to the others, but an answer of the heart of Jesus to her affection. *He which testifieth these things*, whatever he may have said about them, answers her desire—*Surely I come quickly. Amen.* May our hearts be enabled to join in what sprung forth by the Spirit from the Apostle—*Even so; Come quickly, Lord Jesus.*

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# SIMPLE TESTIMONY.

No. 30.

MARCH, 1848.

VOL. III.

## THE CAVE OF ADULLAM.

1 SAM. XXII. 1, 2 ; 1 CHRON. XI. 15—19.

It is true that those who resorted to David in this cave appear to have had no character to lose. They were either themselves debtors, or companions of those that were. But the day of Saul in Israel was like the world, a scene of apostacy and enmity to God. Either God had to act in grace, sovereign grace, or full destructive judgment. And grace can and will gather the harlot and the publican, or receive the discontented and the debtor.

But then, observe what this company became in the cave of Adullam. They resort thither as men without character, but there they make character. (See 1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2; and 1 Chron. xi. 15—19).

Fellowship with David has power and virtue. He was no debtor, though he will receive debtors. His distress was that of righteousness, and not of wrong. He had won a character already, though he would now, in his "den and cave of the earth," receive those who had lost their's. But in his company they become new men, and do such exploits of virtue, as give them honour in the day when righteousness is exalted.

David's receiving of such is the condemnation of that world out of which they gathered to him. His making of them new creatures, or their becoming such while with him,

is the vindication of that separated place to which they thus gathered.

How easy is it to apply all this to a greater than David! When Jesus receives, He receives in grace. It is no question of previous character with Him. He gathers "bad and good," as we read—those found in the lanes and alleys, the highways and hedges. It matters not in the reckoning of the Son of God. Not that He countenances evil, or can brook it in His presence. But He will not sanction the self-righteousness of the world. He will receive sinners, and eat with them. But His presence has its virtue—virtue to write a new description under a man's name as here. (1 Sam. xxii. 2; 1 Chron. xi. 18).

Such is the mystic power of this separated place in the Wilderness, or of Him whose presence and company

make it what it is. And what do we covet to be but such Adullamites?—men who having destroyed ourselves, in the ruin of character and of circumstances have fled to the Son of God, and with Him, and through Him, and under Him, have acquired names and dignities which He will own in the day of enthroned righteousness.

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## NOTICE OF AND EXTRACTS FROM

A TRACT ENTITLED,

“SOME THOUGHTS ON UNITY IN JUDGMENT,  
AS CONNECTED WITH THE UNITY OF THE  
SPIRIT; CHIEFLY AS RESPECTS THE COMING  
OF THE LORD.”

IN this little tract there are some wholesome words and needful warnings for the saints in Christ. A few extracts are given, with headings or statements in them, and Philippians

iii. 13—21, prefixed, by way of introduction.

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“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose

end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.) For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

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THE PLACE AND THE NATURE OF THE BELIEVERS' ONENESS IS HEAVENLY.

"The connection between the second and fourth chapters of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, is no doubt seen by the greater part of attentive readers of the Word;—but it is not seen by all. St. Paul, in the beginning of the Epistle, declares the place of the Church to be in the Heavens, in Christ Jesus, for spi-

ritual blessings ; and mentions in the beginning of the second, those to whom these belong ; viz., to those whom God had quickened—who were once dead in trespasses and sins—whether Jew or Gentile ; between whom, in the heavenly places (and not elsewhere) the wall of partition was broken down, having been made nigh together by the blood of Christ—of twain He making *one new man* in Himself. Such have access through Him by the same Spirit unto the Father ; and they are builded together for an habitation of God by the Spirit. Such blessings are the ground of an exhortation which begins—‘ For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ, beseech you : ’—But here he stops to declare the specialty that belonged to his apostleship, and which is the subject of the third chapter : (with a prayer that the mystery may

be apprehended;) and at the beginning of the fourth he recommences with the same form of words as in the continuation of the end of the second—beseeching them to keep the unity of the Spirit *in the bond of peace*: that is, that both Jew and Gentile, having access in common by the same Spirit, are to know, that in heavenly places (the place of the Church), all distinction is lost; and that *there* everything that could make them *two* is done away; and that there is ONE Body—ONE *Spirit*,—as they are called in ONE hope of their calling;—ONE Lord,—ONE Faith,—ONE Baptism,—ONE God and Father of all. . . . It is blessed indeed to see how God hath dealt in all wisdom and prudence in this. When He reveals Christ first in the conscience of every believer,—when He says, ‘you who were dead in trespasses



and in sins hath He quickened,' and raised, and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: *One* originally in the misery of alienation from God, and having nothing to boast out of the circle of mercy in which He has abounded to us: He gives us *one* great theme of praise, and *one* Spirit, through Jesus our deliverer, whereby to set it forth. Surely this ought to secure oneness; and will, if we keep not far from it. It is leaving this ground of humiliation that gives occasion to Satan; for I bring in earth and self the moment that the *Cross*, as that which stands for me between God and the world, is not practically the ground-work of every *truth* in which I am held, as well as of every grace in which I stand. There is indeed a *ONENESS* of result also, in a due holding of the Cross and its truth, which is, the assembling of all

the Church of God to Jesus ; brought to the Father's house by Him ; of which assembling therefore we shall do well to keep hold. Moreover, it is alone in the safeguard of the truth of the Cross, as God's Judgment of the world and the flesh, and as that which separates us from the world and to heaven, that we may travel without danger through the wonderful varieties of things and aspects found in the Word, without fear of dissension and disunion.\*—"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded : and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."

\* And I never knew a doctrinal error which did not connect itself, if examined, with some default in acceptation of the work of Christ in origin or result.

KNOWLEDGE MUST BE SUBSERVIENT  
TO LOVE WHICH IS SUPERIOR TO IT.

“I can suppose, nay we may say we *know*, that in consideration of the Word, much diversity of mind may arise as to the Lord’s coming, so generally called. It must of course arise, in some, from want of apprehension; or, from different capacity of apprehension. . . . But let us remember, that the love of Christ (and if there is love to Christ, there must be the love of all that is in Christ) is, in the first place, superior to knowledge; and if knowledge does not subserve the end of advancement in grace, (as an opportunity it gives us by intelligence for that end), we have lost the *Cross*, and it can serve but an earthly end, as it is often of an earthly character,—intellectual and highminded. But Christ,

with *lowliness* and *meekeness*, is the way of *truth* as well as peace. Ephesians iv."

HEAVENLY THINGS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ACCORDING TO HEAVENLY CAPACITY : AND IT IS FROM HEAVEN IN SPIRIT THAT EARTHLY THINGS, AS THE SUBJECTS OF PROPHECY, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

"It is my given capacity to deal with heavenly things. I must, moreover, be in heavenly places, before I entertain even earthly things right, and to do so without confusing the two ; or, as a man in the midst of the objects of earth, standing on a level with them, not only has a bounded view, but one not giving the just relative place to all around him as an elevated place would ; or it proves to be a place that refers all things to *himself*. Differences will

surely arise under such circumstances if we entertain any divine subject, i. e., when we take the Earth as the place to judge from. I need not fear elevation, because *it is God and Grace that raises me*: and I am to blame if I use not the faculties which I receive, in the spirit. To feel this, is much to be desired for His saints."

"As to the doctrine itself, if I am heavenly, how does the Lord address me, but according to His own handy work?—according to my new capacities as a partaker of the heavenly places? and in them, though I bodily move here. *It is departure from this blessing that is the source of the woe of the Church.* Our natural tendency is always to fleshly apprehensions;—to human things, of which we are partakers by nature; and not to divine, of which we are partakers by grace. Concerning heavenly things,

God would speak to me as simply heavenly, and of heavenly capacity. He would also speak to me of earthly things as to me in heaven,—and *for* His heavenly ends towards me.”

THE WORD SHOULD BE READ IN GOD'S  
PURPOSE TOWARDS CONSCIENCE,  
AND IN THE CONSCIENCE OF CHILD-  
DREN SUBJECT IN LOVE TO THE  
FATHER.

“ There is no escape from confusion and division, but by reading the Word in God's purpose towards conscience, and in the conscience of children subject in love to the Father ; and for intelligence in a manner agreeable to its several objects, and to its subject, which is Christ, severally considered. Oh that those called by the name of Jesus, were thus acted on and thus acted ! and if the Lord were pleased to call them to effectual service to

His name, how different the results to those we often witness. Happy if this one or that one is now warned and brought into contact with God's purpose in this, and his soul raised or corrected."

"If we exercise a judgment concerning God and His things, this judgment, proceeding simply from ourselves, or not for His ends toward us, is not only presumption, but bespeaks sure differences in our contentious nature. If it be a judgment in the Spirit, the growth hath been *first* in love, and *then* in the increase of God, and THEN in a spiritual perception of these things, in order to be right and safe; and unity of judgment, so brought out, is a great blessing."

THE SAINTS SHOULD BE LOOKING FOR  
CHRIST WITHOUT QUESTIONS OF IN-  
TERVAL.

“From whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ : who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”

“He says, ‘I COME.’ Well! *When?* ‘I COME’ is all I hear ; and the result of faith is to go out to meet Him. This is indeed the simple condition of the Church’s hope, and its proper purifying. Our obedience, in our divine character, is to look for Him ; and as I improve in looking for Him, I improve in expression of divine character. It is He who is your divine life that shall appear. *And to THEM THAT LOOK FOR HIM, He shall*



appear a second time without sin unto salvation. IT IS NO QUESTION OF INTERVAL AT ALL.—God is not speaking to you as earthly, but as *heavenly*, in Himself.”

“Those who have understood Him, as He has given to them to understand Him, have so looked for Him; except by neglect, by repudiation of the Word, by revelation from God to individuals, as in the case of Peter; or by incapacity from character of faith. The Jew, looking for the Messiah, would not look for Him as the Christian would—by the character of his faith. But he who will be conformed to Jesus, and bring forth now the best works, will do so.\*

\* “The Millerites, who refuse to do their daily service, look for the Lord in *time*, and not according to the hope of the Church, who ought to be found in diligence amidst her works.”

If sin be at hand—one thought of such a true character of expectation must reveal it to the soul, as the light reveals it. To Paul, it appears, his departure otherwise than being caught up alive, was revealed to him afterwards. The angels, *if* they have such a capacity, would be as surely looking for Him to be brought before the Antient of Days, and to hear the trump, as we see Him coming to take us to Himself. God has said to those—that the Lord is about *to go*: to *us*, that He is coming: though they and we may go in obedience severally to our ministries, or whatever He has given us to do; and expectation fails not the while. It is present, continual, divine expectation, because near—God having said so. It may be asked, how many have this capacity of looking for Jesus? The answer is, they, to

whom He cometh, have this capacity; and to such He cometh without sin unto salvation."

"Among what are you daily? Is it the stones of the street and houses, or green fields and trees that are under your eye; and men as trees walking on the face of the earth? Are they not all—all that you see in nature, lying in *death*? *Death* is a heavy word. But it is He who is your *life*,—your eternal life, in whom you spiritually live and move, and have your being, that you look for; and look for presently to appear. You know His voice that has said, '*Behold, I come!*'"

"We require therefore more than ever (and God will never fail His saints) that which will raise us out of the evil around, and out of the age, and unite those that are His, in striving together for the faith once,

and once for all time, delivered to the SAINTS ; namely, that we are of God, and *if* of God, not of the world. If the power of the expectation of the Lord's taking the Saints, is divine, the practical condition the Saint is left in by its non-arrival, is that of waiting. This is a very blessed condition,—full of faith. Should trouble arise either from a course of faithfulness and its difficulties, or from the enmity of Satan against the saints and their hope ; deliverance will be looked for by them and waited for, as from one who was Himself too a sufferer, to deliver those who suffer ; who, when they are tried, will receive a crown of life ; and they abound in hope the while, through *the power of the Holy Ghost.*”

IN CONSIDERING THINGS TO BE DONE  
ON EARTH WE CAN COUNT BY TIME;  
BUT IN THE HOPE OF THE COMING  
OF THE LORD TO TAKE US TO HIM-  
SELF, WE CANNOT.

“Now, beloved, this hope DIVINELY exercised, (and it bears no human comparison), is the church’s proper portion, by the gift of God ; and so it is *also* its portion, as the friend of God, and having our conversation in heaven, to know many things He will do on earth now, and by-and-bye. Oh Beloved! when I have to consider things present and future here below—when earth is my proper matter, I can count by *time* too. I can talk of wars and rumours of wars ;—of the manifestation of the presence of the Lord, by which He shall destroy the Wicked one ;—of Jewish return to the land of Apostacy ;—of three-and-

a-half years, and seven years; of the tribulation, and of the great tribulation. The day of the *Jews' establishment under the Lord*, I should look to be far off; but not some of His judgments. Nay, God gives me an interest in it, because Jesus has, and I shall be with Him. I can preach in my own sense too, to the world, the judgment of their present condition. I have here a *judgment common with God*; or, on the other hand, I may so read, spiritually, the condition of the world, that I may perhaps preach His *very* nearness for earthly judgment;—for there are signs and many Antichrists. God uses us thus to act on the consciences of men.”

“The Lord's coming in manifestation of glory, is to earth, for earthly ends, and time enters into it. The hope of the church is the taking of the saints up *from* earth, and is hea-

venly in all its relations, and time does not enter into it. Sad and evil is the day for the divine character of the church, when the latter is counted in time, after the manner of the former. As sad in its results, as it is short of the full mind of God, and of His Grace."

*A Note.*—"It is remarkable, that the Lord does not come *to the earth*, when He comes to take His people to Himself."

"We which are alive and remain shall be caught up . . . in the clouds to meet the Lord *in the air*."

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#### A THOUGHT ON THE LORD JESUS.

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It has just struck me, that we may observe in the Lord the absence of all endeavour *merely to please* His disciples. He never did that. Nay, I am sure He passed by many little

opportunities of gratifying them, as we speak, or of introducing Himself to their favour. He did not make it His business to please them—and yet He bound them closely and intimately to Himself.

This was a symptom of great moral power. “If we seek to please we shall scarcely fail to please,” is a true saying, I doubt not. But nothing can be, *morally*, lower. It makes our fellow creatures supreme; and it is dealing with them as though their favour was life. But to bind one in full confidence to us, to draw the heart, to leave ourselves in the bosom of others, without ever, in one single instance, having had that as our object, this bespeaks moral power in our walk; for nothing can account for that, but such a faithful course of love as clearly tells others that their blessing and prosperity are



in deed and in truth the purpose and desire of our hearts.

And this was the Lord Jesus. Nothing that He did told them that He sought merely to please them, but everything that He did told them that He desired to bless them. And because of this, it was, as I said, that He passed by many little opportunities of gratifying them, or of introducing Himself to their favour.

And yet I may add, He met them *graciously* on many other occasions, which a mere man, acting as man, would have *resented*. But this, as well as the other, came from those springs and sources of moral perfection which took their rise in His soul. For as vanity had nothing in Him to put Him to an effort to please, so malice had nothing in Him to make Him resent His own wrong. *He could not be provoked into un-*

*kindness, nor fluttered into graciousness.*

Look, for instance, at Luke xxii. 28—30. The disciples had just then betrayed nature, through pride striving about the chief room. He rebukes this, but He does not hold it long before His mind, but quickly calls up another object to command His heart respecting them. "Ye are they," says He, "which have continued with me in my temptations." But was that, I ask, just the moment for remembering that fact, or anything else, *to their advantage?* Was that exactly the time for eying them *so favourably?* No; not for *nature* to do so. But for *Jesus* it was exactly the moment.

Strange this may appear. Yes—and the ways of divine unselfish love are strange. Her's are pilgrim feet, the feet of a stranger and a foreigner in a world "hateful and hating,"

either vain or malicious, like this. It is not well to be always understood. Joseph spake roughly to his brethren in the moment of their sorrow. Jesus told Thomas, in a moment of repentance, that there was an order of blessing which he had not then reached. But Joseph was serving his brethren, and Jesus was serving Thomas, true to truth, true to us all, true to Thomas himself, when he might have been flattered into softness.

O the perfectness of all this! O the beauty of all that love does or says! We shall understand it all by-and-bye, and have pages to study which are now a barbarian tongue to us. For through love of indulgence we mistake the doings of love very commonly, and expect gratification, when faithful love refuses it, seeking our solid good rather than our pleasurable excitement.

## EXTRACT FROM "SHORT MEDITATIONS ON ELISHA."

2 KINGS IX.—X.  

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"THE history of Jehu affords an awful illustration of the doctrine of scripture, that the Lord may use, instrumentally or ministerially, those in whom personally He takes no delight. This is a solemn fact. Balaam could never have stood in the mind or sympathies of God. But Balaam the prophet is used, as is also Saul the king, and Judas the apostle.

Our souls may well pause over truth like this, and be admonished. "Have we not *prophesied* in Thy name? I never *knew* you." No communion in spirit, though the hand or the tongue may have been used by the Lord.

And this clearly shews itself in Jehu. The hand of this captain is

used, but there is no communion between him and the Lord. He goes through his service. He executes his commission to the full. But there is no expression whatever of a soul exercised towards God. He takes up and lays down most solemn and important transactions, and all of them, too, in the name and at the command of the Lord; but there is no exercise of heart as in the sanctuary, or presence of God.

And this is just what marks the man whom God can use ministerially, but in whom He can have no joy personally. *All* may be used in this *dead way*: *knowledge* as well as *services* may be taken up,—taken up by a dead intellect, as in a dead hand. For what is knowledge, if used as a mere material? Jehu had both. He had knowledge and strength; he had an understanding that could ap-

prehend the divine decrees touching the house of Ahab, and a hand ready to execute them. But it was a dead intellect, and a dead hand. No divine life or grace filled or moved either. And with us, knowledge will be but the same, if it be not the occasion of awakening divine affections. Jesus' knowledge ever made Him enter into and reflect the divine counsels. But there is nothing of this in Jehu. He can talk of God's purposes, and execute them; but there is no communion with God through all his actions."

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NOAH'S DOVE.—GENESIS VII. 11.

"The dove may have returned to the ark simply because *the earth was still uncleaned*. She was not in fear of the snare of the fowler. She might have ranged through the whole extent of the air without fear. But the uncleanness of the place, and that alone, made her dissatisfied."

## HYMN.

*“ Casting all thy care upon Him, for He  
careth for thee.”*

CHILD of sorrow, raise thine eyes,  
Mourner from the dust arise,  
Jesus, bending from above,  
Speaks to thee, and speaks in love ;  
Listen to His gracious voice,  
It can bid thine heart rejoice ;  
Hear Him say, ‘ Whate’er they be,  
Cast thy burdens all on me.’

Dost thou fear what powerful foes  
Watch to mar thy soul’s repose ?  
Fear not Satan or his hour,  
Mightier is thy Saviour’s pow’r ;  
In His strength the warfare meet,  
Lay thy trophies at His feet ;  
If the cross thy banner be,  
Satan cannot conquer thee.

Art thou destitute and left  
In the wilderness alone ?  
Of beloved friends bereft—  
All thine earlier treasures flown ?—  
Drooping spirit, weep no more,  
Jesus will thy joy restore,  
Will Himself for ever be  
More than all thy friends to thee.

Gloomy tho' the path appears,  
Marked for thee awhile to tread,  
Leading thro' a vale of tears  
Mid the dying and the dead ;  
On the Saviour fix thy sight,  
He shall guide thy footsteps right ;  
Thou canst not in darkness be  
If His glory beams on thee.

Art thou weary and distress'd,  
Poor, in sickness or in pain ?  
He can give thy spirit rest,  
And renew thy youth again ;  
He will ever to thy soul  
Health and boundless treasure be,  
Long as countless ages roll,  
Through a blest eternity.

Soon will poverty and wealth,  
Soon will all this chequer'd scene,  
Sorrows, pleasures, sickness, health,  
Be as though they ne'er had been :  
Oh believer, let them go !—  
In the Lord thy portion see ;  
From His love alone can flow  
Everlasting joy to thee.

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## SIMPLE TESTIMONY.

No. 30.

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VOL. III.

RAHAB.

JOSHUA II.

WHAT an instance does the case of Rahab afford us of the long-suffering of God being salvation, as Peter speaks.

The camp of Israel had accomplished their journey, a journey of forty years. At the beginning of it, a mixed multitude followed them out of Egypt. Very soon after they had entered on it, and were clean delivered from Egypt, Hobab the Madianite joined them. But now, at the very end of it, yea, something even beyond that, when the desert had been

fully traversed, and the appointed or penal term of forty years was fully spent, in an interval of delay or long-suffering, the ransomed of the Lord lingering on the confines of the desert and the land, this harlot of Jericho joins them.

This is full of meaning. The entrance of Israel into Canaan was to be the judgment of the people. But the moment is delayed. Was it that the Lord was slack concerning His promise that the inheritance of that land was to be made sure to the children of the Genesis Fathers? No, but this delay was "salvation." God delayed the day of visitation on the Amorites, that He might call His elect to repentance.

This history is a vivid expression of that great principle.\* Joshua,

\* The 120 years of Noah's preaching was another season of delay or salvation—a time of similar long-suffering. (1 Pet. iii.)

however, does not appear to have been in the secret of God's grace. It is to spy out the land Joshua sends two men. No mission of mercy to the people seems to animate his action, or guide his thoughts. But the grace of God, in a way unlooked for by His people, worked then and works still. It passed over to the Gentiles before Peter, (Acts x.,) and it now crosses the Jordan before Joshua.

But further. If Joshua be not in the *secret* of God's grace, the spies whom he sends cannot be in the *commission* of it. They are, however, prepared for such a service. This is truly blessed. They were not entrusted with such a business, nor under orders concerning it, but they fulfil it at once without reserve, without suspicion as to their title to do so, and in all possible confidence and decision.

Precious beyond thought is this. They heard nothing from their captain about such a thing, but they pledge deliverance to Rahab, and make the security of that Canaanite as ample and as perfect as that of any Israelite in the camp, as rich and full even as their own. *God* was their title, *though uncommissioned by Joshua*; for in *His* eyes the feet of the publishers of peace on the mountains even of defiled Canaan, are beautiful. (See Rom. x.)

Who can tell the Gospel comfort of this?—But again—The spies themselves, in a day or two afterwards, enter the land in quite another character. They were now going there at the peril of their lives—in a day or two they would go under the conduct of the ark and in company with the glory. They were now going as the witness and the channel of blessing to a poor sinner

of the place—in a day or two, they would go to execute the judgment of the Lord, and to share the spoils and the inheritance. They were now in weakness and danger, thankful for the shelter of some stalks of flax to hide them from the pursuer, but they were speedily to be in victory and honour in the same place.

Wonderful in its value to us is all this, in its consolations and encouragements!

Further, however, as to Rahab. Let the glory thus enter the land, and the judgments conduct their solemn work, *she is safe*. She had believed the word of the spies about the scarlet line, and *been faithful to them in the hour of their weakness and degradation*.

This is to be much observed. *She had not uttered their business*, and she is therefore as safe as they are. That

is—she had been faithful to them in their time of weakness and danger and degradation; and now, in the day of their victory and strength, when all things are changed, she is as they are, their victory is her victory, their security is her security, their inheritance her inheritance.

“Our life for your’s,” say the spies to Rahab, “if ye utter not this our business.” How strikingly the great principle of the Gospel expresses itself there! For *faith* was demanded by that word of the spies—as *faith* is that which is *true to Christ’s humiliation, and weakness and sorrow*. It is faith which understands that precious Gospel mystery. It is faith which holds to Jesus in the hour of His cross. The abandoning of that secret would be death. “If ye continue in the faith,” says the Apostle. To give up the hour of the Lord’s

weakness—"he was crucified through weakness,"—is to forfeit every thing. But faith is true to that mystery, as Rahab uttered not the business of the spies, nor betrayed them in the hour of their degradation, weakness, and peril.

This surely is full of meaning for us. And again. Her pledge was in the midst of the scene of judgment, but it had been appointed by the executors of judgment. It was they who had passed it to her. No security could be higher. As in the paschal night of Egypt, the sword is borne by the hand of Him who had ordained the blood on the lintel. No security could surpass that. But such, and equal to it, is the security for a sinner by the Gospel. As it is written, "herein is love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as He

is, so are we in this world." We are in the world, the place of judgment, and Jesus is on high; nevertheless, His safety is our's—"as he is, so are we in this world."

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MARY MAGDALENE.

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WHEN poor Mary Magdalene lost Christ, she lost her *all* in this world. She had nothing to relieve her, or fall back upon. Her character was gone. She was a degraded thing. But the blessed Lord had taken her up. He had spoken friendly to her, when the world would have thought well to neglect and reproach her. He was, in this way, *every thing to her*, and when she lost Him, she lost her all.

This has been justly observed by another.



How could she, then, but weep at the sepulchre! But these tears tell rather what *He* was, than what *she* was. They speak the *peculiarity* of His grace, if they tell the *fondness* of her heart. They speak *this* praise bestowed on Him by Magdalene, (as another, like her, once expressed it,) "I am too bad for any but Jesus."

Precious thought!

And according to all this, I may further say, the highest dignities in heaven can associate with the lowest materials among men, when Jesus is common to both.

Angels, for instance, made the beggar at the gate their charge; and shining ones, whose raiment was whiter than snow, talked with poor trembling women just because they were seeking Jesus. (See Luke xvi., Matt. xxviii.)

Jesus, after this most blessed man-

ner, annihilates the distance between earth and heaven, or, is the centre between such ones as Gabriel and Lazarus.

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#### EXTRACT FROM A LETTER.

“I WAS thinking the other day with what ease and rapidity the prophet of God in Patmos passes, in vision, from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth.

“The two regions are alternately before him, and he sees the actions in each. But the passage is made with ease and with speed—and, if I may add it, he is not incapacitated by the sight of the one, for the enjoyment of the other, or from conference with it. In the ivth and vth chapters, he is in sight of heaven—so also at the opening of the seals in the vith. But he passes at once to the

earth, to see there the results of these opened seals. So again in chap. viii., you find him in vision of both heaven and earth. He hears also the music or the conferences in heaven, the rapture and the hopes there—and then again he is suddenly amid the infidel pride and the confusion and evil which are giving character to the scene on earth. He passes from the exulting marriage scene in heaven, to the judicial actions of the rider on the white horse on earth.

“We see the like to this in the opening of Job. There, we are in heaven and on earth, as in the twinkling of an eye.

“Is it not, the office of *faith* thus to act still?

“There are two regions—that of faith, and that of sight—and it is the office of faith to pass rapidly into its own region from that wherein the senses keep the soul.

“Had Job, by faith, visited the heavens, and heard and seen the actions there, he might have been ready for the sorrows and trials which were awaiting him on earth—and so, in the sad activities which are now abroad on the face of the earth, if the soul were ready in its transits or passages to the place of faith, it would be ready for them all.

“How little I know of it, but I desire, in spiritual power, to follow John in the Revelation, who passed thus rapidly and easily from earth to heaven, and back again, and was prepared for the shifting scenery.”

ON WASHING THE DISCIPLES'  
FEET.—JOHN XIII. 1—17.

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O LORD, Thy love unto Thine own,  
Is love unto the end ;  
Whate'er Thou see'st our wants to be,  
To those Thou dost attend.

No terror to our poor weak hearts,  
In Thee, O Lord, we see ;  
To serve us is thy purpose still,  
Unworthy though we be.

We need the washing of our feet,  
'That we may walk with Thee ;  
And thou, in love, art serving us,  
'That this our part may be.

Already clean—yea, every whit,  
We need no washing now,  
Save for our feet, now washed by Thee,  
Our Lord, to whom we bow.

Oh, what a Master Jesus is !  
Our blessed Lord above,  
Who kindly serves His people now,  
That they may serve in love.

T. T.

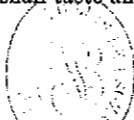
## IN PROSPECT OF DEPARTING.

AND if this very night  
My God should call away,  
Then I shall be this very night  
In bright and endless day.

For Christ is in the light,  
And I with Christ shall be;  
And never shall the dark be found,  
Wherever He shall be.

My body it will sleep,  
And none shall wake it up,  
Till Christ shall come with trump of  
God,  
That I with Him may sup.

The marriage of the Lamb!  
The marriage supper too!  
His bride herself shall ready make,  
And I shall taste and view.



“Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father ; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”—Rev. i. 5, 6.











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