

THE WITNESS:

An Unfettered Monthly Journal

OF

Biblical Literature, Expository Papers,

Notes of Addresses, Conference Reports,

Questions and Answers, Intelligence,

Poetry, Correspondence, &c.

EDITED BY

J. R. CALDWELL,

Author of "*Shadows of Christ*," "*Things to Come*," "*Earthly Relationships*," &c.

NEW SERIES—VOLUME IX.

OVER ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY PAPERS ON BIBLICAL SUBJECTS.

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THE WITNESS:

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE.



GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE.

ISRAEL IN THE PAST.

Notes of Addresses by JOHN R. CALDWELL.

I DO not make any apology for asking you to read a good many passages of Scripture. "What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." The Word of God is the solid wheat. Man's words are but as the chaff in comparison.

Let us look first at Romans iii. 19. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

Those referred to here as "under the law" are the people of Israel. God put them under the law—dealt with them by means of the law in order that He might teach a world-wide lesson. He gave the law to one nation only: no other nation was like unto them in this particular privilege. But in giving it to them it was in order "that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world might become guilty before God." In testing them God was virtually testing all mankind.

God has indeed been testing man from the very beginning of his history. In the garden of Eden, Adam failed under the simple test of one commandment. Thus sin entered into the whole race of Adam. Quickly the world became filled with violence and iniquity, so that it repented God that He had made man on the earth. He brought the flood and swept away the apostate race, saving only the one man Noah and his house to form the nucleus of the population of a purged earth. Noah was the best

man living at the time of the flood, so that in beginning, as it were, anew God began under the most favourable conditions. He chose the man who had for hundreds of years stood against the current of an ungodly world, witnessing for God and for righteousness. Thus Noah became, as it were, the head of a new world. But ere long Noah himself falls into sin, and speedily the world relapses into apostasy and open rebellion against God, building the tower of Babel to keep themselves together in opposition to God's command to scatter abroad and people the earth.

Out from that land Mesopotamia, or the land of Shinar, where sin had reached its climax in the building of the tower of Babel, God called Abram. What sort of a man was he? In Jeremiah ii. 21 we read: "Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed; how then are thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto Me?"

Here we see that God took the very best seed, the choicest plant to be found. He said of him, "I know Abraham, that he will command his children," &c. He could trust Abraham with His friendship. Yet though he was a choice vine, in process of time his descendants became as "the degenerate plant of a strange vine," a wild vine.

Then look at Isaiah v. 1-7, and you will see that, in choosing the seed of Abraham, God took, as it were, the very best specimen of humanity. He gave to that choice vine every possible advantage—did everything for it that could be conceived in order to render it a healthy, fruitful, remunerative vine. What was the

result? God gets nothing from it but wild grapes. It is a total failure—not on God's part, but on man's. Thus in testing Israel God was testing all the world.

The fact that they having received the law failed to keep it, incurred its curse, departed from Jehovah to idols, and showed in the rejection of the Christ of God that their hearts were at enmity with God, brings condemnation not to Israel only, but to the whole world. If the best plant under the most favourable conditions yields such a miserable return, what could be hoped for from the Gentile? "If they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

Turn now to Romans iii. 1: "What advantage, then, hath the Jew? . . . chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." Read also *Romans ix. 4, 5*. I refer to these two passages as giving a summary of the privileges conferred upon the people of Israel. In the first it is "chiefly"—but the apostle stops there, and names no other privilege; this one is so vast, so unique, "that to them were committed the oracles of God." This was the highest privilege that God could bestow upon any people, the revelation of Himself and of His will.

The Holy Bible comes to us through Israel. God never suffered a Gentile to put pen to paper in connection with this blessed revelation;—the Scriptures of truth. The prophets were Israelites, and spoke in the Name of Jehovah, God of Israel. God's revelation was to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, all in the line of the chosen people, and to none else. It was all grace bestowed upon this chosen vine.

Even when on account of their sins Israel was in captivity, and power was on the side of the Gentile, the secret of the Lord was with the captives, and the proud Gentile must be debtor to the Jew for the interpretation of his dream.

The possession of the divine oracles set them immeasurably above all other nations. In Deut. iv. 8 we read: "What nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law?" No other nation had such a privilege, and none of the privileges afterward to be considered could surpass this.

I do not think that we at all appreciate as we should the privilege that is ours in the possession of these living oracles communicated by God from time to time to Israel by His prophets, completed by the Son of God Himself, and the apostles and prophets of the New Covenant, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

Since listening lately to Mr. Macrae, from India, telling of the gross darkness of the people of that land, the thought uppermost in my mind has been, what a privilege to have those Scriptures in our hands and in our own tongue, in which the living and true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, are revealed to us. I am sure we do not comprehend the greatness of the privilege as we might. The people of Israel did not comprehend it, and they lost the blessing of it in consequence. God had exalted them marvellously. He had formed them as a people for Himself, to show forth His praise. But they did not comprehend or believe it. The precious privilege has been dashed from their hands, and is now conferred upon us, and we Gentiles have been grafted in and have become partakers of the fatness of the olive, whilst the natural branches, because of unbelief, have been broken off.

Let us take heed, lest we also lose this privilege. Fast this nation, and even "Bible-loving Scotland," as it is called, is casting these oracles of God behind its back, criticising them as though they were the words of man and not the words and judgments of God. Thus the nation is parting with its choicest blessings, the Lord's Day becoming like the Continental Sunday, a day of amusement, and public bodies and institutions ceasing to recognise a God at all.

In Romans ix. we read of a further privilege possessed by Israel, viz., "To them pertained the adoption."

In Exodus iv. 22 we read: "Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my first born." Read also in Deut. xiv. 1, "Ye are the children of Jehovah;" also in Deut. vii. 6, 9. These passages form a commentary on the words, "to whom pertaineth the adoption." That is to say, God took the people of Israel, and owned them among all the nations as His family. Not that they

were a regenerate people. None but the elect among them were regenerate. But nationally God calls Israel His "first born," and His care for them was such as the care of a father for his children. What a privilege this was, bestowed in sovereign grace upon a people that were no more worthy of such honour than any other.

Another of their privileges was "the glory."

There was a visible expression of the glory of God in the midst of the nation of Israel. When God brought them out of Egypt He went before them in a pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day. When the Tabernacle was completed that glory cloud descended and filled the place, so that even Moses was obliged to withdraw from it. That cloud remained above the mercy-seat and between the cherubim. It gave them light for journeying by night, and was a shade from the burning sun by day. It accompanied them through all their wilderness journey, going before them to search out a resting-place ere they should pitch their tents.

Again it filled the temple on the occasion of its completion by Solomon. And finally it is seen by Ezekiel rising up from the place of its rest, passing over the threshold of the temple, again passing over the Mount of Olives, lingering as though lothe to depart, and finally ascending to heaven.

You remember, when the Ark, through Israel's sin, was taken by the Philistines, the wife of Phinehas, said: "The glory is departed from Israel." It is to this glory-cloud, the visible symbol of the Divine presence in the midst of Israel, that reference is here made as one of their national privileges. A greater glory filled the temple when the blessed Son of God, God manifest in the flesh, entered, and thus, as foretold by Haggai, the latter glory of the house, inferior as it was to Solomon's temple, was greater than the former; and again in the latter days the glory of the Lord will be there. But the glory of God in the face of Jesus was not discernible by carnal eyes. No halo crowned His head, albeit painters represent Him so; but the moral glory of His person, known to faith, transcended all the previous manifestations of the Divine glory. And this also was

reserved for Israel, for His blessed feet never overstepped the limits of the land of Canaan.

But the open, manifested glory of God was only attached to Israel, and will never be seen again until God restores Israel to their land and to Himself.

The next privilege named is "the Covenants."

I take this to refer to the unconditional covenant promises made by Jehovah to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and Solomon, the centre and kernel of all which was the promise of the Messiah. God never entered into covenant relationship with any other people. He revealed Himself by the name of Jehovah as the covenant-God of Israel. In reading the Old Testament, where you find the title "LORD" printed in capitals it is usually "Jehovah." Circumcision was appointed as a sign and seal of the covenant. When Jonathan and his armour-bearer set out to smite the Philistines he spoke of them as "the uncircumcised," and David, when he went out to meet Goliath, called him "this uncircumcised Philistine." Was this merely a term of reproach? No, not at all. It was as if He said: "I am Jehovah's servant; I have a covenant God at my back; that uncircumcised Philistine has not any covenant relationship with God, and therefore he will be as helpless as the lion and the bear before me." So Jonathan regarded the Philistine armies simply as a people who had no covenant God to uphold them. Being without God, they were without power before him.

Oh, the blessedness of being in covenant relationship with God! With the believer now it is not merely that he shares in the covenant promises made to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, but being "in Christ," he is a joint-heir with Him of all that is included in the eternal covenant which is ratified in His blood. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." He who is the covenant God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ is our covenant God and Father too. What need we then to fear from those who know no such relationship with God?

The next privilege was "the giving of the law." This I take to include not merely the ten commandments, but the whole cere-

monial, social, and political legislation as recorded in the five books of Moses.

If you read carefully through these you cannot but come to the conclusion that the law is indeed "holy, just, and good." To have such a book of instruction was an inestimable privilege, but nationally they despised it and cast it behind their backs. They cast off God and turned to idols. Such is the result of the testing of man by the law.

"PRESENT YOUR BODIES."

Notes of an Address by Dr. THOS. NEATBY at Leominster Conference.

"Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Rom. vi. 13).

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. xii. 1).

THIS is a word of great importance to all Christians. The *young* need it, and the old people need it too. Thank God for this word!

In Rom. vi., the Holy Spirit by the Apostle brings forward the importance of walking in newness of life. We have the new life in the risen Lord Jesus. God has dealt with the old life. The old man was crucified with Christ, "that the body of sin might be destroyed"—annulled (Rom. vi. 6). We have been crucified *with* Christ—not *in* Christ. Hymns may say so, but God's Word does not say we are "crucified in Christ." We had forfeited our lives to the judgment of God as entirely and utterly corrupt. God did not attempt to improve the flesh, but condemned it. But now that we have *new* life, He insists that we "*walk* in newness of life."

That I am dead to sin is true *de jure*, but not *de facto*. That brings the anomaly of "reckoning" ourselves dead (Rom. vi. 11). To a corpse I should neither whisper nor shout, "Reckon yourself dead," but to *myself*, which feels so much alive. I cannot reckon what is not true. It *is* true. God says so. There is great need for us to reckon ourselves dead. It is a solemn thing for us not to do so. If we don't, sin will soon have dominion over us. "For sin shall not have

dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. vi. 14). Grace brings in power. The Holy Ghost is given in God's mightiest grace. In that power it *is* possible to walk in newness of life. We deceive ourselves if we say we have no sin—no indwelling sin. But God forbid that we should familiarise ourselves with sinning. The Holy Ghost is given to keep us from sinning. I have a deceitful heart, but it is not necessary that the thoughts of that deceitful heart should be translated into lies.

All this is connected with Rom. xii. 1. It is not a *legal* matter now. Rom. ix.-xii. is a parenthesis. Rom. xii. 1 is directly connected with the end of Rom. viii., where there is such an amazing display of Divine grace. Rom. viii. has been said to begin with "No condemnation," and end with "No separation." But "no separation" is a very feeble description of the unmerited goodness of our God described in that chapter.

"Present your bodies." Why your *bodies*? We are very apt to overlook this. The body is the instrument of the mind and the spiritual life within, and includes the whole man. We may learn much in this connection with the cleansing of the leper in Lev. xiv., where the blood of the trespass offering is placed on

The right *ear* (the entrance to the mind for God's Word, or anything else);

The right *hand* (representing the activities of life for good or evil);

The right *foot* (our walk).

The poor leper used to cry afar off, "Unclean, unclean!" but now is able to tread the courts of God. He is brought into the tabernacle, and it is God's will that he should tread His courts, and have the blessed privileges of the people of God under the power of the precious Blood. After the blood has been placed on the right ear, hand, and foot, the oil is put upon the blood in the same places. So the Holy Ghost seals the value of the precious blood, and brings the power that none else can.

We, like the poor cleansed leper, though now uncommonly rich, should present our bodies living sacrifices. "Yield yourselves unto God" in Rom. vi. 13 is just the same word in the original as "*Present your bodies*" in Rom. xii. 1. It is most needful to press

this truth on Christians. You have been redeemed from the power of evil; now yield your members to God—hands, ears, feet. They won't be serving sin if they are being used for Him.

The *tongue* has been used for backbiting, and, alas! for lying and evil speaking. Oh, beloved, may that be a yielded member! It belongs to Him by redemption, and is never to be scorched in the lake of fire. Thank God! It should be used as an instrument of righteousness, and not for backbiting and idle gossip, which does more harm to the cause of Christ than anything else. When you go home, what will a yielded member have to say? Put the question to your heart of hearts, and not only negatively. *What will the yielded tongue say?* It will be found speaking praise and thanksgiving to God, and occupied with the blessed truths of His Word. Is there much of this, my brethren? "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart unto the Lord" (Eph. v. 19). Is there much of this? Cast your eye back on to-day alone and see.

Never let the *hand* be put to anything you would not do if Christ were standing before you in bodily shape. You do many things with the hand. One is letter-writing. You may write insinuations without writing facts, when there is neither profit in doing it nor necessity to do it. How this searches our hearts!

"*Which is your reasonable service?*" Everything a yielded member does is service. In everything let us ask, "Is this the will of God?" "Is it service to the Master?"

Beloved, I desire *practical holiness*. But of myself I have no strength to yield it. *He* must work the "willing" as well as the "doing" (Phil. ii. 13). "Present your bodies" is in the present tense, and is a definite act, and it often needs to be repeated. It won't do to say, "I am perfect in Christ," if it just means so much screening of myself as to practice. The statement may be true enough, but the idea conveyed is not truth a bit. What I am in Christ I ought to be in my walk. "Which thing is true in Him and in you." God has saved me that I might do His will.

PARABLES OF OUR LORD.—XXXII.

THE PHARISEE and THE PUBLICAN.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

Luke. xviii. 9-14.

Verses 9. "And He spake also this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others."

IN the former verses of this chapter, the Lord Jesus had spoken a parable unto this end—that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; a parable full of encouragement to believing and expectant prayer, although appearances may be disheartening, and the answer long in coming. The prophetic interpretation of this parable may apply to Israel, who are apparently so long forsaken of their God, but on whose behalf, when the Son of Man appears, God will speedily execute judgment.

The Lord now adds another parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.

Verses 10-12. "Two men went up into the temple [outer temple] to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican [tax-gatherer]. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican [tax-gatherer]. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess [acquire].'"

These two men, so different in character, creed, and self-estimation, go up to the outer court of the same temple to pray; and both present themselves before the same holy, holy, holy God. Within the court of the priests, where they dare not enter, stands in full view the altar of burnt offering, whereon the fire was ever burning, the sacrifice ever consuming, and from which the sweet savour of the ascending offering was ever going up to God, and where also stood the brazen sea with its abundance of water for cleansing and sanctification—gloriously presenting before the eye of faith God's provision for the putting away of sin through the atoning sacrifice of His own spotless Lamb, and God's provision for the sanctification of those who drew near unto Him and worshipped before Him through the regenerating and sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost. All this is unheeded and overlooked by the Pharisee in his self-occupation and self-esteem; he stands and prays "thus with himself." He ventures to approach a

righteous and holy God without sacrifice, like Cain, and to pray before Him without the sanctification of the Spirit. Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish his own righteousness, he pleads only what he was not, what he did, and how much he considered himself better than others.

Verse 13. "And the publican [tax-gatherer], standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, 'God be merciful [literally, be propitious on the ground of reconciliation, or atonement made] to me a sinner [the sinner].'"

To the eye of faith the ordinances of the law presented a shadow of those grand and glorious truths which have their reality and substance in Christ. Taught by the Spirit of God, the publican saw in that fire of the altar ever burning, the righteousness and justice of God, who is a consuming fire. In this light he saw himself a sinner, guilty and condemned, and, without comparing himself with others, he confessed himself "the sinner," as though he stood alone before God.

But the same Spirit which convicted him of sin led him to plead before God the sin-atoning sacrifice "God be propitious to me the sinner"—not simply merciful, on the vain supposition that a holy and righteous God could pass by sin without a satisfaction being made for the breach of His holy law, and in vindication of His holiness, justice, and truth. Apart from a personal interest in the sacrifice made for sin, he dared not approach to God. In the consciousness of the sin which lurked within his breast, on which he smote, he dared not lift up his eyes in worship before God. The language of his inmost soul may be best expressed in those inspired words, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

Verse 14. "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased [humbled]; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

The one goes down to his house self-justified, but God-condemned; the other self-condemned, but by God justified. The one exalts himself, and God must abase him; the other humbles himself, and God for His own glory will exalt him.

THE ROMEGRADE—I.

"ECCLESIASTICAL REST."

By J. S. ANDERSON, Florence.

IT is becoming more and more manifest that there are many sincere souls longing for a rest from all the religious controversy that has been raging with ever-increasing fervour since the days of the apostles, who raised their inspired protest against the pending apostasy. True it is that the great bulk of nominal Christians treat with proud indifference the manifold doctrinal questions which have occupied the hearts and minds of the holiest of men. For the present, we shall not address ourselves to these self-contented religionists, to whom things that differ are the same, and one "religion" is as good as another.

"Speaking truth in love," and avoiding the *odium* that has so ministered to the development of error and division in the Church of God, we would desire to be helpful to those who, wearied of endless contentions, are seeking rest in what they consider *doctrinal, religious, ecclesiastical unity*. They feel they must be "connected with" and "belong to" a system whose dogmas are infallibly settled. And many are walking on the Romegrade, assured that once within the *infallible* unity of Rome, schisms and sects, enquiry and controversy will for ever give place to the unanimous voice of the unerring councils.

Now, we would readily and fully admit with all such seekers after rest, that God is not a "God of confusion, but of peace" (1 Cor. xiv. 33), and that He is not the author of division; and we recall the words of the same apostle, and in the same epistle (iii. 3): "For whereas there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk after the *manner of men*?" Yes, heresies and their consequent schisms are of *men*, and not of God.

But what work of God, perfect, pure, united, has not man marred and endeavoured to break up, and *that at the very outset of his trial*? Whether placed in a perfect Eden, saved from the waters of judgment, redeemed from the slavery of Egypt, led and fed in a barren wilderness, exalted among the nations, man has ever miserably failed. And has he

proved himself worthy under grace? No! Having beaten some of the servants of the Master, stoned and killed others, have they revered His Son? No! Gathered from "every nation under heaven," united by one Spirit in one holy and blessed fellowship, have they kept that unity? No!

Let us hear what the apostles say about the earliest divisions in the Church. Without dogmatising about dates, we shall presume that JAMES wrote his epistle in A.D. 45, in which he says: "From whence come wars and brawlings among you? Come they not hence, even of your pleasures that war in your members?" (iv. 1).

PAUL, in the year 60, met the elders of the Church in Ephesus, to whom he said: "I know that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts xx. 29).

PETER wrote, in the year 64: "There were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Peter ii. 1). See also verses 2 and 3.

JUDE'S Epistle was written about that very year. In it he says: "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit" (19).

JOHN wrote three Epistles about the year 96. In his first letter he says: "Even now are there many antichrists. . . . They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (ii. 18, 19).

Now it surely will be profitable to hear from the very same infallible, inspired, apostolic writers what they proposed as the remedy and rest in view of all that approaching religious, doctrinal, and ecclesiastical evil. We shall just continue the context in each case:

JAMES: "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God."

PAUL: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which

the *Holy Spirit* has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood," "I commend you to God and the Word of His grace which is able to build you up."

PETER: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."

JOHN: "But ye have an unction from the *Holy One*, and ye know all things."

How assuring, in the midst of all the evil and confusion of men, to know that *God Himself* invites us to find all our help and rest in *Himself!*

Instead of wading through the muddy schismatic waters of the first four centuries, we shall accept the statement of Saint *Augustine*, whom Rome considers the patron of theology. Well, this great doctor says that before his day there were *ninety heresies* which had afflicted the Church. We think it is only fair that our Romegrade friends, who accuse the Reformers with the sin of schism, should remember that more than a thousand years before the Reformation the Church enjoyed little visible unity, or doctrinal, ecclesiastical rest, and that manifold and grave differences manifested themselves even among "the Fathers." And our readers, who know the leading facts of European history from the fifth to the fifteenth centuries, are aware how the Church of Rome involved herself in the political strifes of Italy and other countries. During these dark ages, if comparatively little doctrinal discussion and reform arose within the professing Church, was it not for the simple reason that she had become so worldly that her members were slumbering in the rest of ignorance, indifference, and "ecclesiastical unity"?

And after many solitary protests, such as that of Savorola, there came the mighty awakening of consciences at the Reformation, a great testimony for God and help to His Church, but not a perfect work, just as the system out of which it sprang was imperfect, and as the systems which have sprung from it are all more or less imperfect. And we would lovingly remind those who are travelling on the Romegrade that all

truly spiritual-minded Protestants agree in this—that their basis of spiritual and ecclesiastical fellowship does *not* consist of a mere protest against Rome.

Now, the theologians of Rome teach that her unity is solid and perfect, for, they say, she is one in doctrine, worship, and government. Without entering into the history of her divisions in doctrine and government, we admit that the modern decree of papal infallibility has ensured her an external uniformity. But we would in love ask all who have gone, or are going, on the Romegrade, to consider their ways, and to examine the nature of an ecclesiastical unity such as that they long after. Suppose a schoolboy were asked to take six from seven, he would soon and simply calculate thus: $7 - 6 = 1$. He would arrive at unity by subtracting six units from seven. And is it not a similar process by which many are seeking to arrive at that ecclesiastical unity which Rome professes and promises, namely, by eliminating all individual responsibility, exercise of conscience, mutual exhortation and edification, examination and meditation of Scripture?

It has been repeatedly stated by Rome's doctors that wherever her children be found, whatever be their national or social differences, they all agree on one point—that *the Church is right*. This is what common people call *agreeing to differ*, and is generally supposed to mean *disagreement*.

In order to set more clearly before our Romegrade friends the nature of true doctrinal, ecclesiastical, spiritual rest, we shall draw a brief contrast between Christian unity according to *God* and according to *Rome*.

1. *God's unity is spiritual, Rome's is carnal.* "That which is born of the flesh is *flesh*" (John iii. 6). Even when baptised, confirmed, confessed, communicated—it is still *flesh*. And "they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. viii. 8). "And that which is born of the Spirit is *Spirit*" (John iii. 6). "For in one Spirit were we all baptised into one body" (1 Cor. xii. 13). God never calls us members of a Church, but of the Body of Christ

2. *God's unity is real, Rome's is nominal.* It we want really to know whether we belong to the Church, the Body of Christ, let us

apply the practical test or this Scripture: "Whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it" (1 Cor. xii. 26). God desires that there should be no schism in the body. My dear Romegrade reader, do you suffer when you know that one who is *Christ's* (Mark ix. 41) is suffering? Is it because he *belongs to Christ* that you suffer? Is it the suffering of the same spiritual, living, real body? There is no doubt about these things. "We know," says the Apostle John, "that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (1 John iii. 14).

3. *God's unity is eternal, Rome's is temporal.* Dying Romanists do not, cannot say: "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, *eternal* in the heavens" (2 Cor. v. 1). All is uncertainty to the soul that trusts merely in ecclesiastical rest in this life. The Church cannot save. The priests profess to give absolution *as far as they can*. The departing *unit* of Rome's unity cannot say with serene confidence to those with whom he has been enjoying years of ecclesiastical rest: "Do not sorrow for me, as for those who have no hope. If you believe that Jesus died and rose again for you, whether you remain unto the coming of the Lord, or whether you too will sleep in Jesus, we shall meet in meeting—Him in the air, and so shall we *ever* be with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 14-17).

Yes, beloved friends travelling on the Romegrade, the vaunted ecclesiastical unity and rest you are seeking, in the hour of death and judgment will not give you assurance of everlasting life, and union with the Lord and His saved ones. True rest and union are to be found in Christ alone, who died that we all might be one saved Church, and who prayed that we all might be one in Him now and ever.

"IT IS GOOD."

Five times "It is good" in the Psalms—

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------|-------------|
| 1. God's name, | - - - | lii. 9. |
| 2. To draw near to God, | - - - | lxxiii. 28. |
| 3. To give thanks, | - - - | xcii. 1. |
| 4. To have been afflicted, | - - - | cxix. 71. |
| 5. To sing praises, | - - - | cxlvii. 1. |

1899.

IT MAY BE THE LAST!

IT may be the last of the years quickly flying,

It may be the year when the Saviour will come;

When the land of the holy, for which thou art sighing,

Will burst into view—the Father's glad home.

It may be the last of earth's chequered story,
The last of "the desert," "the furnace,"

"the thorn";

The last, too, of "service in weakness"—
then "glory,"

When the Saviour has come, bright Star of the morn.

It may be the last time on earth to awaken,
To finish the tale of sorrow and toil,

Of seeming unloved, neglected, forsaken,

With bleeding feet treading earth's thorn-covered soil.

It may be the last the Cross daily choosing,
The footsteps of Jesus retracing below,

And daily earth's glitter and glamour refusing,

Companionship with the Unseen One to know.

It may be the last, all mystery ending

In deepest of peace in the sunlight of God;

That sweet smile of welcome, from Jesus descending,

Will more than make up for the toils on the road.

MAX I. REICH.

FIGURES OF THE CHRISTIAN.—VI.

AN AMBASSADOR.

IN all ages the office of an ambassador has been one of great dignity and corresponding responsibility. The Greek word, at the first, meant an elderly person; consequently one to be had in honour. One easily perceives how the word came to have its special meaning. In early days the old men of the clan or tribe were naturally and properly accounted wise, and such were invariably

selected to be sent on any important ambassadorship.

"In Christ's behalf then we are ambassadors," writes the Apostle, "as though God were entreating by us: we pray on Christ's behalf, Be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. v. 20, Alford). In this passage the writer sets before us what was the general practice of himself and fellow-evangelists. Not that he was doing so just then when writing this letter to the Corinthian Church, for through faith in Christ they had already been reconciled to God. The "we" of this verse, as I understand it, takes in all believers who, according to their gifts and opportunity, are fulfilling the commission of beseeching men to be reconciled to God. That this ministry, within the lines above indicated, has been entrusted to all Christians I need not here stay to prove. So that we may at once seek to gather a few lessons from this impressive figure twice used by the Apostle Paul.

1. An ambassador is one specially chosen by his sovereign to fill a responsible position. So with the Christian. And in this aspect of the subject the Apostle was an outstanding example. By the Lord Jesus he was directly chosen, called, fitted, and appointed to go forth and preach the gospel of reconciliation. And we must not suppose that in this he was an exception to the general rule. I think it is evident that he was intended as the great pattern after which, had the Church been faithful, the Lord would have called and prepared His servants all down the ages. The *principle* of spiritual ministry in this dispensation might be expressed thus: "So and so, an apostle, or a teacher, or an evangelist, 'not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father'" (Gal. i. 1). Notice the words neither *from* nor *through* man. Many contend for the former who quite ignore the latter; but both principles are of God, and can only be set aside to the dishonour of the Lord and the loss of His people. Speaking broadly, the only question of any importance in Christian service is this: "Am I called, fitted, and sent to it by the Master Himself?" If this is the case a man's gift cannot but make room for him; and the benediction uttered concerning Asher shall be spiritually

fulfilled in him—he shall be blessed with children, and be acceptable to his brethren (Deut. xxxiii. 24).

2. An ambassador is selected for service in a foreign land. When we trusted in Christ and were begotten of the Holy Spirit, old things passed away and all things became new. Now with a God-given zest and joy we muse and sing :

“The cords that bound my heart to earth
Were broken by His hand;
Before His cross I found myself
A stranger in the land.”

And not only are we in a strange country, away from our fatherland; we are in an enemy's dominions. The world is a revolted province; its people are rebels against Jehovah; its prince is Satan, that implacable enemy of Christ and His people. Yet God is not willing that any among her myriads of sons and daughters should perish. And ourselves reconciled to Him in Christ, He commits to us the ministry of reconciliation. And we gladly serve Him here. Still we ever feel that we are away from our native land. Our life is a secret life. Its principles and aims are not understood by those around us. At times we are hated of men for His name sake; and but for His over-ruling hand the hatred would even now, as it often has in the past, break forth in active persecution (John xv. 18-21).

Among men an ambassador would not be so treated; from earliest times the person of an ambassador has been held inviolable. War would at once follow were one power to insult or maltreat the representative of another. Yet the apostle gives us this startling conjunction of terms; “*An ambassador in chains*” (Eph. vi. 20). What an exciting headline this would make for a morning paper! And what a stir such an event would cause throughout the civilised world!

But in God's relation to man *grace* now reigns through Jesus Christ our Lord. He is not imputing unto men their trespasses; He is not eager to avenge the murder of His Son, or the indignity and suffering heaped upon thousands of His servants. However, to these matters God is anything but indifferent, and in due time will avenge His elect which cry unto Him day and night.

3. It is an ambassador's vocation to look after the interests of his sovereign and his native land. He is not a private citizen but a public servant, and must in all things act, not for himself, but for his king and country.

So is it with the servant of the Lord. His one aim must be to fulfil the ministry entrusted to him. And what a ministry! Nothing less than to be Christ's representative, to be God's mouth-piece, to entreat men to be reconciled to Him.

An earthly ambassador never dreams of *beseeching* men to adopt a certain course. To do so, as men think, would be to drag his country's dignity in the mire. But not so with Christ's ambassadors. We have not carried out our mission unless, it may be with tears, we have besought men to be saved.

4. An ambassador looks forward to the hour when his term of service shall expire, and he shall be called home. On returning from such a mission he will probably be privileged to see his Sovereign face to face, and if he has been a faithful and true minister honours and rewards will be conferred upon him.

And each ambassador for Christ in a similar way desires to be summoned home. At times he has an intense longing to be at rest in the presence of his Master (Phil. i. 23). Very far better he knows it will be. He is more than willing to be absent from home as long as his Lord deems it necessary (2 Cor. v. 6, 7). We desire to be at home in our own dear native country. He is like an exile banished from his own bright, sunny, picturesque south to some cold, bare, barbarous heathen land; his heart turns with longing to his loved native land. Such was the thought of heaven to the early believers, and such should it be to us. The Christian ambassador does not affect to be uninfluenced by the hope of the reward held out to him by his Lord. Yet it is not for it he labours and suffers; it is not for it he longs. At times we may hear him softly singing :

“I will not gaze at glory,
But on my King of grace;
Not at the crown He giveth,
But on his pierced hand;
The Lamb is all the glory
Of Immanuel's land.

The presence of the once slain Lamb makes heaven for His people. Were He to leave it heaven would be no longer heaven to them. Ere closing we will draw one other lesson from this interesting study.

5. Before war is declared by one country against another, that country's representative is first called away. Our God has a controversy with sinners which must soon be brought to an issue. Such judgments will soon be abroad in this old, sin-worn world as it has never before seen. But before these judgments are poured out we believe that the present ambassadors will be called away from the scene. The Lord Himself will come and take them home. To him the promise runs: "I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev. iii. 10). Through grace we expect to escape all these things that shall ere long come to pass, and to stand in the presence of the One whom, amid much weakness and failure, we have sought to represent among men. Brethren, let us make it our earnest endeavour that, whether serving Him here or present with Him there, we may be *well-pleasing unto Him*.

J. N. C.

TWO OPEN-AIR MEETINGS.

AN open-air meeting was going on at the cross of a certain town. I stayed on my step as I passed by, wondering if I might hear a message with power. There was a great noise. Most of those who were bearing testimony had musical instruments of one kind or another, and between singing and shouting and the sound of these instruments, the "service of praise" was almost deafening. I also observed that the performers were arrayed in the most fantastic dresses. This, as I learned, was for the purpose of "drawing the people, and making a sensation."

No doubt a number were attracted to the spot. But as I looked around to see what impression was being made, I could perceive no interest being aroused except the interest of idle curiosity to see what was the meaning of the tumult. One young man thus attracted

said he thought it was a theatre company who were out to "advertise the play." I remembered it was written that the Kingdom of God "cometh not with outward show" (Luke xvii. 20, mar.), and that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal (2 Cor. x. 4); and I wondered what possible connection this show in the flesh could have with the Kingdom of the meek and lowly Saviour of men. Then came the cry for money. The hat was sent round with the most urgent and earnest appeal for help to "carry on the work." The bystanders—saved or unsaved, it did not seem to matter—were besought to give an offering. I thought on that Scripture which says, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath *no money*" (Isa. lv. 1).

"That text would never do here," I said to myself. Then I heard the "God bless you" of the preacher as some poor unconverted worldlings handed in their coppers. Thus a new evil was revealed to me. These Christ-rejectors were being put into a false relation to God. They were being led to believe that in some mysterious way they would earn God's favour and receive "a blessing" on account of the pence they contributed to "the cause." I felt sad at heart, and wondered how any intelligent believer could countenance a religious system that openly appealed to the servants of the devil for money to destroy the devil's kingdom! As I stood there the collection was counted, and the intimation made that it was not up to the mark, and must be increased to a certain sum!

By this time the onlookers were getting impatient. Whatever little interest may have been aroused in the earlier part of the service was now effectually dispelled by this renewed appeal for money. I felt, and I think every intelligent bystander felt, that such a "service" in the name of the Lord was a very weak and beggarly affair. I was sorry for the worldlings who were thus getting a thoroughly misleading impression of the Gospel of Christ, and who were being deceived as to their true relation to God. And I was no less sorry for any believers who might be found there, fancying they were doing God service in thus identifying them-

selves with things so utterly opposed to the spirit and letter of the Gospel of Christ.

"After many days" I was passing that same corner, when my progress was arrested by a crowd. An open-air meeting was going on. As I drew near I could see a deep earnestness impressed on the faces before me. The preacher, a horny-handed son of toil, was dressed in the usual Saturday-afternoon attire of the working man. He was a plain man, with no "airs," and no suspicion of the "ministerial dirge" in his style of address. He proclaimed the perfect ruin of the sinner, and the no less perfect salvation that is in Christ Jesus. He told out the blessedness and the freeness of that salvation. He warned his hearers that it was at their peril they delayed to close with Christ, and he illustrated his warnings by one or two striking incidents from his experience in the coal-mines. The Word was with power. The preacher's testimony had the stamp of *reality*. The crowd seemed to recognise this, and their attention was rapt and unbroken. Another speaker, and yet another, all of the same class, and with the same untutored eloquence and unaffected zeal, stood forward to "deliver their souls." The interest never flagged for a moment. No one moved.

"A powerful meeting," I said to a brother who was standing near; "how apt these men are in the Word! See how the people are listening!"

The preachers made searching appeals to the consciences of those who stood by; but they made no appeal for money. I have no doubt that this was duly noted by the audience—many of whom were only too well accustomed to such appeals at that very spot. There were no such appeals now—no hope was held out that a few coppers could bring down the blessing of heaven. These humble preachers knew not how to lay any such flattering unction to the souls of men who were rejecting the Son of God. Yet their testimony was received in solemn and, I believe, heart-searching silence. Yea, and I could easily believe that not a few in that crowd were sorry when the train was due, and these simple-minded witnesses to the power of redeeming love had to take their departure.

w. s.

GOD'S PURPOSE FORESHADOWED.

GENESIS XXII., XXIII., XXIV.

THESE three chapters, read together, are a picture of God's dealings with us, who are the called according to His purpose before the world began.

IN CHAPTER XXIV. we have a rich father, an obedient son, and an old and faithful servant.

First, a rich father, and rich because of an obedient son.

IN CHAPTER XXII. we learn how this father became rich, and the whole chapter is focussed in Ephesians v. 2, where it is recorded "Christ gave Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour." Only thus could our Holy Father receive us into favour, and only through the Son's obedience unto death could God be *rich in grace*.

The whole scene is a marvellous picture of Calvary in its burnt-offering aspect, the only break in the picture being, Abraham's son in himself could never represent Christ, hence the ram was offered in his stead to complete the picture. For three days Abraham journeyed with this thought in his mind, "I must give up my son." From Eternity to Calvary God had the same thought. Every lamb on the altar was keeping it before God, for the blood on Jewish altars could never enable God to receive sinners into favour. Willingly He gave His Son in order "to bring the many sons to glory."

All this is told in chapter xxii. The father lays the wood on Isaac his son, the father carries the fire, and holds the knife, all depicting the Father and Son at Calvary; for what is the wood? "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is My beloved among the sons": "Behold, the axe is laid at the root of the trees." The trees represent the sons of men; wood, being a cut-down tree, represents a convicted sinner. So, beloved, when the Holy Spirit convicted us of sin, and we owned the axe as righteously at our roots, because subject to the judgment of God in His word, was it not then we saw ourselves "crucified with Christ," and judgment past. "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" became ours. Now, the wood was first laid on the altar, then the lamb (see Lev. i.), and both were consumed together. In Leviticus

we see the priest gathering the ashes and taking them to a clean place, and all the ashes of the wood and the Lamb had the same sweet savour. Thus have we been crucified with Christ the Lamb, and in Him are risen to the cleanest place in all creation, for "we are raised up in Him, and in Him sit in the heavenlies" (Eph. ii. 6), and this because of the Son's obedience unto death.

But in CHAPTER xxiii. we are face to face with a death ere chapter xxiv. begins: the *mother of Isaac* becomes dead *ere he gets his bride*. Of whom came Christ after the flesh? Romans ix. 5 gives the answer: "Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all God, blessed for ever." Israel is now dead to God; they are dry, withered branches cut off from their own olive tree (Rom. xi.), and now the old servant (Gen. i. 2; Job xxvi. 13) is doing His work—viz., "gathering out a people *for His Name*" (Acts xv. 14), and that accomplished, "He will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down." So God has not cast away Israel, for "the Redeemer shall come out of Zion, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, for this is My covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins" (Rom. xi. 26). Meanwhile, as we have said, God is taking out of the nations a people for His Name to be co-heirs, the bride of His beloved Son. The Comforter Has come to convict of sin, to glorify Jesus, and to take of the things of Christ and show them unto us (John xiv., xv., xvi.). So did Abraham's servant to Rebekah, getting her to own her descent (chap xxiv. 24), revealing the riches of Abraham and the glory of Isaac. Thus did God with us: the Holy Spirit convicted us of sin, got us to own our descent from Adam the sinner, then did He unfold the glory of Jesus and the Father, rich in grace, mercy, and all we could need, and put the same stirring question to us, "Wilt thou go with *this Man*?" Without seeing we answer, "Yes," and thus get the blessedness of those "who have not seen and yet have believed." "In whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

When He comes and receives us to Himself, shall we not say, "Beloved, the half hath not been told."

T. C.

FAITH.—The Word of God is the *ground* of faith; the Lord Jesus Christ is the *object* of faith; God Himself is the *source* of faith; seeing Him who is invisible is faith in *exercise*; holiness is the *fruit* of faith; and "It is written" is the *language* of faith.

T. C.

Correspondence.

[ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS.—Please take note that the Editor will not undertake to acknowledge or take any notice of communications that do not bear the name and address of the writer. But if any correspondent wishes his name to be kept private, such a desire will be scrupulously respected.]

BAPTISED FOR THE DEAD.

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

I SHOULD be glad of your permission to offer a few observations on Mr. G. F. Trench's explanation, in the last number of *The Witness*, of the passage in 1 Cor. xv. concerning being baptised for the dead.

The interpretation which commends itself to him is one accepted by many who perceive a verbal connection between baptism into death and baptism for the dead; but it appears to me that this connection is merely verbal, and that it is only by straining the language and the sense of the passage that it is made to do duty as an interpretation.

I am entirely at one with Mr. Trench in rejecting any such reference to superstitious practices as is involved in explanations 1 and 2, referred to by him. On the other hand, the third explanation quoted by him, though strangely misunderstood and misrepresented in his article, seems to me to offer a simple and obvious interpretation, equally in harmony with the argument of the whole passage and with the grammatical construction of the sentence.

Mr. Trench states his explanation as follows: "That 'for the dead' means to fill the place of the dead—recruits, as it were, to fill the ranks broken and gapped by death." He then proceeds to argue that this makes nothing of baptism, and treats becoming a Christian and being baptised as synonymous expressions, making the force of the passage to lie in conversion instead of in baptism. But here he is manifestly wholly at fault. It is not the belief in a man's heart, but his open confession of Christ, that puts him in the place of those who had fallen in the fight, and exposes him to the same dangers which they had faced.

In those days when everyone who openly con-

fessed Christ was baptised without delay, the most apparent aspect of baptism to the unbelieving world was that those who submitted to it thereby proclaimed themselves to be disciples of Jesus. Secret believers, who dared not face persecution, might postpone their obedience to this commandment of the Lord; but such were in no sense filling the gaps occasioned through the fall of those who had been faithful unto death. Though saved themselves they were not taking the place of soldiers of Christ.

Mr. Trench's second objection to this view of the passage is that there is no sense in it as a proof of resurrection. He evidently overlooks the fact that this is equally true of his own explanation of the passage, and also of points 5 and 7 of his statement of the apostle's argument. These he expresses as follows:

5. The misery of our present life is only compensated by the hope of resurrection (ver. 19).

7. If there be no resurrection what sense is there in our thus imperilling our lives daily for Christ's cause? (verses 30-32).

These arguments are not put forward as proofs of resurrection, but as evidences of implicit belief in resurrection on the part of the persons referred to. In the previous points the apostle had given the direct proofs, and in these latter ones he sets forth the indirect evidence afforded by the willingness to expose themselves to suffering and death of those who openly confessed Christ. In reality Nos. 6 and 7 are all one point of the argument. First the apostle puts the question concerning persons who are coming forward to take the place of those who had died. What shall they do if there be no resurrection? And then he makes use of the same argument in connection with himself and his fellow-workers. Why do we (WE very emphatic) also stand in jeopardy every hour? Mr. Trench's forcible expression, "What sense is there in imperilling our lives if there be no resurrection?" applies equally to both cases. Paul had been doing this daily for years. Others were newly coming forward to incur the same danger; and in every case it was the undoubting assurance of resurrection that enabled them so to act.

But I must not close without reference to the words of the original. Mr. Trench suggests that the preposition *ὑπέρ* (*hyper*) should be taken as meaning "as being;" or "to be," but he does not offer a single instance of its being used in such a sense. I feel sure that if he had attempted to verify this translation he would have abandoned it altogether. In the great majority of cases *ὑπέρ* (*hyper*), followed by a genitive, is used in the sense of "on behalf of," or "in the stead of." Sometimes the one thought predominates, sometimes the other; sometimes they are equally combined. In the following

passages the italics show where the word *ὑπέρ* is used:—

"The Good Shepherd giveth His life *for* the sheep" (John x. 11).

"That one man should die *for* the people" (John xi. 50).

"Now then we are ambassadors *for* Christ" (2 Cor. v. 20).

"We pray you, *in* Christ's *stead*, be ye reconciled," etc. (2 Cor. v. 20).

"If one died *for* all, then all died" (2 Cor. v. 14).

"Every high priest . . . is ordained *for* men" (Heb. v. 1).

"To appear in the presence of God *for* us" (Heb. ix. 24).

It will be seen that "in the stead of" is plainly the meaning in some of these cases, which might be multiplied manifold. Indeed it is so translated in 2 Cor. v. 20.

Besides this, the presence of the definite article before "dead ones" entirely contradicts Mr. Trench's interpretation. If the meaning intended were, "What shall they do who are baptised as dead ones?" the addition of the article "the" would destroy the sense. Whereas, if it be intended to ask what they shall do who are baptised in place of others who had died, no words could more precisely convey that meaning than those actually employed.

Whereas the New Testament affords no instance of the word *ὑπέρ*, with a genitive, being employed in the sense suggested by Mr. Trench, there are many instances of the use of such an idiom; but the word employed is *ὡς* (*hos*), followed by the same case as that which preceded it; as, for instance, "All hold John as (*ὡς, hos*) a prophet" (Matt. xxi. 26), John and prophet being both in the accusative.

One point more. Mr. Trench at the commencement of his article quotes the passage as given in the Revised Version: "Else what shall they do which are baptised for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptised for them?" This reading, according to the unanimous testimony of all the oldest manuscripts, is the correct one, but it makes Mr. Trench's interpretation an impossible one. In the Authorised Version the words "for the dead" are repeated at the close of the passage, and if Mr. Trench's translation could be upheld in the first case, it would, of course, be equally available in the second. But when we consider the correct reading of the closing words, and then attempt to associate with this Mr. Trench's rendering of the earlier portion, we find that the whole passage is rendered meaningless. It would then stand: "Else what shall they do who are baptised as being dead? If the dead rise not at all, why are they then baptised as

being them? No one would venture to translate *ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν* (*hyper auton*) "as being them;" but it is equally incorrect to render *ὑπὲρ πῶν νεκρῶν* (*hyper ton nekron*) "as being dead." The passage really reads, "Else what shall they do who are baptised in the stead of the dead ones? If the dead rise not at all, why are they then baptised in their stead?" ALFRED J. HOLIDAY,

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

UNITY AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.—(1) In Eph. iv. 3 we are commanded to "give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace," and in verses 4 to 6 we are told of the seven component parts of that unity. What are the responsibilities flowing from each one of the seven parts of the unity entailed upon us by the command to keep it? (2) If the unity expressed by partaking of the one loaf at the Lord's Supper be the unity of the One Body of Christ (as is shown in 1 Cor. x. 17), must the Lord's Table not always be spread for every member of that One Body?

SCHISM AND ITS EFFECTS.—1 Cor. xii. 25. What is schism, and how does it affect the body?

CO-OPERATION AND JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is a member of a co-operative society in the same position as a shareholder in a joint-stock company?

"IN CHRIST" AND "IN THE LORD."—What is the difference, if any, between "in Christ" and "in the Lord"?

LIFE AND DEATH.—Please explain Romans viii. 10 and 13. In what aspect are we to understand "life" and "death" in these two verses?

CHRISTIANS AND POLITICS.—If all Christians were to abstain from politics, the government of our country would be entirely in the hands of the unconverted. Would this be right or scriptural?

WHAT COMMANDMENTS?—What commandments are referred to in the following passages? (1) "One of these least commandments" (Matt. v. 19); (2) "Whatsoever I commanded you" (Matt. xxviii. 20); (3) "If ye keep my commandments" (John xv. 10). Are our Lord's commandments in Matt. v. and Luke vi. addressed to believers in the present dispensation?

PROPITIATION.—(1) Heb. ii. 17. Is the func-

tion of propitiation-making (see R.V.) referred to here an allusion to the service performed by the High Priest within the sanctuary (see Lev. xvi. 14-17) on the day of atonement, which was exclusively high-priestly?

(2) In view of Heb. viii. 4, which states the Lord was not a High Priest on earth, and He gives the reasons for it (verses 4 and 5), where was the service of Heb. ii. 17 wrought? If the Lord was not a High Priest on earth, and Heb. ii. 17 states, He must be one to make propitiation, remembering also, to introduce His priesthood before death would abrogate the force of Heb. v. 6 10 and vii. 16, 17, 24, where and when was propitiation made?

(3) Heb. ix. 12. The Lord entered by blood—*by* (*ζῆλα* characteristic), not in virtue of. Where did He enter? If the heavenly sanctuary, then it is in contrast to the earthly. But why *by* blood? If the entrance be relegated to the ascension-day, what necessity then *by* blood? Aaron entered the earthly sanctuary by or with blood; he is the type, and in the capacity of a High Priest. What for? Is it to make atonement? (Lev. xvi.) Will the antitype tell differently, remembering the capacity in which he did so? (Heb. ix. 11); and in what connection the entrance is mentioned? On the ascension day atonement in all its parts was assuredly complete.

CHRIST'S REIGN.

QUESTION 375—If Christ delivers up the kingdom and becomes a subject—reigns till He has put down all enemies (1 Cor. xv. 24-28)—how then does He reign for ever and ever? (Rev. xi. 15).

Answer.—The question assumes that "reign" here refers to the millennial kingdom as that which is to continue until His enemies are put under His feet, and then to terminate; the Son thenceforth becoming a subject of God the Father.

According to this he must reign over those who are not put under Him, and will cease to reign as soon as they are made subject to Him! But in Scripture "reigning" implies the having under subjection those reigned over; as Lordship implies rightful ownership, though often not in possession. Thus those over whom the Son reigns must be those who are already put under Him—that is, made His subjects.

And further, this supposes the millennial kingdom to be one of constant warfare for the subduing of His enemies, like that of David, instead of that of Solomon, characterised by peace.

The passage in 1 Cor. 15. 24-28 can be understood only by seeing its evident reference to Ps. cx. 1, the text most frequently quoted in the

New Testament, "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool."

If the two passages are carefully compared it is hardly possible not to see that the words following the "until" in both texts refer to the same event. If so, then what precedes in each, though described by different words, must refer to the same period. Christ the Son is on the Father's throne. In other words, He is *reigning there*.

In their care to affirm the neglected truth of the Personal reign on earth, some have limited (as in the above question) the term "reign" to the millennial period, and therefore insisted on so taking it here, disallowing its application to a present "reigning" of the Son at the right hand of the throne of God (Heb. xii. 2). Yet in describing this elsewhere Scripture uses all the equivalents of the term: "Set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Heb. viii. 1). "He is set down with His Father on His throne" (Rev. iii. 21). And more in detail, 1 Peter iii. 22: "On the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him." These are now His "subjects," and we, too, by grace. But the kingdoms of this world are His enemies still. Over them He shall reign. They shall become His kingdom (Rev. xi. 15), when the Father shall put *them* under His feet.

For it is the Father that will put them under the feet of the Son—that is, *subdue* them to Him. This is clear from verses 27, 28 of 1 Cor. xv. And we have to read the passage thus: "When He (the Son) shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He (the Father) shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He (the Son) must reign (*i.e.*, on the Father's throne) till He (the Father) hath put all things under His (the Son's) feet."

Verse 26 would present a serious difficulty if the apostle had not explained later on in this chapter (verse 54) that he is here speaking, not of the great event of Rev. xx. 14, but of the abolition of death as an enemy standing in the way of Christ's reign on earth. Now death holds in its power the saints, without whom Christ is not to take that throne. It is "at His coming," when the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout (1 Thess. iv. 16), when the dead and living shall be caught up together, *then* shall come to pass the saying—that is, "Death is swallowed up in victory," subdued under Christ's feet.

And observe that the burden of the whole chapter is the resurrection of the saints, and the reason for thus introducing these verses is their

special relation to that event. Accordingly, of "all" the enemies that the Father will subdue to Him, only this one, death, is here spoken of.

"Then [*cometh, or is*] the end. "When?" "At His coming." This seems to have been read as though it meant "afterward," after an interval like that in verse 23. And the Revisers, contrary to their custom, have rendered the two different Greek words by the same in English. But if we examine these we find that they differ as to their force in Scripture. *Epeita*, "afterward," is used sometimes to express definite interval, as in Gal. i. 18-21; ii. 1. *Esta*, "then," though implying succession, never suggests a distinct interval. Where the two are brought together, as here, it is in the way of antithesis, rather than identity. Else surely if the same were meant, the same word, *Epeita*, would have been used in both.

This renders more comprehensible the thought of the subjection of the Son to the Father, deep and wonderful as that must ever be. The Father's right hand, where He now sits, represents a position of formal equality. In personally vacating that place to take from the Father a kingdom over those hitherto His enemies, He assumes a formally subject position.

Whatever may follow the thousand years, and all we know of this is limited to Rev. xx., Christ's kingdom will not then terminate. In spite of that last great rebellion, and under whatever altered conditions, He will go on to reign for ever and ever. There will be no "until" to bring that to a close.

Editor's Note.—We give this thoughtful and suggestive reply upon an admittedly difficult point. Possibly it may elicit correspondence, and thus lead to further help.

WOMEN'S BIBLE READING.

QUESTION 376.—Is there anything in the Word of our God that condemns believing women coming together an hour in the week for Bible reading? Some have no husbands, some have unsaved husbands, and others are not able to read for themselves. Some unsaved women can also be got in to the reading.

Answer.—It seems strange that such a question could arise in the mind of a believer. The Scriptures do condemn women coming together to gossip "from house to house . . . speaking things which they ought not" (1 Tim. v. 13); but the Scriptures certainly cannot be classed among the things of which women *ought not* to speak. But to be brief: We find in Titus ii. 3-5 that the *older* women are to "teach the young women." Could they have a better handbook for this purpose than the Word of God? M. M. D.

*"CERTAINLY I WILL BE WITH
THEE."*

Notes of New Year's Address by J. R. CALDWELL.

"Certainly I will be with thee" (Ex. iii. 12).

"My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give you rest" (Ex. xxxiii. 14).

ON the first day of this year this is a word to all our hearts. We need the assurance that the Lord will be with us. We would not face the year, with all its trials, perplexities, and temptations, with unprepared hearts. Let us take these words for our comfort and encouragement throughout the year upon which we have entered.

Joshua i. 8: "The Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." That was the confidence of Joshua in all his arduous service in bringing the people into the land.

Judges vi. 12: "Jehovah is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. Go in this thy might." What was his might? "The Lord is with thee." Gideon replied: "If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?" But the Lord had not been with Israel in their departure from Him. The Lord had taken up Gideon, and was with him. In himself he was weak as any other man, but with the Lord he was a "mighty man of valour."

Jeremiah i. 7, 8; The Lord said to Jeremiah, "Say not I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee." We have there the strength of Jeremiah. Consciously he is "a little child," and has "no might," and knows not what to do. But the Lord says, "I am with thee," and that is his strength.

And that is our confidence in entering upon this year, with all that the providence of God may have in it for us. A year of conflict doubtless it will be with the forces arrayed against us; so much of it as we may spend on earth will be a perpetual fight with the powers of darkness. But the Lord with us is our confidence and strength.

2 Chron. xv. 2: "Azariah went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, . . . *The Lord is with you*, while ye be with Him; and if ye seek Him He will be found of you; but if ye forsake Him He will forsake you." Else-

where we have the assurance of God that He will never leave nor forsake us (Heb. xiii. 5). It is equally true that "the Lord is with us while we be with Him, and if we forsake Him He will forsake us." This does not mean that He will forsake us ultimately and eternally. It means that if we part company with God, and go down to walk in the darkness, He will not walk with us there. He will not follow us into the darkness. It is a solemn thing to part company with God, and go in paths not pleasing to Him. It is for God's glory, and for our own blessing, that He leaves us for a time to reap what we have sown, to prove that "the way of transgressors is hard," and that the will of the Lord, and that alone, is "good and acceptable, and perfect."

It is only as we walk in the light that we have fellowship with God, and with one another. "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" It is only as we agree with God in the doing of His will, according to His plans and purposes, that He will walk with us. For instance, a little child is walking along with its parent, who holds its hand. The child wishes to go its own way. The parent says, "If you let go my hand and go where I forbid you, you will get hurt." The child will take its own way, and the father, with his eye upon it, allows it to go from him, knowing what will happen. It tumbles and gets itself hurt, and cries at once for its parent, who is ready to help it. That is just the way that the Lord often deals with His people. "If you will have your own way, then take it." He allows them to take the way they have chosen, but at the same time He hedges up their way with thorns; they kick against the circumstances that restrain them, and won't have it. At last they find that they are fighting against God—they are forsaking Him. Thus for a time He allows them to have their own way. It is not that the Lord really forsakes them. He is continually making intercession for them. Peter forsook the Lord when he denied Him, although told beforehand that it would take place. He left him to go on in his own way, until he denied Him three times. Then the Lord looked upon him, and that look broke his heart.

Let us accept both sides of the truth: Oh, to be in the path where we can count upon the Lord being with us! Gideon sought to be assured that God would save Israel by his hand. He asked God to assure him by putting a fleece of wool on the ground, and asking Him to signify His will by causing the dew to be on the fleece only, and the earth to be dry around it. The Lord consented to his request by filling the fleece with dew. Again he says to God, "Let me prove Thee this once by causing the fleece to be dry, and the ground to be covered with dew." Why did God condescend to Gideon's weakness thus? Because God respected his desire to be perfectly assured that He would be with him.

Let us seek to go in paths this year in which we may be assured of the presence of the Lord. That will save us from doubtful ways, and keep us out of questionable places and associations. It will keep you clear of many a temptation, snare, and entanglement.

Psalm xxiii: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for *Thou art with me.*" Also Isaiah xl. 3: "When thou passeth through the waters *I will be with thee.*" There was one along with the three children in the furnace like unto the Son of God (Dan. iii. 19-25). "The presence of the Lord is salvation." See that you have the presence of the Lord in your family, in your business, in all your service and testimony. Yea, seek to have the presence of the Lord with you wherever you go.

Read now Deut. xxxi. 8: "And the Lord, He it is that doth go before thee; He will be with thee, He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed." We are not to be in *front* of Him. He is to be in front of us. If I am following a person whose leading and guiding I have committed myself to, that means that I don't go anywhere except where he leads me. If I am really following the Lord I will not be found in any position and circumstance into which He would not go before me. Others may fail us, but He won't fail those who are truly trusting and following Him.

Numbers xiv. 40-45: Israel, in opposition to the will of the Lord, here say, "We will

go up unto the place which the Lord hath promised." But Moses said, "Go not up, for the Lord is *not* among you." "But they presumed to go up unto the hill top; nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the Lord and Moses departed not out of the camp. Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites . . . and smote them and discomfited them." You have there the same truth that I have been seeking to put before you. They had the promise of the Lord that He would never leave nor forsake them, and He did not forsake Israel, but His judgment came upon them, because they presumed to go forward without Him. The Lord had told them that because of their evil ways their carcasses would fall in the wilderness, and that their children should wander there forty years and bear the results of their sin. They answered, "We have sinned." But it was not a real confession. If there had been true contrition of heart there would have been an immediate bowing to the will of the Lord. But instead of that there was determined rebellion. They said, "We will go up." Accordingly they go, and are smitten before the enemy.

If you and I go in paths in which the Lord is *not before* us, and *not with* us, we are bound to be smitten before the enemy. Does the Lord lead His children to go into the public-house, or into the dancing-room, or into the theatre? Do you find Him there? Can you count on His presence being with you in such unhallowed places of resort? You are bound to get damage to your soul, for you well know that going in such a path you part company with the Lord.

God does not lead you into any place from which Christ is excluded, and with Him every thought of eternity. You know He does not lead you there, neither is He with you there. You are bound, if you go to such places, to be smitten before the enemy. Take these words with you from the commencement of this year: "The Lord He it is that doth go before you. He will not fail thee nor forsake thee." In order that this may be practically known and enjoyed, I must keep following Him, and not part company with that Lord who loved me and gave Himself for me. He claims my entire obedi-

ence in all that He has commanded. Let me see that whatsoever I am doing, whether to His own people or to the poor world around me, I am doing it to Him, and from love to Him.

God's dear children are suffering damage by association with the world. This is at the root of want of blessing in the Gospel. Many are parting company with their Lord and going in paths in which they know He is not, and cannot be, with them.

Then take this precious promise with you and go forward in the confidence that He is with you. "Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world." As you continue in the place of subjection to Him and His will as given in the Scriptures, He will give you the victory over all your enemies. As you thus submit yourself to Him you shall prove in your experience that His will is "good, acceptable, and perfect."

COMMUNION.

Notes of an Address at Leominster Conference
by DR. THOS. NEATBY.

"IF a man love Me he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

This is the privilege of every child of God—of the fathers, young men, and little children. My brethren, how much have we proved it to-day? How much have we known of that quiet communion with our God—with the Father and with the Son—which is here spoken of as "making our abode with him"? O how this communion would keep us from sin! If we sin, it is not only that communion is interrupted, but we have failed with regard to communion before sin could have come in.

It is not *indwelling* sin that interrupts my communion with God, though I have it in me, and I humbly own it before God. It is when I put that indwelling sin into action. But, beloved, before I sin communion with God has first declined, and that, surely, is part of my confession. *Righteousness* is not interrupted. Christ is my righteousness. Thank God, He has been my righteousness for more than fifty years uninterruptedly. Would to God that I could say the same as to my communion!

The Holy Ghost, the power for this communion, is in us. O to let that power work, to bring us daily, hourly into this communion through keeping Christ's words as we learn His will from His holy Word! How very little we know of it, my brethren! There are differences in intelligence and responsibility, but it is the *obedient* child that enjoys the Father's smile. You don't caress a naughty child. You are a naughty father if you do! Some, perhaps, may say to a disobedient child, "I won't love you, now." That is a mistake. A father loves his child through thick and thin. But it is the obedient child he caresses. And, beloved, God wants to caress you. He wants to have you in communion. It is keeping Christ's words that brings us into a state in which communion takes place.

"*He will keep My words.*" O to do the will of God from the heart, and to keep the words of Christ—in my business and in my family! O to do His will in the *home*! How we have failed *there*! And how we reap what we have sown! Let us live for Christ in our families, so that our wives and children may anticipate our coming home as the sunlight of the family. They will not if it is a "grumbler" who comes in. Let all our intercourse with them be the intercourse of one in constant communion. The Holy Spirit is the power in us for constant communion. We live in the day when He indwells believers on earth, and He keeps our souls fresh with living water, "springing up into everlasting life" (John iv. 14).

God has not mended me nor repaired me. He has put me to death with Christ, and as Christ really died, so I really died with Him. I am accepted in Him. The Lord Jesus says in verse 20, "I am in the Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." Christ is in us by the Holy Ghost, and it is this which is the living power in us for this obedience and to maintain our daily relations with Christ. We have failed in this in the past, but why should we not know it more fully now and more uninterruptedly?

A CHRISTIAN, when he comes into the world, lives to die again; but when he goes out of the world, he dies to live again.

THE COMING REVIVAL.

THERE is at the present time a widespread expectation that we are on the eve of a period of great revival in the Church and awakening among the unsaved. Not a few of the watchmen on the towers of testimony perceive tokens of the coming shower. Yea, they tell us they already hear the sound of "abundance of rain." It is now a far cry to "The 1859 Revival"—that wonderful time when, despite its peculiar external features, there can be no doubt that a mighty work was done by power from on High. Witnesses chosen and fitted of God for the work stood forth with a veritable message from the Throne. They passed through the land like a flame of fire. Men and women in hundreds and in thousands were awakened from "the dull dream of a sense-bound existence" to cry out, "What must we do to be saved?" The conviction of sin was intense. And when the sin-stricken ones "closed with Christ" their gladness in the Saviour's love could scarce be told in words. The tide of revival joy rose to its highest point. The risen Christ had "dominion from sea to sea" in the hearts of His ransomed people. They crowned Him "Lord of all." They knew no fear, save the fear lest they might sin against God! Happy people! Their word was with power. Their testimony was believed. The work widened and deepened; and, in spite of the hostile criticism of a scoffing world and those at ease in Zion, the 1859 Revival remains, and must remain, one of the great landmarks in the history of Gospel testimony in these realms.

From whatever cause or causes, the flame of revival gradually died down, but not before it had been the means of kindling many fires that continue burning with kindly glow until this day. The fruit of that period of awakening is still to be found. No doubt a death-roll of forty years makes havoc in the list, yet we meet them occasionally who tell us they were "born in the '59," and "garments fresh and foot unwearied tell how God has brought them through!"

Are we about to have another 1859? Are we to see, in these last days, a time of re-

vival that shall be like that of forty years ago in these great features—the love of Christ dominating the hearts of His people—holiness of character the rule of life—heaven-wrought conviction of sin in the hearts of the unsaved, with a deliverance from the power of the flesh, the world, and the devil, so manifest that many shall see it, and fear, and trust in the Lord? There are those among the Lord's watchmen who believe we are about to be favoured with such a time. Yea, they say we are already entering the tide of blessing! They have believed, therefore they speak. They connect '59 with '99. These forty years have rolled between—years marked by many a revival and many an awakening—years in which there has been much patient labour for God and much fruit to His glory—years in which His people have seen "His wonders in the deep" of their own experience, and have been sustained by the hidden manna and refreshed with the heavenly springs. Yet, withal, there has been a settling down. Worldliness is on the increase, faith has waxed feeble, and the lamp of love is burning low. Nevertheless, there are longing hearts—many, we doubt not—who are crying out, "O Lord, how long?" They have laid hold upon Him for a day of His power. And it is surely a significant token of the general expectation of coming revival that the first number of a new paper called *The Revival* should have just appeared.* It is to be issued monthly; and a hundred thousand copies of the January number were printed. A little paper with the same title appeared weekly during the period of the 1859 awakening, for the purpose of recording some of the wonderful works of God at that time, and the present sheet is a re-issue upon similar lines. The appearing of such a paper at this time shows there are those who believe we are on the eve of a great awakening. They are not afraid to bracket 1859 with 1899, and, as it were, to cry out, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight through the wilderness of sin and of human hearts an highway for our God." May we indeed be ready for His coming in revival power. Let us hear His voice saying, "Put away the strange gods

* *The Revival*, monthly, 3d., Morgan & Scott, London.

from among you"—a word that preceded a great deliverance in a bygone day (1 Sam. vii. 3). Surely it shall be our holy ambition to be of those "empty vessels, not a few," which shall bear the waters of God's salvation to a dying world. If "according to your faith so be it unto you" is a law of the Kingdom, then victory is assured, for God cannot deny Himself. Let us "go in to possess the land."

w. s.

GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE.

ISRAEL IN THE PAST.

By J. R. CALDWELL,

Author of "Christ in the Levitical Offerings," &c.

THE next of Israel's special privileges referred to is "the service of God," or as it is called in Heb. ix. 1, "divine service," and a marvellous privilege it was, if only they had discerned it. There were some who saw dimly through the shadows, but they saw enough to lead them to trust in Jehovah and to praise and worship Him.

The service of God was precious to the saints of Old Testament times. It was with joy they said, "Let us go up to the House of the Lord." Jehovah's feasts, His holy convocations, were their glad festivals, when He gathered His people around Himself that they might worship and rejoice before Him.

The Levitical ordinances, the Aaronic priesthood, with all its wealth of spiritual instruction and typical ceremonies, pointing to Him who was to come, is all included in "the service of God."

Next we have "the promises." I know not how many thousands of promises, but I should say the promises here specially referred to are those concerning the coming of the Lord Jesus. These are *the promises* above all others, just as "the promise" of this dispensation is the second coming of the Lord. The promise they had was that God would send the Messiah to them; all blessing and glory were bound up in this one promise, and the faithful counted upon its fulfilment and looked forward to the coming of the Redeemer and King as foretold to Abraham, Isaac, David, and Solomon. God never made promises to any other nation; in this Israel stood pre-eminent and alone.

"Whose are the fathers." In this sense the Gentiles have no "fathers." In Israel, genealogies were of great value, for the promises concerning Christ all connected Him with the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and then with the seed of David and Solomon. But Christ having come, according to all the prophetic Scriptures, the chief end of genealogies has been fulfilled—they are no longer needed, and, indeed, "endless genealogies" are condemned. Our genealogy without doubt takes us back to Noah and to Adam, and that is enough for us.

"And of whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came."

That was the crowning privilege and honour bestowed upon that chosen but unworthy nation. As concerning the flesh, Christ was first the seed of the woman, next the seed of Abraham, and finally the seed of David. When He comes again to reign He will take the throne as the Son of David, raised again from the dead.

In passing I may remark that this expression "as concerning the flesh" proves the divinity of the Lord Jesus, for if He were a mere man there could be no meaning in it. As to the flesh, He was the "child born;" as to His divine nature, He was the "Son given"—"God gave His only-begotten Son." Having glanced at this divine summing up of the privileges of Israel, I want you now to turn to Isaiah xviii. 1, 2.

I may remark that the Hebrew word here rendered "woe" is the same as that which in Isaiah lv. 1 is rendered "Ho—every one that thirsteth." The nation here described, but not named, is a maritime Power, with swift vessels, which with its flag overshadows many lands, and is favourable toward Israel. No nation answers to this description but Britain, and I believe it is she who is referred to here. Britain, though once she with others persecuted the Jews, has long ago ceased to do so, and has for centuries been a friend and protector, and affording a refuge and a home for the scattered people. For this there is a blessing upon this nation, proud and ungodly though it be. God will not forget the people who have shown kindness to Israel.

They are here called "a people terrible

from their beginning hitherto." Even though "scattered and peeled," and down-trodden in every nation but Britain, they are nevertheless a most influential people. Scattered over the face of the earth, mingled among the people of every nationality, nevertheless they are separate from all, and are still preserved as a living witness to the truth of God's Word, a miracle which the unbeliever cannot deny or gainsay, testifying of the faithfulness of God to the Word He has inspired.

"A people terrible from their beginning hitherto." Egypt oppressed them: were they not terrible in Egypt? Amalek opposed them: were they not "terrible" to the Amalekites? The nations of Canaan, the walls of Jericho all against them: were they not "terrible" there? Every nation that ever opposed or oppressed Israel has in its turn been judged by God. Depend upon it, the nations that are now oppressing and treading under foot the Jews will suffer judgment from God because of it.

Take care how you speak of the Jew. Let not the Christian join in the world's proverbial reproaches of that people even though they may have given occasion for much of the reproach they have incurred.

This nation, terrible from its beginning, will be yet more terrible in the future, for terrible indeed will be the judgment of God upon those nations which in the latter day will seek to exterminate the nation of God's choice, the nation beloved as the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to whom promises were made that God in His faithfulness will yet fulfil.

Turn now to Genesis x. 25: "Unto Eber were born two sons; the name of one was Peleg, for in his days was the earth divided."

When the children of Israel entered the land of Canaan it was Jehovah who divided to each tribe its inheritance. This was done by casting lots, but, as we read in Proverbs xvi. 33, "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." It was not chance; it was divine appointment. As really as God divided the land to Israel's tribes, so really did God divide the earth to the nations.

Now read Deut. xxxii. 8. "When the

Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel."

So early as the tenth chapter of Genesis, in the days of Peleg, did God mete out their portion to the nations, and arranged all with reference to the twelve sons of Jacob. Thus God had the land of Canaan in view as the portion set apart for them, which they shall surely inherit. From the great river to the river of Egypt, *i.e.*, from the Nile to the Euphrates, is their portion, and God has His eye upon that land. It does not belong to the Turks; it is Jehovah's land, and He will in His own time assert His right to it, and bring His people into it.

Not only is the nation of Israel a standing miracle in proof of the Divine Authorship and inspiration of the Scriptures, it is also a permanent witness to the over-ruling providence of God. Not only have we an inspired Book, but we have proof that He who inspired it over-rules everything in this world, making all things to work together for the fulfilment of His eternal counsels and His revealed will.

How is it that the land of Canaan is still kept waiting and ready for Israel? No Gentile industry has taken root in it. Jerusalem is thus reserved for the return of those to whom it belongs by right. Let us never forget the one Lord Jesus Christ, the King of the Jews, is "over all, God blessed for ever."

I sometimes think there is almost an unwholesome attraction for some minds in the subject of unfulfilled prophecy. Not that the subject is unwholesome, but it is often enquired into in a spirit of curiosity that does not tend to blessing. For this reason I dwell a little on how God, in the past, has been working out His sovereign will. All that He foretold has come literally true—true as to the judgments he would send upon them and the grace He would show them; true as to His sending the Messiah according to all the promises; true as to their rejecting and crucifying Him; true as to His resurrection and ascension; all has been fulfilled exactly as it was written before. And

if God has so fully and substantially fulfilled His word in those things that have had their accomplishment, we may with perfect certainty be assured that every word as to the future will also be fulfilled.

My object has not been so much to set before you an historic account of Israel in the past as to set forth the glory of God's providence and of His covenant grace to the chosen people, so that we may glorify God and rejoice that ours is this same covenant-keeping God.

FRUIT-BEARING.

An Address by the late Mr. HENRY HEATH.

Scriptures read—Psalm lxxx. 8-19; Isaiah v. 1-10 and xxvii. 2-3; John xv. 1-8; Gal. v. 22, 23.

THE first passage points us back to the time when God having preserved His people in Egypt, and having there formed them into a nation, brought them out by blood, by judgment, and by power. After bearing with their manners in the wilderness, having guided, guarded, and delivered them, He brought them into the Land of Promise. So to speak, He transplanted a vine from Egypt to Canaan.

In Isaiah v. 1-10 the vineyard is fully described, and also the conduct of the husbandmen; but there was one thing lacking, there was no promise of keeping it. It reminds me of the position Adam was placed in in Eden at first. He was perfect as a creature by the hand of his Creator. He was placed in the garden where there was everything that met his desire for his pleasure. There was not a single thing lacking on which he could have founded an excuse for his transgression. All was perfect, the work of his Creator in His mighty power and matchless wisdom.

But there was no promise to keep him. He was left to stand on the ground of a perfect creature against the wiles and methods of one who in the scale of creation was far above him, and one blast of that tempter swept him from his standing. And if you and I, raised up together with Christ infinitely higher and in a nearness to God of which he knew nothing, were left for one moment to stand apart from our Surety at the right hand of God,

we should have a more tremendous fall than even that of Adam.

In Isaiah xxvii. 1, 2 the very first thing stated of "the vineyard of red wine" is, "I will keep it night and day," "I will water it every moment." In the same chapter Israel is spoken of as on the ground of the covenant of grace. During the interval between Israel's fall and their restoration—between the time of their apostacy and their being scattered on the face of the earth and the time of their being gathered together unto Christ, during that period what has God on the earth? God always had a centre on the earth. When Adam stood in Eden unfallen, the eye of His Maker was always on him, the thoughts of his Maker's heart and His kindness centering on him. Everything was for Adam. Eve was for Adam. God said, "I will make him a help-meet for him."

From the call of Israel till the end God's thoughts (thoughts of peace, and not of evil) always centered in Israel. It was His delight to bless them. The nations around were blest in the measure in which they acknowledged Israel's supremacy and blessing. If they desired to share it, they had only to cast away their idols and acknowledge Jehovah as the only living and true God, and through circumcision came into the national commonwealth and share their blessing.

Israel being scattered, God has no centre in the earth now. Christ, God's well-beloved Son, is the True Vine. Through His death came life. Union with Christ by the Spirit enables the believer to bring forth fruit unto God. We by nature who were afar off, as far off as we could be—irrecoverable—as guilty and filthy as we could be, have been forgiven and cleansed through simple faith in the Gospel of the Grace of God, and united by the Spirit to Christ risen and seated at the right hand of God. That is the work which God by His Spirit has effected. When that work is completed, when the last living stone is laid on the foundation, when the last member of the body is in its place, when the Church is completed, and the body is formed, and the perfect Christ appears in the air, then Christ will return to His poor, scattered, guilty, persecuted brethren according to the flesh,

and bring them first to a knowledge of Himself and then to the possession of all the promised blessings; then Israel will again be God's centre in the earth.

Are we sufficiently thankful to-day that we are no longer in our sins, that we have been begotten by the sovereign grace of God, and by simple faith are found to-day united to the Lord Jesus Christ for eternity?

There are three different words used in John xv. in connection with fruit, namely, "fruit," "more fruit," and "much fruit." Life and fruit cannot be entirely separated. Everyone united to the Lord Jesus does bear fruit more or less. Even where the life is such that brethren can scarcely detect it, yet to the eye of God it is there. In my judgment life and fruit are inseparable.

Then we have "more fruit," that's in the case of those who, having some fruit, are subjected to purging that they may be more fruitful. This points to the discipline of the Father, to the edge of the sword of the Spirit doing its work. This points to those trials that are so difficult to bear that those passing through them have to be sustained by God's grace. This is in order that, though fruitful in a very feeble measure, they may become "more fruitful."

The next to me is a very searching word, because it calls up the question, Why do we seek to be more fruitful? Is it that we may be better pleased with our attainments? Is it that we may pass among our brethren as more fruitful? Or is it that we may please and glorify the Husbandman? That's what we want—the single eye to God's glory. His glory should be the end of everything we do. The object of all God's dealings with us is to fulfil His own counsels, to gratify His own heart, and magnify the riches of His grace. That makes salvation glorious, and as certain as it is glorious, God can never fail to glorify Himself.

"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." Those to whom He spoke were disciples already, but now they would rejoice as they understood discipleship thus, that grace had made them disciples. But the "much fruit" proves to those who behold us, who narrowly watch us (not always with a good motive) that we are what we profess

to be, disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. It glorifies God, and proves the reality of our character.

Now we come to that beautiful, precious cluster of fruit in Gal. v. The fruit that we are expected to bear is conformity in our daily life to that description of the fruit of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace," &c. Let us read it again and again. Read it in the closet, ponder it, judge our state of life by it, and then we shall ascertain whether we are glorifying God by "much fruit," proving to all around us that we are true disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. I only touch on love. From many passages of the Word of God we learn that the manifestation in our walk and life of divine love is the manifestation of the unseen God to the world who can never see Him (John i. 18). "If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and His love is manifested in us."

If it were possible that brotherly love should be banished from the earth, the world would be left in Egyptian darkness as to what God is. Sun, moon, and stars can speak for Him, but it is the privilege of those loved, redeemed, and brought to love God to manifest to the world what sun, moon, and stars never could, the love of God—"God is love." Let us be thankful for what fruit He has enabled us to bear.

We must ever have the right standard before us—Christ; as we have Him before us, we shall see our imperfections and shortcomings. Christ is our example. Christ is our pattern—none other. If you observe the most perfect saint under heaven, you will find presently a defect; but contemplate Christ, and the flesh is rebuked and repelled at every side, and we are brought low. But let us not be discouraged, for that life never can change, never can fail—that essential, vital union with Him "in whom all the fullness of the Godhead bodily dwelleth," and with the omnipotent indwelling Spirit, do I say too much when I say that we are thereby capable of the highest, holiest, and best that God can require.

[Shorthand notes of a number of other addresses on "The Son of God in Humiliation, Resurrection, and Ascension," "The Resurrection," "The Present Ministry of the Lord Jesus and His Promised Second Coming," and other subjects, by this aged servant of the Lord, will (D.V.) be given in future numbers.]

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

MR. HENRY HEATH.

"God took him" Jan. 1, 1899.

AT Home with God! Feebly the words
convey

To hearts and minds on earth the height of
joy

To which thy soul has soared, brother be-
lov'd!

Thine eagle-eye from far the glory viewed,
Yet not the glory—not the place—but Him,
The glorious PERSON thou didst gaze upon,
Until *thy* face reflected that bright light.

Heaven's calm sat on thy brow while here
below

Long years thy feet the pilgrim pathway
trod,

While yet thy spirit soared on eagle-wings
Within the veil, and, John-like, on the breast
Of thy beloved Lord, found there its Home!
There thou didst learn the *secrets* of His *love*,

And didst appropriate, reciprocate,
And seek to lead *our* souls thy bliss to share.
"Heaven lacks a charm, beloved (these were
thy words)

Till by the Bridegroom's side His Bride
shall be;

Then shall His heart and *ours* be satisfied!"

A glad New-year we wished thee:—God has
given

Gladness beyond our asking! To begin
The year in joy that never end shall know,
This is thy portion in the FATHER'S Home.

Leominster. Jan. 1, 1899.

M. M. D.

THE LATE MR. HENRY HEATH.

MR. HENRY HEATH was led to Christ in days of youth, and thus had the privilege of spending a long life in the service of the Lord and His people. Many years ago he spent some little time in Spain, and his visit was not without fruit, but, though he kept up his knowledge of Spanish for a long while, God fixed his sphere of service where his native tongue alone was needed. He was well known and much valued in Barnstaple and the neighbourhood, and he also spent some years in London, being specially linked with Christians assem-

bling in the name of the Lord at Hackney. About thirty years ago some special circumstances led him to the meeting at Woolpit in Suffolk, and this was considered his abode until his days of pilgrimage and his service on earth were ended.

Our departed brother was a man mighty in the Scriptures. He never used superfluous words, and those he did speak were always weighty. In listening to him one felt he was not saying something on the Scriptures, but was unfolding the Word itself in such a manner that it spoke to heart and conscience. In his ministry he combined in no ordinary measure truths which in the present day are so often separated—what Christ is on behalf of His people as our atoning Sacrifice and glorious High Priest, what He is in us by His Spirit, and what He is in the records of His life as our example.

In Conferences, which have become so much more general of late years, he was a valuable helper, but he was so retiring that he was apt to keep too much in the background. At his burial dear Mr. M'Vicker spoke of his humility and the absence of anything like self-display or self-seeking, and remarked, "I should as soon have expected to see the sun rise in the west, or a river running up-hill, as to hear of dear Henry Heath seeking any position or honour for himself." What an example to younger ones! But, thank God, he is not the only one of whom this is true. The Lord help us to remember such, and considering the issue of their conduct, imitate their faith (Heb. xiii. 7).

The close of dear Mr. Heath's earthly course corresponded with his life. Though some noticed last summer that he was more feeble, he went on much as usual till December 27th, when he was taken ill with a bad cold, which developed into pneumonia, and on January 1st, at 1.30 a.m., he fell asleep, in his 84th year. The end came somewhat suddenly, for even on Saturday (31st), though those around him were anxious, he did not seem to think himself worse. He dictated a brief letter to dear Mr. Chapman, saying that he and his niece had intended being with him on his birthday (January 4th, when he entered upon his 97th year), but his heavenly

Father had ordered otherwise; yet he had the hope of soon seeing him. Just after midnight, as the village bells announced the opening of the New Year, he rose up in bed, called to his niece (who was sitting by the fire) to light a candle, and said, "The morning breaketh—the morning without clouds," and gave her, as a New Year's text, "In Me ye SHALL have *peace*." The word was characteristic. About 1.30 a.m. he asked for some food; and in his niece's words, "I gave him some beef-tea, which he drank, I only raising his head sufficiently to do so; and as I gently laid his head down again, as I thought, to sleep, he gave two heavier breaths, and was 'with Christ.' It seemed just like a sudden translation." He was not of an emotional nature; there was nothing ecstatic about him, but he seemed always full of *peace*. It was evident that he knew the meaning of the statement, "Great peace have they which love Thy law."

Another prominent feature of his character was *steadfastness*. His was a calm, even path in the service of Christ, according to the Word of God, undisturbed by any wind of doctrine or any erratic practice. He evidently lived as one who always felt the truth expressed in the words spoken by him that night: "Another year gone, with a record kept on high of every day, and we must give account of how we have spent each day." The blessed hope of the Lord's coming was a great reality to him, and very constantly found expression in his ministry.

At the burial on January 6th, the large meeting-room at Woolpit was crowded by those who deeply felt their bereavement. The numbers gathered were chiefly from the neighbourhood, some having driven as much as twenty miles. Others had travelled from London, and a few still greater distances, to that country place, some miles north-west of Ipswich, to join in thanksgiving to God for the finished course and the blessed rest of His beloved servant, as well as to express regard for him and sympathy with one another. With such thanksgiving, prayer was mingled for those specially bereaved, while words of profit and encouragement were spoken. In the quiet burying-ground close to the meeting-room the remains were laid

by the side of those of his dear wife, who was taken five years ago. There they await the blessed resurrection, while the remembrance of him, whom his aged fellow-servant at Barnstaple, and some of his younger fellow-servants too, will greatly miss, is well calculated to enforce the exhortation: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." W. H. B.

THE ROME-GRADE.—II.

ECCLESIASTICAL ART.

By J. S. ANDERSON, Florence.

IT is natural to man to enjoy that which appeals to his senses, and a religion that gratifies these will be more popular than spiritual truth. Many are giving up the religion of their fathers because they think that *art* ought to be united to *faith*. "Religious art," they say, "appeals to our best affections and softens the soul."

Our Rome-grade friends consider worship without ceremony as a bird without wings, and they regard Protestant places of worship, be they "churches," chapels, or simple halls, as melancholy, mute, artless, dead. No vases of "holy" water to teach the need of purification; no confessional to remind us that we must seek mercy and pardon; no altar on which "the daily sacrifice" of Christ assures us that He is with us always, even to the end of the world! No lights to speak to us of charity; no crucifix to inspire us with trust! All is earthly, with no image of heaven—dead as a cemetery! All closed save a few hours weekly, and open then only to "hear a sermon"! No sacrifice, no worship, no priesthood, no spotless robes, no sacraments, no picture for the eye, no music for the ear, no "holy" incense for the nostrils! No processions, no festivals to relieve the monotony of life; no self-mortification nor humiliation! Cold, wandering, capricious prayers; heartless, artless praise and a sermon—that is all!

We have endeavoured to give an impartial hearing to our Rome-grade critics, and if, in some points, they have observed the real defect of "Protestant worship"—that is the

want of worship—we trust the reproof will lead to better things.

And now we may in all love offer a few words to our Rome-grade friends. And in the first place we shall readily admit that what is generally called “natural religion” is dependant upon appeals to the senses. But let it not be forgotten that this very fact is the basis of all idolatry, and that in proportion as a religion is sensual it is idolatrous. But let us hear what the early fathers say about ecclesiastical art. We shall content ourselves with a few examples.

Tertullian says that Christians *do not burn incense*. And it was not until the beginning of the seventh century that this pagan rite became renewed.

Origen distinctly says that Christians had no altars, but tables, and this is exactly what the Apostle Paul teaches (1 Cor. x. 18-21) when contrasting the *heathen altar* and the *Lord's table*.

St. Ambrose, speaking of St. Helen, who (tradition says) found the “three crosses”: “Helen worshipped the King (Christ), not the wood, and this is the error of the Gentiles and the vanity of the unrighteous.”

St. Augustine, speaking of images, says: “The only image which we ought to make of Christ is to have ever present before us His humility, His patience, His goodness, and to endeavour to make our lives like His. Those who go and seek Jesus and the apostles on painted walls instead of in the Scriptures deserve to fall into error.”

We trust, then, that all who have gone, or are going thus on the Rome-grade, will lay to heart the timely warning of their greatest doctor, who, with other leading teachers of those days, saw the corrupting tendency of ecclesiastical art, and, a thousand years before Luther, *protested* against it.

But I trust these lovers of ecclesiastical art will lend an attentive ear when I ask them a still more important question: Do you not think that the Son of God, the Head of the Church, the Creator of all that is beautiful and pure, could and would have ordered and provided a ritual more gorgeous than that of *St. Peter's*, in Rome, had He considered it helpful to the worship and edification of His Church? Not only so,

but what think ye of His loving, living words, spoken at Jacob's well: “God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him *must* worship Him in spirit and in truth” (John iv. 24). And observe that Jesus, speaking of Himself as “the Truth,” “the *True Vine*,” laid special stress on the fact that He was the *reality* of all past shadows, “for the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never, with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect” (Heb. x. 1). And when He assures us that “where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matt. xviii. 20) our Lord does not hint at even one of the manifold religious externals, without all of which the Rome-grade party consider their worship artless, and therefore heartless!

You will readily admit that there was not ecclesiastical art in the synagogue in which Jesus taught, nor in that home in Bethany where Mary loved to sit at His feet and hear His word, nor in the large upper room, furnished, in which He ate the passover with His disciples and washed their feet, nor in His meetings with them after His resurrection.

But some one on the Rome-grade may reply: “While He, who is the light and life of the world, was here in person men did not require any representation of Him, or of the truths He came to teach.” Well, let us follow the apostolical testimony.

We shall begin with Luke xxiv. 52, 53: “And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.” Acts i. 13, 14: “And when they were come in they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, and Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphæus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren.”

Chapter ii. 1: “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come they were all with one accord in one place.”

Idem 41, 42: “Then they that gladly re-

ceived His Word were baptised, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers." So that the only ecclesiastical art of those blessed times was the heavenly art of brotherly love and fellowship.

Nor in the later assemblies of Christians in apostolic times do we find any allusion to material ecclesiastical art. All is simple and spiritual.

As to MUSIC, the apostle says: "Be filled with the Spirit, singing to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph. v. 18).

As to INCENSE: "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ" (2 Cor. ii. 15).

As to ALTARS: "We have an altar. . . . Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp bearing His reproach" (Hebrews xiii. 10-13).

As to ROBES: "Be ye clothed with humility" (1 Peter v. 5).

As to PRIESTS: "Be ye also as living stones [built up, a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter ii. 5).

As to "holy" WATER: "Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word" (Eph. v. 26).

As to CROSSES: "God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. vi. 14).

As to SACRIFICE: "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come" (1 Cor. xi. 26).

As to PICTURES: "So great a crowd of witnesses" (Heb. xii. 1).

As to CONFESSIONALS: "First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matt. v. 24).

As to LIGHTS: "Let your light so shine before men" (Matt. v. 16).

Beloved friends, if you are going on the Rome-grade in quest of ecclesiastical art, let me remind you that it was not lacking in Athens, when at the sight of the city full of idols Paul's spirit was stirred within him.

And the apostle admits that in all things the Athenians were too superstitious, "for," he says, "as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, *To the unknown God.*" The apostle knew well that what Athens and the whole world needs is not ecclesiastical art to appeal to the senses, but the Word of God to appeal to our consciences, and so he concludes, as I would affectionately and earnestly do to all on the Rome-grade: "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you. . . . And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to REPENT. Because He hath appointed a day in the which He will JUDGE the world in righteousness by THAT MAN whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given ASSURANCE unto all men, in that He hath RAISED Him from the dead."

RAISING THE DEAD.

Notes for Bible Readings.

THE three occasions on which our Lord raised the dead have some lessons for us who seek to win souls for Christ.

Let us notice these occasions—

1. Luke viii. 54...Maid.
2. Luke vii. 14...Young man.
3. John xi. 43...Lazarus.

I. THE LENGTH OF TIME EACH HAD BEEN DEAD.

1. The maid.....Just dead.
2. Young man.....On way to grave.
3. LazarusFour days dead.

In each case they were *dead*, and needed Divine power to raise them.

(1) The maid *just dead* reminds us of the little ones in Sunday School—*just dead*, as it were, uncontaminated by the evil around.

(2) The young man, with more knowledge of the world and its sins, less desire for God—a further stage of death.

(3) The grown-up person steeped in sin—haters of God. Beyond hope, as far as man is concerned.

II. MODE OF RAISING THE DEAD.

(1) In the case of the maid, He took her by the hand. What a lesson for those of us who seek to teach in Sunday School. Let us lead the little ones by the hand to Christ—make ourselves children with them.

(2) With the young man, He touched the bier—that upon which he was borne. O for the gentleness of Christ to make us great in winning souls. May we be able to touch the bier that is carrying so many young men to the grave—the bier of immorality, of drink, of indifference, of worldly pleasure. How difficult it is to get them to stand still, that they may hear the voice of the Son of God.

III. WHAT FOLLOWED THE RAISING OF THE DEAD.

(1) To the maid—Give her meat. Yes, the young ones need food, and suitable food. We cannot raise the dead, but we can help with the food.

(2) Delivered him to his mother. Ah! young man, if you are really converted, Jesus would have you care for your mother. Let her be the first to see the new life. When one sees young men always coming to the front, we often feel inclined to ask, What does his mother think of him? How does he behave to her?

(3) Loose him, and let him go! When a grown-up person gets saved, there is so much to be loosened. How sin and this present world bind men round. Grave-clothes do very well for the grave, but are worse than out of place on the living. As our Lord left us an example, may we seek to follow in His steps.

H. C. H.

IMMEASURABLE LOVE.

WHAT a satisfying portion the Lord Jesus is, with all the unsearchable riches of His love, and of His sweet communion! Let us try to search out the unsearchable wonders of His grace and His glory; to measure the immeasurable lengths, and breadths, and depths, and heights of His infinite love. We cannot do it. Well, but let us try our utmost, just that we may find out that it cannot be done, and that we cannot do it, not because we are so very small, but because Christ and His fulness of grace is so inconceivably great. And now, when we have worn out ourselves with our unsuccessful effort to comprehend Him, let us refresh our weary hearts with the delightful thought that this same Christ, with all that He is, and all that He has, and all that He can do, is actually God's amazing gift

of love to us. Yes, God has given us His beloved Son, because He so loved us, that no smaller gift would have sufficed to express the greatness of that love. We need nothing more.

—JOHN DICKIE.

Correspondence.

BAPTISED FOR THE DEAD.

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

IN reply to Mr. Holiday's letter I can only add a very brief note or two. That in the interpretation of the passage favoured by him baptism is made to do duty for conversion will be obvious to any who will refer to J. N. Darby's Synopsis (*in loco*): "Baptised, then, for the dead, is to become a Christian," &c. This is the doctrine that I condemn as untrue. If it were true, is it not strange that the Scriptures elsewhere contain no allusion to such a thought as that new converts should confess Christ in baptism as substitutes for the dead ones?

Besides, Mr. H. seems to forget that there is no evidence that there were any deaths of believers in Corinth to whom this verse could refer, but even if there had been such in the ordinary course of nature, as seems probable, unless there had been also deaths in the martyr sense, viz., in the cause and service of Christ, and as the result of persecution, this view of the passage would not apply. But there is no record of persecution in Corinth, or of martyr deaths, and the notion that some persons were baptised to replace the fallen witnesses is without a shadow of foundation.

Mr. H. does me a service, for my remark "that there is no sense in such an explanation as a proof of resurrection," should have been "as a proof of faith in resurrection." It was a mere *lapsus calami*. My context shows that that was what I was proving, viz., that Paul's appeal was to existing faith and practice. What I sought to show was that for one man to be baptised because another had died was no evidence of his belief in resurrection, rather the reverse; and I illustrated this by the case of a soldier recruited to take the place of one who had been killed. There is no faith in resurrection exhibited. Devotion, loyalty, self-sacrificing love are exhibited indeed, as in many cases by gallant men in battle-fields, but faith in resurrection would not thus be proved.

Mr. H. mistakes me if he thinks that I translate *huper* (*ὑπερ*) "as being" or "to be." I translate it "on behalf of"; so does Mr. Pridham, in his book on 1 Corinthians. He says: "That which they undergo in their mortal bodies they undergo on behalf of their own dead selves." This I explain by saying: "They, the living, are bap-

tised for the dead," that is in the character of the dead, being the dead figuratively, though actually the living (page 191). A translation and an explanation are not the same thing.

The expression favoured by Mr. H., "instead of," will suit my view very well. The living body is baptised instead of the dead flesh, and as its representative.

As to Mr. H.'s final remark that the Revised translation, "for them," is against my view, I only remind him that the substitution of a pronoun instead of a noun introduces nothing new into the sense. It merely avoids inelegant repetition. Let me add that the very word used here (*νέκροι*) nekroi, is that used in Romans vi. 11, "reckon yourselves to be dead." That is what we do when we ask to be buried in baptismal waters, and to that the apostle here refers; at least in my humble judgment. G.F.T.

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

Is not the real difficulty simply owing to our degenerate ideas as to what baptism is? Our Lord says, "Are ye able to be baptised with the baptism that I AM BEING baptised with?" (present tense in the Greek)—Ram's skin dyed red. He was at that moment "in deaths off," "dying daily," "the Man of Sorrows," "baptised in sorrows," "immersed in grief." So his close follower, the Apostle Paul, living the life of Christ, was being daily baptised in the same way, and other FAITHFUL ones with him. Thus the apostle asks in 1 Cor. xv. 29: "Else what will they do who are being immersed?" (Rotherham's translation) "on behalf of the dead? If not at all the dead are to be raised, why are they even being immersed on their behalf?" Again a similar question, springing out of the former, is asked by him: "Why are we also running into peril every hour? Day by day AM I dying," &c.

Had Mr. Holiday's view, which is indeed a view put out by many, been the truth taught, we should have had: "Else what shall they do, who were or have been baptised instead of the dead?" Now, the Greek word *παρὶ* *θούρα* cannot be thus translated. Also, I believe any real classic would say that the Greek preposition *ὑπὲρ* never means absolutely "instead of;" but always (with the genitive) "on behalf of," and sometimes (by extension) "on behalf of and instead of"—the two ideas always going then together. Never does *ὑπὲρ* mean absolutely "instead of," as in Luke xi. 11: "Instead of a fish, will He give him a serpent?" Here *ὑπὲρ* could not be used. It is the preposition *ἀντί*. It is impossible to divorce the meaning "on behalf of" from *ὑπὲρ*. Now, there is and can be no such thought as "on behalf of" in the passage, as Mr. H. explains it. Therefore, as it is only substitution according to

him, the preposition should and *must* have been *ἀντί*, which it is not, and therefore he is wrong.

M. T. B.

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

It seems to me that much of the mist which surrounds 1 Cor. xv. 20 arises from losing sight of the *subject* of the chapter, viz., the resurrection of the *body*. With this I send an extract from the pen of an able writer, and trust it may be helpful:

"This text affords another example of the manner in which Scripture connects the doctrine of baptism with the hope of resurrection.

"Some in the Church at Corinth were beginning to teach that there would be no resurrection of the body. 'Why, then,' asks the apostle, 'were ye baptised? In baptism ye professed ye had hope as to the future; and ye said well, for baptism does refer to a future hope in resurrection, grounded on the resurrection of Him who has risen as the firstfruits of His people. But if there be no resurrection, what meaning is there in your baptism?'

"It would be folly to say that your hope respects the grave, and that you are baptised in reference to, or in behalf of, your dead bodies. Baptism cannot imply hope in the corruption of death, and yet there is nothing else to which it can point in futurity, if there be no resurrection.

"The apostle's words are designedly abrupt, and should be pointed thus: 'Else, what meaning will there be in the act of those who are baptised? They must be baptised on behalf of their dead bodies, if dead bodies rise not at all. Why, then, are they baptised for them?'

"The apostle speaks of the thought of being baptised on behalf of their dead bodies not only as an absurdity, but as an *acknowledged* absurdity. He assumes that no one would ever think of alleging such a reason for baptism, and therefore his argument is—'Ye must either abandon baptism or admit the resurrection.'

"If, then, the passage be rightly pointed, it will be seen that there is no such thought in the Scriptures as 'baptism for the dead;' and the thought of being baptised with reference to any hope attaching to us in death is only referred to as one too preposterous to be entertained by any.

"All the laboured expositions, therefore, of this passage fall to the ground, for they are attempted expositions of words which, so connected, are not found in Scripture.

"As to the supposed practice of baptising living persons, as substitutes or sponsors for the dead, it was a practice unknown in the apostolic age, and afterwards was adopted only by heretics, such as the Cerinthians and Marcionites. The fathers' reputed orthodox would not tolerate it. As respects the practice of baptising 'over' the

graves of martyrs, not a trace of such a practice appears in the apostolic age. It was introduced later by some, probably from a mistaken interpretation of this passage. Nor would any interpretation that required 'huper' to be understood in the sense of 'super,' 'over,' be admissible, for 'huper' is not used in the New Testament in that local sense."

Having given this extract, I would ask your readers who have *The Englishman's Greek Concordance* to turn up "huper," and they will see the truth of the last clause in extract. T. C.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

MANY views indeed have been taken of this scripture, as the foregoing correspondence may serve to indicate.

To us it appears incredible that the apostle should base an argument upon a practice that is not sanctioned, or even alluded to, in Scripture.

On the other hand, it seems almost as incredible that he should omit reference to the obvious signification of the ordinance of baptism, which he himself in Romans vi. and Colossians ii. shows to be symbolical of death and resurrection.

Instituted by the Lord, practised by the apostles, familiarly known and understood by the whole Church, how is it possible that so cogent a point should be omitted from so exhaustive an argument as 1 Corinthians xv.?

It seems to us that to give a wider latitude to the use of the Greek *huper*, as suggested by Mr. Trench, offers far less difficulty than any of those interpretations which are based on an alleged sentimental or superstitious meaning humanly imported into the simple ordinance which sets forth death and resurrection with Christ. J.R.C.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

UNITY AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.—(1) In Eph. iv. 3 we are commanded to "give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace," and in verses 4 to 6 we are told of the seven component parts of that unity. What are the responsibilities flowing from each one of the seven parts of the unity entailed upon us by the command to keep it? (2) If the unity expressed by partaking of the one loaf at the Lord's Supper be the unity of the One Body of Christ (as is shown in 1 Cor. x. 17), must the Lord's Table not always be spread for every member of that One Body?

CO-OPERATION AND JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is a member of a co-operative society in the same position as a shareholder in a joint-stock company?

"IN CHRIST" AND "IN THE LORD."—What is the difference, if any, between "in Christ" and "in the Lord"?

LIFE AND DEATH.—Please explain Romans viii. 10 and 13. In what aspect are we to understand "life" and "death" in these two verses?

CHRISTIANS AND POLITICS.—If all Christians were to abstain from politics, the government of our country would be entirely in the hands of the unconverted. Would this be right or scriptural?

PROPITIATION.—(1) Heb. ii. 17. Is the function of propitiation-making (see R.V.) referred to here an allusion to the service performed by the High Priest within the sanctuary (see Lev. xvi. 14-17) on the day of atonement, which was exclusively high-priestly?

(2) In view of Heb. viii. 4, which states the Lord was not a High Priest on earth, and He gives the reasons for it (verses 4 and 5), where was the service of Heb. ii. 17 wrought? If the Lord was not a High Priest on earth, and Heb. ii. 17 states, He must be one to make propitiation, remembering also, to introduce His priesthood before death would abrogate the force of Heb. v. 6 10 and vii. 16, 17, 24, where and when was propitiation made?

(3) Heb. ix. 12. The Lord entered by blood—by (*διὰ* characteristic), not in virtue of. Where did He enter? If the heavenly sanctuary, then it is in contrast to the earthly. But why *by* blood? If the entrance be relegated to the ascension-day, what necessity then *by* blood? Aaron entered the earthly sanctuary by or with blood; he is the type, and in the capacity of a High Priest. What for? Is it to make atonement? (Lev. xvi.) Will the antitype tell differently, remembering the capacity in which he did so? (Heb. ix. 11); and in what connection the entrance is mentioned? On the ascension day atonement in all its parts was assuredly complete.

WHAT COMMANDMENTS?

QUESTION 377.—What commandments are referred to in the following passages? (1) "One of these least commandments" (Matt. v. 19); (2) "Whatsoever I commanded you" (Matt. xxviii. 20); (3) "If ye keep my commandments" (John xv. 10). Are our Lord's commandments in Matt. v. and Luke vi. addressed to believers in the present dispensation?

Answer.—The answer depends upon what is meant by "the present dispensation." If it is

supposed to begin at Pentecost, or later, the question might present difficulty. But Scripture nowhere so defines the term, nor the idea. The Lord Himself defined it in these words, "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man *presseth into it* (Luke xvi. 16)—*a present order of things, beginning with His ministry, not to be confounded with the future manifested kingdom*—see *Witness*, July, 1896, p. 102; August and September, 1898, pp. 110 and 141. If, then, we accept this as the Lord's own declaration of the distinction between the past and "the present dispensation," it becomes evident that "whatsoever He commandeth" (Matt. xxviii. 20, or John xv. 10), or whatsoever He endorsed (Matt. v. 19) are addressed to His disciples under the present dispensation. w. c.

Editor's Note.—Matthew v. 19 must be read in connection with verses 17 and 18. Evidently it is the law of Moses, which by all the prophets was enforced (see Mal. iv. 4), that is here referred to. Matthew xxviii. 20 must refer to all the teaching of the Lord Jesus, and the same applies to John xv. 10, but here with special reference to the new commandment. The principle and precepts of the new covenant do not in any case lead to the breach of any "righteous requirement" of the law (see Rom. viii. 4; xiii. 10).

But it is necessary to discern between commands of the Lord Jesus which might be called local and temporary, and those which involve permanent obligation. For instance, Matthew v. 23, 24 cannot apply literally to a dispensation in which there is no altar on earth. Nevertheless, its application spiritually is definite and practical. Again, Luke x. 4, 5 is special and temporary, and is rescinded in xxii. 35-37.

Referring to reply given above, it appears to us that in many important respects the present dispensation is characterised by the ascent of the Lord to the right hand of the Father and the descent of the Holy Spirit, and therefore began at Pentecost, but this does not necessarily render any command of the Lord one whit less binding upon His people now. On the contrary, seeing that He lived what He taught, and "left us an example that we should follow His steps," this must involve obedience to all His commands.

SCHISM AND ITS EFFECTS.

QUESTION 378.—1 Cor. xii. 25. What is schism, and how does it affect the body?

Answer.—The word properly means a *rent*, as in cloth (Matt. ix. 16.; Mark ii. 21), and then a division, split, faction among men (John vii. 43, ix. 16, x. 19). In 1 Cor. xi. 18 it does not mean that separate churches had been formed, but that division, not merely of opinion (i. 10), but

shown in outward acts (xi. 21), existed in the Church itself. According to modern usage of terms, schisms are generally the outcome of heresies—meaning doctrinal error, but in *Scripture*, sect (Acts v. 17, &c.; see Anderson's *Rome-grade*)—but v. 19 shows heresies to be "divisions which are not recent divisions of congregation, but schisms which have now become inveterate." At present, schisms, dissensions; in future, heresies, matured separations.

"Schism" in xii. 25 denotes no ecclesiastical division of any kind. That Paul had, as above, dealt with "first of all" (xi. 18-34) and now secondly (chs. xii. to xiv) with abuse of spiritual gifts. He argues that the practice of one gift should not be esteemed or given a place before all others, and the possessor of it given undue prominence and scope to the disparagement of others. (Thus he compares gifts xiv. 20, 23, 26, 33, showing Corinthians' notions to be incorrect.) They thus caused division in *the operations of the body*, where only divine order existed, failing to see that the least gift was needed, each forming reciprocal complements of each other.

As to schism and "the body." Looked at from the standpoint of God's purpose, it is the new creation, therefore perfect, unbreakable, an indivisible unit. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." How often repeated, many members, but *one body*. It is noteworthy that this term is applied to saints on earth *at any one time* (Eph. iv. 16; Col. ii. 19), showing that at no time does it ever lack a limb. No Scripture speaks of a maimed or defective body. All saints are members of one body. In a human family the common relationship of members is unbreakable, though friendship may not exist. Looking at the Church from its outward manifestation, it is indeed rent asunder. The inner relationship exists, hidden to the natural eye, though it will yet be manifested (Col. iii. 4), but the fellowship which should flow therefrom is wanting, and the operations of the body are hindered, but not destroyed, for God will perfectly work out His purpose in the Church. J. H. H.

Editor's Note.—The figure of a body, head and members, characterises the Church rather as purposed and seen by God, and it is used to enforce mutual love, responsibility, and care. But it is the will of God that all the features devised in His eternal counsels should be made good and manifested practically in the assembly.

Schism, whether the spirit of it, shown in the lack of lowliness and love to other members of the body of Christ, combined with wilfulness, or the outward manifestation of it in divisions and separations among saints, affects not the essential unity of the body, but it does affect that manifestation of oneness, as of a body, which is pleasing to God and glorifies His Name.

THE PRESENT MINISTRY OF THE LORD JESUS.

Address by the late Mr. HENRY HEATH, of Woolpit, Suffolk.

BEFORE I enter upon the definite subject of to-day's lecture let me say how pleasant it is to think that each and all of us who are saved, whether old in Christ's service or only born yesterday, are linked to the Lord Jesus Christ, have all the virtue and the value of His death, and all the capabilities and activities of an endless life, begun here and perfected in resurrection. O think how blessed that each one, without robbing another, can claim an entire Christ as his or hers.

How careful we should be, how full of praise, and what obligations it lays upon us to seek more and more to live for Him who died to make us His, and lives to preserve us; who died as our surety, by His perfect obedience, to pay that debt we owe. We need Him as a surety now, we shall need Him as a surety through eternity. But for that suretyship our exalted position in Him, if left to ourselves, would only expose us to a more tremendous fall than even our father Adam knew. He became our surety to free us from condemnation and curse, and He is our surety to preserve us in life for eternity. Even while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. Much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. Not His life before His death, but His resurrection life. We are saved to eternity by that endless life.

Then with regard to His ministry, that He was a minister we know from His own words. When the request of the two sons of Zebedee to sit one on His right and the other on His left hand in His kingdom provoked the other ten disciples to envy the two, He taught them the lesson of humility. He took up a little child and said that except they were converted and became as little children they should not enter the kingdom; that he who would be great must be a servant, and he that would be chief of all must go a step lower and become a slave: for it is by sinking believers rise. And then He says: "Even as the Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister

and to give His life a ransom for many." And His whole life proves that He was the minister, the servant of Jehovah. And was He not the substance of the shadow cast from all eternity. All that Christ was manifested to be on earth He was in the counsels of God from eternity, and because He stood in those relationships He cast a shadow on the earth. You remember that the servant, who had liberty in the year of jubilee to go out free from his master's house, he who had married and had children, when the day came for him to go free if he pleased, must leave behind him the dear offspring of his love. And he is described as coming to his master and saying: "I love my master, I love my wife, I love my children. I will not go out free." And the servant, in token of that, was taken by his master to the door and his ear bored through with an awl, to be the token of a life-long servitude from love to master, wife, and children.

Well we know what led the Saviour to come from heaven to earth. It was love of His Father, and delight to do His will—love to poor sinners, for whom He came to die. And afterwards He became the servant for eternity—the servant of the Father, and therefore He says when He enters the world: "Mine ears hast Thou digged:" interpreted, in Hebrews, "A body hast thou prepared Me;" so that from love to the Father, love to the Church, He became for eternity the servant of the Father, and used the body which God prepared Him, with all its faculties and all its powers, in a life of service.

Then He had His shadow also in the priesthood under the law, and you remember that instructions were given to Aaron for priests in their service. They were not left to their own wills or their own understanding to discern, to determine, and to fulfil the functions of their office, but there were divine instructions given, divine lines drawn, for their constant conduct. Part of their ministry was performed in sight. The congregation could see a part of it, and when not the whole congregation, those who were connected with the priesthood (the Levites) could witness their service.

But there was a part of the priestly ser-

vice hidden except to the eyes of God. That was when the priest, having dealt with death outside the door of the tabernacle, carried the blood within the veil, and there sprinkled it and filled the inner part of the temple, the holiest, with incense from the censer in his hand. That part of his ministry was hidden; it was secret. How, then, could the people know what he was doing? By consulting the testimony of God given to Moses as to how he was to enter, what he was to do when he was there, and what, after having sprinkled the blood and filled the holiest with incense, he was to do, viz., to come out and with uplifted priestly hands bless the people. Thus the ministry was divided into that which was visible unto the entire company and a hidden service, which they could understand, because God had given directions to the priest how to perform it when within the veil.

We know that the histories of the gospels acquaint us with what the ministry of the Lord Jesus was up to a certain point. Trace Him through the gospels and you will see Him always in that character, manifesting the mind and Spirit of God to those who loved Him. But there came a time when His ministry became invisible. No one could see it. You remember that Aaron, as I said just now, dealt with blood, with death, outside the veil. He, in virtue of that blood and to use that blood, passed within the veil, there in silence sprinkled the blood before and on the mercy-seat, raised a cloud of incense to Jehovah, and then came out and blessed the people. When the Lord Jesus Christ had dealt with death and with sin, when by the Cross he had answered all that was foreshadowed by blood shedding, He passed, by His own blood, *i. e.*, in virtue of it, the blood being his title, into heaven, "there to appear in the presence of God for us."

Aaron, you know, had to take the blood, the material fluid, within the veil. Why? Because he could not take life from the beast outside and take the beast living inside with him. But when the Lord Jesus laid down His life as an atoning sacrifice He took up that life and passed, by virtue of His blood, a living Person into the presence of

God. So that we now have not a mercy-seat made and adorned by human hands, but we have a living Person in the presence of God as our mercy-seat, whom we preach, and through whom the mind of God is communicated to us. Let us rejoice, then, beloved, that we have the Lord Jesus, who died on the cross to redeem us by His blood, in the presence of God, hidden from bodily eye, but the "real minister of the sanctuary," our minister, to minister, as we need it, wisdom and grace.

Then, how can we understand what He is doing if it is hidden from us? He has come to the world, and hear what He has said, and what the Spirit has said since concerning His ministry.

In the first place, let me recall to you the words He uttered to Mary Magdalene at the time when He was risen and she was seeking Him, and she was grieved and sorrowful in spirit. He said: "Woman, woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" She answered that someone had taken away the body of her Lord, and she knew not where they had laid Him. Now, the Saviour knew full well why she wept and whom she sought, but He delights to have the heart opened and told out to Him. And as soon as ever she had told Him the object of her search and the cause of her tears, He changes the title to "Mary, Mary," and she immediately recognised Him.

I would say to any that have sorrow or temptation in their hearts, or difficulty in judging as to which of two paths to take, Have you told the Lord about it? Have you opened your heart to Him about it? If not, you will have to carry it about as a burden—though He knows all about it—until you have dealt with Him as a friend, and told Him out your grief, and expressed to Him your desire. And when you do that He will act as a true minister of the sanctuary, and relieve you and give you comfort. Pour out your heart, turn the vessel upside down, open it out thoroughly to that blessed one. He loves you, and you will find He will give you the relief you need.

Another instance: when the two apostles were journeying with heavy heart, and perhaps heavy step too, towards Emmaus, He

joins them. He knew why they were sad, where they were going, what the burden of their conversation was, but He puts the question, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?" And then they told Him why they were sorrowful, what their difficulty was; and we know what it resulted in. As He broke bread with them and gave thanks He was manifested to them as the Christ they had loved—another example of the blessedness of our believing and trusting the love of Christ, and unbosoming and opening the heart and telling out everything to Him as the sure way to relief.

Mary had a commission to go to the disciples and say, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God." Now, that gives us light on the commencement of the ministry which we cannot see with the bodily eye. But His Word instructs us, and we hold fellowship with Him as He performs it in the presence of the Father. He ascended "to His Father and our Father." Then, He is the first-born of the family, and the first-born of the family is at home with the Father, and when the eye of the Father rests on the first-born He sees all the younger branches of the family in Him, and when His heart delights in the First-born He delights also in those who are the younger of the family who are the brethren of the Lord Jesus Christ, for "He is not ashamed to call them brethren." And then, beloved, He beholds us, that is all the younger branches of the family, in the First-born, with the certainty of our being all gathered together unto Him in one place, with one heart and one mind, with one title to be for ever in His presence. And thus God has the reward for giving up the Son of His bosom, the Son of His love, as He looks round upon a company numberless except to Himself, all full of blessing, all crowned with glory, all filled with joy, their very countenances reflecting His love. He has gone as the First-born to represent us in the presence of the Father.

Then, again, according to John xvii., He has taken His place at the right hand of God, and has received authority over all flesh, that He might give eternal life to as

many as the Father has given Him; so that we are now to regard everything in heaven, on earth, or in hell itself as being committed to the hands of the Son of God at God's right hand that He might presently subdue all things to the Father, as the servant of the Father carrying out His will and fulfilling His purpose. And is it not very comforting to us as believers to think that we are in the hands of Christ, that all heaven and earth and hell are under His control, and He is head over all to the Church, His body.

What is His action with them? It is to give eternal life to those whom the Father has given Him. We are a part of that number whose names were written in the Book of Life from eternity, whose sins were borne by Christ on the cross. We are raised up together with Him, and are seated in Him at the right hand of God. We are as those to whom the Son of God, as having all flesh in His authority, has ministered life, eternal life, by His Spirit.

Then, again, He has entered on His priesthood. When He was on earth He answered everything that had been foreshadowed by blood. In resurrection He entered, in virtue of an endless life by the oath of God, into the priesthood after the "order of Melchisedec." And before He left the earth He gave, as it were, an earnest of that ministry. There was no blood connected with Melchisedec's priesthood; it was a priesthood of bread and wine and blessing. There were memorials of blood, but no blood. The bread, the grain had been ground between two millstones, and the grape had been crushed in the winepress; so that, while there was no blood, there was the memorial of death. And that is the same as the priesthood of Christ now. Christ is the answer to all blood-shedding, and in virtue of that He is entered on the Melchisedec priesthood, which is simply a priesthood of blessing. And He gave an earnest of this before He left the earth. After He had completed His ministry with the disciples, after His resurrection, after the forty days, He was taken up in the act of blessing the disciples. He lifted up His hands and blessed them, and, as if He could not complete the blessing then, while He blessed

them He was taken up and a cloud received Him out of their sight. He passed into heaven as the one who had answered all the bloody types and shadows under the law, and now entered upon a priesthood of blessing for ever and for ever. That is what He is continually doing.

To the sinner awakened to a consciousness of his state as guilty and lost, and seeking a Saviour, how does He minister? By revealing Himself as the one who has made an end of sin on the cross, who has reconciled man, and justified sinners by His blood. And the sinner believing it gets peace, ministered by the Prince of Peace, to his soul. The sinner finds peace from the knowledge of pardon through the blood of Christ. But he finds the flesh, the wickedness of which he was ignorant of before, a constant trial to him. He meets with opposition, sometimes persecution, from even those who loved him most, and he has sorrows, and burdens, and temptations, and difficulties of which he knew nothing while ignorant of Christ.

What is Christ's ministry to him? Turn to Hebrews iv. and you will find what His ministry is there. The apostle says: "Seeing, then, that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession (or confession). For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." Mark this rare combination. You find men in this world with strength of character, determination, firmness, but lacking tenderness. You will find others very tender, but lacking strength of character and purpose. But how rare is the combination of the two. But in this Man, this Minister, this Minister of the sanctuary who is still delighting in His ministry to us, we have that blessed combination of tenderness and might. As the Son of God He is mighty indeed; but as the one who has had thirty odd years' experience of the world, of circumstances, of men, of devils, of sorrows and of joys, all of which are behind and gone, He has carried into heaven the fruit of them all: a heart made tender in sympathy, which sympathy and tenderness He delights to minister to the soul that needs it.

Then let us remember that He carries through all that ministry the longing affection of His heart to embrace His Church in glory. He never forgets it—it is always in His heart. If He dries a tear, it is with a longing for the day when the last tear will be wiped away. If He delivers a saint from trials, it is with longing for the day when trials will be no more. In all His ministry there is still the longing, the affection, the desire, breathed in that last petition in the 17th chapter of John: "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me." He longs for the day more than any of us. He remembers it when we forget it; but He holds the longings of His heart in subjection to the Father's will, and He will not come till He is sent. When the time comes for the Father to send Him, He will quickly come, but meanwhile He delights to act the part of a minister, to give consolation, and power, and patience, and the grace of God to the members of His body as they pass through the wilderness.

[The concluding portion of this Address, on "His Promised Second Appearing," is reserved for next number.

FIGURES OF THE CHRISTIAN.—VII.

A BUILDER.

HAVING ourselves been hewn out of Nature's quarry and built into God's spiritual temple, we in turn become builders. It is interesting to observe that the English word *edify* and the Greek word for which it stands in the New Testament both originally meant *to build a house*. The noun *edifice* still retains its literal meaning, and in early English writers the word *edify* was also used in its original sense. The figurative use of the word is very frequent in the epistles of Paul the apostle. Remembering this use of the word it will at once be seen that all Christians in a spiritual sense are builders, for each one is responsible to so *act* and speak as to build up his fellows (Rom: xv. 2; 1 Thess. v. 11, &c.). The Lord used the figure when he said, "I will build My Church." And He must ever be recognised as at once the foundation-stone and the chief Builder. Yet the apostle takes the same figure and applies it to himself and fellow-gospellers (1 Cor. iii. 15). In this passage there are two or three outstanding

points we may perhaps with profit briefly dwell on.

1. *The Foundation.*—Both in point of time and importance this comes first. In the apostle's mind there stands out the picture of a vast building. "According to the grace of God that was given unto me," he writes, "as a wise master-builder I laid a foundation." And we are not left in any doubt as to what, or rather *who*, the foundation was, for he adds, "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is *Jesus Christ.*" The foundation here referred to is not so much that for personal salvation as it is the beginning of Christian testimony in Corinth, though most certainly the former is included. Paul's hearers could never have misunderstood the great, central, foundation truth of his preaching. In the previous chapter he refers more fully to the foundation that he had laid in their midst. Looking back to that time, he says, "I determined not to know anything among you save *Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.*" While this does not mean that, even to those without, he only preached the crucifixion, it certainly does mean that the death of Christ was the central truth of his ministry. With this agrees the *resumé* of the Gospel which he gives later on in this epistle (1 Cor. xv. 1-4). It is to be observed that he does not begin with the birth of Christ, but with His death. It goes without saying that Jesus Christ could not have died unless He had first been born, nevertheless, the two great pillars upon which God's glory and man's salvation rest are not His birth and life-obedience, but His death and resurrection.

Through God's grace the apostle knows himself to be a wise and skilful master-builder, and his wisdom was first of all seen in that he sought a good foundation. In this he stands in contrast (perhaps designed contrast) to the foolish man of the Lord's parable, who built his house upon the sand. As we have seen, the reference is not chiefly to individual salvation, but rather to the basis of Gospel truth which, as a pioneer in the Gospel, he had first laid at Corinth. So, in another place, he tells us that with him it was a point of honour to preach where Christ was not already named, in order that he might not build

upon a foundation laid by another (Rom. xv. 20). Holy and praiseworthy ambition! If, down the centuries, one in a thousand of professed servants of the Lord had been imbued with a like spirit we would not have to own to the humiliating fact that at this hour, roughly speaking, three-fourths of the human race are still in heathen darkness. Christian young man, what is your great ambition? Is it to have a comfortable time, to get on in the world, to be highly esteemed among men? There are aims far higher and nobler than these, and not the lowest of such is to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond, and not to go on through life building on a foundation laid by another.

2. *The Material built upon the foundation.*—This varies according to the wisdom or faithfulness of the workman. Six kinds are mentioned—three that fire can destroy, and three that it cannot destroy. The precious stones do not, I judge, refer to gems and such like trinkets, but rather to such as the "costly stones, even great stones" used by Solomon's workmen (1 Kings vii. 10). This view, it seems to me, better suits the context. Of the two sorts of material that might be employed each list begins with the most valuable and descends to the least, "Gold, silver, costly stones; wood, hay, and stubble."

I think we have seen that, primarily, the foundation was the doctrine of the person and work of Christ. If this be so, then it follows that what might be built upon the foundation also refers to doctrines. Those succeeding the apostle in a place might be men of like spirit who would build up the saints by the truth; or they might be Judaising or philosophising teachers who would tack on ordinances or teachings of men to the Gospel, thus in a great measure nullifying its action. The believers instead of growing in grace would become carnal and remain spiritual babes. Though, since the foundation is so closely connected with a person, the materials built upon it may also in a secondary sense refer to persons. The false or unfaithful servant who, in order to swell the number of those professing Christ's name, made compromise with Jewish or heathen beliefs or customs, or in any way lowered the claims of the Gospel, builded with wood, hay,

or stubble. In the end he himself might be saved, but his work will be burnt up, while the one who kept true to God and to the Word of His grace, who in his service looked at quality rather than quantity, builded with gold, silver, costly stones; not only would he himself be saved, his work also would endure.

In the body of Christ each member has some necessary function to fulfil. And as we carry out our ministry, however lowly or hidden, we contribute to the building up of the whole body (Eph. iv. 12-16; Col. ii. 19). Speech energised by the Holy Spirit is the chief instrument for building up the saints. Hence the importance, as hearers, of taking heed to what we listen—that it is according to the truth (Mark iv. 24), and as speakers, of seeing well to our own speech—that it may never corrupt, but ever minister grace to the hearer (Eph. iv. 29).

Knowledge is power, and it is a thing most desirable. Yet, unless rightly used it will injure both its possessor and others. Unless the man realises that the knowledge he has comes from God, unless he is constrained by love to use it for others, it will only puff up himself, and its certain tendency will be to puff up others rather than build them up (1 Cor. viii. 1). Love is mightier than knowledge. We may change the words of another and say:

"He soweth best who loveth best
All men both great and small."

In the building up Christ's people it certainly may be said, "The greatest of these is love." In this and in many other matters genuine love has no equal.

3. *The Testing*.—"And the fire shall test each man's work of what sort it is." Solemn, searching truth! The picture in the apostle's mind seems to be that of a great city such as writer and reader were well acquainted with. It adds colour to the scene when we remember that it was written in the great and splendid city of Ephesus, and first read in the notable city of Corinth. Side by side might be seen the grand and stately mansions of the wealthy, and the mean and miserable hovels of the poor. The one built of great blocks of granite or marble, with its interior decked with silver and gold; the other made of wood,

thatched with straw, and its crevices stuffed with stubble. Imagine such a city visited by a great fire. The one class of buildings would in a few moments be burnt to the ground, the other would come through it all without being destroyed.

Thus will our work be tested when the Lord comes. Well for us in that day if it be found that we held firm to the truth of God, if it be found that those professing conversion through us prove genuine; then we shall be both saved and have a reward. Alas! for us if we have been rearing structures of wood, hay, and stubble that will not stand the fire. No matter how great or imposing it may look, it will all be burnt up; and the workman will just escape, but all his work will be lost. Let us fear lest, a promise being given us of such a reward, any of us come short thereof. Let us labour, then, in view of the testing-time, in view of the judgment-seat of Christ, in view of eternal loss or gain. "THE FIRE SHALL TRY EVERY MAN'S WORK OF WHAT SORT IT IS." J. N. C.

THE ROMEGRADE.—III.

ECCLESIASTICAL TRADITION.

By J. S. ANDERSON, Florence.

ROMANISM being a great religious mosaic, of which tradition forms the conspicuous part, many are attracted on to the Romegrade by their veneration of antiquity. They do not trouble themselves about the origin or relationship of these mosaical traditions; they love them simply as religious fossils or relics.

Now, we want at once to say to all Romegrade traditionalists that, as children of God by faith in Jesus Christ, we love the old truths, founded on faith in the blood of the Lamb, truths handed down to us by DIVINE tradition from the days of Abel. Yea, if we may go back further, we rejoice that our names have been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. xiii. 8). So we admit most readily that GOD'S TRUTH has been handed down from time to time by men who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Our great contention with our

Romegrade friends is that we scrupulously endeavour to distinguish between DIVINE TRADITION and HUMAN CONTRADICTION, whether it be contained in the traditions of Romish or Protestant literature.

It is very unfortunate for traditionalists that even St. Augustine thought it necessary to point out the *heretical origin* of tradition in the Church: "Under the pretext that the Lord said, 'I have still many things to say unto you,' heretics who want to pass for Christians strive to give a favourable colour to their inventions."

We are glad to shake hands with all those who are endeavouring to hold fast the truth handed down—true apostolic tradition—by word and epistle (2 Thess. ii. 15), for this means that what the apostle taught orally corresponded exactly to what he wrote in his letters which we possess. But he was very anxious and jealous that what he *did* hand down might be faithfully kept. "Brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle." This is what we contend for, to hold fast (*κρατεω*), to hold firmly that which the apostle taught.

"I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in *all things*, and keep the traditions as I delivered them to you" (1 Cor. xi. 2). This is apostolic tradition, much older than and very different from Romish tradition. Let us remember, then, in *all things* to keep it, as the apostle delivered it. This interesting verb *deliver* (*παροσδδωμι*), *hand over*, occurs again and again in the 15th chapter, verse 3: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." Yes, all apostolic tradition was based on the Scriptures, "according to the Scriptures," while Romish tradition is professedly and really supplementary to the Scriptures, and has quite another foundation, which in the later apostolic epistles is characteristically called *fables* (*μυθοι*), *myths*. These are much more modern works in the traditional mosaic of Rome than the precious stones of God's revelation. Hence we love the old Word and the old way, and earnestly beseech all who have gone or are going astray on the Romegrade to return to the

original, primitive, infallible tradition of the apostles and prophets.

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was *once for all* delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). No additions, no traditions to the faith of the saints!

The teaching of the Scribes and Pharisees in the days of Jesus was so saturated with tradition that He distinctly stated that it made worship *vain* and the Word of God of *no effect* (Mark vii.).

The apostle had to guard the truth against the inroad of human traditions and fables. One of the earliest of these was that mentioned and corrected by the Apostle John regarding the words of Jesus to Peter: "If I will that he (John) tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me." John adds that the "saying *went abroad* among the brethren that that disciple should not die;" yet JESUS SAID NOT unto him, 'He shall not die;' but "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" (John xxi. 22, 23).

So the Apostle John thought that even such a "secondary" question of tradition ought not to be allowed to pass. He loved too much what his Lord *did* say to allow tradition to teach what He *did not* say. And if some sincere traditionalist should ask, "How can I be saved?" the apostle replies, "These things *are written* that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name" (John xx. 31). So that SALVATION DOES NOT depend upon TRADITION, but upon FAITH IN THE SON OF GOD revealed in the SCRIPTURES.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Churches of Galatia: "I speak after the manner of men; though it be but a man's covenant (testament), yet if it be confirmed no man disannuleth or addeth thereto." But what men don't do to human testaments ecclesiastical traditionalists have done to God's testament! Would Leo xiii. die happy if he knew that his will would be tampered with, modified, altered, according to future capricious, self-interested ideas?

In apostolic days there was a species of

tradition that is still very subtle. Paul refers to it in his epistle to the Colossians ii. 8: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the elements of the world, and not after Christ." Many Romish and other doctors have sought to disguise the mythic element of their traditions with "philosophy," and the "vain deceit" has proved a great success for the Romegrade.

David (Psalm xix.) declares that God's Word is perfect. John (xx. 31) declares that it is sufficient for salvation. Paul (2 Tim. 3. 16) declares that it is able to furnish *perfectly* the man of God unto *all* good works. Traditionalists deny this, and declare that tradition is as necessary as Scripture, and in some cases is more valuable. For *their* system this is true, but it will not satisfy those who want to quench their spiritual thirst at the pure fountain of living waters, instead of the polluted river of tradition, into which the poisonous elements of Romish error have been flowing for centuries.

"Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments. . . I am the Lord your God; walk in My statutes, and keep My judgments and do them" (Ezek. xx. 18, 19).

"IN ALL THINGS PRE-EMINENT."

H EAD of the new creation!
 Son of the living God,
 Captain of our salvation,
 Who shed'st for us Thy blood;
 Emmanuel, Son of David,
 The woman's blessed seed;
 Thy heel the serpent bruised,
 While thou didst bruise his head.

Thy Cross and shame are over,
 And all redemption's toil;
 Thy conquests are eternal!
 Unfading is the spoil:
 The fame of Thy achievements
 Dies not upon the ear
 Of friend, or foe, for ever:
 For both Thy fame shall hear.

Our great High Priest e'er living
 With tenderness and might;
 Our Shepherd ever feeding
 The sheep of Thy own right.
 First-fruits of all the sleeping,
 Who rest from toil and strife,
 And wait, while we are watching,
 To wear the crown of life

Soon shall the heavens reveal Thee,
 In all Thy glorious might,
 In all the Father's glory,
 And that of angels bright!
 Then shall the Church, beside Thee
 (Bride of Thy heart's delight),
 Sit on Thy throne of glory,
 All beauteous in Thy sight.

Then shall the throne of David,
 As God decreed, be Thine,
 And Thine the righteous sceptre,
 To sway with power divine.
 Israel and Gentile nations
 Shall own Thy rightful place:
 While those who will not yield it
 Shall suffer in disgrace.

And when the short-liv'd struggle
 Marking Milleñnium's close
 Shall cease by fire from heaven
 Consuming all Thy foes,
 Then shall the old creation
 Full quickly pass away,
 And God the new shall fashion
 To stand and shine for aye.

To that bright world Jehovah
 Will His own presence give,
 And from its ransom'd myriads
 Eternal praise receive.
 Nor sin, nor pain, nor sorrow,
 Nor Death, shall e'er be known;
 All, all defied for ever
 By the celestial throne!

HENRY HEATH.

THE GODLY.

THREE REFERENCES TO THE GODLY IN
 PSALMS—

1. The Godly set apart, - Ps. iv. 3.
2. The Godly at prayer, - Ps. xxxii. 6.
3. The Godly translated, - Ps. xii. 1.

GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE.

ISRAEL IN THE PAST.

By J. R. CALDWELL.

WILL you now read Acts vii. 2, 3, and compare with Gen. xii. 1. We learn from Stephen that the Lord's instructions to Abram as recorded in Genesis were communicated to him while he was yet in Mesopotamia. In reading the narrative in Gen. xi., one would suppose that Terah was the prime mover in the whole matter; but it is clear that God never appeared to Terah, and never called him. It was to Abram, and to him alone (see Isa. li. 2), that the God of Glory appeared; he only was called and chosen. Surely such a revealing of God to Abram was an act of sovereign electing grace. And it is no less so in every one to whom God is revealed. Paul writes, "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace to reveal His Son in me," &c. (Gal. i. 15, 16); and again, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 6). This is the work of the Holy Spirit, and each one of us may say "it was the sovereign grace of God that chose me and called me, for had He not chosen me, I never would have chosen Him."

An old saint was questioned as to whether she had not something to do in the matter of her salvation. "Well, yes," she said; "I resisted all I could, and God did the rest." I fancy a good many of us could say very much the same.

And what was Abram when God called him? We read in Joshua xxiv. 2 that on the other side of the flood, in old time, dwelt Terah, the father of Abram and of Nahor, and "they served other gods." Long afterwards, even in the household of Jacob, the old sin of idolatry cropped up. So it was not because they were in any way specially true to God that He chose Abram and his seed. But from the moment that God revealed Himself to Abram as the God of Glory, there was no more idolatry for him. He "turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God."

Now pass on to chapter xii. 7. At first, when Abram set out on his journey, he took the direction in which his father led him, and it brought him to Charran. Now, if you look at a map you will find that by travelling on in that direction he would never have come to Canaan at all. But when his father was dead, being delivered from that which proved to be an entanglement and a hindrance—and fleshy relationships and affections often prove hindrances—he took the straight road across the desert, and by Divine leading "into the land of Canaan he came." He found the Canaanites, the worst of idolaters, in possession of the land; but there the Lord again appeared to him, and made the UNCONDITIONAL PROMISE which we have read: "Unto thy seed will I give this land." If God makes conditions, then if I fail to fulfil the conditions the promise is of no value to me. Under the old covenant with Israel, that of the law, blessing was conditioned upon obedience. But Israel did not obey, as it is written, "Which My covenant they brake, and I regarded it not." But where God makes an unconditional promise, the grace that makes it must see to every step until its accomplishment. If God promises to take me, a poor sinner who has believed on His Son, to His own glory, then I know He that hath begun the good work will perfect it. "Whom He justified, them He also glorified." There is a Divine link connecting justification with glory, and nothing can break it.

The promise to Abraham involved two things: 1st, that he should have a son; and 2nd, that the descendants of that son should inherit the land specified.

Turn now to chapter xiii. 14. You remember that after the return of Abram and Lot from Egypt, owing to the greatness of their possessions, their herdmen fell a-quarrelling, and there was danger of unseemly strife between these two children of God. But Abram said, "Let there be no strife between me and thee . . . for we be brethren." Oh, that the children of God now would take that to heart! And Abram left the choice to Lot, "If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." It reminds us of Phil. iv. 5, "Let your modera-

tion [yieldingness] be known unto all: the Lord is at hand." Abram was the elder, and might well have claimed his right to make the choice, but in grace he left it to Lot to choose. His choice was quickly made; no reference to God, only present interest was looked to. He beheld the well-watered plain, like the garden of the Lord, and, despite the character of its inhabitants, he decided to settle there. It is just at this point that verse 14 comes in: "And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever."

It is beautiful to notice the occasions which the Lord chooses to manifest Himself to His children. If there is something that has cost you a pang to obey, that is just the time He will make choice of to draw near to your soul and reveal Himself. Thus He will more than make up to you for anything you have sacrificed for His sake. And the Lord enlarges the promise as he repeats it; it is now, "I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth," &c. Here is a large promise and unconditional, a promise suited to sustain and comfort him at a time when the flesh might be tempting him to say, "What a fool I was! Lot has chosen the very best of the land, and I may one day be left to starve on these bare mountains."

Now look at chapter xv. 5, 6. Abram knew that according to nature it was not only unlikely, but impossible, at his age and that of his wife, that they should have a son. He seems to fear lest after all his steward would be his heir. It is night, and the Lord takes him forth out of his tent, tells him to look up and say if he can count the stars. "So shall thy seed be," is the renewed promise. Abram does not question or doubt the word. "He believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness."

Having thus "believed," Abram goes on to make inquiries, not in unbelief, but that he might have fuller understanding and permanent assurance—so in verse 8, "Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it." Then follows the wonderful ex-

perience, vision, and prophecy of verses 9 to 18.

The ordinary idea of a covenant is an agreement between two parties, imposing certain conditions upon each. But that is not the nature of God's covenant of grace. In this covenant with Abram there is no "if" or "but." It is sovereign grace. The land here promised to Abram's seed is from the Nile to the Euphrates. If you look at a map you will see how large a portion that covers, and not even at the time of Israel's greatest prosperity under Solomon did their dominion extend so far. This covenant of Genesis xv. remains to be fulfilled, and as certainly as God has spoken it, Abraham's seed shall inherit and occupy that land, and Christ, the Son of David, shall be their King.

Chapter xvii. "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine." Every year that passed was rendering the fulfilment of the promise more unlikely; according to nature it was an utter impossibility. And so Abram reckoned that he and his wife were as good as dead. At this point the Lord again appeared unto Abram, and spoke in such terms as to answer the thoughts of his heart. "I am the Almighty God." Now read carefully verses 2 to 8, and count the number of times the Lord says "I will." Law says, "Thou shalt;" grace says, "I will," and all our covenant blessings are based upon God's eternal "I will." Here the promise is again repeated and enlarged.

Refer now to Gal. iii. 16. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, 'And to seeds,' as of many; but as of one, 'And to thy Seed,' which is Christ." You and I might not have taken any notice of what is here by the Spirit pointed out, and indeed from the peculiar nature of the word "seed," which may be either singular or plural in English, we would not have seen that here it is singular. Again, though it is singular and refers to one particular person, we might have thought it meant Isaac. But here we are informed that the Seed of Abraham, to whom the promises are confirmed, is Christ. All the promises centre and have their end and fulfilment in Him, and it is in Him that you and I come in for all—"Joint-heirs with Christ." "If

ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Four hundred and thirty years after the promises to Abraham, God entered into a covenant with Israel at Sinai. God said, "Thou shalt;" Israel said, "All that the Lord hath spoken will we do." That is a covenant of law. God is one party to it; Israel is the other. If Israel fail, God is under no obligation to fulfil His part of the bargain.

But this could in no way alter or affect the unconditional covenant of promise which God gave to Abraham four hundred and thirty years before. The law came in by the way, but had no power to disannul the promise made to Abraham, or make it of no effect. God gave the inheritance to Abram by promise. That which was given by promise unconditionally cannot be altered by any subsequent transaction. The law may come in in the meantime, and the fulfilment of the promise may be postponed, but in God's own time it must and will be fulfilled. Now, our blessings being all of grace, are all of the nature of promise. It is not that we have contracted to fulfil one side of a bargain and God the other. It is all on God's side. We have but to BELIEVE, and God undertakes to save us to the end.

Look now at Gen. xxvi. 1-3. Here is the promise that was originally made and confirmed by oath to Abram again repeated and confirmed to Isaac, his son. Ishmael was the child of the flesh, not the child of the promise.

Now turn to Gen. xxviii. 13, &c. Here again the promise is confirmed to Jacob. Again it is unconditional; again it is the un-failing "I will." How does Jacob respond to it? "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me!" What an answer to an unconditional promise made in sovereign grace! "If." So Jacob tries to make a bargain with God. "If God will do so and so, then I will do this and that." What low ground Jacob was on! Read through all Jacob's changeful history and you will find it issues in one great demonstration, that Jacob broke down in all his promises, but God was faithful to Jacob to the very last.

I have read all these passages in order to

show that God has committed Himself fully to do certain things in the future for Abraham's seed, in the line of Isaac and of Jacob. He has given promises that He is under obligation to fulfil, apart altogether from their condition, apart from their breach of the law, apart from their behaviour as a nation, which is as bad as could be from first to last. If God has promised to place Israel in the land, and to give them possession of it permanently from the Nile to the Euphrates, and to bless them abundantly therein, I know that He in His own time and way will do it.

You may say, "Well, there is very little sign of it yet." I answer that I am not surprised at that, for it is not in this dispensation that God is going to do it. In the meantime God is doing another work. He is gathering out an elect people, out from the Jews and out from the Gentiles, and uniting them to the risen, glorified Christ in heaven. Christ is the Head of the body, and they are the members. Not until the last member of this elect body is gathered out will the promises made to Israel be fulfilled. The blessings that God is now bestowing are not national, but individual. The nations, as such, are rushing on to ruin. There are more heathens in the world now than when the Lord Jesus was upon earth, and even the nations that are professedly Christian are casting off all acknowledgment of God and of Christ. The Gospel is not "leavening the world," but it is effecting God's purpose, and will do so, notwithstanding the enmity of the world and the awful failure of the Church.

THE WORD IN SEASON.

"A WORD spoken in due season, how good is it" (Prov. xv. 23). Only a word—some passage of Scripture that has been brought home to your heart with power—a word which perhaps you have proved in your own experience, or which has shed some fresh light on another part of the sacred page. And not only is it "a word" in the sense that it is true and scriptural, but it is the very word needed for the time and circumstances in which it

is spoken. Of such a word Scripture says, "How good is it." It is not sufficient to say, as some have said, "But it was *the truth* I spoke—it was quite in keeping with that which is written." Quite possible. Yet *the truth of God may not be the message of God.* If God's truth were always His message, then it would not matter what passage you commented on. There would be no need for any exercise of heart as to what "text" we should expound; and there would be no call for ministering ones to pray, "O Lord, what message wouldst Thou have me to deliver at this time?" Every scribe instructed in the things of the Kingdom knows that a word may contain the truth, and yet not be a word in season. He must wait upon his ministering. He must be in fellowship with God as to the need of His people. *Anything* will not meet the need of His saints. Neither will that need be met by our merely filling up the time in order to prevent a "blank" or relieve an awkward silence. A stop-gap ministry will never work out the purposes of God concerning His redeemed. Better to wait in conscious weakness before God than be indebted to such ministry for a deliverance which after all is no deliverance. Let us wait upon God that we may be found in the trend of His thoughts concerning His people. Then it shall come to pass that our "word" shall not only be truth, but *present* truth, and truth *in its season.*

Then the "word in season" need not be an exhaustive address extending to three-quarters of an hour. Speaking with special reference to the "open" meetings we believe that many a striking and seasonable thought is *not* given because it will fill only a little space. It seems "hardly worth while" to stand up and occupy so few minutes. Or, if it *is* thought worth while, a whole chapter is sometimes read, and a great deal of general ministry is added, in order to make up an address of a respectable length. The result is that the "striking thought" is lost in a cloud of generalities. It humbly appears to us that the remedy for this is very simple, namely, if you have one or two definite things to say to the Lord's people, say them

and sit down. Mere padding will only deaden the message. Unnecessary words will simply obscure your meaning. When you strike the nail on the head, that is all that is required. Repeated blows of the hammer will only result in the proverbial "splitting of the board." Blessed are they who are "content to fill a little space, if God be glorified." And we shall be content to fill such little space, and we shall not fill it in vain, if we are being taught of Him who was able to say, "The Lord God hath given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." w. s.

THE HEAVENLY CALLING OF THE CHURCH.—IV.

A HEAVENLY SEAT OF GOVERNMENT.

By GEORGE ADAM, Straanraer.

UNDER the law Jehovah's manifested presence came down to earth. When He will resume His dealings with Israel, and when He shall have established them once more in the "land," His manifested presence will come down to earth again, and not only so, but the Lord Jesus, as "Son of David," will yet sit on the throne of His father David; and as "Son of Man" "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." "Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him" (Psalm lxxii. 8-11). Meanwhile, until that time come, God has raised the Lord Jesus to His own right hand; as it is written, "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thy foes Thy footstool" (Psalm cx. 1). He has now sat down with His Father on His throne (Rev. iii. 21). From His throne now in heavenly glory He, as Head of the Church which is His Body, superintends the gathering out of those who, in the foreknowledge and in the eternal counsels of God, were given Him by the Father. And as "Head over all to the Church," He administers the will of God to those who are so gathered out.

The Apostle Peter, who was chosen by the Lord to open the door of faith to both Jew and Gentile, is careful to put the "Lord-

ship of Christ" to the front of his testimony. "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye crucified both LORD and Christ" (Acts ii. 36). Again, in speaking to the Gentiles he says: "The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—He is LORD of all" (Acts x. 36). This emphatic statement is put in the very introduction of Peter's address to the Gentiles, long before he comes to the "forgiveness of sins." And because the Lord Jesus, in doing the Father's will on the earth, went down to the lowest place, God has given Him the highest place in Heaven, and ordained that all creation should bow before the Name of Jesus, "and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11). It is sad beyond expression that this truth of the Lordship of Christ, which is so dear to the heart of our God, and which occupies such a prominent place in Scripture, should be so ignored, not only by the professing Church, but also amongst those who have been gathered unto His blessed Name. It is also painful to hear the familiar way in which some address the Lord of Glory, using such expressions as "Blessed Jesus," a familiarity which would be resented by any mortal man who is in a good position in society.

The point I wish to make specially clear in this paper is, that during this parenthetic period of time God has "called out" the Church to acknowledge the authority of His well-beloved Son. And not only to do this by appealing to His written Word in every difficulty, but to do it by *appealing to Himself* for His direct guidance to be given by the Spirit through the written Word. This was the principle which was carried out by those men who were called out by Jehovah to lead and rule His people Israel. Moses, the man of God, never moved in any emergency until he inquired of the LORD. He was the God-ward man, who brought the causes unto God (Ex. xviii. 19). When Moses was removed, and Joshua was called to take his place, Eleazar, the priest, was made the God-ward man, and at the mouth of the Lord, through him, Joshua was to lead out the people (see Num. xxvii. 18-21). When

the priesthood failed, the prophet, in the case of Samuel, was made the God-ward man; and Saul, who was anointed to be king, was to wait in an emergency until Samuel came to tell him what to do (see 1 Sam. x. 8). Saul failed first, by not waiting till Samuel came, and he failed again by *obeying the voice of the people*, instead of obeying the voice of the Lord (see 1 Sam. xiii. 10-16; xv. 24).

How many who have taken the place of guides in the Church have fallen into the same snares as King Saul—first by acting in a difficulty without waiting for divine guidance, and also in being guided by the voice of the people, instead of the voice of the Lord. The *united judgment* of one assembly, or of any number of assemblies, is of no value unless it is the judgment of the Lord. An assembly of saints should always act unitedly in any important matter, but it is not *their unity of judgment* which makes the thing right. The vital question is, Is it according to the *word and will of the Lord*? The Spirit of God says of David: "I have found David, the Son of Jesse, a man after Mine own heart, who shall fulfil all MY WILL" (Acts xiii. 22). Although David went far wrong on several occasions, his habit was to inquire of the LORD before he moved in anything about which he was not sure. Cases could be cited to prove that oneness of judgment amongst the people was no guarantee that what they did was right. There is no word of a single dissenting voice when Israel made the golden calf (Ex. xxxii.). Then there is the case of Joshua with the Gibeonites (chap. ix. 14). The princes were all of one mind, and yet they went wrong because they did not ask counsel of the LORD. There is also the case of David consulting with the "captains of thousands, and hundreds, and with every leader" (1 Chron. xiii.), yet, although there was no dissenting voice, they went wrong. Human nature is the same still. Being of one mind is of great importance, but unless it is *oneness of mind in the Lord* it may be all wrong together.

The question here arises, Can we in this dispensation arrive at the mind of the Lord as surely as the Lord's people did in the days referred to? I answer this by asking another question. Can it be that God's people, under grace, are placed at a farther

distance from the Living God than Israel were who were under the law? Has the Lord Jesus gone up to heaven and left His people with nothing but a written book to guide them? And when difficulties arise amongst saints, and between assemblies, is there no way of "drawing near to God" and laying the case before Him? Instead of calling meetings to confer over difficulties, and when we have come to a joint conclusion, endeavouring to justify ourselves before men in some way or other, would it not be more scriptural to call a meeting for humiliation and prayer, and look up to the Lord for His guidance in the difficulty? Would this not be the right way to own Him as Lord over all to the Church?

The Lord Jesus has gone beyond the reach of mortal vision, but He still lives, and He can still be approached by faith. It is not His way now to reveal His will by a "vision," or an "angel," or by any audible voice. But cannot the humble, exercised believer, or a company of such believers, draw near to the living Head of the Church; and if they have no end of their own they wish to gain, but an honest desire to be guided into His will, would not that blessed One, who never turned any one away when He was upon earth, hear the humble prayers of His people and guide them into the knowledge of His will regarding the matter? Then those who have so waited on the Lord for His counsel could seek to lead others into the light they themselves have received from the Lord, and pass it on, not as the result of their "united judgment," but as the judgment of the Lord, so far as they have light and grace to know His will. It has often appeared to me that that conference which is recorded in Acts xv. is made to teach what is really not in it. The four men whose names are mentioned—Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and James—were not brought to be of one mind through the previous "disputing." They were all of one mind, because they were each and all in the mind of the Lord.

I cannot but believe that the same oneness of mind and judgment is yet attainable were the right way taken to arrive at it—to own Christ as the LIVING LORD of the Church by humbly drawing near and waiting at His feet until He is pleased to give

light and oneness of mind. "The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way" (Psa. xxv. 9). "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (chap. xxxii. 8). These divine principles are as true as ever they were, and were leading men in the Church "clothed with humility," and carrying difficulties to the Lord, waiting until He open up the way, they would not often go wrong. Men who are in the counsel of God will never force their convictions on the consciences of fellow-saints at the point of the sword of excision, nor in any other way. Those who have been taught of God to draw near into the "holiest" where Christ is now seated, and ask counsel of Him, will never seek to coerce a believer's conscience. They will "lead on softly," as the flock are able to follow. But thus to recognise and honour the living Head of the Church requires a humility and a depth of spirituality which few, if any, of us have attained to. May our God help us thus to take the low place, and give to Christ the high place which He has given Him, not in name only, but in reality.

Correspondence.

"THE COMING REVIVAL."

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

DEAR BROTHER,—The remarks of our brother W. Shaw on the above subject have so interested me that I am constrained to drop you a line to call the attention of your readers to it.

It is never safe to predict, but when God is about to do some important work it is often His way to give those who are walking with Him a presentiment of what He is about to do. (See Gen. xviii. 17, Psa. xxv. 14, Amos iii. 14.)

If, as our brother suggests, He is doing so in regard to a coming revival, a few thoughts may not be out of place.

1st. It will be deeply solemn if God should find those of us who "gather unto the Name of the Lord" so "settled on our lees" (Jer. xlvi. 11) that He may have to pass us by, and take up those who have never abused the light and grace which have been bestowed on us. This should lead to careful searchings of heart, that our God may find us on the "mound of communion," ready to catch the first breathings of the Spirit's presence and power, and so be borne along on the breast of the wave of blessing.

2nd. Each "revival" has some peculiarity of its own, and if we are to be blessed with another one (as we pray and hope we may), I believe the truth of the Lord's soon coming, to be followed by the "day of the Lord," will be specially used of God, in the awakening of both saints and sinners, to the solemn fact that the "acceptable year of the Lord" is about to close, and "the day of vengeance of our God" in all its fury, is soon to be ushered in on poor "Gospel rejectors." If any of us wish to be used in carrying the conviction of these truths to the hearts of others, we need to plead with God that He may by His Spirit write them deeply on our own hearts (2 Cor. iv. 13).—Yours in the service of the Lord, GEO. ADAM.

BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD.

WE have received quite a number of interesting communications on "Baptism for the Dead," but we do not deem it desirable to continue a controversy that has proved in the past, and still threatens to be, interminable.—EDITOR.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

POINTS CONCERNING BAPTISM.—The following questions regarding Baptism have been recently raised, and replies would be valued;

(a) Was Paul's baptism at Corinth on a par with his circumcising of Timothy a concession to Jewish ideas?

(b) What is the significance of the words, "For Christ sent me not to baptise but to preach the Gospel?"

(c) Does Col. ii. teach that baptism is one of the "ordinances" which, like holy days, new moons, and Sabbaths, has no place in connection with the Church, the Body of Christ?

(d) Is baptism one of the "rudiments of the world," which are "for those living in the world, not for those who have died with Christ, and been buried with Him, and are risen with Him?"

(e) If, as some assert, everything was Jewish up till the death of Stephen, and all Church order unrevealed until subsequently, what Scripture warrant or command have we for baptism?

HOUSEHOLD SALVATION.—What are we to understand by the promise, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house?" We have always claimed it for our children, but can we not claim it as Rahab did, *i.e.*, for parents, brothers, sisters, and servants also?

DANIEL'S FOURTH KINGDOM.—Has the fourth

kingdom mentioned in Daniel vii. 7. finished its career; and if not, what is its *present* condition?

CHRISTIANS AND POLITICS.

QUESTION 379.—If all Christians were to abstain from politics, the government of our country would be entirely in the hands of the unconverted. Would this be right or scriptural?

Answer.—The principles on which God has acted with reference to His people have been the same in every dispensation. One of the most important is that He requires obedience regardless of consequences.

Abram was told to leave his country, kindred, and father's house, for a land unknown to him (Gen. xii.), and we find that he is mentioned in Hebrews xi. as "A stranger and a pilgrim on the earth." The children of Israel were redeemed out of Egypt (type of the world) to serve God (Ex. 8. 1), and forbidden to return (Deut. xvii. 16). Although Lot, Abraham's nephew, left his father's house he went back to the things he had once forsaken when he turned to Sodom, and in so doing "Vexed his righteous soul from day to day," in seeing and hearing (2 Pet. ii. 8). When the children of Israel departed from the Lord Isaiah was to prophesy against them, "Woe to the rebellious children . . . that walk to go down into Egypt" (Isa. xxx. 1, 2).

The same principles hold to-day. God is calling out a people for His Name who should "Show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light" (1 Pet. ii. 9). The Lord Jesus praying to His Father, said, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John xvii. 16). Paul, writing to the Corinthians, says, "Be ye separate" (2 Cor. vi. 17). The teaching in Romans xiii., Titus iii., and 1 Peter ii. is that Christians should be subject to the powers that be. There is not the slightest hint as to their seeking to participate in the government of the "world, which lieth in wickedness" (1 John v. 19). James i. 27 tells us that "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is . . . to keep himself unspotted from the world." We cannot do this if we engage in politics, but "vex our righteous souls" like Lot of old, instead of, Abraham-like, walking a separate path as "friends" in the estimation of our Master (John xv. 14).
W

"IN CHRIST" AND "IN THE LORD."

QUESTION 380.—What is the difference, if any, between "in Christ" and "in the Lord?"

Answer.—The expression "In Christ" describes relationship; "In the Lord" rather characterises actions. A man who is in Christ may be pursuing a course or acting in a way that could not be characterised as "in the Lord"

—it might be manifest to all that it was in pride and self-will.

In one passage "in the Lord" apparently describes relationship, but not really (refer to Phil. i. 14), but it should not be read "brethren in the Lord," but "in the Lord waxing confident."

J. R. C.

UNITY AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.*

QUESTION 381.—(1) In Ephesians iv. 3 we are commanded to "give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace," and in verses 4 to 6 we are told of the seven component parts of that unity. What are the responsibilities flowing from each one of the seven parts of the unity entailed upon us by the command to keep it? (2) If the unity expressed by partaking of the one loaf at the Lord's Supper be the unity of the One Body of Christ (as is shown in 1 Cor. x. 17), must the Lord's Table not always be spread for every member of that One Body?

Answer A.—If we believe that "there is one body," and that by the grace of God through faith in Christ we have been made members thereof, we are responsible to seek its welfare, using every means within our reach to that end. Evangelists are responsible to seek the increase of the body by the addition of new members. Pastors are responsible to care for the members as a shepherd cares for the flock which has been entrusted to his care; and teachers are responsible to instruct and lead the members of the body by precept and example; while all the members are alike responsible to love and care for one another. If in no other way, we can by intercession and prayer be helpful to every member of the one body.

"There is one Spirit." Every one who is a member of the one body is responsible to bring forth the fruit of the one Spirit, which is—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

Every one who professes to speak according to the Spirit is responsible to speak as the oracles of God, while those who hear are responsible to try the spirits whether they be of God, and receive only the teaching of the one Spirit, the chief characteristic of which is the confession that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.

"There is one hope of our calling." The one hope that is set before all who love the Saviour is that they shall see Him as He is, and be like Him, and with Him for ever. And we are responsible to have our loins girded about, our lights burning, and we ourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord.

"There is one Lord." "Though there be lords many, to us there is but one Lord Jesus Christ." And we are responsible to submit ourselves to

His authority in all things. Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

"There is one faith." Whether we think of Abel offering his lamb, or Abraham offering his son, or Moses choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God, or Saul of Tarsus believing that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, the faith is the same. And we are responsible to walk in that faith, which has sustained God's elect in all ages and under all circumstances.

"There is one baptism," and we are responsible to learn the deep spiritual significance of the outward act, and to walk as truly dead with Christ and risen with Him. "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism unto death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

"There is one God and Father of all," and we are responsible to confess Him before men as the creator and upholder of all things. If we look above us, the heavens declare His handiwork; if we look beneath, He causeth the grass to grow. He giveth food to man and beast, and in the person of Jesus Christ He revealed Himself as God, who so loved the world as to give His Son to die.

In a time when all the wonders of the earth and the heavens are ascribed to natural causes, and the doctrine of atonement is held up to ridicule, and spoken of as a relic of Paganism, we need to be fully alive to our responsibility in this matter.

The Lord's table is undoubtedly for every member of the one body; but at Corinth there was a man whose sinful walk proclaimed him to be either a false professor or a backslidden believer, and in order that his true character might be revealed they were commanded to put him away from among them. His subsequent repentance and godly sorrow made it manifest that he was in reality a converted person who had fallen into sin. From this it would appear that persons who are practising the gross sins mentioned in 1 Cor. v. and other portions of Scripture are not to be allowed to participate in the Lord's Supper. If they are members of the body God will bring them to repentance, and if their profession has been false their true character will be manifested, and God in His mercy may save them.

Editor's Note.—We would add that 1 Cor. v. is not the only Scripture that gives instruction as to who are to be separated from the fellowship of the Church. See, for example, Matt. xviii. 15-17; Gal. v. 10-12; 1 Tim. i. 19, 20; Titus iii. 10. So that whilst contending for the inclusion of all that God includes, it is necessary to use all diligent care to secure the exclusion of all that God by His Word excludes.

LEPROSY.

By WILLIAM COLLINGWOOD, of Bristol.

THE law of the leper occupies a remarkable place in the Mosaic ritual, and its teachings, if searched out, must be of deep practical value. It sets forth experiences by no means uncommon among the children of God, and shows the way to the divine remedy.

Little can be gained on this subject by examining the malady from a medical point of view. The Scripture does not present it in this aspect, but in relation to ceremonial defilement. The diagnosis is submitted to the priest, not to the physician. The prescription is for the cleansing, not for the healing. Whatever it may have been as physically contagious, it is not against this that the law is directed. The separation from the sanctuary and the camp is on the ground of ceremonial uncleanness. See Numbers v. 2, where it is classed with other defilements to which no contagion attaches.

The law in Lev. xiii. describes leprosy as uncleanness arising from a "plague in the flesh" below the skin. Any scab, or scar, or tetter (R.V.), seen to be only on the surface, is not to render a person unclean, that is, not to prevent him taking his place as a worshipper. But if the priest, who is always the judge in such matters, finds that it is deeper than the skin, or spreading, or if there is "quick, raw flesh," and it have turned the hair white, he shall pronounce him unclean. And the leper had to go with rent clothes, bareheaded and mourning, crying, "Unclean, unclean!"

CEREMONIAL DEFILEMENTS.

We shall altogether miss the significance of this portion of God's Word if we are satisfied to attach to leprosy the general idea of *sin*. The evil of "sin" is taught everywhere in Scripture, in an infinite variety of aspects. But Leviticus xi. to xv. is dealing with a special line of truth, showing various causes which would forbid the Israelite to come into the sanctuary as a worshipper, or to eat of the holy things; teaching the believer under the Gospel various causes which interrupt communion, defile the conscience, and hinder him from drawing near to God

and offering acceptable worship. How needful that we lay these to heart!

In chapter xi. it is a question of eating or touching unclean animals of various kinds. The meaning of this, one meaning at least, we learn from Acts x., the defilement resulting from ungodly associations, "evil communications." Then in chapters xii. and xv. everything proceeding from the flesh produced ceremonial uncleanness. What this signifies we learn from the Lord Himself in Mark vii. 14-23. He shows that the evil lies not in the material flesh, but in "the man," that is, in his *heart*, out of which come all those evil things such as He enumerates, and they defile the man.

The Lord very solemnly pronounced His judgment on any who dared to enter into His presence, or eat of the holy things, having his uncleanness upon him. "That soul shall be cut off from his people" (see Lev. vii. 20, 21; xxii. 3). It was often done in ignorance, but when discovered the trespasser had to confess his guilt, and Lev. v. provides the atonement. Do we not sometimes trespass thus into God's presence while allowing the works of the flesh, variance, wrath, strife, envyings, and such like, if not the grosser things described in Gal. v. 19, 20? And how much we need an exercised conscience about all such matters, if we would seek to walk with God and acceptably worship Him!

LEPROSY DEFINED.

Among these various defilements leprosy takes an especial place. It is more largely treated of than any of the rest. It represents another of the causes which stand in the way of communion with God, and hinder us from taking our place as worshippers.

Observe its peculiarity. If only an outward scar or scab, no harm was in it. True leprosy was deeper, an underlying disease rising to the surface, spreading, and turning the hair white. The especial symptom was the

"QUICKENING OF LIVING FLESH"

(verse 10, margin), for "*living flesh is unclean*" (15). And this could not be cleansed, like the other defilements, by washing the clothes and waiting till evening, or even by

“three score and six days,” or by turtle doves and pigeons. So long as it lasted the leper was shut out of the camp, and the cry “Unclean, unclean!” must go up. When it was cleansed it was by a very peculiar ceremony of remarkable import, that of the two birds, one dipped in the blood of the other, and set free to fly in the open field.

These details surely indicate something more than “sin” in a general sense. They represent the case of one smarting, not, perhaps, under the guilt of some special transgression, but rather under the deep sense of evil within, so troubling the conscience as to hinder communion, to preclude the liberty of access into God’s presence, or the feeding on the promises of His Word. The mere scab on the surface, the scar of a boil or a burn, could not harm the spirit thus. Temptation from without may distress. Sin confessed and put away may leave its scar, though the conscience be free from its burden. But the deep sense of inbred corruption and its constantly felt presence, how often does this hinder joy, unless we are living in the light of our union with Christ in His death and resurrection.

ROMANS VII.

The reserve which becomes us in speaking on a subject so much controverted as Romans vii. has been, should not forbid our gathering its practical teachings. It may be that the key to the difficulty lies in its possible application on each of the lines on which opinions have been divided. In the first instance, no doubt, it is meant to describe an awakened soul, still “in the flesh,” discovering its helplessness to attain to righteousness thereby. But, secondly, it is true of a child of God that in him, that is, in his flesh, dwelleth no good thing; and that to look there for righteousness can only cloud the conscience and hinder communion; and, thirdly, the rejoicing believer is no less conscious of the inbred evil of his nature described in the conflict there recorded, only that he is able triumphantly to say, “The law of the Spirit, of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

The leper, unclean through the “quicken- ing of living *flesh*,” pronounced by the priest (the minister of law) unable to worship or

feed on the holy things, represents the second of these. “Evil is present with me. I see a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and leading me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am. Unclean, unclean!”

In the leper cleansed, knowing himself in Christ to be dead to the law and alive unto God, an accepted worshipper, sprinkled and anointed, we have the latter of the three. While conscious of what the flesh is, yet instead of crying out, Who shall deliver me? he exclaims, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” “There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.”

THE TWO BIRDS.

Here, then, is the truth most strikingly set forth in the law for the cleansing of the leper. As in the kindred matter of defilement *by the dead*, for which was provided the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, so in connection with the leper there is a provision quite peculiar to his case.

No trespass offering, or sin offering, comes in until this order is first followed. “Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed, two birds, alive and clean, and that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running (*living, mar-:)* water. As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedarwood, and scarlet, and hyssop, and shall dip them in the blood of the bird that was killed over the living water, and shall sprinkle the man seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field.”

The absence of sacrificial character is remarkable. It has nothing to do with the tabernacle or the altar; all is done without the camp. They were not turtle doves or pigeons, but any birds—*sparrows, mar.* The bird was killed by the priest’s command, not by himself or by the leper, though the priest sprinkled the blood upon him. It was killed in an earthen vessel, over “living water.”

Here is set forth the believer’s death and resurrection in the crucified and risen Christ. For the “earthen vessel” see 2 Cor. iv. 7. The living water is the Spirit, whereby he is

brought into fellowship with the crucified One, "planted in the likeness of His death," "the old man crucified with Him," dead to the law and its curse, to sin and its penalty. And the living bird, let loose into the open field at the moment of pronouncing the leper clean, represents the believer himself, thus set at liberty and restored to communion.

What Romans vi. teaches on Baptism, the believer, buried out of sight as having died in Christ's death, is fore-shown in this Mosaic rite. And the experience of Romans vii., as far as it may describe that of one groaning in bondage under a sense of inbred corruption, is met by this beautiful figure of his death, resurrection, and liberty under the law of the Spirit, the law of life in Christ Jesus. Walking with God by faith, in the light of His countenance, in the spirit of adoption as an accepted child, he can now fulfil the righteousness of the law, not in the oldness of the letter but in newness of the spirit. Such treasures of grace are there in God's storehouse, laid up in Christ for the sinner that believes in Him.

THE LEPER CLEANSED.

Besides the ceremony of the two birds, there was the shaving, the washing, and the bathing. These were to be done twice, the first immediately after the living bird was set free. He was then so far clean that he might come into the camp, though not yet into his tent. Again on the seventh day he was to be shaved, all his hair even to his eyebrows; again his clothes were to be washed, and he had to bathe himself in water, and so was clean.

The washing and bathing were the same as in all cases of defilement—a constant accompaniment of ceremonial purification. They might indicate either the removal of uncleanness, or its absence. For in the case of the burnt-offering the inwards and the legs washed appear to indicate the essential purity in heart and walk of the Great Sacrifice. "I delight to do Thy will, O my God; yea, Thy law is within my heart." And when in Heb. x. 22 we are exhorted to have our bodies washed with pure water, it seems to point to an upright and clean walk as distinguished from a blood-sprinkled con-

science. Whether the washing and bathing here mean more than the indication that the uncleanness has been removed, we will not stop to enquire.

Nor perhaps may we speak with certainty as to the signification of the shaving of the hair, since we find no distinct explanation of it in Scripture; and it is better to be ignorant than to hold an erroneous view on any subject. The most likely suggestion of its meaning seems to be that of the stripping away of all personal comeliness, the fitness of which in this place would be apparent, as in the case of the Nazarite (Numbers vi.).

THE OFFERINGS.

Being now cleansed, the leper can draw near to God as a worshipper. He comes to the tabernacle with his offerings. In the special defilement of his leprosy he offers a "trespass" or "guilt" offering. The blood of this is put upon his ear, his hand, and his foot, and upon this again *the oil*. It is remarkable that only in the consecration of the priests was a similar act performed, with this difference, that the blood of the ram of consecration was so applied, but *not the oil*. It was the cleansed leper alone that was anointed thus. This full and special provision was made for the one who had been an exile from the presence of God under the burden of conscious defilement. And now he is brought so nigh into this deep individual experience of atoning blood, meeting not only his sin in general, but his own special guilt and special experience. And the oil upon that, the anointing, the sealing of the Spirit, the joy and gladness of assured acceptance.

Then follow the other offerings in their usual course, the sin-offering perhaps indicating the putting away of all sin, apart from the trespass or "guilt" of his particular case. And now his burnt-offering can go up on the altar, and he can look upon the spotless lamb on which he has laid his hand, ascending as a sweet savour, accepted for him, and himself accepted in it before the Lord.

These types require little comment. They are things to meditate on. They speak to the believer's heart of the blessedness of the

man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. But to the one who has been bowed down under a sense of indwelling sin they speak of the especial favour of the Holy One who inhabiteth eternity, who dwells in the high and holy place, and yet loves to make His abode with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. The kiss, the best robe, the ring, and the shoes, were for him who said, "I am not worthy." It is when we most deeply feel what we are in ourselves that we need to know that it is not *we* that live, but Christ liveth in us; that we live not by any righteousness of our own but by Christ's death and resurrection. And when this is known in power, then most do we individually enjoy the blessedness of the atoning blood and the anointing Spirit.

DANIEL'S CONFESSION.

By Dr. NEATBY, Author of
"From Glory to Glory," "Our Lord's Coming Again," &c.

THERE are important lessons for us in this day to be learned from Daniel's attitude before the God of Israel (Dan. ix.). O that we were more ready to learn them! It was when Daniel was low before God, "confessing my sins and the sins of my people Israel," that he was morally nearest to God. It was then that Gabriel was sent to him with a message that he was "greatly beloved." He had touched the heart of God. It was the sin of God's people that he took home and confessed as his own. Who can read Dan. ix. without *feeling* how God's own heart had found expression in the humble cry of Daniel? Where are the Daniels now? Is not the Church, as to her responsibility, in a condition deplorably like Israel's? The Church, of God's counsels, can never fail, because of the Rock on which it is built; nor can the gates of hell prevail against it. But the dispensation is ruined past remedy. The Church, as to its responsibility, lies in ruins, never to be reconstructed. The heart that feels it has so far the mind of the Lord.

God forbid that we should make the ruin of the Church a pretext for doing our own will! He who does it will find "our God" "a consuming fire." There is a path of faith

for the day of greatest failure, and the humble soul that seeks it diligently will surely find it. "The meek will He teach His way." It was in view of days such as these that it was said, "I commend you to God and to the Word of His Grace." That is enough for the obedient heart.

But what have our hearts to say to God as to the condition of that which bears the name of Christ on earth? "To *us* belongeth the confusion of face." How little the proud heart of man is ready to make such a confession! Give me some little pedestal, from the height of which I can look down on my brethren—I greatly prefer it. But "the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity" dwells "with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." May it be ours, O God, by Thy mighty grace, to have the contrite and humble spirit with which Thou canst dwell!

THE FIRST STEP OF A WALK WITH GOD IS CONFESSION.

Alas! how few of us have taken this first step as to our place in the Church of God. It is not surprising that there has been an intellectual conviction that things are very far from right according to the will of God. We should be blind indeed not to own this. But has this conviction brought us into the dust before God, with these words welling up from a distressed heart: "We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from Thy precepts, and from Thy judgments." If we have not begun with confession, we have not taken one step with God. Our thoughts are far from His thoughts, unless we say loyally and humbly, "My sin and the sin of my people."

Daniel might have found excellent reasons after the flesh for minimising his confession. When Hezekiah heard God's prediction of the Babylonish captivity, Daniel was not born. When, again, Manasseh's grievous sins called forth the public declaration of that captivity, it was long before Daniel's day. When the evil day had actually come, and Nebuchadnezzar had carried him and others of the royal seed captive to Babylon, Daniel was too young to have influenced by

his personal sins the terrible chastisement of God upon his people. But, for Daniel, Israel was the people of God. It was his privilege and his solemn responsibility to be one of that people. Faith does not reason out carnal excuses, nor must we. For now Christ has died that the scattered children of God might be gathered in one. The Holy Ghost has come down to effect and maintain that oneness. We must—if we would truly honour our God and vindicate Him even at our expense—we *must* confess “my sin and the sin of my people.”

If a natural man were to say his life had been wrong, but he would turn over a new leaf and do what was right, we should be very ready to judge his pride and self-righteousness. God be praised that He has taught us better as to our personal relations with Him. But how has it been in our relation with the Church of God? Have none of us self-righteously “turned over a new leaf?” Instead of justifying God by a humble confession, have we not flattered our self-importance by an outward change, which in the light of the Word is only making clean the outside of the cup and platter? O for a trumpet voice to call us to repentance. My brethren, shall it be the pretensions of intellectual rightness, or shall it be the deep humbling of ourselves before the God against whom we have sinned?

INDIA AT THE DAWN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.*

MISS GUINNESS, like her father, brother, and sister, has the pen of a ready writer. In this handsome and ably-written volume she gives much valuable information concerning both the moral and spiritual condition of India. Most of us know but little of that vast and important dependency of the British Empire.

Statistics are considered by many as dull reading, but Miss Guinness, through the aid of diagrams, has made them exceedingly interesting and attractive. India—after China—is the most populous country in the

world. Its present estimated population is 300,000,000, and outnumbers that of France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Great Britain, Ireland, Spain, Belgium, and Italy combined. It is 1900 miles in length, 1600 in breadth, and has an area—inclusive of Burmah—of 1,500,000 square miles. Hinduism and Mohammedanism are the two principal religions. There are about 207 millions of Hindus and 60 millions of Mohammedans. Queen Victoria reigns over more Moslems than any other Sovereign, not excepting the Sultan of Turkey. The Hindu belief is that: “Existence is an evil; emancipation from this life, and in countless future lives, is our one hope. Detach yourself from earth—go without clothes; have no home—no friends, no people; do no work; take no interest in anything; enjoy nothing, feel nothing, hope for nothing. Detach yourself—to do this, suffer pain, sleep on spikes, starve yourself, or eat carrion and nameless abominations; hold your arms up till they wither, and the nails grow through the hand; do anything and everything to get rid of your supreme curse, conscious existence.” Hinduism accepts the doctrine of transmigration of souls. According to it men are born and reborn 86 millions of times to live, suffer, and die. Their souls constantly change from one body to another, from cows to coolies, from crows to princes! Their sufferings here are said to be the result of sin committed in former bodies. Hindus are thorough fatalists. Thousands become *fakirs* and torture their bodies in the hope of escaping re-incarnation. The Hindu does not desire life: he longs for annihilation—the cessation of existence.

Mohammedanism is Eastern Unitarianism, and, like Mormonism, has a false revelation—the Koran. Though accepting the existence of a Supreme Being, the Moslem denies the incarnation, divinity, and atonement of Christ. His hope of entering heaven is based on his prayers, fastings, almsgivings, and religious ceremonies. India—and perhaps Egypt—is the only land where a Mohammedan's life would be safe for an hour after making a public confession of Christianity.

The *Parsees*, or fire-worshippers, hold the

* “Across India at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century.” By Lucy E. Guinness. Price—Paper boards, 3/6; cloth boards, 5/. To be had at *Witness* Office.

doctrine of the immortality of the soul, as well as that of future punishment. "After death the soul of every man has to give an account of its doings in the past life. Meher Daver weighs a man's actions by a scale pan. If a man's good actions outweigh his evil ones, even by a small particle, he is allowed to pass over the bridge to heaven. If his evil actions outweigh his good ones, even by a small weight, he is not allowed to pass over the bridge, but is hurled down into the deep abyss of hell. If his good and evil deeds balance each other, he is sent to a place known as Hamast-Gehan, corresponding to the Romish purgatory and the Moham-medan Aeraf."

How like the belief of many unconverted religious professors in so-called "Christian" countries!

Several chapters of Miss Guinness's book take up the position of women in India. The condition of the 145 millions of females in the Indian Empire is very sad. One of the Hindu sayings is this: "The cow is a holy animal entitled to divine honour; woman is a wicked animal entitled to no respect." She is, alas! too often treated as a "wicked animal!"

A Hindu catechism has the following questions and answers: *Q.* "What is cruel?" *A.* "The heart of a viper." *Q.* "What is more cruel than that?" *A.* "The heart of a woman." With such thoughts of women, we need not be surprised to learn that their lot is exceedingly hard and bitter.

The system of infant marriage has been and is a terrible curse. When a husband dies his widow is not allowed to remarry. "She must wear a single coarse garment, red, white, or brown. She must eat only one meal during the twenty-four hours of a day. She must never take part in family feasts with others. She must not show herself on auspicious occasions. A man will postpone his journey if his path happen to be crossed by a widow at the time of his departure. The relatives and neighbours of the young widow's husband are always ready to call her bad names, and to address her in abusive language, at every opportunity. There is scarcely a day of her life on which she is not cursed by these people

as the cause of their beloved friend's death." Why is this? "Because widowhood is believed to be the effect of some horrible crime committed by the woman on a person's life, a crime for which her husband is punished. He has died, but she must suffer." There are 25 millions of widows in India, 77,000 of them being under ten years of age. The common belief is that there is no salvation for a woman unless she is formally married. At her marriage she enters the house of her husband, and seldom ever leaves it until she is carried out to be buried. One chapter tells of Ramabai's interesting and blessed work among Hindu widows.

The maps of the various states and countries, with names omitted, are filled up with statistics which give one a vivid conception of the enormous field for effort and the comparatively few labourers. The native state of MYSORE, with 5,500,000 people scattered in 17,000 villages, hamlets, and towns, has an average parish for each missionary in it of 275,000 souls. The average parish of a minister in England and Scotland is 1000 souls. The native state of HYDERABAD, with 13,000,000 of population, has but 30 workers, or one missionary to 433,000. KUTCH, with a population as great as Uganda, has no missionary. KATHIAWAR has a population of 3,000,000, and only three missionaries. RAJPUTANA, larger than Italy, with 13,000,000 people and 24 missionaries. BOGRA, with 817,000 inhabitants and no missionary. MALDAH, 815,000 of a population and no missionary. NEPAL, population 3,000,000, and no missionary. BEHAR, which is nearly as large as England, with 20,000,000 of souls and only six missionaries, three of whom are women. In 1898 there were 1700 Protestant missionaries in India, with a population of 300,000,000. This gives one missionary to 176,000 people. At this ratio, Glasgow, with its 800,000 souls, would have five Gospel preachers; Edinburgh, with a population of 300,000, two; Liverpool, with 600,000, four; London, with 5,000,000, thirty! When we think of the scarcity of women workers, it is even more appalling. Miss Guinness gives an estimate of 200,000 British women labouring among the 19,000,000 of British women and girls. In India there are not more than

800 women workers among the 145,000,000 of their sex. This is an average of one lady worker to 180,000 persons. A big enough parish indeed!

How are these 300,000,000 of human beings to be evangelised? How are the 145,000,000 of women and girls to hear the story of God's mighty, matchless, forgiving love to a guilty world? Only by the living voice of consecrated Christian women. Of the 145,000,000 of India's women and girls only 1,000,000 are able to read or write! And no male missionary is allowed to enter a Zenana. In order to reach with the gospel India's millions, the *mothers* must first be won, and only our sisters can reach them. What a responsibility rests on the Church of the Living God! It is more than eighteen centuries since the Lord Jesus gave the commission, "GO YE into all the world and preach the gospel to EVERY CREATURE." Has His command been obeyed? Seventeen hundred Protestant missionaries in India to 300,000,000 of people! One herald of the Cross to 176,000 persons! Whilst we are not responsible to convert the world, it is the high honour and blessed privilege of the people of God to see that "every creature" in the habitable globe—including India's 300,000,000—should hear the glorious gospel of God's matchless grace ere they pass into eternity. "How shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. x. 14). Dr. Arthur T. Pierson's words on this point are worthy of being pondered: "For the present generation of the saved to reach the present generation of the unsaved is the one question of the hour that leaves all others far in the distance. To the solution of that problem in God's own way, the Church and every member of it should bring all the brains, heart, conscience, will, money, intelligence, and enterprise at command. . . . Never can the thoughtful disciple forget this shame and reproach of the Church, that since the Lord ascending to His throne said, 'Go ye . . . and preach the gospel to every creature, sixty generations of men have lived and died embracing an aggregate multitude estimated at no less than twenty times the present population of the globe, that is from twenty to thirty thousand millions of our fellow-men!

—a number so vast that if they could march one by one past a given point, one a second, it would consume from seven to ten centuries, day and night!"

Let special prayer be made to God that He will call and send many Christian young men and women to India to make known the unsearchable riches of Christ to the millions who are sitting in midnight darkness. Let us take to heart the following words which were spoken by Miss Guinness's gifted mother before her death: "Consecration to Jesus in a world tenanted by one thousand millions of heathen means stern labour and toil, means constant self-denial and self-sacrifice, means unwearied well-doing even unto death."

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me" (Isaiah vi. 8).

Most cordially do we commend to *Witness* readers Miss Guinness's interesting and instructive book.

A. M.

PARABLES OF OUR LORD.—XXXIII.

THE PARABLE OF THE TRUE AND GOOD SHEPHERD.

By THOS. NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

JOHN X. 1-18.

Verses 1-6. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but cometh up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable [similitude] spake Jesus unto them, but they understood not what things they were which He spake unto them."

WHAT which apparently gave occasion for this parable of the Lord Jesus was the decision of the Jews that if any man did confess that Jesus was the "Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue" (chap. ix. 22).

The Lord shows that these professed shepherds of Israel were exercising an authority which they had usurped, and which had not been given them of God, in casting out of the Jewish fold one of Christ's sheep, who

up to his present light had confessed Christ, and who was brought into the clear apprehension of His Divine glory as the Son of God (chap. ix. 34-38). Israel, nationally, were the sheep of God's pasture and the flock of His hand, parted off from other nations by the law of commandments contained in ordinances, a separate and distinct people, and this separation was of old designed by God for all-wise purposes.

But they were not all Israel which were of Israel. All were not able to adopt the language of Psalm xxiii. in the faith and assurance of the psalmist who wrote it. Jehovah was the great Shepherd, and the sheep of His pasture were those who, through faith in His promise of a coming Messiah, were enabled to confide in Him. And they were partakers of His Spirit, having been anointed with that oil (Ps. xxiii. 5).

In due time the Son of God, Jehovah's Shepherd, came in the way of God's appointment, sent by Him, sealed, anointed, and acknowledged of God. And when He came to Calvary Jehovah of Hosts could say of Him: "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My fellow; smite the Shepherd" (Zec. xiii. 7), and whom He brought again from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant, as the great Shepherd of the sheep (Heb. xiii. 20).

He came into the Jewish fold—for He was made under the law—to redeem them that were under the law. But He brought His sheep out from under the yoke of legal bondage into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. He had other sheep, even from among the Gentiles, who were not originally of this Jewish fold (verse 16). These also He brought and united into one flock, under one Shepherd, having broken down the middle wall of partition, and He Himself went before them and led them out.

There is doubtless a significance in the words recorded in Matthew xxviii. 7: "Behold, He goeth before you into Galilee," and referred to again in verses 10, 16.

Verses 7-18. "Then said Jesus unto them again: Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; by Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture. The

thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the Good Shepherd; the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the Good Shepherd and know My sheep, and am known of Mine. As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold [flock] and one Shepherd. Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power [authority] to lay it down, and I have power [authority] to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father."

In this second parable the Lord Jesus, having entered through the door into the sheep-fold, represents Himself as the Door by which the sheep enter in and are saved, with liberty to find pasture within the Jewish fold or without.

Having laid down His life for the sheep, and having redeemed them by His blood, He gives them life abundantly, even eternal life, and everlasting security, they being kept in His own hand, and in His Father's hand, from whence none can pluck them.

When the present dispensation closes by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto Him, Israel will again come under the shepherd-care of Jehovah, their covenant-keeping God.

Then a hundred and forty-four thousand will pass under the rod, sealed for especial protection, and in the cloudy and dark day the eye of the Divine Shepherd will be over His persecuted and scattered flock.

And when the millennial morning dawns the sheep of Jehovah's pasture and the flock of His hand, brought back from all places whither they have been scattered during the cloudy and dark day, will again feed upon the mountains of Israel under one Shepherd-King, the Root and the Offspring of David.

And when the heavenly fold will enclose within its ample circuit the spirits of just men made perfect, the Church of the first-born written in heaven, and the redeemed out of every nation, kindred, people, and tongue,

the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them [feed them as a shepherd], and lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Thus we see the shepherd character of Jehovah and of Christ brought out in a five-fold aspect:—

1. Israel, nationally, the sheep of Jehovah's pasture.

2. The Church in this present dispensation, composed of Jew and Gentile, elected of God, redeemed by the blood of Christ, quickened and sealed by the Spirit of God, formed into one flock under one Shepherd.

3. The elect of Israel and saved from among the Gentiles, during the times of the man of sin and the great tribulation, the objects of Jehovah's shepherd-care.

4. During the millennial period then the Root and Offspring of David will be the one Shepherd of the whole earth.

5. In the eternal state, when the Lamb of God shall be the Shepherd, leading the redeemed into pastures of unfailing verdure and beside waters of unruffled rest within the heavenly fold.

"Bless'd fold, no foe can enter,
And no friend departeth here;
Jesus is their sun, their centre,
And their shield omnipotence."

THE MOUNTAINS OF ISRAEL.

YE mountains of Israel, so silent and lone,
Ye dreary winds over each ruin that moan;

Were language your portion what tales ye could tell—

Could harp of Eolia but break the sad spell.

Ye mountains of Israel, what sights ye have seen,

In days when with dew and with rain ye were green;

When smoke from Baal's altars ascended on high,

And drown'd by his drums was the children's death cry.

Ye mountains of Israel, your slopes have been trod

By Israel's Messiah, the Sent One of God;

His prayer broke your stillness at midnight's dark hour,

His teardrops oft watered the wilderness flower.

Ye mountains of Israel, ye saw Him arrayed

In glory, when He to His chosen displayed

The beauty which He for a season laid by,
That He for lost sinners might suffer and die.

Mount Olivet, how thou didst echo with song,

When on to Mount Zion thy King rode along,

Then palm branch and raiment before Him were flung,

And sweetly by children hosannas were sung.

O lowly Mount Olivet, none anywhere

Amid many compeers with thee may compare;

The glory of Carmel with thine cannot vie,

Nor Lebanon's snowy peaks piercing the sky.

O sacred Mount Olivet! from thy green sod

The Holy One rose to His Father and God,

His parting words fell on thy oft trodden height,

As with benediction He passed out of sight.

O desolate Olivet! lift up thy head,

His feet once again on thy summit shall tread;

Earth's "Omega" thou when He went up on high,

Its "Alpha" when He with a shout rends the sky.

Ye mountains of Israel, be glad and rejoice,

Ye wild winds triumphantly lift up your voice;

For Jesus is coming, Himself to restore

In hundred-fold measure, the glory of yore.

A. W. P. S.

ALL THINGS

WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD TO THEM THAT

LOVE GOD.

Romans viii. 28.

IN one thousand trials it is not five hundred of them that work for the believer's good, but nine hundred and ninety-nine, and one besides.

—GEORGE MULLER.

GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE—IV.

*ISRAEL IN THE PRESENT
DISPENSATION:*

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

Notes of Addresses by JOHN R. CALDWELL.

I WILL ask you to look with me at Scriptures concerning three destructions of Jerusalem. Jerusalem has been twice destroyed in the past, and there is yet another destruction coming for that notable city. Turn with me to 2 Kings xxv. 1 to 12. It is not necessary to read other Scriptures concerning that great event.

God had borne long with the people. He had sent His messengers, His prophets, year after year declaring to them their sins, and telling them the judgments that would certainly come if they turned not to the Lord. But they persisted in their course of iniquity, and the land became filled with idols. They turned their backs upon Jehovah, and became a nation of idolators. Consequently God, in fulfilment of His word, sent against them the King of Assyria, who carried away captive the ten tribes of Israel to beyond the river Euphrates, beyond Babylon, away into Assyria. And it is remarkable that is the land out of which God brought Abraham. He was called "Abram the Hebrew," which means "one who has passed over," because he had passed over the river Euphrates into the land of Canaan. He was brought from amongst an idolatrous people to serve the Lord in the land of Promise. Because of their idolatry God caused them to be carried away lack to this land of heathenism.

Then after this, because Judah and Benjamin did not take warning and gave no heed to the judgments that God still declared were coming, God's patience being exhausted, the time came also for their chastisement.

At the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, they were carried away captive, and Jerusalem was given up to the enemy, the house of the Lord was burned with fire, and all the houses of the great men in Jerusalem. God had at last forsaken His habitation. This is the first destruction of Jerusalem.

Turn to Luke xxi. for the next destruction.

Verse 20: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." Notice there that God foretold in perfectly plain, literal language the destruction that was coming upon Jerusalem. It did not take place for a considerable time after the Lord Jesus Christ had gone to heaven, and the Holy Ghost had come down, and the Gospel had been proclaimed in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and all round about. But the Jews as a nation rejected the testimony of the Holy Ghost, and consequently this judgment as predicted took place.

But I want you to look at one or two other Scriptures about it. 1 Thess. ii. 14: "For ye, brethren, become followers of the churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus, for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men; forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be saved to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost."

Here the Jews are charged with the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ, with persecuting the messengers of Christ who preached the Gospel with the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and with standing in the way of the testimony of God's grace to the Gentiles. Thus they were filling up their cup of iniquity, till at last the judgment that had been spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ came upon them to the uttermost.

Look next at Daniel ix. 26: "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the Prince that shall come [that is the last great head of the Roman Empire, yet future] shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." Now, that agrees exactly with the words of the Lord Jesus Christ when He said: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." "Desolations are determined." And that is what has

been since the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus—it has been desolation, scattering, persecution, all down these eighteen centuries.

Turn to Luke xix. 41: "And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it." We find again a detailed prophecy of the destruction of that guilty city, and notice that the very thought of it drew forth bitter tears from the eyes of the blessed Lord. O what a tender heart! He sat there on Olivet's brow, and looking down on the city He wept as He thought of the judgment that was coming. He was full of anguish and sorrow for what was to take place in that guilty city, and gave vent to his feelings in the words we have read, in tears. "Though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him, that it might be fulfilled that was written by Esaias the prophet, 'He has hardened their hearts and blinded their eyes'." But does God harden people's hearts and blind their eyes? Not before they have rejected the clearest evidence. Christ said: "If ye believe Me not, believe Me for the very work's sake;" *i.e.*, "look at my credentials, at the works I have performed." In John v. 35-39 He appeals to four witnesses—that of John, verse 33; of His works, verse 36; of the voice from heaven, verse 37; and of the Scriptures, verse 39. But they resisted all testimony, and took counsel to put Him to death. Therefore their hearts were hardened and their eyes blinded.

Now glance at Luke xxi. 24: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

I want you to observe that what is here foretold has exactly taken place; that Jerusalem and the land of Canaan have been trodden down by the Gentiles, and the Jews, to whom it pertains, have been cast out of it, and scattered into every nation on the face of the earth. The prophecy is literally fulfilled. In every nation you visit you will find the Jew, and the Jews are not mixed up with the other nations. They are a separate people still, and meantime the Turk and the

Mohammedan tread down the inheritance of Israel. But it is only for a definite period. The Lord Jesus says that will come to an end. It is only "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." These times of the Gentiles began when God gave Nebuchadnezzar authority to take possession of Israel, to carry away the people of Jerusalem and Judea captive. He put dominion into the hand of the Gentile, and dominion will remain in the hand of the Gentile until the Lord Jesus Christ comes in His glory, and the saints with Him, to take possession of His kingdom. Then will the times of the Gentiles be at an end. That will be the day of Christ, not of the Gentiles. Then the children of Israel will become the head, and not the tail. The veil shall be taken from their hearts, and they, according to God's promise, will become the precedent nation on the earth.

Now look at Zech. xiv. 1-4: "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle." It was the Roman army only that was gathered against Jerusalem in the days of its last destruction. "And the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east." You cannot spiritualise that. The very same feet that stood on the Mount of Olives when He was here shall in that day again stand on the Mount of Olives. But what a day! "And the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley: and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south." The very touch of those feet will cause it to cleave asunder. It will be a cleft that will accomplish the purpose of God. We hear of earthquakes, and there are many earthquakes taking place, and these may be premonitions that the end is drawing near. You say,

"There have always been." Yes; all through this period of Jerusalem being trodden down and the people scattered, there have been earthquakes, commotions, famines, pestilences, just telling us that the whole world is out of order. It is more completely given up to the devil than ever it was. God has retired further from direct interference with the course of events than ever before. True, God is gathering out a people for His Son; but the world is one mass of confusion, and under Satanic power. These things are now going on, but when the Lord shall come, the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof. "And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah King of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."

"All the saints." You and I, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, shall come with Him in that day of His glory. So that in that future, that *third* destruction of Jerusalem, the enemy is not to be allowed any longer to tread it down. Satan is laid hold of by a mightier power, and this third destruction is the commencement of Jerusalem's restoration.

But in the meantime Jerusalem has to be rebuilt; the people have to go back to their land of necessity, because when the Lord comes he finds Jerusalem an established city; He finds the people back in their land; the temple worship going on; and the thing called "the abomination of desolation" set up in that temple. The people at that time shall have made a covenant with the man that is called "the wicked one," "a covenant with hell."

It is not a godly nation that is found back in the land. There will be a remnant that God will reserve for Himself according to the election of grace. But I want you to see the people go back to their land, not as a saved people, not even as a repenting people. They first go back and people the land as a national movement, simply as Jews, as rejectors of Christ, and establish their own form of worship, the Mosaic economy revived.

At this moment some are making a plan of the temple according to the book of Ezekiel, to be prepared to set it up when the time comes. How soon this time may arrive we do not know. This we *do* know, that the Jews are returning rapidly to their land; they are cultivating the soil; railways are being made. Rain is now being given to the land, making it fertile, such as has not been for centuries. God is making preparations for the scenes of the last days. The end is coming very near. And if these days are coming near, how much nearer is the coming of Him who is going to take us to Himself before these last scenes take place? So remember, if we see already the beginnings of these things that must surely come to pass, we know His coming for us is nearer still.

Correspondence.

"THE CHRISTIAN AND POLITICS."

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

If this is not too late, I would like to add a few thoughts to the answer given to this question by our brother "W." I quite agree with all he says. I have long believed that for a child of God to go to the "poll" is to belie the Christian character and the Christian's calling. At the same time, I believe we ought to take an interest in what our God and Father is doing in His world; only, the Christian's place of power is at the *throne of grace*, not at the *polling booth*. Abraham took no part in the government of Sodom, as Lot would seem to have done; but he was not indifferent as to its impending doom. Lot lost his power by going into Sodom; Abraham maintained his power by keeping the place of separation from it; and whilst his intercession did not prevail to avert the doom of Sodom, it brought Lot out of it, for we read in Genesis xix. 29: "And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God REMEMBERED ABRAHAM, and sent forth Lot out of the midst of the overthrow." We little know, and little value, the power which a believer might have by intercessory prayer; and whilst I firmly hold that the Christian has no right to be mixed up with the world's contentions for power, I believe it would be edifying for our own souls and well-pleasing to God for us to carry even a political election to the Throne of Grace, and ask God to overrule man's contentions for the furtherance of His own holy purposes, and for the well-being of the nation in which our lot is cast.

Many of us have to plead guilty to a sad neglect of the exhortation given in 1 Tim. ii. 1-4.

Another thought is that, when our "vote" is solicited by intelligent and sometimes conscientious Christian men, we are not careful to give an intelligent, Scriptural "reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear." We have no right to put such men off with a piece of banter, or with a blunt negative. If we have the truth of God upon our side, we ought to embrace the opportunity to make it known. We ought to tell them respectfully that when the Son of God "came into His own [world], His own [people, Israel] received Him not" (John i. 11); that when God sent His only Son, His well beloved, to claim His due, the various factions of earth united to cast Him out, and to kill Him, and then seized on His inheritance; and whilst He is away hid in heaven, the Christian's place in this world is to stand apart from all its unholy contentions for place and power, and to wait patiently for the time when the "Man of God's right hand" will come back to earth again and govern this world according to God.

Another thought is that the principle of men being put into places of power by the votes of the people was never of God. In the case of Saul and Jeroboam, God gave to Israel the men of their own choice, but it was in judgment He did it; it was never His way to do so. While God is overruling the democratic government of this world, holding man's pride and avarice in check until His present purpose is completed, yet democracy, or rule by the will of the people, is in its very nature "from beneath." It never was "from above," and never can be. For this reason alone no "heavenly man" ought to touch it. Whether this principle appears in Church or State, it is a practical denial of the authority of God to choose His own rulers, through whom He will administer His own blessed will. In answer to the question sometimes put, "What would become of the world were all Christians to act on the foregoing principles?" I reply, The Great God is perfectly able to govern His own world without our help. "'Tis ours to obey; 'tis His to provide."

G. A.

THE REIGN OF CHRIST—TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL.

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

IN *The Witness* of January a question is answered by "W. C.," upon this subject, and responding to the Editor's suggestion that it may elicit further correspondence, I offer the following note:

Briefly put, the answer to the question, "If Christ delivers up the kingdom . . . how then does He reign for ever and ever?" is this: The

kingdom which He delivers up is that which He holds as Son of Man. The kingdom over which He will reign for ever and ever is that which He holds as God. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," were words addressed to the Son of God.

There are several interesting points made in "W. C.'s" letter, and most valuable is his showing that the word "until" does not imply a terminus. Many instances might be quoted where the word indicates a point of transition to a further and new condition. "Until the law sin was in the world." "The sceptre shall not depart . . . until Shiloh come," &c. But when your correspondent states that the "kingdom" of 1 Cor. xv. 25 is the present dispensation, and that the destruction of death is to take place at our Lord's coming for the saints, I do not believe he will carry his readers with him.

As I have dealt fully with this passage in the little book, "After the Thousand Years," I will not enlarge now, but only add a transcript of the appendix to the second edition, lately published, which bears directly on the question in hand.

That Christ's enemies will not be put under His feet till the millennium's end is manifest from the world-wide success, even to the encompassing of Jerusalem with the armies, of the great rebellion. It is therefore *after* the thousand years that the "subjection," the settled reign of peace, will take place.

The appendix on 1 Cor. xv. 24-28 is as follows: "In verse 24, the word 'cometh' in our English versions, both the Authorised and Revised, is an unfortunate addition, directing the mind rather to an event than to a period. 'Then the End' (*Telos*), that is, 'the End when all shall be accomplished, the *bringing in and fulness* of the Kingdom by the subjugation of the last enemy' (Alford, Gr. Test., *in loco*). 'Liddell and Scott' define the strict sense of *Telos*, not as the ending of a past state, but the arrival of a complete and perfect one. It is the final dispensation towards which all that precede it have been and shall be leading up. The sense will be made apparent by reference to the case of Job. In James v. 11 we read: 'Ye have seen the *end* of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy;' and in Job xlii. 12, 'So Jehovah blessed the latter *end* of Job more than his beginning;' verse 16, 'After this lived Job an hundred and forty years.' That is, the words 'beginning' and 'end' both comprise long periods of time. So is it here. If the 'end' of Job's life lasted for 140 years, to what length may not the 'end' of Christ's Kingdom extend? (See also Heb. ix. 26).

"Again, in reply to those who suppose that the words, 'He must reign *till* He hath put all His enemies under His feet,' imply that at that time

the Reign shall terminate, let us ask ourselves what meaning would attach to a similar statement as to Job. For example, 'He must live till all his diseases are cured and his distresses are relieved.' Would that imply that when once again made well and happy, Job should die? It is absurd. The reign of Christ was to last till all His enemies were abolished, and to continue thenceforward (like the life of Job) in the new and peaceful conditions.

"The whole passage, verses 24-28, is divided into two sections, distinguished by the verbs *katargeo* in the first part (verses 24-26) and *hupobasso* in the second (27, 28). The first is translated 'put down' and 'destroy' in the Authorised Version, and 'abolish' in the Revised. It refers to the victory of Christ at the beginning of the period, by which all enemies so proudly defiant at the close of the millennium shall be abolished and ended. The second is uniformly translated in the Revised Version 'subject,' or 'put in subjection,' and occurs six times in the two verses (27, 28). It is not the same thing as the first. That was an act, this a lasting condition; that was the inauguration of the Kingdom, this is its order, or constitution; that was a Victory, this is a Reign; that fulfils Psalm cx. 1, this Psalm viii. 6.

"The teaching of the passage will, I believe, be elucidated by the following transcript, with the explanatory words in brackets, and will show how carefully the apostle's words are chosen to convey the leading thought in the mind of the Spirit:

"Then the end [or final dispensation], when [that is, at the conclusion of which period] He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, when [that is, at the beginning of which period] He shall have brought to naught all Rule and all Authority and Power. For He [Christ] must reign till [and after] He [God] shall have put all His enemies under His [Christ's] feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is Death.

"For He put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He [God] shall have declared, "All things are put in [a settled state of] subjection to Him," it is evident that He [God] is excepted, who did subject all things unto Him [Christ]. And when all things have been subjected unto Him [Christ], then shall the Son also Himself be subjected [that is, as to His reigning attitude] to Him that did subject all things unto Him, that [even throughout the term of Christ's Kingdom, as always] God may be all in all."

GEO. F. TRENCH.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th

of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

MINISTRY AT THE BREAKING OF BREAD.—Is it contrary to the Divine pattern to sing, read, or minister the Word before the observance of the Lord's Supper, seeing our object in coming together is to "break bread" (Acts xx. 7), and that no hymn was sung at its institution (Matt. xxvi. 26-29; Mark xiv. 22-25) until after the feast had been observed?

DIVINE TITLES.—Is it Scriptural for a Christian to use the term "our heavenly Father" in prayer or worship?

"WATER" IN JOHN'S EPISTLE.—Does the water mentioned in 1 John v. 8 and the water mentioned in the 6th verse of the same chapter mean the same, or, if not, what do we learn from the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses together?

A REPROVED BROTHER.—Is it Scriptural when a brother takes offence, because he has been reproved for his conduct, to go off to the nearest assembly, and that assembly to receive him?

PRAYING FOR EVIL.—Please explain Psalm cix. 6-29 in the light of the spirit and teaching of Jesus Christ.

PROPITIATION.

QUESTION 382.—1. Heb. ii. 17. Is the function of propitiation-making (see R.V.) referred to here an allusion to the service performed by the High Priest within the sanctuary (see Lev. xvi. 14-17) on the day of atonement, which was exclusively high-priestly?

2. In view of Heb. viii. 4, which states the Lord was not a High Priest on earth, and He gives the reasons for it (verses 4 and 5), where was the service of Heb. ii. 17 wrought? If the Lord was not a High Priest on earth, and Heb. ii. 17 states He must be one to make propitiation, remembering also, to introduce His priesthood before death would abrogate the force of Heb. v. 6 10 and vii. 16, 17, 24, where and when was propitiation made?

3. Heb. ix. 12. The Lord entered by blood—*by* (*διὰ* characteristic), not in virtue of. Where did He enter? If the heavenly sanctuary, then it is in contrast to the earthly. But why *by* blood? If the entrance be relegated to the ascension day, what necessity then *by* blood? Aaron entered the earthly sanctuary by or with blood; he is the type, and in the capacity of a High Priest. What for? Is it to make atonement? (Lev. xvi.) Will the antitype tell differently, remembering the capacity in which he did so? (Heb. ix. 11); and in what connection the entrance is mentioned? On the ascension day atonement in all its parts was assuredly complete.

[THESE questions on "Propitiation, &c.," have elicited much correspondence. We give three replies, which

seem to us to express most of what is contained in all - to publish which is out of our power. We would only remark on two points:

1. That whilst in one aspect the making of propitiation, or atonement, was complete when the Lord Jesus died on Calvary and the veil was rent, in another aspect it was incomplete until the resurrection and ascension of the Lord. "If Christ be not risen ye are yet in your sins." His resurrection and exaltation were God's public declaration of His full satisfaction with the propitiation made on Calvary, and without which declaration the whole propitiatory work would have lacked an essential element.

2. It is important to distinguish between the exercise of priestly functions and the official standing and glories of High Priesthood. As the God-Man, the Lord Jesus was at all times competent to exercise priestly functions, to act as Mediator, to forgive sins, and to offer Himself without spot to God.

For four thousand years God, in His relations and intercourse with the elect, acted in anticipation of the work to be done on Calvary. Even so the Lord Jesus anticipated His official Priesthood and acted in the power of it, though actually it was only in resurrection and ascension that He became publicly and officially the glorified Melchizedek Priest.—ED.]

Answer A.—1. The service performed by the High Priest within the sanctuary once every year represented the high-priestly ministry of Christ as ever living to make intercession for us: Therefore, not merely the one act of entering there, but as in 1 John ii. 2, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins."

2. In Hebrews the Lord is always the "High Priest," whose ministry is in the holiest. He stands in contrast with "priests" whose service was all outside in the daily round of offerings, none of which ever found their way inside the veil. The one service of the High Priest, which he alone could do, was to go within the veil and make atonement on the mercy-seat with the blood of the victim which he himself must first offer on the altar. So it is written, "He offered up Himself" (Heb. vii. 27). Except as this act may be so regarded, the high-priesthood of Christ began with, and consisted of, His entrance into, and continuance in, the Holiest above.

3. The Risen Lord was "seen of them forty days," then "a cloud received Him out of their sight." Atonement was surely complete before that. "He rose again because of our justification." His showing Himself alive after His passion was to serve another purpose, that of testimony to His resurrection. His blood-shedding for atonement had given Him the right to, and the whereby to enter at once as our High Priest into the Holiest. Though Scripture does not so affirm it, except as we may see it in type (Lev. xxviii. 11), there seems no reason to relegate to the ascension day His exaltation to His Melchizedek office and glory.

w. c.

Answer B.—With reference to the queries on propitiation in the February number of *The Witness*, which has only just been seen by me, may I make a few short suggestions. Let me say that my remarks are tentative rather than dogmatic, as this subject presents many difficulties.

1. It appears that there is a priesthood proper to the Lord Jesus which is not the Melchizedek priesthood. The functions of the Melchizedek priest could not be exercised by Christ during his life on earth:

(a) Because it necessitated resurrection from the dead. Jesus was "crowned with glory and honour [priest and king] because of the suffering of death" (Heb. ii. 9, r.v.). See also Phil. ii. 9.

(b) Because it involved not only ascension to God the Father, but his acceptance and approval by God as the Man who had glorified Him on earth, and had done His will as His faithful Apostle and High Priest (Heb. iii. 1, 2). This includes the things spoken by the Lord as Apostle, and His making purification for sins as High Priest.

(c) Because it necessitated His anointing and appointment as the chosen and honoured One—"rejected indeed of men, but chosen of God, and held in honour" (1 Pet. ii. 4) in resurrection life at God's right hand, with an oath, "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent," &c. (Ps. cx. 4). The anointing spoken of here cannot be the anointing with the Holy Spirit at his baptism by John, but that spoken of by Peter (Acts ii. 33). "Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this." Typified Psalm cxxiii.

(d) Typically, Melchizedek appears on the scene, not as one who makes propitiation for sins—this we hear nothing of—but as king of Salem, and priest of the Most High God, who gives gifts to, receives tithes from, and blesses God's faithful servant, Abraham.

2. It is evident that Jesus Christ was exercising priestly functions on earth, or how could he have offered Himself as a propitiatory victim on the Cross? The answer is that by God's appointment he exercised the office of High Priest on earth:

(a) *Not under law.*—The law recognised as priests only those who were sons of Levi, and of the order of Aaron (Heb. vii. 5, 11). Jesus was not a legal High Priest. The tribe of Levi was separated for the service of the sanctuary because of the hardness of Israel's heart. From the beginning it was not so. Had Israel risen to their high calling and privileges, and walked obediently, they would have been a nation of priests, and every firstborn son would have been a chief priest, while their earthly representative ruler would have been the High Priest. Moses apprehended something of this, and performed

the office of priest and mediator at the foot of Sinai.

(b) *Not in connection with the earthly sanctuary.*—Jesus had no standing there, nor did he make any claim to it. He would not have been admitted into the holy places made with hands, which were only figures of the true, because the legal priests did not recognise one greater than the temple, even the High Priest of the “good things.”

3. What, then, were His claims to priesthood, and on what authority did they rest?

(a) As Son of God and Son of Man (the seed of the woman) He could become, by *virtue of His birth*, the promised kinsman Redeemer. This was a necessity (Heb. ii. 14-17). The Redeemer must, of necessity, be a mediator and priest, standing between God and man.

(b) He must be a *firstborn son*. To Jesus God could say, “Thou art My Son, My beloved,” “My chosen.” “Thou art My firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.” He was also the firstborn of the woman, and, as “Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord,” He was duly qualified, under certain conditions, to act as priest.

(c) He must be “without sin” (Heb. iv. 5). A lover of righteousness and a hater of iniquity (Heb. i. 9).

(d) He must be able to sympathise with all the sorrows of His tried and tempted people, and be full of mercy as well as pity (Heb. ii. 17, 18).

(e) He must be able to take the place appointed to Him by Jehovah, as it is written in Isaiah liii. Let this chapter be carefully read. It applied to Jehovah’s elect Servant, who was to be anointed to do the whole will of God, and, though He had done no evil Himself, was to justify many through His death. There is nothing of Melchizedek priesthood until we reach the last verse. Yet there is priesthood, and an offering of His soul for sin.

4. Does not Heb. viii. 4 say, “Now, if He were on earth, He would not be a priest”? Yes. How, then, could He, as priest, offer Himself on the Cross as a propitiatory victim? Answer:

(a) The difficulties vanish when we see that He was the “Minister of the true sanctuary, and of the tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man.” The words “on earth” must be read in light of the whole teaching of this epistle. “The earth” is connected with the shadows and figures of the coming “good things,” and the coming heavenly “Priest of the good things.” But Christ having come, the shadows pass away, the types are now to be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God, and the true and good things which are above earth and above and before the law are now recognised as the sphere of action.

Jesus spoke of Himself as “the Son of Man who is in heaven” even when on earth. He in-

structs Nicodemus as prophet in the heavenly things. Here in Hebrews He is seen acting as the heavenly Man, the only righteous One on earth, *in heavenly matters*, and *on heavenly ground*. “It was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be cleansed with these (the blood of beasts), but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these” (Heb. ix. 23). The whole earth, which is the Lord’s; Mount Moriah, where the sacrifice was slain; the grave from which He rose; the heavens *through* which He passed; heaven itself, into which he entered and now is; all in this sense go to make up the tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man, and are typified by the Court of the Tabernacle, afterwards in the temple the *Court of the Gentiles*; the brazen altar; the laver; the holy place; and the holiest of all.

For this work He was anointed as servant of the sanctuary, and by virtue of His fitness for High Priest of the good things, by God’s own appointment, without an oath. It is evident that this anointing and priesthood would cease by reason of death, which necessitates the new order and the fresh anointing in resurrection life.

R. W. B.

Answer C.—The contrast in Heb. ix. is between the figures of the types and the realities of the anti-type. How, then, was the figurative ceremonial carried out by the earthly High Priest? By means of a hand-made tabernacle and the blood of bulls and of goats. These things—a material tabernacle and the blood of beasts—were the needful accessories of the day of atonement.

But how was the anti-type of all this to be carried out? What were the grand spiritual realities corresponding to these accessories? “A better and more perfect tabernacle,” and “His own blood.” It was by means of these that Christ, being come a High Priest, fulfilled the shadows of good things to come.

It is noticeable that in verse 12 Christ is said to have once entered into the holy place (that is, into heaven itself—verse 25) by (*δία*) His own blood, whereas the High Priest entered into the earthly tabernacle with *εἰς*, the blood of others. Why this difference of preposition? Is it not for the very reason that whereas the High Priest did actually carry in the blood, the idea of our Lord doing so, though to be found in some hymns, is foreign to Scripture. He did enter in by means of, or by the instrumentality of His own blood, though not with it, and is now in the presence of God for us, bearing still in His body the marks of accomplished atonement. It is as a Lamb, as though it had been slain, standing in “the highest place that heaven affords,” in the midst of the throne, that the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed to the eye of the Apostle John. W. H.

GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE—V.

THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS TO PALESTINE.

By JOHN R. CALDWELL, Author of "Shadows of Christ in the Old Testament," "Things to Come," &c.

WE have seen that in Scripture Jerusalem is spoken of as being three times destroyed—twice in the past and once in the future.

Likewise we read of three national restorations of the people to their land.

In Jer. xxv. 11 we read: "And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the King of Babylon seventy years."

Again, we read in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21: "To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years." One of Jehovah's appointments was that the land of Israel should neither be sown nor reaped every seventh year. But unbelieving hearts were always ready to disobey God. Just as the people in the wilderness refused to rest and went out upon the seventh day to gather the manna, so Israel refused to allow the land to rest on the seventh year; they would till it, they would sow and reap, though Jehovah had forbidden it.

Man complains of "the curse of labour," and yet when God wants him to rest he won't. Long and exhaustive hours of labour with few holidays was not God's mind. He wanted man to have happy times and abundance of rest, but not idleness. "Abundance of idleness" was the soil in which the abominations of Sodom were developed. (See Ezek. xvi. 49.)

Thus in the overruling providence of God He caused that the land should enjoy its Sabbatic years in spite of Israel's disobedience—the land kept Sabbath during the seventy years of the Babylonish captivity.

Let us now turn to Dan. ix. 1. 2: "In the first year of Darius, . . . I, Daniel, understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the Prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem." When Daniel had made this

discovery, did he say, "It matters not whether I pray about it, or take an interest in the purposes of God or not; He will accomplish them all the same?" Not so, but in verse 3 we read, "And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes." Earnestly he sought that the people might be brought into a fit condition to receive the promised blessing, and now that the time was drawing near he confessed the sin of the nation as if it had been his own, and besought the mercy of the Lord.

How often have we, in deep humiliation, confessed the sin of the whole Church or God as our own, and besought Him that we might be brought into a fit condition to receive the blessing? As the land requires to be prepared to receive the seed, so our hearts have to be fitted to receive the blessing.

Turn with me now to Ezra ii. 1: "Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon had carried away into Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city." In view of certain errors that are abroad in these days, I want you to note this verse particularly. Who were they that returned to Jerusalem with Ezra? This verse answers; it was those whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and the Levites among them. Was it those who had been carried away of the ten tribes by Shalmanezar into the land beyond the Euphrates? No. They did not return.

These are called Jews; that means "inhabitants of Judea"—such is the origin of the title, and however generally it may be used now-a-days by those who have not studied these subjects, it properly does not apply to the ten tribes, but to those whose forefathers remained true to the house of David. The ten tribes were carried away into Assyria far beyond Babylon, and we read nothing of their having been brought back, though we know from other Scriptures that they will be, in the future.

We are sometimes told that the British or Anglo-Saxons are the ten tribes. It would

not be hard to prove that this is impossible. We cannot speak dogmatically as to where they are; James addressed his epistle to the whole twelve tribes, evidently recognising the fact of their existence somewhere. God knows where they are, and will gather them again when His time comes; but those who returned to Jerusalem, who peopled the land and occupied it when the Lord Jesus was upon earth, and who were guilty of putting Him to death, were not the ten tribes of the Assyrian captivity, but the Jews.

True, there are one or two names incidentally mentioned of persons who belonged to other tribes, but they are merely individuals. The fact is that it is the Jews, viz., the descendants of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, who were guilty of the murder of the Messiah; it is they who have been scattered and persecuted in every land since the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. Again they will be brought back to Jerusalem, and will there pass through the great tribulation because of the awful sin of having rejected and crucified the Lord of Glory, and having called out, "His blood be upon us and on our children."

As to the ten tribes, I am not going to say where they are. My belief is that they will be found somewhere in the direction they were carried to by Shalmanezzer, in Central Asia, among the Nestorians or the tribes of Afganistan, or even in Western China.

Having glanced at the restoration to the land of that part of the nation which was led by Ezra and Nehemiah, let us now look at a restoration that is still future. "Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock" (Jer. xxxi. 10). This clearly predicts a future restoration, not merely a political movement in unbelief, but a return as the redeemed of the Lord at His call. Take another passage, Jer. xxxii. 37-41: "Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in Mine anger, and in My fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts, that

they shall not depart from Me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with My whole heart and with My whole soul."

Notice that Jehovah here says His whole heart and His whole soul are in this yet future restoration. As He says elsewhere, "The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will do this." Now, let me ask, is it right that you and I should be indifferent about events shortly to take place, upon which the whole heart and soul of Jehovah is set? Surely such things demand the loving interest of every one who desires to have fellowship with God in the working out of the counsels of His grace.

What I want to make clear is that this return to the land is yet future, and that any present gathering of the Jews back to Palestine differs entirely from the return we are looking at in all essential features.

Read also Ezekiel xxxvii. 15-24: "The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions." Here we have a very notable feature of that future restoration; it is not the return of the Jews only, but of all Israel. There is Judah, representing also Benjamin and Levi, and there is Ephraim, representing here, as elsewhere frequently, the ten tribes. "And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these? . . . Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will

save them out of all their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be My people, and I will be their God. And David My servant shall be king over them."

That is "the Son of David" who in many passages is called David.

This future restoration, then, is of the whole nation, the twelve tribes, and is not merely a political movement, but a great spiritual regeneration of the nation, a work of grace according to the New Covenant in fulfilment of the promise made to Abram, Isaac, and Jacob, and later to David.

Let us now read Isaiah xi. 11: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea." We are here given the lands from which in that day the remnant of Jehovah's people shall be brought. There is Assyria, whither the ten tribes were originally taken as captives. There is Egypt; no doubt many at least of the Jewish portion are there. Pathros and Cush denote Ethiopia, the Soudan, and possibly farther into Central Africa. Elam and Shinar, that is Persia, or that district to which the ten tribes were carried captive.

In Isa. xlix. 12 we have further information. "Behold, these shall come from far [probably referring to the far south, as the Queen of Sheba—Queen of the South—was said to have come from the uttermost parts of the earth]: and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim," or China, being far east, the only direction not yet mentioned.

Then in verse 21 surprise is expressed at the congregating of so many from unknown parts. "These, where had they been?" Exactly what we should expect to hear when the "lost" ten tribes are found!

Then in Isaiah xi. 12 we read: "And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." All these passages combine to prove that the future restoration to the land is to be of the entire

nation, from all parts of the earth; that it is a spiritual return to the Lord, and not merely a political movement; and that it is to be accompanied by the revelation to them of the Lord Jesus, their long-rejected Messiah.

There is a question which no Jew can answer: If for abominable idolatries they were carried away into captivity for seventy years; if after their return idolatry was never set up in the land, what, then, is the terrible crime which has brought upon them nineteen centuries of exile and sorrow? How is it that Jehovah hears not their cry, and interposes not for their restoration?

We know that it is because they rejected the Messiah, and they too will yet be brought to know and own it in the language of Isa. liii.

Turn with me now to Hosea iii. 4, 5: "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days." Here it is definitely foretold that Israel's exile from their land was to be for a lengthened period—"many days."

At this moment they are without a king, and even without a prince who could be regarded as heir to the throne. They are without a sacrifice, for that involves an altar and priest, and a fixed place of worship of Jehovah's choice. But they have only synagogue worship; so long as they are in strange lands they can have no temple service.

They are without an image, or rather a pillar, symbol of settlement; and without an ephod, the priestly robe taken as representing the office of priesthood, and yet although they are brought so low, they are without "teraphim," or household gods; the demon of idolatry once cast out has not yet returned to the house he left.

Even the most pious of the Jews, who cleave to the Old Testament Scriptures, are in great perplexity as to all the calamities that have come upon them, for the veil is upon their hearts and they do not see Him of whom the Scriptures testify.

Many of them are yearning to be back in their land, and to have the worship of

Jehovah re-established, with temple, altar, priesthood, sacrifices, as of old.

The movement in that direction, at present gaining force, will doubtless develop, and ere long we shall see a Jewish nation planted again in Palestine. This is the restoration that comes in necessarily between the past and the future, which we have been considering. It must be so, for all the latter-day scenes as regards Israel are connected with Jerusalem and the land. But of this return of the Jews we read very little in Scripture. It is a movement that the Holy Spirit does not dwell upon. It is probably referred to in parable by the Lord in Matt. xii. 43-45—fearful picture of moral depravity combined with outward prosperity. A cleansed land, but a devil-possessed people.

But this passage in Hosea, so explicit and so remarkably fulfilled, is silent as to what God *is doing* during the period of Israel's dispersion.

That, so far as the Old Testament is concerned, is a dead secret. As to Israel, nationally, God is in a sense disowning them. He is saying to them, "*Lo ammi*"—"Not My people." But in the meantime, what is God doing? Has He given them all over to unbelief?

Now turn to Rom. xi. 1: "Hath God cast away His people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin."

Saul was therefore a descendant of those who returned from captivity with Ezra and Nehemiah. Moreover, he was one of those who gloried in the murder of Christ. Verse 2: "God hath not cast away His people whom he foreknew."

Even in Elijah's day of utter apostacy, when he made intercession against Israel—forgetting even such an one as Obadiah, and thinking there was no one left true to Jehovah but himself—even then God said to him, "I have reserved unto Myself, 7000 who have not bowed the knee to Baal."

But has God reserved a remnant for Himself in this age? Yes. "At this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of Grace." Who are they? Paul says, "I am a specimen of these—I am one of those whom God has reserved and saved in sovereign grace."

THE PROMISED SECOND

APPEARING OF OUR LORD JESUS.*

Address by the late Mr. HENRY HEATH, of Woolpit, Suffolk.

WITH regard to His coming, we enquire at the same source of information and instruction—His Word. When the disciples were full of sorrow at the thought of His leaving them, when He is parting from them, He says: "But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away." Then in the 14th chapter, He says: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. 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." It is part of His hidden ministry. We cannot describe the way He is preparing, but He is doing it. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." That promise He never forgets. The hope that He has given He never forgets; and He is longing Himself, with a more intense longing than the warmest heart present longs, for the fulfilment of His own word: "I will come again, and receive you unto 'Myself.'" Not into the house, but unto Himself. If the time had arrived for His coming to gather us to Himself we should not meet Him in heaven, nor on the earth, but between the two. He will step to the air. He will speak with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and wake the sleeping saints, and touch with His transforming power the living, and change them in a moment; and we should be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. "And so shall we ever be with the Lord."

It always reminds me of Isaac's meeting with Rebekah, and where she met him. He did not go to her home and fetch her: he did not wait till she came to his tent. He walked out to meditate, and she was advancing on the camel. They met between the two houses, and he brought her into his mother's tent. So, that, beloved,

[*The first portion of this Address, on "The Present Ministry of the Lord Jesus," appeared last month. Other Addresses by our recently departed brother will (D.V.) be given.]

is what we are waiting for as Christians. We are waiting for Jesus our Lord to leave the Father's throne and descend to the air, and when there to speak with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and wake the sleeping, and transform the living, and gather us unto Himself in the air, and then introduce us to the place He has gone to prepare for us. That was His promise; and when the Spirit of God came down, when the Thessalonians were in sorrow for the departure of some of their friends, and troubled regarding their portion, the Head of the Church gave to the Apostle Paul a prophetic word, not a quotation of Scripture, but a word direct from the Throne for the circumstances, for the occasion. And therefore Paul says: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord." What was it? "That we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." That was the hope of the Church; that was the hope of the Thessalonians, for it would appear they had not a thought of death. They received Christ with the expectation of His coming, as we are told in the 1st chapter: "For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven." Their state was that of persons regenerated, converted, turned to God from idols. Their occupation and spiritual business was to serve the living and true God. And their hope was to wait for His Son from heaven, even Jesus. Oh, that the Church had never lost that blessed hope. The truth of it; the power of it; the separating power of it from the world; the power of it to give patience amid the sorrow of this wilderness. "Waiting for His Son from heaven"—not even waiting for heaven—expecting He will come. Not expecting antichrist, that monster of iniquity combining in himself all

possible evil human and satanic. He will come, we know, but we do not wait for him; we wait for the Son of God from heaven. That is our hope: the hope of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then from the eighth chapter of Romans, taken in conjunction with the third chapter of Colossians, we see what will take place. In Colossians the apostle says: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." "Hid." "Your life is hid with Christ in God." "When He who is our life shall be manifested;" when He will no longer be an object of faith only but of sight; "when He shall be manifested, we shall be manifested with Him in glory." Then in Romans we are told that such is the importance of that event and the glory of it that the whole creation travails and groans in hope of it. The creature is groaning, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God; "for the unveiling" is the word here.

We are all children of God, brethren of Christ, members of His body, flesh of His flesh, bone of His bone, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ. What does the world think of it? Can they understand it, can they appreciate it? Do they know our life is hid with Christ in God? But when He who is our life shall appear, then shall we be manifested, unveiled in all our dignity and glory in association with Christ. And the world will believe then what they will not believe now, that we are objects of the same love, equal love with the Son of the living God.

That is our hope. We are waiting to be unveiled. I think sometimes in pondering this subject that if some person ignorant of the construction of the tabernacle had passed it, looked at it with the badger-skin covering—they could see nothing more—they would think, "What an unsightly, rough, mean exterior," not knowing that underneath lay precious coverings, and that even gold was hid beneath the badger skin. So, beloved, we must be content to appear to the world as if we were covered with the badger skins.

We are in our weakness and roughness, but we shall presently be unveiled in the perfect likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ. We shall be then seen to be objects of equal love with the Son of God Himself, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Let us then rejoice that we have such an one as the Lord Jesus, who served us in life, who served us with His death, who serves us with His hidden life with all its capabilities, and rejoice with hope for the day when He shall appear, and we shall be with Him in the glory.



FIGURES OF THE CHRISTIAN.—VIII.

THE CHRISTIAN: A FISHERMAN.

By Dr. J. N. CASE, China.

“FOLLOW Me,” said our Lord to Peter and Andrew, “and I will make you fishers of men.” Their earthly calling became a figure of what He designed them to be in the spiritual realm. There is surely a more than casual resemblance in the two things since the Lord Jesus used the figure on three different occasions (see Matt. iv. 18-20; xiii. 47-50; Luke v. 1-10), for I judge that a careful comparison of Matthew iv. 18-20 with Luke v. 1-10 will show that they refer to different incidents.

In the Luke incident the promise was especially made to Simon Peter, and by the word used a contrast is suggested as well as a likeness; hitherto he had been catching fish for death; hereafter he was to take men for life (see the R. V., *margin*, of verse 11).

In the New Testament this figure is used by Christ alone. It shows us how His mind was ever set on spiritual realities; how He at once arises from the natural to the spiritual; from the earthly to the heavenly. The figure of the net is frequently used in the Old Testament. But there it always either refers to involving men in evil or taking them for judgment. In Jeremiah xvi. 14-18 we have a striking use of the figure in reference to Israel in the future, but even there it reads: “And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double.” So that Christ was original in using it in a good sense. But we must now, briefly, come more to the heart of the subject.

1. The right season was, and I believe

still is, considered the best time for net fishing (Luke v. 5; John xxi. 3). And, during the night of His absence, it is the privilege and duty of servants of Christ to be specially engaged in casting the Gospel net into the sea of humanity to take sinners for life and salvation, not for death and destruction. And such service always has and always will win men for Christ.

2. In net fishing it is necessary to be able and willing to work with others, for several necessarily engage in it together. Peter, James, and John were partners in their earthly calling (Luke v. 10) before they became so closely identified in seeing the Lord’s mighty works and glory, and in proclaiming Him as the Christ, the Saviour of sinners. Many Christians seem unable to co-operate with others in Gospel work. This is a loss to themselves, to fellow-believers, and to the unsaved; for the principle and promise still hold that one shall chase a thousand, while two shall put ten thousand to flight. In spiritual fishing two are better than one, and three or more may be better still. Doubtless it is pride that hinders many an one from working happily with others. He is willing to pull in double harness, but the chariot must run tandem fashion, and he must be the “leader.” Power, opportunity, and influence are often dissipated or lost through true-hearted Christians not striving together to win others to Christ. But to pass on.

3. Fishermen need to be endowed with a special stock of patience and perseverance. Many a returning boat’s crew might say: “We have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing.” But they do not, on this account, change their calling and give up all hope of again getting a haul. There are still fish in the sea, and in due time many of them will be caught. The application of this to workers for Christ is obvious. We, too, labour at times with no visible results following. Yet we toil on, knowing that in due season we shall reap if we faint not. This we know, not because we have any confidence in human nature, but because God has purposed through the preaching of the Gospel to save those who believe, and He has provided that there should be such at all times and in all lands.

4. A fisherman must also be able to endure hardships. It is not an easy life. Often, while others are comfortably resting in their beds, fishermen are out in the dark, cold, wet night. Yes; they are exposed to real hardships and at times to imminent danger. And all true service for Christ calls for self-denial and a willingness, if necessary, to "suffer hardships with the Gospel." Were this loyally accepted as a *sine qua non* of Christian work, a little rain or an extra hot day, a personal comfort or convenience would not keep so many away from the prayer, gospel, open-air meetings, or Sunday-school class.

5. Fishermen's nets at times call for both cleansing and mending (Matt. iv. 21; Luke v. 2). In the application the net represents the various powers, gifts, and opportunities through which men may be influenced for Christ. The late C. H. Spurgeon, himself under God a great soul-winner, once said that in preaching one needed to be "all there." This testimony is worth considering. We must, indeed, take heed to ourselves in the whole range of our being. Spirit, heart, intellect, temper, body — all need looking after, otherwise we shall lose many opportunities of winning men. They will, as we may say, slip through the broken meshes of our nets.

And, to accomplish the end in view, the nets must be clean. A dirty net might scare the fish away. This reminds us of the holiness of heart and life which ever becomes those who take the place of being "fishers of men," for actions ever speak louder than words, and he who denies by his life what he preaches by his lips will turn more from the truth than he can possibly lead to Christ. Truth most searching and solemn!

6. While fishing by net is chiefly in view in the New Testament, fishing by hook and line is also alluded to (Matt. xvii. 27). In this we have brought before us our individual responsibility to serve in the Gospel. Circumstances are often such that a servant of the Lord must go ahead, alone in Gospel effort. One may be alone in a place, or other believers may be cold and worldly and have no heart for souls, or may hold such doctrines or be in systems which prevent us from having fellowship in service with them, but none

of these things can remove our individual obligation to seek to reach souls with the Gospel message. Indeed, no matter how closely we may be identified with others in spiritual work, such work can nearly always be supplemented by individual efforts and efforts among individuals. There are probably some persons whom I am more likely to turn to God than any one else in the world. Let me then realise my responsibility toward such.

7. A fisherman, to be successful, requires both knowledge and experience. Either from others or from personal experience he must learn the best season of the year, the best time of the twenty-four hours, and the most suitable bait for taking different sorts of fish. He would be a poor fisherman who sought to catch all kinds of fish with the one sort of bait. *He is not to be accounted a physician who would use one remedy for all the ills that flesh is heir to.* But such would be wise compared with the man who had one method and one line of truth in dealing with all sorts and conditions of men. To tell one sinner that he is going to hell may awaken him to a sense of his danger; to say the same thing in the same way to another may turn him from evangelical truth to the end of his days. In nothing do we need to be in closer touch with the Lord than in dealing with individuals, for no stereotyped method can be followed. Each one must seek from above that wisdom which is profitable to direct. Our aim must be to speak the right word, at the right time, and in the right way. For this, like our great Leader, we must have resting upon us the Spirit of wisdom, and understanding, and knowledge, and then, with Him, we shall ever be able to speak a word *in season*, whether to the weary, or hopeless, the self-righteous, indifferent, or rebellious sinner.

8. Lastly, the fisherman, of all men, ought to be a man of faith and dependence on God, for he should realise how much his safety and success depend upon the God who rules the wind and the waves, and controls all things. So with the soul-winner. At the last analysis all success in spiritual work is from God. But for His sovereign will and power the most eloquent, persuasive, convincing, and faithful address ever delivered would not

interest or awaken, much less save one soul. Successful soul-winners should ever keep this in mind, lest they fall into the subtle snare of sacrificing to their net, burning incense to their drag (Hab. i. 16). Such, it is to be feared, will now and here receive their reward, and will lose it in that day when "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Note.—The word rendered *catch* in Luke v. 10 is an unusual one. It means to take men captive, to save them alive, in contrast to taking them for death. In the New Testament it is only used again in 2 Timothy ii. 26. The latter is confessedly a most difficult passage to translate. On the whole the *text of the Revised Version* (which see) is the most satisfactory rendering one has met with. If it be the true rendering, then the two passages supplement each other—the first gives us the work of the evangelist in winning souls at the first; the second the work of the pastor and teacher in delivering backsliding ones from the snare and power of Satan.

THE HEAVENLY CALLING OF THE CHURCH.—V.

HER BLESSINGS ARE HEAVENLY.

By GEORGE ADAM, Straetraer.

"WHERE your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. vi. 21). If we are wrong as to what the characteristic blessings of the Christian consist of, and as to where they are, we must be proportionately wrong as to the condition of our hearts. If we have never learned what we may expect in the world, and from the world, if we follow the Lord fully in the present age, we are sure to be disappointed, and a spirit of murmuring will be the result. When a certain man said unto the Lord, "Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest," Jesus said unto him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head" (Luke ix. 57, 58). Again, "In the world ye shall have tribulation" (John xvi. 33). The Lord Jesus was very pointed in telling those who desired to follow Him what they might expect to be their lot in life during the time of His rejection by this world. And the Holy

Spirit has recorded abundant evidence for the guidance of the followers of the Lord Jesus that the path of discipleship is one of "self-denial" (Luke ix. 23), also of "tribulation" (2 Timothy iii. 12), and also of "suffering" (1 Peter ii. 21). All this is in marked contrast to what was promised to Israel when they were come into the "land." The Lord promised to His people Israel that if they would obey His voice and keep His commandments He would bring them into a land "flowing with milk and honey." Also, their blessing in the land depended upon their obedience unto the voice of Jehovah. Israel's obedience unto the commandments of the Lord secured unto them an abundance of *earthly* blessings, while their disobedience brought down upon them earthly curses, as see Deut. xxviii. and other passages.

But in the present age all this is changed. A Christian prospering in the world is no proof that his ways are pleasing unto the Lord; nor is earthly adversity a proof that the Lord is displeased with a believer's conduct. It was so in the case of an Israelite "in the land." There may be, and there often is, a connection between a Christian's faithfulness in his use of the earthly blessings which God bestows on him and these earthly blessings being increased; but these earthly blessings are not the Christian's *portion*. "Where God is pleased to give to a Christian a supply of the good things of this life beyond what he needs for himself, and for those who depend on him, it is not given him as his portion, but rather as a trust committed unto him to test his faithfulness. "If, therefore, ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? (Luke xvi. 11).

The Christian's portion is "laid up in heaven" (Col i. 5), and the earthly blessings bestowed on him test his fitness to use this heavenly portion when he comes into possession of it. What we as Christians possess of this world's goods we ought to hold as stewards. *They belong to "another MAN."* This world, with all that is in it, is the property of the Man Christ Jesus. He is the rightful Heir of the world, and not

only so, but He sold all that He had, and bought the field (Matt. xiii. 45, 46). The riches of this world are not "unrighteous" in themselves, but man has taken possession of them, and is still holding them in unrighteousness. God, so to speak, expects nothing else from the "children of this age or generation," but He expects the children of the Regeneration to hold and use the riches of this world as a trust from Him; and our faithfulness or otherwise will measure our share of the inheritance when the time arrives for our getting possession of it.

Not only is the Christian's inheritance "reserved in heaven" until the Church is complete, but the Christian's *present blessing* is heavenly. We are now "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. i. 3). The Christian's present as well as his future portion is all in Christ, and Christ is now in heaven; consequently our storehouse of blessing being in Him, it must be where He is. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. xiv. 17).

As already noticed, the Lord Jesus did not promise His disciples worldly wealth or honour, but the very opposite. He taught them to expect the hatred of the world, and the writings of the Apostles are all full of this same line of teaching, and also that this hatred of the world, and tribulation in it, will be very much in proportion to our likeness to Him. The legacy the Lord Jesus has left to His followers, whilst it is tribulation in the world, is joy and peace in Himself. "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John xv. 11). Again, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you" (John xiv. 27).

The experience of the early disciples was in harmony with the teachings of the Lord. They did meet with the hatred of the world, but this was far more than compensated by the heavenly joy which filled their souls. It is said of some of them, "Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance" (Heb. x. 34). They had a present joy, as well as a future hope, which was worth far more to them than

their earthly goods. The Spirit of God by Peter tells not only of an inheritance in heaven awaiting the Christian when we get home, but also of an object which can fill and satisfy the soul of the Christian all the desert journey through: "In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter i. 8). The faithful witnesses for Christ have found this to be true all the age along. During the days of open persecution many thousands laid down their lives rather than give up or deny that Blessed One who was incomparably more to them than life itself. Even if the blessedness which awaits the believer in heaven is lost sight of, the faithful follower of the Lord Jesus has, beyond all comparison, the best of it now.

But whilst there is a present joy to be found in Christ for all those who are prepared to go in for it, this joy at the best is but a sip of that joy which awaits the child of God in the Father's house. Probably the joy in the Lord which the believer now experiences is the same in *kind* as that which he will enjoy in heaven, though less in *degree*. The inheritance may consist mainly of a fuller measure of that happiness of soul which made our hearts thrill when we came at first to the Saviour and were received into the bosom of His love, and which has deepened all the path along as our acquaintance with Him has become more close and intimate, but will never be enjoyed in its fulness until we lay aside mortality and are clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.

There may be more awaiting us in heaven than this, but it will all be perfect, and Christ Himself will be all in all. Also, the expression "heirs of God" may imply a fuller knowledge and a fuller enjoyment of what GOD IS, rather than coming into possession of all that belongs to God. The expression "joint-heirs with Christ" evidently teaches that the children of God will share in all that falls to the "first born from among the dead," but I doubt not it will be a full and an ever-increasing knowledge of God as revealed in and through the Lord Jesus Christ which will form the chief part of the Christian's portion in heaven as it now forms the sweetest part of the believer's portion on the way to heaven.

THE ROMEGRADÉ.—IV (Concluding Paper).

ECCLESIASTICAL INDIFFERENCE.

By J. S. ANDERSON, Florence.

"A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land. The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so. And what will ye do in the end thereof" (Jer. v. 30, 31).

THE wonderful and horrible thing in Israel was that the prophets taught falsely, and the priests bore rule by *their hands*—that is by their influence—and to crown all, the professing people of God loved to have it so. And this is precisely why so many are on the Romegrade to-day. *They love* human priesthood based on the doctrines of Rome. Whatever the Scriptures may teach to the contrary, whatever may be the kind of teaching or worship, it is all the same. The false prophets sustain the ruling priests, and the people enjoy it all; they *love to have* it so; they don't want a change.

Is not this a *wonderful, horrible* indifference towards God? Thousands are quite content that their doctors and priests have studied theology for them, think for them, pray for them, sing for them, minister for them. They go to "hear" mass, &c. All is prepared. They need feel no responsibility as to what is being done. They have no direct dealing with God. The whole system of Rome is a religious commission agency. Those who patronise it may be very religious; so is the agency. All goes on, and the people *love to have it so*, because their consciences have not been cleansed from dead works by the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish unto God (Heb. ix. 14).

Now, the religion of irresponsibility, of human mediation, of personal indifference is a very old one; in fact, it dates from the day when our earthly father Adam, accusing God indirectly, cast the blame and responsibility of his sin on his wife in order not to have direct dealing with God. But the Divine voice reached him among the trees: "Adam, where art THOU? . . . Hast THOU eaten of the tree?"

So it was in the days of the judges. The people obeyed the judge—the man—as long as he lived, and then became corrupt, following, serving, and bowing down to the gods of

the nations, ceasing not from their own doings nor from their stubborn ways (Jud. ii. 19).

This indifference towards God developed into the desire of a king to judge them like all the nations (1 Sam. viii. 7), and of this *horrible thing* God said: "They have rejected ME, that I should not reign over them."

The "people loved to have it so" till the days of Isaiah, to whom the word of the Lord came, saying: "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me?" (please read Isaiah i. 10-20).

And when John the Baptist came preaching repentance he found a good many people whose religion consisted in the indifferent, irresponsible creed: "We have Abraham to our father" (Matt. iii. 9). But he reminded them that God could raise up children to Abraham of the dead, hard stones of Jordan.

And had not the woman of Samaria been casting all her religious responsibility on "our fathers," until Christ revealed Himself to her poor, guilty soul and conscience. Then, and only then, with a personal conviction and faith and joy could she say to others: "Come and see a Man, who told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?"

Our Lord solemnly declared that "if the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch" (Matt. xv. 14).

Yes, beloved souls on the Romegrade, while you are letting the doctors and priests think for you, the Lord is asking you: "What *think ye* of Christ" (Matt. xxii. 42)? While you are indifferently reposing in the studies of the doctors, He asks you to *study* "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul" (Matt. xvi. 26)? While you are trusting to the prayers of priests the Lord is saying to you: "Ask, seek, knock" (Matt. vii. 7). While you are casting your responsibility on human priests, and human sacrifices, and human intercession, the Word of God declares that Christ, having offered Himself for our sins, has entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us (Heb. ix. 24). While you listen to a Latin chant, sung by a choir for you, hear the glad words of David: "He hath put a NEW SONG in MY MOUTH" (Ps. xl. 3).

Your responsibility, your guilt, where

oh, where will you leave it? "Woe to them that go down to Egypt" (or Rome) "for help" (Isa. xxxi. 1). "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord" (Jer. xvii. 5). Oh, pilgrims on the Romegrade, stop and turn unto the Lord Jesus. "Surely HE hath borne OUR griefs, and carried OUR sorrows. . . HE was wounded for OUR transgressions, HE was bruised for OUR iniquities, the chastisement of OUR peace was upon HIM, and with HIS stripes WE are healed" (Isa. liii. 4, 5). This is the religion and truth of God which quickens the soul to a living, holy responsibility, "because we thus judge that if one died for all, therefore all died, and HE died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again" (2 Cor. v. 15).

Correspondence.

A VISIT TO CENTRAL AMERICA.

MY DEAR MR. CALDWELL,—I have written little since I left England, but feel I must send you a few lines. We sailed from Liverpool on Friday evening, 3rd February, in the West India and Pacific Steamship Company's boat *The Texan*. There were but four passengers, three young men from Lancashire engaged by the *Darien Gold Mining Company* in Colombia, and myself. The first ten days of the voyage was a very stormy time. Strong head winds and tempestuous seas caused us to lose four days on the passage to St. Thomas. We reached that beautiful West Indian island on the afternoon of the 20th, and stayed there a few hours to discharge cargo and get fresh water. We had time to visit the town, which is prettily situated at the foot of a mountain. Cocoa-nut palms laden with fruit and banana plants give one an idea of the climate of the country. Three-fourths of the inhabitants are negroes. I took a quantity of gospel booklets and papers with me, and soon disposed of them. There are plenty of churches in the town, including a large Roman Catholic one. In the evening we left St. Thomas for Colon, Central America, arriving there on Friday morning. Colon is an important town belonging to the Republic of Colombia. I visited the Panama Canal, on which £60,000,000 have been spent, although one-third of it is not yet constructed. It is sad to see the number of steamers, dredgers, locomotives, cranes, &c., lying unused.

There are about one thousand labourers employed in various parts of the canal at present, but it is doubtful if ever it will be completed.

There is a wide and an open door among the coloured people in the West Indian Islands. The Colombian Republic has a large area of territory, with a population of 4,000,000. For centuries it was as tightly closed against the gospel as other South American Republics. But now, thank God, Ecuador and Colombia are open to the gospeller. The Romanists until recently prevented the Scriptures from being circulated. A few months ago the *American Bible Society* issued a statement regarding a decision given in the Colombian Courts in their favour. It appears that some of the authorities in Socorro, instigated by the priests, informed the Society's agents that it was illegal to circulate the Bible in Colombia, and that they must cease doing so. The Society declined to obey the order, with the result that one of their representatives was summoned before the magistrates at Socorro. His Bibles were confiscated, and a prohibition was put upon him "to offer no more such *obscene books* for sale in that town." The Society's agent protested, and demanded that censors should be appointed to examine the books and state whether or not they considered them to be "obscene." One of the censors pronounced in favour of the Bible, and the other against it. The matter came before various boards of censors, and was tried at several courts. Eventually the Government at Bogota (the capital of Colombia) decided that the sale of the Bible is not prohibited by the laws of the Republic. This is a severe blow to Rome, and is a great victory for the truth. Let us hope and pray that the *American Bible Society* will increase their efforts to spread the Scriptures throughout the length and breadth of the South American Continent.

After Colon, we sailed for Greytown, Nicaragua. The agent of the Nicaragua Republic at Colon stated that there was a revolution in the country, and purchased a quantity of coal, which was to be discharged at Greytown. On the following day we anchored close to the river which is to form the Atlantic entrance to the proposed *Nicaragua Canal*. A Nicaragua gunboat bearing a flag of truce passed within 200 yards of us. A lighter filled with soldiers came near us, and I was privileged to scatter among them a quantity of gospel literature (Spanish). After spending two days at Greytown, we left for Tampico, Mexico. We passed an English steamer wrecked on a coral reef in the Mexican Gulf. In five days we reached Tampico, an important port on the Rio Panuco, which empties itself into the Gulf of Mexico. We visited the city, and from what we

learned there is but little spiritual life. We also had several walks through the Indian village of Dona Cecilia, and had an opportunity of seeing something of the manners and customs of the people.

After three and a half days' stay at Tampico we sailed for Vera Cruz, arriving there at noon on Thursday, and I was met at the steamer by Mr. Eglon Harris, who kindly came from Orizaba. We caught the one o'clock train, and reached Orizaba—which is 4000 feet above sea level—at eight o'clock. We passed through lovely scenery, the railway track crossing coffee, plantain, tobacco, and sugar plantations. Was glad to meet again our brethren Phelps and Ingram, and pleased to learn that they are making progress in Spanish. Mr. Frank Deitweiler, son of an American Lutheran clergyman, who is learning Spanish with the object of labouring in a Spanish-speaking Republic, also helps in the work in and around Orizaba. One of his brothers is telling out the gospel to the poor, priest-ridden people of Ecuador.

Mr. Harris has had much to encourage him since his arrival in Mexico eight years ago. For six years he has lived and laboured in and around the city of Orizaba. He has also visited most of the villages, towns, and hamlets within a radius of 50 miles. Orizaba has a population of 35,000, and lies about 80 miles north of Vera Cruz. Numbers of mills have been erected within the past few years, and the population is rapidly increasing. The city is at the base of a range of high mountains, the Peak of Orizaba, nearly 18,000 feet high, towering above the rest, and clad in perpetual snow. There is an assembly of about 40 Christians, who stately meet for worship and testimony in a comfortable hall.

The work in Orizaba needs the help of our brother. The labour involved in editing, writing, translating, printing, publishing, and despatching his monthly gospel paper, *El Sembrador* (*The Sower*), is great. Mr. Harris is enabled to send out monthly 25,000 of his paper free. It is read in 3000 villages, towns, and cities in the Republic of Mexico. Lawyers and judges, school teachers and college professors, physicians and postmasters, priests and army officers, merchants and coffee planters, receive this herald of mercy month by month. It is also sent to Cuba, Puerto Rico, Philippines, Algeria, Spain, to all the South American Republics, and to all the Republics of Central America. The Government authorities are exceedingly friendly. They know—as do the Italians—that Rome is their greatest enemy. There are no monasteries or nunneries in the country. Monks and nuns have been expelled. So have the Jesuits, but they are secretly returning. The officers in the

Mexican army gladly allow *El Sembrador* to be distributed among the soldiers. In 15 barracks it is regularly received. The governors of prisons thankfully accept and systematically distribute the paper among the prisoners. All prisoners serving long-time sentences are taught to read, and in several prisons *The Sower* is employed as a text-book. As there is no capital punishment in Mexico, there are large numbers of murderers in the prisons. In the prison of Vera Cruz 700 murderers are confined within its walls.

When it is remembered that 99 per cent. of those who receive this gospel monthly message are, or were, Roman Catholics, one can see what immense possibilities are involved. In numbers of villages and ranches the paper is regularly read to congregations who assemble for the purpose. Hundreds of letters have been received by the editor from persons occupying all sorts of positions in various countries telling of blessing derived through its perusal. On the day after my arrival at Orizaba, whilst journeying over the mountains by train to Esperanza, the three brethren—Phelps, Ingram, and Deitweiler—distributed *El Sembrador* to the passengers. A Dutchman, on receiving a copy of the paper, remarked to the distributor, "I would like to see Mr. Harris." On being told that he was on the train, he went and spoke to him. The gentleman was the manager of a large ranche 100 miles from Orizaba. He told Mr. Harris that he once received a copy of his periodical in a distant part of the country, and said that he could distribute 200 copies monthly to Americans and Indians in his employment. He also gave Mr. Harris a most cordial invitation to visit him, and guaranteed him a good congregation.

From many dark parts of the Republic invitations are sent to Mr. Harris to visit the people and preach the gospel. If he were to accept half of the "Macedonian calls" he receives he would never be at home. In addition to his monthly paper he publishes tracts and booklets. He has also translated and printed an edition of 5000 of the "Pilgrim's Progress." He has in his possession a letter with the address on the envelope in Spanish as follows: "Mr. John Bunyan, Mexico." The letter was written by one who appreciated the "Bedford tinker's" wonderful book, and thought it was his duty to express his feelings to the author! Editions of 20,000 of the "Acts of the Apostles" and 10,000 of the "Gospel of Luke" have been issued.

At the present time there is an open door for the gospel in Mexico. How long that may continue no one can tell. The priestly power is not broken by any means. There are millions of

bigoted Roman Catholics in the country. Many who have left the Romish faith dislike all kinds and forms of "religion," hence the importance of spreading the glorious gospel of God's matchless grace by every possible means ere the people become infidel. Missionaries who itinerate among the villages are often exposed to peril. But what of that? "If God be for us, who can be against us?" should be the motto of the gossellers. If there were labourers to visit the places whence calls for help are sent to Mr. Harris, what blessed results might follow! Our brother has it laid on his heart—if the Lord provides the means—to publish a monthly paper for young Christians. His desire is to keep *El Sembrador* a strictly gospel paper. A periodical for believers would supply a felt want in Spanish-speaking countries. In my experience I never knew a more interesting and more promising field of work.

The day I left, Mr. Harris received a letter which I asked him to transcribe and translate for me. The following is a copy:—"Having read your paper *El Sembrador*, I wish to know how I can obtain some for distribution. I am a telegraph operator, but have time and inclination to circulate its holy religion among those who are ignorant thereof. I am also treasurer of 'Our Father St. Francis of Assissi,' and shall be able to put the periodical in the hands of the young men of that society, and also those of the college of 'Christ the Redeemer.' Let us see if in this city we can, by distributing and sowing the seed, gain some souls for Christ."

Mexico has a population of 13 millions. From north to south it is 2000 miles in length, and from east to west 800. The night before I left we had a precious season in prayer and Bible reading in Mr. Harris' house. Let Christians remember at the throne of grace the labourers, and pray that the Lord of the harvest will thrust forth more labourers into Mexico and the Central and South American Republics.

Reached New Orleans last night, and expect to leave in a couple of days for Canada *via* St. Louis and Chicago.

Yours truly in Christ Jesus, our soon-coming Lord,
ALEXANDER MARSHALL.

New Orleans, U.S.A., 20th March, 1899.

CHRIST'S REIGN.

(1 Cor. xv. 24-28.)

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

AN answer to a question on the above subject appeared in *The Witness* for January, and a rejoinder from Mr. Trench in April. He speaks of "several interesting points made in 'W. C.'s'

letter," but does not further notice them, except in a remark upon one word. He gives us, however, an exposition of his views on this text which seems to need careful examination.

Mr. Trench says: "The whole passage is divided into two sections, distinguished by the verbs *katargeo* in the first part (verses 24-26) and *hupotasso* in the second (27, 28)." The first he refers to as the victory of Christ, after the close of the Millennium, by which all enemies shall be abolished and ended. The second is not the same thing. The first was an act, the inauguration of the kingdom, a victory, fulfilling Psalm cx. 1; the second a lasting condition, the order or constitution of the kingdom, a reign, fulfilling Psalm viii. 6.

But, first, *katargeo* as used in Scripture does not bear the meaning of "abolished and ended." Of all the words rendered "destroy," this more distinctly than any other implies simply "making void" (Rom. iii. 3, 31; iv. 14; Gal. iii. 17; v. 4); "doing away" (2 Cor. iii. 7, 11, 14; 1 Cor. xiii. 8, 10); "bringing to naught" (1 Cor. i. 19). It is the "abolition" of a thing in the sense of taking away its power (2 Tim. i. 10; Heb. ii. 14); not the end of it, but of its rule.

Nor does *hupotasso* show "a settled state." It is a subjection, not only of women to husbands, or believers to the higher powers, to which we are exhorted, but of the devils to the disciples, as in Luke x. 17, 20. It is simply to *put* or *be put under* another. The two words differ only in that *katargeo* applies to the taking from things their rule or power, and *hupotasso*, the putting of persons under the rule or power of another.

2. Then again, as to the division of the passage by the use of these two verbs. Though *hupotasso* does not occur in the first part, its exact equivalent is there as identified with *katargeo*. "Put . . . under His feet" comes in verse 25, the apostle quoting the word as it stands in Psalm cx. 1; LXX. It is precisely the same thing as the *hupotasso* of the following verse, so far as the fact is concerned.

3. Mr. Trench says, "The first was an act." But so no less is the second. It especially has to do with the "act" of the Father in putting all things under Him. And as to the former being a victory and the latter a reign, the Scripture pronounces the previous state a reign—"He must reign until" that event. Nor will it meet this to say He will always "reign." If, as Mr. Trench says, the former fulfils Psalm cx. 1, it is the "sitting at God's right hand until" then. Shall we be told that He will continue to sit there, according to Psalm cx. 1, when He comes again to reign on the earth? Is that what Heb. x. 13 teaches—"From henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool?"

4. There might be something to justify the adding "and after" to the word "until." But can it be rightly dividing to give two opposite meanings to the same word "when," occurring as it does twice in the same sentence and the same connection—to make the first refer to the conclusion of the period, and the second the beginning of that period?

5. It is hardly necessary to point out that "the end" in Scripture habitually means the end of what is being spoken of, as Matt. xxiv. 14; xxvi. 58; 1 Cor. i. 8. Here the end is defined by the word "then" (verse 24), and we have to see what it here means. It is not the same word as "afterward" in verse 23, and must not be confounded with it. It is never used in the New Testament to express a distinct interval, as "afterward" evidently does in this place and in Gal. i. 18, 21; ii. 1; 1 Cor. xv. 46, &c. *Eita* ("then") stands rather in contradistinction from "afterward" (*epeta*), as meaning "then at that time," directly consequent upon the resurrection of the saints. It must therefore be "the end" of the age, the great climax in the world's history, when the kingdoms of this world, hitherto His enemies, shall be put under His feet, and shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.

The "points in 'W. C.'s letter" referred to by Mr. Trench, briefly summarised, are as follow:

(a) That in 1 Cor. xv. 25 the apostle is quoting and restating the prophecy of Psa. cx. 1.

(b) That the "making His enemies His foot-stool," or "putting them under His feet," are the same thing, and must refer in both Scriptures to the same event.

(c) Therefore what precedes this event, expressed in the one by "sitting at God's right hand," and in the other by "reigning," must refer to the same.

(d) That the "abolition" of death as an enemy (verse 26) is the victory over it described in verse 54 of the same chapter as taking place "at His coming."

(e) That the subject of the chapter throughout is the resurrection of the saints.

(f) That the word "then" in verse 24, as above shown, does not imply (Mark iv. 17) an interval, like the "afterward" of verse 23.

(g) That having until then sat at God's right hand, "reigning" on His throne, as in a position of equality, Christ, by vacating that throne to receive from the Father the kingdom over His enemies, assumes a formally subject position.

Of these Mr. Trench takes no further notice than to say that "W. C." shows that the word "until" does *not* imply a "terminus," whereas all that he, "W. C.," said was to show that, whatever it may be elsewhere, it *does*, in this place, imply the termination of His "sitting at God's right hand," that is, "reigning" *there*.

These "points" still remain to be examined, and are so offered to the candid searcher of the Scriptures. The passage is one of cardinal importance in the study of prophecy. To misunderstand it is to be on the wrong track as to the main lines of the subject which is engaging so large a share of the attention of Christians in this day.

W. COLLINGWOOD.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

"WATER" IN JOHN'S EPISTLE.—Does the water mentioned in 1 John v. 8 and the water mentioned in the 6th verse of the same chapter mean the same, or, if not, what do we learn from the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses together?

A REPROVED BROTHER.—Is it Scriptural when a brother takes offence, because he has been reprov'd for his conduct, to go off to the nearest assembly, and that assembly to receive him?

PRAYING FOR EVIL.—Please explain Psalm cix. 6-29 in the light of the spirit and teaching of Jesus Christ.

HOUSEHOLD SALVATION.—What are we to understand by the promise, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house?" We have always claimed it for our children, but can we not claim it as Rahab did, *i.e.*, for parents, brothers, sisters, and servants also?

DANIEL'S FOURTH KINGDOM.—Has the fourth kingdom mentioned in Daniel vii. 7. finished its career; and if not, what is its *present* condition?

CO-OPERATION AND JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is a member of a co-operative society in the same position as a shareholder in a joint-stock company?

LIFE AND DEATH.—Please explain Romans viii. 10 and 13. In what aspect are we to understand "life" and "death" in these two verses?

TARRYING ONE FOR ANOTHER.—Please explain 1 Cor. xi. 33. Does it mean that those assembled should tarry for those who are late at a morning meeting, or that those who are come together, instead of being too hasty in ministering, should tarry one for another?

MINISTRY AT THE BREAKING OF BREAD.

[NOTE.—Out of many replies to this question, all in agreement, we select three. No doubt the custom that obtains in some assemblies of having lengthened ministry and other exercises before the breaking of bread, thereby thrusting the observance of the supper into a limited space at the close of the meeting, has given rise to the other extreme of

or bidding ministry of any kind before the breaking of the bread. The replies now given seem to us to place the matter in a proper light.—ED.]

QUESTION 383.—Is it contrary to the Divine pattern to sing, read, or minister the Word before the observance of the Lord's Supper, seeing our object in coming together is to "break bread" (Acts xx. 7), and that no hymn was sung at its institution (Matt. xxvi. 26-29; Mark xiv. 22-25) until after the feast had been observed?

ANSWER A.—The questioner gives as reference Acts xx. 7, in which verse we read that "Paul continued his speech until midnight." And from verse 11 it would appear that they did not "break bread" till after this. The Revised Version gives it thus: "Paul prolonged his speech until midnight . . . and as Paul discoursed yet longer." Eutyclus being borne down with sleep, fell, &c., and Paul went down and restored him to life. "And when he was gone up and had broken the bread and eaten," &c., "he talked with them till break of day." This seems to warrant ministry of the Word before breaking of bread. And in 1 Corinthians xi. 28 we read: "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat." Of course this should be done before coming to the table, but how often in these busy days of rush and unrest it is neglected. And a word of exhortation is used of God to help such an one in this matter. Indeed, it must be a rare state if any saint has reached a stage in his Christian experience when "searching of heart" is not known as he sits at the table of the Lord; and at such times exhortation and ministry of the Word, and hymns such as "To Calvary, Lord, in Spirit now," "O my Saviour crucified," "Amidst us our Beloved stands, and bids us view His pierced hands," &c., have often proved helpful to true heart worship. M. M. D.

ANSWER B.—I would begin to answer this question by asking another one. In the account given in Acts xx. 1-12, was the bread broken before Paul preached, or after he had done? In the Revised Version, and most other translations, verse 11 is rendered, "When he (Paul) therefore was come up again, and had broken the bread, and eaten," &c. This may not prove that they had not broken bread till then, but at least it makes the matter so doubtful that it leaves little room for us to lay down rules as to what exercises should be either before or after the bread is broken. Besides, we are enjoined to "consider one another" (Heb. x. 24), and the strong are to bear the infirmities of the weak (Rom. xv. i). There are some who have grace and opportunity to come together in a condition of soul to break the bread at once, but many are not able to do so. Mothers with the care of a house and family, and many house-

hold servants, have every moment of the morning occupied, and require to strain every nerve to get to the meeting in time: and these dear saints need to be helped before they are able to eat the feast to the pleasing of the Lord, or to their own edification. Those who are strong ought to remember such, and not to please themselves, and to seek by godly exercises and reasonable ministry to lead up to the breaking of the bread. That the special object of our coming together is too much and too often lost sight of, is painfully true, but to lay down rules as to what exercises should or should not be before the bread is broken would not help us. What is needed is deeper spirituality and more jealous care over the hearts and lips of those who lead the assembly either in worship or ministry. G. A.

ANSWER C.—The institution of the Lord's Supper took place during the eating of the Passover (Matt. xxvi. 26), and was therefore naturally embedded in the forms and order of that feast. It is almost certain that the hymn referred to in verse 30 of the same chapter was nothing more nor less than Psalms cxvii. and cxviii., ordinarily sung at the close of the paschal celebration. We must hardly, therefore, go to the gospels for the special order to be followed to-day in the observance of the Lord's Supper. It was reserved for the Apostle Paul to legislate by special revelation in 1 Cor. as to the order to be observed by believers "when they come together"—a phrase used five times in various forms in chapter xi. with direct reference to the Lord's Supper and twice in chapter xiv., a fact which seems to connect the two chapters and justify us in applying most closely to the meeting for the breaking of bread the principles laid down in the latter of them. If this be so, we may notice that, while ample directions are laid down in chapter xiv. for our guidance, on the principle of the general edification of the Church, little or nothing is said about doing things in a certain fixed order. Thus while wide liberty is left in verse 26 for the exercise of different ministrations, nothing is said as to whether it is to be before or after the breaking of bread, the only proviso laid down being, "Let all things be done unto edifying." It is true that the object of the disciples in coming together in Acts xx. 7 was "to break bread," but the context shows that the Apostle Paul himself, as we have seen, the very legislator of the new order of things, did not understand this as excluding the ministry of the Word, and that too at great length, before the bread was actually broken in verse 11. To break the bread and thus show the Lord's death till He come, is indeed the object of our coming together; to do it *worthily*, the desire of every

truly exercised heart. It is indeed blessed thus to meet and dwell upon His dying love and remember Him, and when things are in a right condition, the spiritual character of any ministry may well be questioned which would distract the thoughts from the object for which we have come together; but things are not always in a right condition, as we know too well, both as individuals and assemblies. Hence the exhortation, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat"—not stay away. But if there has not been self-judgment, and things are not right—what then? Are we to feel bound to follow a certain order and allow the theory of what ought to be to hinder our recognising what is? Rather let us be real, and be thankful for a word of exhortation or a ministry of feet-washing which, though they may appear foreign to the object of our meeting, and would be so if things were as they should be, are in reality most closely allied to it, as they may reach the consciences of some and enable the whole assembly to more truly discern the Lord's body in the breaking of bread.

W. H.

DIVINE TITLES.

QUESTION 384.—Is it Scriptural for a Christian to use the term "our heavenly Father" in prayer or worship?

Answer A.—Our Lord spoke twice of "My heavenly Father" (Matt. xv. 13; xviii. 35); four times of "your heavenly Father;" six times of "My Father in" or "which is in heaven," and of "your Father which" or "who is in heaven;" and once of "our Father which art in heaven." The word "heavenly" denotes, among other meanings, inhabiting heaven, or it may be used to differentiate from earthly. In our Lord's lips it could only have the former meaning, as earthly father He had none. Yet if any one might fittingly have omitted the qualifying adjective, surely He, a Man *pertaining to heaven*, even there while also on the earth (John iii. 13), a Divine Man, and yet He confesses His fellowship with flesh and blood and the reality of His earthly life.

The only reason I can divine for question is perhaps an idea of incongruity in styling our Father heavenly, seeing we are seated in heavenly places, and enriched with all heavenly blessings; but while we are a heavenly people, we are yet in earthly relationships, and while in the purpose of God we are already in the heavenlies, His purpose is not yet fully evolved. It will be very bad for us if in viewing assured glories we forget present actualities (2 Tim. iv. 18). Be it noted that the Ephesian epistle speaks of every "family in *heaven and earth*," and also of "your Master in heaven."

J. H. H.

Answer B.—Our Lord taught His disciples to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven," and He repeatedly used the expression, "Your heavenly Father," recorded chiefly in the Gospel of Matthew. Although the expression does not occur in the Acts or Epistles, and there is an even more definite revelation of the Father's Name consequent upon the resurrection, still, the earlier revelation is not superseded, for Christians do not cease to be disciples. As such, therefore, the teaching of our Lord should fully warrant the use of "our heavenly Father" in prayer or worship.

D. D. C.

Answer C.—This question is not easily answered. When the Lord Jesus was teaching His disciples He frequently used the terms "Your heavenly Father," and "Your Father which is in heaven." But, so far as I am aware, the expression "Our heavenly Father" is not to be found in any of the Epistles. The apostles often speak of God as "our Father," but never as our heavenly Father. No doubt there is a divine reason for this. This may be because believers were not made "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 6) until Christ was seated there Himself. Neither was the way into the holiest made manifest until sin was put away by the sacrifice of Christ; so that believers do now enjoy a nearness of approach to God which was not known to the disciples before the Cross. On the other hand, we find the Lord Jesus, when speaking of God, using the term "My heavenly Father" (Matt. xv. 13; xviii. 35), and whilst we should seek to rise to the dignity of our calling, to my mind it does seem to be carrying this too far, for any believer to profess to have a more heavenly experience and a more conscious nearness to God than the Lord Jesus enjoyed when He was upon earth. Even when upon earth He was "in the bosom of the Father" (John i. 18). Also, in speaking to Nicodemus, He speaks of Himself as being "in heaven" (chap. iii. 13). No believer can get beyond this. So long as there is no want of due reverence we should never interfere with one another regarding the language we use when speaking to our God, but leave it to the Holy Spirit to guide us, and He always leads us according to our light.

G. A.

Answer D.—The blessed Lord, when seeking to draw the disciples nearer to the Father, and inspire them with deeper and more filial confidence in Him, used the term, "Your heavenly Father." As three times in Matt. vi. the Lord Jesus Christ said, "Your heavenly Father," when speaking to the believers, assuredly we may devoutly and gladly look up and say, "Our heavenly Father."

J. S.

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH.

I.—MODERN THEORIES ABOUT IT.

WHEN the Lord Jesus was upon earth He was continually opposed by Sadducees, who disallowed the authority of the Scriptures, and Pharisees, who made them void by their traditions. These two classes were antagonistic to each other, and at first they withstood Him separately, each class on its own ground; but towards the close of His course they united against Him. The Word of God has always been subject to the same twofold opposition, though of late in increasing measure. Satan's aim is to keep men from yielding obedience to God, and he has two chief methods of doing this—either by keeping them from bowing to Scripture as the infallible Word of God, and thus leading them on in indifference; or by bringing them into bondage to priestly assumption and the superstitions connected therewith.

The Apostle Paul, not being ignorant of Satan's "devices" (2 Cor. ii. 11), sought to guard believers against them, and it behoves us, without prying into the depths of Satan (Rev. ii. 24), to be on the alert as to the tendencies of things around us, lest we be led astray. To those who respect the Bible Satan will seldom present the plain question, *Hath God spoken?* His "fiery darts" take the more subtle form of enquiries touching the unity and integrity of the books of Holy Scripture, or whether they were really written by those whose names they bear. To some minds there is a fascinating power in such questions, for they seem to en throne the human intellect by appealing to it as competent to decide them.

There are many questions that we may consider with profit, as calculated to exercise the heart and conscience before God, and to lead to a deeper knowledge of Himself and His ways. But questions that have their origin in *unbelief* can only lead to the "perverse disputing of men of corrupt minds," instead of "godly edifying, which is in faith" (1 Tim. i. 4; vi. 5). They may appear interesting and harmless, but closer examination discovers that they touch the foundations of our "most holy faith."

For 2500 years the Book of the Prophet Isaiah was accepted without question—as written by him whose name it bears—by all who professed any outward respect for God and His Word. Of late years, however, that sceptical Higher Criticism, which began by setting aside "Moses," has extended itself to "the prophets". (Luke xvi. 31). The origin and growth of the rejection of Isaiah, as sketched by the late Dr. Delitzsch, are instructive. He says: "The beginnings of this criticism were not fitted to inspire confidence. It grew up in the swaddling clothes of Rationalism—the German form of French Encyclopedism and of English Deism." The chief canon of prophetic interpretation laid down by this school, which still professes to be *Christian*, is that "*the near, not the remote, was the LIMIT of prophetic foretelling,*" or, as another says more plainly, "a proper foreknowledge is not to be ascribed to the prophets."

Applying this principle to Isaiah xl. to lxvi., and maintaining that the prophet's sole theme is the restoration of Israel from Babylon, they conclude that these chapters could not have been written until it was *evident* that the restoration was about to take place, and *consequently* could not have been written by Isaiah. At first the German sceptics who thus attacked Isaiah found but few followers in this country, but the growth of the spirit of insubjection to Scripture is such that denials of the unity and integrity of the book are now given forth by men of high ecclesiastical position—men, too, who profess to honour the Scriptures. And whereas a few years ago the High Church party, as a whole, withstood all such teachings, now many members of that party are endorsing them. So that, as of old there was a combination against Christ of men who in many things were opposed to one another, there is now a similar combination against the Scriptures.

It is remarkable, and it is well to remark, what demands these sceptical critics make upon the credulity of others. For a long time we were asked to believe that, whilst every single prophetic book—even to the smallest—bears the name of the writer, there arose, "towards the close of the Babylonian captivity," a prophet outshining all his

predecessors in the sublimity and grandeur of his prophecies, and that the name of this prophet was so entirely forgotten that his writings became tacked on to those of Isaiah, with no hint left in any way that they were spoken by another till this was discovered 2500 years later, when the writer became honoured by the title, "The Great Unknown"!

But one theory passeth away and another cometh, and so we are now asked to accept the idea that these twenty-seven chapters are *not* the writings of *one* prophet, but the utterances of *many* prophets whose names, without a single exception, all faded from the memory of a people who gloried in their prophets! Yet a little more. These many prophets so resembled one another in style and expression that men who spoke the language in which the different prophecies were written failed to discern the fact that they were by different writers; they were all so similar to the prophecies of Isaiah, who wrote from 150 to 200 years before, that it seemed natural to tack them on to his book, and this marvellous piece of patchwork was so perfectly joined together that the existence of seams was never even suspected till they were discovered by the keen vision of the "higher critics" of our day!

But the criticism that produced such results when applied to the second half of Isaiah was soon extended to the first half. Men see that they cannot rob Isaiah of these chapters, and consistently leave him those portions in the earlier part of the book which contain the *germs* of what is here so fully expanded, therefore he must give up them too. Thus one of the latest critics allots to Isaiah twenty-seven chapters only out of the earlier portion of the book, and the very latest writer on *The Hebrew Prophets* (Oxford Text Books, December, 1898) says: "The fact is clear that the book of Isaiah, as we now have it, contains a collection of prophecies which are undoubtedly [!] of different origin and date," and even assigns chapters xxiv. to xxvii. to about 330 B.C. Even the historical chapters (xxxvi. to xxxix.) are not allowed by some to be his, in spite of the express statement in 2 Chron. xxxii. 32, "Now the rest of the acts of

Hezekiah, and his good deeds, *behold they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz.*"

Indeed, the statement of the late Dr. Payne-Smith, scathing as it is, is not a whit too strong, when he writes: "Instead of two portions of Isaiah, one a collection of the most remarkable predictions of his younger days, the other the calm outpouring of his later years, written at a time when he had retired from active life, and was bowed down beneath the load of nearly eighty winters, it [the Higher Criticism] now dismembers all Isaiah and distributes his mangled limbs among a host of prophets, known and unknown, extending from Isaiah down to Maccabean times. Manasseh did but saw him asunder, and this was the sole feat attempted by modern critics at first. Having found this simple process impossible, they now hack him into small pieces."

The theory of prophetic interpretation which underlies all these teachings necessarily blots "the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow," out of the book in which the Lord Himself found them set forth, and which Christians have always prized as bearing special testimony to them. We do not wish to imply that *all* writers who deny the unity of the book of Isaiah disallow the reference in these magnificent predictions to Christ and His work; but we do affirm that it is the legitimate conclusion of any teaching that dilutes prophecy to mere natural foresight, and this we consider the account of the origin of the last twenty-seven chapters of the book given by a recent writer, who apparently holds their unity, really does. He states that the union of the Medes and Persians took place B.C. 549, that Babylon fell B.C. 538, and that the date of the prophecy "will be limited to the interval between these years, during which time Cyrus was pursuing his career in the north and north-west of Asia. *The prophet's eye marks him in the distance as the coming deliverer of his nation.* He stimulates the flagging courage of his people by *pointing to his successes*, and declares that he is God's appointed agent for the overthrow of the Babylonian empire, and for the restoration of the chosen people to Palestine."

W. H. B.

FIGURES OF THE CHRISTIAN.—IX.

A VESSEL.

By DR. J. N. CASE, China.

THIS is a frequent figure in both Old and New Testament writings. It usually refers to a clay or earthen vessel, and connected with it we naturally have the figure of the Potter. These are evidently used as emblems of man's lowliness and frailty, and of God's potter-like power to shape our ends as it pleases Him (see Isa. xxix. 16; Jer. xviii. 1-6; Rom. ix. 20-23, &c.). The figure brings before us destruction as well as salvation, judgment as well as glory.

The God revealed in the Scriptures is, if I may so say, a many-sided Being. And it is for man to believe in, to submit to, to love, worship, and serve this God, rather than a God evolved from his own consciousness. The latter is simply a refined form of idolatry. Many have come to think of God as only a God of love, mercy, and compassion, forgetting His holiness, justice, and truth. Their God is the *Bon Dieu* of the modern Frenchman—a kind, amiable sort of Being, conveniently near at hand to help out of a difficulty when required, but one who does not, and never will, interfere to assert His own will, or to judge and punish sinners. How very different is the God revealed by Moses, the prophets, the Christ and His apostles!

The inspired reasoning of the apostle in Romans ix. 14-22 leads to these conclusions: All men, being sinners, have forfeited every claim to God's favour, and in showing mercy to one and not to another, in selecting this one to become a vessel of glory and allowing the other to remain a vessel of wrath, no charge of injustice can be substantiated against God.

"Hath not the potter a right over the clay," the question runs, "of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?" Sometimes to ask a question is a very strong way of making an assertion. Such it evidently is here.

That as a matter of fact God does so act, nature, history, experience, and the Bible alike teach us, and reason and faith confess His right to do so. We hear a great deal in the present day of the rights of man:

Christians, at least, should recognise and make much of *the rights of God*. And an inalienable right of His is to do what He wills with His own. But within the limits of this brief paper it is not possible to further dwell on this solemn and needed truth. Yet, since it is closely connected with the theme we have under consideration, I thought it not out of place to call attention to an aspect of God's character and ways of which too little is now heard.

Originally we all alike were vessels fitted for the display of the justice, power, and wrath of God. Sovereign, electing grace alone makes us to differ. Hence the Lord Himself speaks of Saul of Tarsus, as a "vessel of election" (Acts ix. 15, r.v., mar.). And in these very matters of election and salvation Paul speaks of himself as a pattern of them which should afterwards believe on Christ to eternal life (1 Tim. i. 16). As we have seen from Rom. ix. 23, because he was a vessel of election, in due time he became a vessel for the display of God's mercy. And the vessel of mercy, from another standpoint, is a vessel unto honour; while this ought to and may become a vessel useful to the Master, and ultimately the vessel of mercy will become the vessel for the reception and manifestation of God's glory, and that for all the coming ages.

I think, with one well-known exception, all the scriptures which speak of the child of God as a vessel have in view a clay or earthen vessel. And in its formation God is always spoken of as the Potter who prepares the clay, and fits and fashions the vessel upon the wheel. He, as it were, takes in hand each lump of clay, and moulds and shapes it into a vessel unto honour. A thousand and one influences act on us and help to form our characters; we are born into a certain position, we have our particular environment, we pass through experiences peculiar to ourselves; but back of all God sits at the wheel and uses them to make us into vessels for His own use, pleasure, and glory.

One of the greatest of recent English poets has caught the great truth beneath this figure and expressed it in striking language, a few lines of which I venture to quote. Of the great Potter he sings:

"He fixed thee 'midst this dance
Of plastic circumstance ;
This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest :
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee, and then turn thee forth, sufficiently
impressed."

And in language that we may all use he continues :

"But I need, now as then,
Thee, God, who moulded men.

"So, take and use Thy work,
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the
aim !

My times be in Thy hand !
Perfect the cup as planned !

Let age approve of youth, and death complete
the same !

The last line might better, from a scriptural standpoint, have read, "And resurrection complete the same," for "the sky, not the grave, is our goal." And on the resurrection morn the Lord will complete His work in us, when He "shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that believe." Yes, it will not be the beauty and delicacy of the vessel, but the wisdom and skill of the Potter that will call forth the wonder and admiration of man and angel. And we shall rejoice to have it so.

But in the meantime we are vessels of mercy, and should aim to become vessels unto honour. Intrinsicly the mere earthen vessel is not worth much ; but in olden times it often became the repository of things of great use and value. For example, the deeds of the land bought in faith by the Prophet Jeremiah under remarkable circumstances were deposited in the earthen vessel (Jer. xxxii. 14). Gold and other treasures were frequently placed in these vessels and hidden away. So in the New Testament we read : "We have this treasure in earthen vessels (2 Cor. iv. 7). The treasure here referred to is nothing less than the New Covenant revelation of God : "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The earthen vessels are the bodies of believers. It is thought by many that when the Apostle penned this chapter he had in mind the incident of Gideon and his lamps and pitehers. The

light was in an earthen vessel, and it only shone forth when the vessels were broken. The answer to this in the spiritual realm we have indicated in the words : "Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." How good, how condescending of God, to place this unspeakably precious treasure in such mean earthen vessels ! Would that we more fulfilled that which He designed us to be in this respect !

The vessel is for the Master's use. It may convey to His own lips the wine of joy and refreshment ; or He may use it to convey the water of life to thirsty, dying men. But if even we have a repugnance against using an unclean cup, how much more God. In 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21, the professing Church is likened to a great house in which there are vessels of various materials for different uses. Some were for use in the banqueting hall, and others in the kitchen ; the former have an honourable and the latter a non-honourable use. One who strives to glorify God must purge himself out from among the vessels of dishonour, and in so doing he becomes "a vessel unto honour, sanctified, useful to the Master." True it is that a golden goblet may become unclean and be put to a dishonourable use ; and an earthen cup, being clean, may be put to an honourable use. But this is exceptional ; it is certainly not what we look for in a well-ordered household. The vessels of wood and earth are, I judge, the vessels of dishonour, and, so far as man can decide, they answer to the same class in Rom. ix. 21. Concerning professing Christians who hold fundamental error, or are seriously wrong in their lives, the command of the Holy Spirit to the faithful is, "From these also turn away."

I was interested recently in observing that the Greek word rendered "meet . . . for use," is only used in two other places in the New Testament. We find it in chap. iv. 11. Here the Revised Version reads : "Mark . . . he is useful to me for ministering." We again have it in Phile. 11 : "Onesimus . . . now profitable to thee and to me." Beloved, think of it ! Just as Mark, who through his lack of purpose had once forfeited the Apostle's confidence, afterwards became "useful" to

him, and as Onesimus, who at one time was unprofitable, yea, was positively injurious to his master, yet in the end became profitable to him and to Paul, so we who were unprofitable, yea, haters and enemies of God, through His grace became profitable to Him now and here, and for all eternity shall be vessels for the display of His wisdom, power, and grace.

But if the honour placed upon us of being vessels useful to the Master is very great, so is the responsibility. Let us day by day humbly wait on our Lord, and be clean and fit vessels ready to His hand, and he will use us.

“O use me, Lord, use even me,
Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where,
Until Thy blessed face I see,
Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy glory share.”

GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE.—VI.

“TO THE JEW FIRST.”

By JOHN R. CALDWELL, Author of “Shadows of Christ in the Old Testament,” “Things to Come,” &c.

WE have seen that Paul reckons himself to be one of the present-day remnant, “according to the election of grace.” He then shows how works are excluded as a ground of blessing by the principle of grace.

“If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise, grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise, work is no more work.”

God saved Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus, even in the midst of his breathings out of threatenings and slaughter against all who confessed Christ. Truly he was a specimen of salvation by grace, “the chief of sinners,” in whom God showed all long-suffering.

But there were many such, for in Acts xxi. 20 we read that when Paul went up to Jerusalem, they said to him,

“Thou seest, brother, how many thousands there are of Jews which believe.”

The word here rendered “thousands” should be “myriads” or “tens of thousands.” So that the remnant of that day may have amounted to hundreds of thousands.

Wherever Paul went, his first testimony was to the Jews; he first sought for the

Synagogue, and only when the Jews rejected the testimony of Jesus Christ did he turn to the Gentiles. The ministry of the Lord Jesus was for the lost sheep of the House of Israel; He never overstepped the limits of the land of Canaan.

“Unto you first, God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you” (Acts iii. 26).

The Lord’s instruction to the apostles was, “Beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke xxiv. 47). At Antioch, in Pisidia, Paul said to them,

“It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you” (Acts xiii. 46).

At Rome, Paul first called the chief of the Jews together; to them he expounded the things concerning the kingdom of God, concluding his exhortation with the words,

“Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it” (Acts xxviii. 17, 23, 28).

Thus the place of priority and privilege that God gave to Israel is recognised even in the present dispensation, although the Gospel is equally for all, without respect to nationality or any other human distinction.

Sometimes we hear the Church spoken of as being Gentile, but the Church is not Gentile any more than it is Jewish. It is out of twain that the “one new man” is made. It is composed of those who were as to the flesh Jews, and of those who were as to the flesh Gentiles; but being “in Christ,” there is no longer Jew or Greek—they are reckoned by God to have been put to death in Christ, and to be alive unto God in Him.

There were “churches of the Gentiles,” *i.e.* churches in Gentile countries, and composed of those who had been Gentiles, or “the uncircumcision according to the flesh,” but that is very different from saying that the Church is Gentile, and calling it a “Gentile Bride!”

Let us now turn to 1 Cor. x. 32:

“Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God.”

This is God’s way of mapping out all on the face of the earth. You must either be a Jew, and that means that you are *in the flesh*; or a Gentile, and that means that you are *in the flesh*; or else you belong to “the Church of God,” and that means that you are IN

CHRIST. That is "the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own Blood," and which has been incorporated by the Holy Spirit into one body, of which Christ is the Head. The Jew, when he believes on the Lord Jesus, is, so to speak, un-Jewed; the Gentile is un-Gentiled. The flesh to which these distinctions pertain is reckoned by God to be dead and buried, and henceforth both are seen only "in Christ," united to Him, and of that "Church which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

God is at the present time working out this, His deep, unfathomable counsel, which was indeed kept secret since the world began. He is gathering out from every nation those who are to form the Body of Christ, the Bride of the Lamb, during this period in which Israel is nationally rejected and individually scattered over the earth. In the Old Testament, whilst the period of Israel's dispersion is clearly predicted, there is no indication as to how long it is to continue—simply it is to be for "many days;" and there is no information as to the nature of the work of surpassing grace that is to be effected during that period. It is pre-eminently "the acceptable year," "the day of salvation." It has been lengthened out for nearly nineteen centuries, and when it will terminate we know not.

But we believe that the number of the elect of whom that wondrous body is to be composed will soon be completed. At its completion the Lord Jesus will come from heaven and take at once, whether asleep or alive, all who have believed on Him—one glorified company, to be for ever in the heavens with Himself. They will share His kingdom and His glory, come with Him when He is manifested, reign with Him when He reigns, judge with Him when He executes judgment, and be His companions throughout eternity.

When that has taken place, God will resume His dealings with the world. The old distinction of "Jew and Gentile," or "Israel and the nations," will be revived. Both in mercy and in judgment He will deal first and specially with the Jew. The centre of His governmental ways will again be Jerusalem. The saved remnant at that time

will be Jews still, the Church having been translated to heaven, and saved Gentiles will be Gentiles still.

Now I want to refer to a few Scriptures to show that on the completion of this heavenly election, called the Church (*Ecclesia*), or "the Body of Christ," God will resume the old distinction of Jew and Gentile, and will deal with His people Israel in their land, with Jerusalem as the centre, in judgment with the apostate nation, and in grace with the elect, the saved remnant of that day.

PARABLES OF OUR LORD.—XXXIV.

THE VINE AND ITS BRANCHES.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

JOHN XV. I-II.

Verse I. "I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman."

WE first notice the time when this parable was spoken, and the place.

It was in the upper chamber at Jerusalem, where the Lord Jesus had partaken of the Passover with His disciples, at the commencement of the fourteenth day of the month Abib, which began at sundown of the thirteenth; as an immediate foreshadowing of the fact that, on the same day and before the next sunset, He Himself, as the substance of the type, should become the true Paschal Lamb—"Christ our Passover, sacrificed for us." It was also after He had instituted the Lord's Supper, the standing memorial during the present dispensation of His sufferings and death.

John xiv. had been spoken whilst sitting at the table, after he had washed His disciples' feet, and taken His garments again. Now He calls upon His disciples to "arise" and follow Him, as He went forth to give the world this proof of His love and obedience to His heavenly Father.

But ere He closed this season of communion with His disciples by the wondrous prayer of John xvii., He gave them this parable of the Vine.

These five chapters of John's Gospel, from the thirteenth to the seventeenth, constitute a peculiarly sacred portion of Holy Scripture.

From the commencement, the Lord Jesus realised "that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father," "that He was come from God, and went to God"; so that IN SPIRIT He takes His place beyond death, and enters as the High Priest of our profession in the value of His atoning blood within the veil.

He had taught His disciples that except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, so that union with Himself must be in the power of the Holy Ghost in resurrection life, and the abiding in Himself which is spoken of in this chapter must be by faith in a risen Christ.

In the former dispensation under the first covenant, Israel nationally was the vine, and Jehovah, the triune God, was the Husbandman. (See Psalm lxxx. 8 to end.)

In Israel the flesh of man was put to the test to see if, under the most favourable circumstances, it was capable of bringing forth fruit unto God; but here, as in every other case, man under responsibility failed. (See Isaiah v. 1-7.) Under the new covenant, Messiah, as Son of God, is the "ROOT," and as Son of David He is the OFFSHOOT, "the BRANCH," the "SON OF MAN," whom Jehovah made strong for Himself (Psalm lxxx. 15-17), on the ground of whose atoning work and prevalent intercession Jehovah will plant Israel again with His whole heart and with His whole soul (Jer. xxxii. 41), and then "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit" (Isa. xxvii. 6).

During the present, or Church dispensation, Jesus Himself takes His place as the true Vine, and His Father is the Husbandman; not Jehovah, as of old, the Sovereign dealing with the nation, but God the Father dealing with those who, through faith in Christ, have become His children (John i. 12).

There are three beautiful Scriptural figures in some points similar, in others different—the lampstand in the Tabernacle, the shaft in the centre representing Christ as the source, centre, and subject of testimony, in the power of the Holy Ghost, associated with the six branches in LIGHT-GIVING before God.

Secondly, The head and the members, Christ and those who partake of His Spirit manifesting the LIFE of God before men.

Third, The vine and the branches, emblematic of Christ and His disciples [in FRUIT-BEARING to God.

It is with this last we have now to do.

Verses 2-11. "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the Vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without Me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples. As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love. If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

In order to fruit-bearing, two things are essential—First, Living union by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Second, Continuous abiding by faith.

It is not enough that a branch should be to all appearance a part of, and in, the vine, except the sap of the vine flows into the branch; so, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. viii. 9), however apparently consistent in character and fair in profession. The scion may be grafted into the stock, but unless the sap of the stock flows into the scion there will be no fruit-bearing from the graft.

A time is coming when nominal profession will be tested for eternity, and even now probationally those not bringing forth corresponding fruit may be removed from places of responsibility (1 Cor. xi. 30; Rev. ii. 5).

This twofold, living union is expressed by Christ thus: "He that abideth IN ME, and I IN HIM, the same bringeth forth much fruit" (John xv. 4, 5).

Secondly, Continuous abiding. It is on this point the teaching of the Lord Jesus in this chapter is so emphatic and important. It is essential for LIFE that the living sap of the vine should flow into the branch, and this is by the indwelling Spirit of God; but in order to FRUIT-BEARING there must be a

continuous supply of the living sap, and this is received by faith.

In fruit-bearing there is development—first the blossom, then the fruit, then the maturity of the fruit. For this a continuous, an ever-fresh, supply of sap is needed. The secret of continuous and mature fruit-bearing is threefold :

“If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father” (1 John ii. 24).

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith” (Eph. iii. 17).

“The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God” (Gal. ii. 20).

Second, The obedience of LOVE :

“If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with Him” (John xiv. 23).

“If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love” (John xv. 10).

Third, The COMMUNION of the Holy Ghost:

“In that day [when the Comforter has come] ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you” (John xiv. 20).

“He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you” (John xvi. 14).

It is as strengthened with might by God’s Spirit in the inner man that Christ dwells in the heart by faith (Eph. iii. 16, 17), and the fruits which are the result of this living and abiding union are “the fruits of the Spirit,” “which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God” (Phil. i. 11).

For life, growth, and fruitfulness three things are essential :

First, Living and walking in the presence of God, in the light and sunshine of His smile and favour.

Second, In living fellowship with the Person of Christ as branches of the Vine.

Third, The power of the Holy Ghost, as the shower that falls, the dew that distils, and the rivulets of living water that nourish and refresh the roots.

The PRESENCE of God, the PERSON of Christ, and the POWER of the Holy Ghost.

MUSING ON REDEMING LOVE.

By the Late HENRY HEATH.

2 Thess. iii. 5.

MY soul! come pause awhile to muse,
And prove that solitude hath charms!
That when withdrawn from busy
Scenes, retreating from the fellowship
Of men, and from the sound of softest
Footstep free, thou still hast wherewithal
To fill thy time and happiness in solitude,
The sinner’s dread, where nought is found
To turn his thoughts from self and
All his ways;—no joy in God! no peace
With Him! no love in Christ! a stranger
To His converse. For him possesses
Solitude no charms. Not so with thee.
Then, catch the moment ere it flies,
And muse. And of the varied themes
That charm (and profit too) make
Choice of Love—the Love of God—redeem-
Love: the life and pattern of all other [ing
Loves! a Father’s, Brother’s, Bridegroom’s
Which in its tenderness is like to that [love,
(Though far surpassing) which graces
Mother, Sister, Bride.
That love which chose thee into
Life, ere Time was born, or sin
Or death were known,
And destin’d thee for bliss.
The love that bought thee at a costly price,
The price of blood! the blood of Christ!
The blessèd Son of God, the spotless Lamb.
That love which hover’d o’er thee
When thou knew’st it not;
That cradled thee in providence
(As Moses in his ark), and sav’d
From many a death.
The love which moved the Holy Ghost
To give thee life, and ope’d thy
Blinded eyes to see the light of heaven,
To know the God of Love,
And find in Him thy springs of true delight.
The love that quells thy fears, and breaks the
Snare; that soothes in sorrow, and
With mercies crowns;
Recalls thy wandering feet, and clears
The way; that knows no change,
And ne’er can fail;
That will its objects raise to bliss
And with unfading glory crown.
To know this love was Paul’s supreme
Desire; for others too he craved the same,

And e'en for thee, my soul, he
 Breath'd this heaven-born wish!
 O think of this, and make response,
 And add thy true Amen.
 And dost thou ask what are the similes
 That God employs to tell thee of His love?
 O then repair to Him, and search
 The sacred pages of His Word!
 There shalt thou find, in simplest
 Language cloth'd, sublimest thoughts
 Of Love,

The pastures ever green! affording
 Constant food. Refreshing streams
 Thy thirst to slake. A river broad!
 An ocean vast! where thou
 May'st take thy pastime without fear.
 A mansion blest! where varied
 Beauties charm but weary not;
 Affording sweet repose.

A fair pavilion! reminding thee
 Of kingly glory, of thy royal birth
 By grace; and telling thee
 Thou'rt destined to a throne.
 A banquet rich! inviting thee
 To take thy fill of Love, and thus
 Beguile the night, the night of weeping!
 The little space of time ere Jesus comes.
 An infinite, eternal, and unchanging
 Sea of bliss: 'tis God Himself!
 For "God is Love."

'Tis He alone can give thee room to dwell,
 Then dwell in Him! in Him for ever dwell;
 For there alone canst thou
 The true enjoyment of all other
 Good, the secret find.

His lovingkindness is the life of life,
 And 'mid the multitudes that live,
 He, He alone is Life!
 And dost thou rest in God?
 And dwell in Love? Yes! wondrous
 Thought, 'tis there thy rest is found.
 Nor is the thought less wonderful
 That Love abides in thee.
 But though it dwells in thee,
 'Tis not within thee pent.—

O Love divine! the limits of my
 Soul are far too narrow for
 The lofty flight!
 The family! where all partake
 Of thee, confines thee not:
 The bound'ries of the Church of God
 Thou pass'est o'er; and as for Time,

'Tis but a point of the vast
 Range. Eternity!—that—only that
 Suffices thee 't expand, and
 Manifest thy stores.
 Then, O my soul, arise! and soar
 By faith! delight thyself in God:
 And whilst delighting in His wondrous
 Love, invite, and wait the
 Hour for which the Bridegroom
 Waits, whose patience thou
 Art bidden share; the hour of hours,
 The day of days, the coming of thy Lord!
 Heed thou the Spirit's voice,
 Who, as thy Comforter, will lead
 Thee far from ill, from sin preserve,
 And guide thee into love, the love of God,
 And patience of His Christ.

HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS ME.

I MUST not judge of a man's Christianity
 according to his attitude towards *me*.
 I must consider the general excellencies of
 his character, apart altogether from the
 question as to whether or not I happen to
 be in his good graces. The sentiments of
 fleshly compassion and personal vanity
 would naturally lead us to form a very
 favourable opinion of those who *stand by us*,
 and to form a correspondingly unfavourable
 opinion of those who oppose us. But such
 a principle, or lack of principle, in estimating
 the worth of others, is simply and entirely
 of *self*. A man may oppose me, and yet be
 a saint of the first standing: a man may be
 a most pronounced supporter of mine, and
 yet be lamentably deficient in the elements
 that should adorn the Christian character.
 What is So-and-so's attitude towards *me*?
 That is not the question. What is his
 attitude towards *Christ*? That is the question.
 What does it matter although he has a very
 indifferent opinion of me—although he deter-
 minedly opposes me in some things? Is a
 man's relation to *me* to determine his worth?
 Am I the meridian line from which I must
 measure, east or west, to discover how far
 my brother is away from the true standard
 of Christian character? Never. Let *self*
 be kept out of the question—let *self* die,
 and be buried; and then, in an even balance,
 and from the *Christ* standpoint, I shall

weigh 'men and things. It is not, "What think ye of me?" it is, "What think ye of Christ?" that must determine my estimate of my brethren. To condemn a man, or to think lightly of him, because he opposes me, is the mark of a narrow and revengeful disposition. When Ahab was asked if there were no other prophet save the four hundred who had spoken with one voice as to the Ramoth-Gilead expedition, he replied, "There is yet one man, by whom we may inquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil" (2 Chron. xviii. 7). We have here the secret of Ahab's determined opposition to the prophet of the Lord. It was purely a personal matter that regulated his estimate of Michaiah. If that one had prophesied "smooth things" to Ahab, he would have been considered an eminent man of God, without a doubt. But he was opposed to the wicked Ahab. That was enough. Therefore he was hated, and consigned to prison, and sentenced to bread of affliction and water of affliction. Let us see that our estimate of others does not spring from a kindred sentiment to that which actuated Ahab of old. Let us beware of that principle of measuring others which, in plain language, comes simply to this—If you support me, you are a splendid type of a believer; if you are opposed to me, you are a most unsatisfactory case. If it is upon these lines that we form our judgment of others, we need not be surprised if we find ourselves "supported" by men whose Christianity is questionable in the extreme—veritable prophets of the groves; while the Michaiahs refuse to make obeisance, and perhaps boldly testify to us that our deeds are evil.

w. s.

THE HEAVENLY CALLING OF THE CHURCH.—VI.

HER HOME IS IN HEAVEN.

IN writing this concluding paper, it may be helpful to some readers to recapitulate what has been gone over.

1st. The general character of God's present heavenly purpose as illustrated in the case of Enoch, the heavenly man, coming in between Adam and Noah, into both of whose hands the government of this earth was committed.

2nd. The nature of believers' separation and unity which characterises the present age. Both are *spiritual*, as contrasted with the *national* separation and unity of God's earthly people.

3rd. The place of worship during the present age is inside the veil, where the Great High Priest now is, in contrast with the one place of worship, which was once upon earth, and will be again when the LORD resumes His dealings with His people Israel.

4th. The Head of all rule and authority in the Church is in heaven, and His will can only be known, and His authority can only be maintained, by Christian men who are walking in fellowship with Himself.

5th. The blessing or portion of the Church, both now and in the future, is heavenly, in contrast with the earthly blessings which Israel once enjoyed, and will enjoy again in millennial days. Tribulation is the earthly portion which the Scriptures teach the heavenly believer to expect. Our present portion is all in Christ, and our inheritance is awaiting us in heaven, where He now is.

We now come to the last truth that I will notice. That is, that the eternal HOME of the Church is in heaven. Nothing could be sweeter than the words used by the Lord when telling His disciples of our future home, "My Father's house." And if we connect with this the message he gave to Mary Magdalene to carry to His disciples, "I ascend to My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God" (John xx. 17), the Lord thus taking all His followers into fellowship with Himself, in His relationship to God the Father, gives every child of God a warrant to think of, and speak of, our eternal home as "our Father's house." What a deep and a sweet meaning such an expression has to the human heart, specially to those who have known and enjoyed a happy home on earth! It was not the grandeur of the building, nor the costliness or beauty of what was in it, that made or makes the home of our childhood and youth so attractive to the heart of the child; it is because it is the *father's house* that the child feels at home whilst in it, and that so leads the heart back to it long after we have left it. How gracious it is o

he Lord to use such a *human* expression in telling believers of our future home. How much is included in the words, "My Father's house," we have no means of knowing. We are only told that there are "many mansions," or abodes, in it. But there is one special "place" reserved for those who have been given by the Father to the Son, as His own special portion, and of these He says: "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory" (John xvii. 24). Where, in the universe of God, that special place is we are not told; nor are we told what like it is. There is nothing said of the believer's future home to please the carnal mind, or to be material for the human imagination to work upon, but there is all that faith can desire. It is in the "Father's house." It is to be where the Lord Jesus is. Its preparation, or fitting as the eternal home of His own ransomed ones, will be all according to His own love, wisdom, and power. Nothing will be awaiting there which infinite love could anticipate; nothing which infinite wisdom could devise; and nothing will be awaiting which infinite resources can supply. But all these could never satisfy the desires of a redeemed sinner. "I will come again, and receive you unto MYSELF." That must ever be heaven's chief attraction to the heart of a believer. What will it be to see His face? And what will it be to dwell with Him for evermore?

There is a peculiar joy when a scattered family on earth have the privilege of meeting at certain seasons in the home of their childhood; but this joy is often mingled with sadness because some seats are empty, some loved ones are gone. What will the joy be when all the heavenly family meet in the Father's house above, with not an empty seat, nor one loved one awaiting? If there is now such "joy in heaven over *one* sinner that repenteth"—such mirth and feasting over *one* lost one found—what will the joy of heaven be when all the redeemed meet at home to part no more?

In our present condition of weakness and infirmity, we can have little idea of the joy which awaits us in heaven; and if we can have almost no conception of the joy which awaits us, far less can we conceive of the joy

which the blessed God will have when He sees all His own redeemed family gathered home at last. The soul is overwhelmed to think of it—the consummation of that purpose which was "hid in God" from all eternity; the realisation of all the joy which led the Lord Jesus to endure the Cross and despise the shame; and the completion of all which the Holy Spirit was sent down to accomplish. I believe I am quite warranted in saying that heaven will not be complete until the redeemed from this earth are there. There is an inheritance awaiting the believer in heaven, and we have now got the Holy Spirit to dwell in our hearts as the "earnest" or pledge of that inheritance; but in man's redemption there is also an inheritance to God, hence we read of "the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Eph. i. 18). That inheritance has already been "purchased" at the Cross, and is now being gathered out by the Holy Spirit, and the Lord Jesus is coming soon to claim the "purchased possession," unto the praise of the glory of the Three-in-One God.

In conclusion, let me ask, Do we really believe these things? Do we really believe that at any moment we *may* be, and in a few years we *must* be, called to leave this scene, with all its allurements, its fascinating beauties, and also all its trials and sorrows, as well as its joys? Do we believe that we are going to spend an eternity in such a PERFECT HOME, and in such company as there will be in heaven? Then why are so many of the Lord's people so like the poor worldings who have no hope beyond this life? If what God is now doing in this world was the purpose dearest to His heart in a by-gone eternity; if the Son of God veiled His glory, and came down and endured the Cross, with all its suffering and shame, to lay the foundation of this wonderful purpose; and if the Holy Spirit has been down here during all this long age, carrying on this purpose to consummation, why are we, who are the objects and subjects of such love and grace now, and heirs to such future glory and blessedness, so occupied with present things, and why have we so little heart for those things which have been, are now, and ever will be, so dear to the heart of our God and Father in Christ, and which have cost Him so much? G. A.

THE BIBLE IN HUMAN BINDING.

A NEW TRANSLATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

ONE of the outstanding glories of this present century is the phenomenal activity displayed in the translation and circulation of the Holy Scriptures. The credit of this phenomena is due, under God, to the missionaries, who have reduced the different languages to writing, and the various Bible Societies in Britain and America, who have borne the expense of printing and circulating. Allow me to reproduce here the statistics of one society as reviewed in the *London Times* for December, last year, just to give some conception of the immensity of the work attempted and accomplished.

The society referred to was established in March, 1804, and since then they have spent upwards of twelve millions sterling in translating, revising, printing, and circulating the Holy Scriptures. These have been printed in about three hundred and thirty different languages and dialects, and upwards of one hundred and fifty-one millions of Bibles, Testaments, and detached portions have been scattered broadcast amongst the nations. This is the work of one society only, as I have not the opportunity to gather the figures of the others. God be praised for this prodigal-like disbursement of His holy Word.

And now I want to plead for a *new* translation of the Scriptures, this time, not into a foreign language, but I do plead with Christians everywhere to translate the Scriptures into the *language of life*, to put the *truth* of the Scriptures into *living practice* that men may see *acted in us* that which they find *written in the Bible*. God has given to every Christian power to translate the Scriptures thus, and happy are those who, being "Christ's epistles," are "known and read of all men" (2 Cor. iii. 2). For such a translation the world has long groaned.

So much for the *new* translation. Now for the binding. Not only has the translation and circulation of the Holy Scriptures been phenomenal and unique, but publishers and bookbinders have vied with each other in a kind of holy rivalry as to who will produce the Scriptures in the most serviceable form in the most choice of bindings, and

they are to be congratulated both for ingenuity and good taste. But after all it seems to me that the old Book looks best when bound in *human binding*, and never better understood than when presented to the people in *covers of flesh*. What the world needs to-day is that the Scriptures be translated into the *language of life* and bound with the binding of *godly practice*. May God speedily give us such a translation in such binding. Was not the life of Christ from incarnation to resurrection such as I have described above? It was. The life of Christ was one long translation and fulfilment of the Scriptures, the Living Word in living action, the Divine Word in human binding, even as He also was *God* manifest in the *flesh*.

"O make me Christ's epistle,
From flaw and blemish free;
A perfect answer to the mould
He left on earth for me."

T. B.

Correspondence.

CHRIST'S REIGN.

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

IN *The Witness* for May, Mr. Collingwood rather complains that in the April number I did not further notice the "points" in his first letter, but seems to forget that most of them were dealt with by mine, though not controversially.

He challenges my interpretation of *katargeo* and *hupotasso*. I have nothing to say against his view of the former, which corresponds sufficiently with my own. For, of course, no soul of man, be he friend or enemy, is ever absolutely ended. All exist for ever; but their power as "enemies" is abolished and ended, and that he admits.

But when he says that *hupotasso* does not show a settled state, and immediately adds, it is a subjection of women to husbands, and believers to higher powers, and of demons to the disciples, I think I need not reply, for by the two former instances he proves that which he previously denies, viz., that it describes a state. My point, however, is that the one, *katargeo*, means the ending of the existing condition, being destructive, and that the other, *hupotasso*, is the establishing of a new condition, being constructive. This will not be denied, I trust.

He objects to the word "when" in 1 Cor. xv. 24 being applied in the first place to the end and in the second to the beginning of the period in question. But would it be inconsistent to say, "The 19th century was that period

when (near its close) Home Rule was rejected, and when (at its opening) the Act of Union came into force." The uses of the word are identical, not "opposite," as Mr. C. states.

The other points are mainly matters of opinion, and as I have written the book, "After the Thousand Years," to show reasons for mine, I will not trouble you further with them.

In conclusion, I cannot agree with Mr. C. that the passage is limited to the time and events connected with the Lord's coming to receive us, the living and the resurrected, to Himself. It is, by the consent of all the students of prophecy, the most far-reaching of all the revelations as to future events, for it goes on to the time when our Lord will "deliver up the kingdom to the Father." That is to an event not elsewhere made known in the Bible. Mr. C.'s concluding words, however, I cordially endorse, "The passage is one of cardinal importance in the study of prophecy," and I trust this little discussion may lead many of your readers to the careful study of it, and of the whole subject of the kingdom which is to come.

GEORGE F. TRENCH.

"IN CHRIST" AND "IN THE LORD."

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

Jesus is suggestive of salvation and suffering.

Christ " " " " position and power.

Lord " " " " rule and responsibility.

"In Jesus" speaks of suffering for the truth of God.

"In Christ" " " standing in the presence of God.

"In the Lord" " " submission to the will of God.

In Jesus—"truth" (Eph iv. 21), resulting in the three things of Rev. i. 9, "tribulation, kingdom, patience," in connection with the body condition

Jesus—manward. Under the Name of Jesus He suffered at the hands of Satan and sinners.

Christ—Godward. Under the title Christ He suffered at the hands of a righteous, holy God as a sacrifice for sins (1 Peter iii. 18).

"Having then a great High Priest, who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God"—great High Priest, telling of His nearness to God for us—Jesus, telling of His nearness to man for God (Heb. iv. 14, 15).

In Colossians iii. 24 and Romans xvi. 18 (R.V.) we find the title "Lord Christ" in each instance connected with service. In the second Scripture it is positive service, "Ye serve the Lord Christ;" in the latter, negative, "They serve not." Observe also how frequently the title Lord occurs in Col. iii. 22-24 (R.V.). "Lord," I submit, is a combination of the two foregoing. In a superficial day like the present, when there is so much eye-service—that is, seeking to please men (compare Gal. i. 10), so as to bring in quick returns, the future, even by Christians, being little contemplated when serving, for love is well-nigh a thing of the past—how such Scriptures as Phil. i. 10, ii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 10 ought to be read,

and prayerfully so, that the love of *Christ* may constrain us to serve the *Lord Christ*, remembering, "Whatsoever ye do, work heartily AS UNTO THE LORD, and not unto men." N. C.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

"WATER" IN JOHN'S EPISTLE.—Does the water mentioned in 1 John v. 8 and the water mentioned in the 6th verse of the same chapter mean the same, or, if not, what do we learn from the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses together?

A REPROVED BROTHER.—Is it Scriptural when a brother takes offence, because he has been reproved for his conduct, to go off to the nearest assembly, and that assembly to receive him?

HOUSEHOLD SALVATION.—What are we to understand by the promise, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house?" We have always claimed it for our children, but can we not claim it as Rahab did, *i. e.*, for parents, brothers, sisters, and servants also?

DANIEL'S FOURTH KINGDOM.—Has the fourth kingdom mentioned in Daniel vii. 7. finished its career; and if not, what is its *present* condition?

CO-OPERATION AND JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.—Is a member of a co-operative society in the same position as a shareholder in a joint-stock company?

LIFE AND DEATH.—Please explain Romans viii. 10 and 13. In what aspect are we to understand "life" and "death" in these two verses?

TARRYING ONE FOR ANOTHER.—Please explain 1 Cor. xi. 33. Does it mean that those assembled should tarry for those who are late at a morning meeting, or that those who are come together, instead of being too hasty in ministering, should tarry one for another?

PRAYING FOR EVIL.

QUESTION 385.—Please explain Psalm cix. 6-29 in the light of the spirit and teaching of Jesus Christ.

Answer A.—Psalm cix. 6-29 can only be explained by taking the Psalm as a whole. It is closely related to Psalm cx. It is a Psalm of David. Its primary personal signification is uncertain, the circumstances which called it forth being unknown. Its prophetic interpretation is certain (Acts i. 16-20). Chrysostom calls it "a prophecy under the form of an imprecation." It is without controversy a prophecy, but I call in question the imprecation. The key to the interpretation is to see that there are two speakers. 1st. Messiah in the day of His weakness and

humiliation, with which contrast the day of His "power" (Ps. cx. 3).

2nd. Jehovah God the Judge.

In Psalm cix. 1-5 Messiah pours out his complaint and makes known His cause to the God of His praise (verse 1). He brings to His bar the many "sons of perdition," His adversaries; He tells of their wickedness, deceit, and lying; of their hatred and opposition to Him "without a cause," and in spite of his "love" to them, and the "good" he sought to do them" (verses 4 and 5). He does not avenge Himself, but gives Himself unto "prayer" (verse 4). In all this He is our example.

From verses 6 to 19, *God the Judge speaks* and gives sentence—a sentence not executed on the condemned at once, but reserved. Note first that "they," the sons of perdition, is changed to "him," the son of perdition (see John xvii. 12), because all this hatred was fully manifested and brought to a head when Satan entered into Judas Iscariot, the traitor, who sinned more than the chief priests and people, since he was nearer to Jesus Christ, knew more of His love, and enjoyed the privilege of His society and service. *28700 28700 28700*

It is worthy of note that if Judas Iscariot was the disciple described in Matthew viii. 19 as "a certain scribe" who came and said to Jesus, "Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest"—as tradition says was the case—Jesus gives him no special call, "Follow Me," as He did to the others, but coldly reminds Him that there is nothing to be gained by following such an one as He is. Verse 21 proves that this scribe was a *disciple*: but, "in order that Scripture might be fulfilled," though not called he is permitted to take a place among the twelve. And again, "that the Scripture might be fulfilled," as written in this Psalm, verse 8, he is officially set apart and sent out as an apostle by Jesus (Matt. x. 4; see also John xiii. 18). All this is very solemn, and we see in it the submission of God's elect Servant Messiah to the decrees of God as made known in the Scriptures.

Now, with regard to verses 6 to 19, we know to a certainty that the Holy Ghost was speaking "by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who was guide to them that took Jesus" (Acts i. 16-20). We know, then, that it is Messiah Jesus who is in verses 1-5 pouring out His complaint and committing His cause to God (1 Peter ii. 23). Jesus never called down curses on the heads of His enemies. Let no one for an instant suppose it. It would have been entirely contrary to the spirit of His mission to men at His first coming (see Luke ix. 54, 55).

Note, secondly, in Jehovah's sentence on "the son of perdition," verses 6-19, the use of the word "let." The word is in common use in sentencing a prisoner. The judge says: "Let

him be taken and on a certain day be hanged by the neck until dead." It is so used in Esther. The king asks Haman: "What shall be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour?" Haman replies, "Let royal apparel be brought," &c. The history of Judas shows how this sentence was executed in its minutest particulars in due time. He was his own executioner!

From verse 20 to end of Psalm, Messiah Jesus speaks again accepting "the reward of His *adversaries from the Lord.*" Note the change to the plural number again, and the difference in tone all through. He speaks of Himself as "poor and needy." His heart is "wounded," His strength declineth. Observe, too, that in verse 29 the "let" is rather "shall be." Since God has told Him so, He says the "Amen." So it shall be. So, also, in the last two verses we see Messiah, *the Man of Faith*, giving thanks and praising Jehovah for his interposition, and the salvation that He gives His needy one from those who "judge his soul." How beautiful is all this! Let us follow His blessed example.

R. W. B.

Answer B.—In 2 Peter i. 21 we read, "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." Also in 1 Peter i. 10, 11 it is written regarding the prophetic scriptures, that the prophets searched diligently into the application of what they were led to write. From this passage it is evident that the "Spirit of Christ" dictated this psalm, as well as all the other psalms. The solution of the difficulty in this question is to be found "in searching into what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, which was guiding the writer, did signify" (or point to, R.V.).

To my mind this psalm, along with other similar scriptures, is prophetic, and points on to the time when "the things which are" (Rev. i. 19) will be finished—when the present dispensation of grace will have closed, and when Christ (as the Lamb that was slain) shall have taken the book of judgment out of the hand of Him who sits upon the throne, and will have begun to open the seals thereof. In Revelation vi. 9, 10 we find the souls of those who had been slain for their testimony crying for vengeance on their persecutors and murderers. Whilst God is dealing with His enemies in mercy, those who are in fellowship with Him will pray for mercy on their enemies, according to such scriptures as Matthew v. 44, 45, Luke xxiii. 34, Acts vii. 60.

So, when God's long-suffering with a guilty world has been exhausted, and He shall have begun to deal with His enemies in judgment, those who will then be His witnesses on the earth will be led by the Spirit to pray for judgment on the enemies of God and of His people, just as believers now are led by the same Spirit to pray for mercy to be extended to our enemies.

G. A.

Answer C.—Scripture presents the Lord to us in two distinct attitudes, which are the complete contrast of each other. Each of these attitudes is seen in Isa. xlii.—the one at verse 2, "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street; a bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench;" the other at verse 13, "The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man; He shall stir up jealousy like a man of war; He shall cry, yea, roar; He shall prevail against His enemies. . . . I will cry like a travelling woman; I will destroy and devour at once."

Thus also in the New Testament the broad contrast is revealed. In Luke iv. 18, 19, and 21 the former attitude of mercy, grace, and salvation is told out, and in 2 Thess. i. 7-9 the latter attitude of vengeance and judgment is definitely foretold—"When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction." The spirit of Paul says, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." That is, the Lord Jesus is now acting in an administration of mercy and grace, and salvation is so sovereign and free that it is called the day of salvation. His people who are walking in the Spirit are in exact harmony with Him, for He hath showed us an example that we should follow His steps.

By-and-by the great day of His wrath will have come (see Rev. vi.), and the hour of His judgment will be come (see Rev. xiv.), when He goes forth, riding on a white horse, with a sword to smite the nations. Then the armies which are in heaven follow Him on white horses (see Rev. xix.), for His people then will be in full harmony with Him. Then will Israel sing those terrible psalms of which cix. is a specimen.

In answer to those inspired prayers of Israel, the anti-Christ and his prophet will be taken alive, and be cast into the lake of fire, and the kings and the armies which are with him shall be slain by the sword of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords (see Rev. xix. 11-21). They will be trodden as a winepress, and blood, blood found everywhere for 1600 furlongs, or 200 miles (see Rev. xiv. 19, 20). See also Isa. lxiii., where He says, "I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments, and I will stain all My raiment, for the day of vengeance is in My heart." When those awful prayers for judgment and vengeance shall be entirely answered, Israel will sing Isa. lxiii. 7, and many of the hallelujah psalms, with fervour and jubilation, such as had never been seen or heard before.

J. S.

POINTS CONCERNING BAPTISM.

QUESTION 386.—The following questions regarding baptism have been recently raised:

(a) Was Paul's baptism at Corinth on a par with his circumcising of Timothy a concession to Jewish ideas?

(b) What is the significance of the words, "For Christ sent me not to baptise but to preach the Gospel"?

(c) Does Col. ii. teach that baptism is one of the "ordinances" which, like holy days, new moons, and Sabbaths, has no place in connection with the Church, the Body of Christ?

(d) Is baptism one of the "rudiments of the world," which are "for those living in the world, not for those who have died with Christ, and been buried with Him, and are risen with Him"?

(e) If, as some assert, everything was Jewish up till the death of Stephen, and all Church order unrevealed until subsequently, what Scripture warrant or command have we for baptism?

Answer A.—The following facts prove that the Apostle Paul regarded the ordinance of baptism as of Divine appointment, applicable alike to believers from amongst Jews and Gentiles.

(a) He was himself baptised.

(b) He baptised some at Corinth.

(c) In the course of his ministry he repeatedly referred to the ordinance of baptism as being of deep spiritual signification as well as being a confession of discipleship.

His statement (1 Cor. i.), "Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the Gospel," clearly shows that baptism (water) did not form any part of the spiritual commission with which he was entrusted.

The only direct commands bearing on baptism are at the close of the Gospels by Matthew and Mark, where evidently the kingdom is in view. None the less, however, is it now incumbent upon believers in the Lord Jesus Christ to submit themselves to His appointment, inasmuch as each member of the mystical body is a disciple by calling, and also a servant in the kingdom (Matt. xiii.), and when the Church has been translated to her proper sphere in the heavenlies the testimony of Christ in His relation to the kingdom about to be manifested in power will be carried on by the Jewish remnant on lines similar to those at the commencement previous to the call of the Apostle Paul.

R. S.

Answer B.—Beginning with the last:—

(e) The commission in Matt. xxviii. 19 specially prescribed for the baptising of the disciples they should make from among the nations—*Gentiles*. This took effect only subsequent to the death of Stephen. Whatever else of Church order may be supposed to have undergone change, or to have been revealed later, this of baptism was revealed by the Lord Himself, before His ascension, as pertaining to the Gentile dispensation.

(d) According to Rom. vi. 3, 4, baptism is for those, and those only, who *have died* with Christ. It teaches that "in baptism" they were "*buried* with Him." Baptism is simply *burial* in figure, a gracious sign on God's part that He accounts the believer to have died, judicially, in the Person of his Surety.

(c) Col. ii. does not place baptism among "the rudiments of the world." It shows that the believer has a *circumcision* made without hands. But his *baptism* is stated to be an act which has passed upon him, wherein he was buried with Christ.

(b) "Not to baptise, but to preach," does not exclude the former, but supersedes it by the latter (compare John ix. 3). Paul had acted on the general commission to baptise Gentile disciples. Else he often transgressed by exceeding his orders. Here he simply shows that, with him, baptism was a secondary matter, rather to be left to others than that it should be abused to party purposes or other mischief.

(a) In circumcising Timothy, Paul was acting on this godly rule laid down in 1 Cor. ix. He never taught that it was wrong for Jewish believers to be circumcised or to observe national customs. Only, these must not be imposed on the conscience, or put in the place of Christ for righteousness, which would be, and could only be, if adopted by Gentiles. w. c.

Answer C.—(a) In Acts xviii, there seems no concessions to Jewish ideas. The Jews were blaspheming, and Paul turned to the Gentiles, and in the house of Titus Justus, a devout man, preaches to the Corinthians, many of whom, hearing, believed and were baptised (verse 8). Along with these, Crispus, a Jew, was also baptised. His circumcising of Timothy was because he would have him as a co-worker, and seeing all the Jews knew his father was a Greek, he circumcised him (Acts xvi. 3) in order that the Gospel might not be hindered. This was different from Peter's action in Galatians ii. 11, for there Peter was denying in his action the grace of God (ver. 16).

(b) 1 Cor. i. 12 affords a clue. Paul is thankful that he was so guided that none could say he baptised in his own name. We have only to remember that Peter even did not baptise in Acts x., but *commanded* them to be baptised (verse 48), and no doubt the nameless brethren did it (verse 23). Hence those who would quote the words, "Christ sent me not to baptise," as against baptism, would have Paul disobedient, for he *did* baptise the household of Stephanus, who all "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints" (1 Cor. xvi. 15), also at Ephesus (Acts xix. 1-7).

(c) How any one could ask this question is a puzzler. As we have shown, Paul *did* baptise, and, further, in Colossians ii. 12 uses their baptism as a figure of burial and resurrec-

tion with Christ. See 1 Peter iii. 21, where we are said to be saved through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the "anti-type, or like figure to which is our baptism."

(d) A sufficient answer to this is in Acts ii., "Then they that gladly received the Word (believed) were baptised." It is a Divine ordinance for a *Christian*, not a "rudiment of the world."

(e) It is one thing to say that God lingered over Jerusalem, as in Ezekiel ix., x., and according to the command of the Lord Jesus, "beginning at Jerusalem," and quite another thing to say that up to the death of Stephen everything was Jewish.

We grant their *knowledge* had to be completed through Paul, but, like us, they were "buried with Him in baptism" (Acts ii. 41), and baptised in one Spirit into one body (Acts i. 4 and 1 Cor. xii. 13), no longer Jews (2 Cor. v. 16, 17). As we have seen, we have apostolic authority to baptise, and remembering they were all inspired, their acts, unless disowned by the Spirit, are just "showing us all things." To our minds it is futile to set aside Matthew xxviii. 19 as a warrant, for even granting all that may be *argued*, the principle is, first make *disciples*, then baptise them. T. C.

Answer D.—(c) No; baptism is the outward sign of DEATH, Christ's death, with which the Church is identified, and as it was *that* death that "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us," &c., *believers' baptism could not be included*, as it was *not* commanded until *after His resurrection*, and *never* was a Jewish ordinance.

(d) Does not verse 22 settle this? "After the *commandments and doctrines of men*," baptism is *divine*, and the commandment of the *Lord Jesus*."

(e) Acts xix. 1-7. If the chronology is trustworthy, this event took place over twenty years after the death of Stephen. Is not verse 6 the divine seal of the *act of obedience* in verse 5? If *not*, then we open a very wide door, and practically deny that the Holy Ghost is a Spirit of TRUTH.

The same thing might be pointed out in Acts xvi. After the baptism of Lydia, she says, "If ye have judged me to be *faithful to the Lord*, come into my house and abide there." &c. What an opportunity Paul had of pointing out her mistake, if one had been made; but the record is, "She constrained us." In the same chapter we have the baptism of the jailor. In this chapter I think we have the Holy Spirit in His operations very prominently brought before us, and to say that Paul made a *mistake* in baptising those two households on their confession of faith seems in my humble judgment little short of blasphemy.

In connection with this, in Mark xvi. 15, 16, "*all the world*" and "*EVERY creature*" "*believeth and is baptised*," surely are God-joined, and therefore not to be separated by man so long as the Gospel testimony lasts. J. N.

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH.

II.—INTERNAL EVIDENCE OF ITS UNITY.

IT must not be supposed that *all* scholars have been led astray by these novel theories about the book of Isaiah. As in Germany sceptical critics were opposed by men whose scholarship was equal to their own, so in England men by no means inferior in learning to those who deny the unity and integrity of the book have been found to maintain both. We say "have been," for those specially referred to are no longer in the sphere in which we have to contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. If some have studied the book in order to bring out differences of language and style in the two parts, others have been the more stirred up to point out the resemblances and agreements, and to show that the latter part must have been written before the captivity, and by one living in Judea, and not in Babylonia.

That the two parts of the book have much in common no one ventures to deny, however some may endeavour to explain away the admission. Thus Dr. Driver, one of the most prominent of the English critics who deny that "the book is *one*," writes: "Isaiah and the author of this prophecy [*i.e.*, xl.-lxvi.] share one distinguishing feature in common: alone among the prophets of the Old Testament they live in immediate anticipation of Israel's recovery from humiliation and disaster. Hence it is not surprising that in his visions of the restored Zion the prophet [*i.e.*, of the latter half] *should pursue the lines laid down by his predecessor* [*i.e.*, Isaiah], *and develop ideas originated by him.*" It is only honest to add that the fact is explained away; but it is with the admission of it that we are concerned. The same writer acknowledges that the similarities of figure or metaphor between the two parts of the book "*are somewhat in excess of those existing between any other two prophets,*" but considers it sufficiently accounted for "*by the supposition, in itself a reasonable and credible one, of the author's* [*i.e.*, the author of part 2] *familiarity with the prophecies of Isaiah.*" He further admits that "the language of chapters xl.-lxvi. is relatively free from the faults

of a later style," though he adds that "it not so free as the language of Isaiah," *i.e.*, the earlier portion.

In these acknowledged similarities between the two parts of the book powerful evidence may be found that they were both written by Isaiah. Some, indeed, can only be discerned by Hebrew scholars, such as a peculiar Hebrew form of the verb rendered *sait*h in chapters i. 11, 18, xxxiii. 10, xl. 1, 25, xli. 21, lxvi. 9 (which is scarcely found in other writers), and the word rendered *in vain* in chapter xlv. 18, 19. This word occurs twenty times in the Hebrew Bible—seven times in the earlier books, in Psalm cvii. 40 and Jeremiah iv. 23, and eleven times in Isaiah, of which three are in the first part and eight in the second. But many points of resemblance are evident to any of us who will patiently compare them.

The expression, "Jehovah hath spoken," or "the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken," is found in chapters i. 2, 20, xl. 5, and lviii. 14. In 1865 the late Dr. Delitzsch pointed out that "the name of God, which is the echo of the seraphic *sanctus* in the heart and mouth of Isaiah, that name peculiar to Isaiah—Holy One of Israel—is common to the disputed prophecies with those that are recognised as genuine." He also quoted and endorsed the beautiful and forcible remark of a Jewish writer: "As if Isaiah had foreseen that later scepticism will decide against the half of his prophecies, he has impressed his seal on all, and has interwoven the name of God—'Holy One of Israel'—with the second part just as with the first, and even still oftener." Every reader can also see at a glance that the combination of the divine titles, Lord God or Lord Jehovah, is as characteristic of the second part as of the first.

The prophecy concerning the Lord Jesus in chapter xi. 2—"The Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon Him"—becomes His own language in chapter lxi. 1: "The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon Me." If in chapter xxviii. 5 we have the promise concerning Israel, "In that day shall Jehovah of Hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of His people," we have the corresponding words in chapter

lxii. 3 addressed to this very "residue of the people": "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of Thy God." And the glowing words concerning the land of Israel—God's "holy mountain"—and its condition in the time to come given in chapter xi. 6-9 find their counterpart in chapter lxv. 25. Thus we might go on, but it is interesting to take a chapter and note the references. The following two chapters, one from each part, are taken simply as being well known. Chapter xxxv. may be regarded as the climax of the first part of the book, while as to subject the same may be said of chapter lx. in the second part.

In chapter xxxv. compare the figure of the wilderness rejoicing and being fruitful, verses 1, 2, with xli. 19 and lv. 12, 13; the vengeance, recompense, and salvation of verse 4, with lxiii. 3-6; mercy to the blind, verse 5, with xlii. 7, 16; the supply of water, verses 6, 7, with xli. 17, xliii. 19, 20, and xlix. 10; "the way of holiness," verse 8, with lii. 1, 11; and the whole of verse 10 with li. 11.

As we take up chapter lx. we may well ask if anyone, in turning to this portion from chapter xxxv., or other portions of the first part, would feel that he was entering upon a new theme, or even the same theme treated of in a different style. We might read the whole chapter as an expansion of the promise of chapter xxv. 8, "The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth," for its chief subject is the joy and glory of Israel as walking in the light of the Lord, and honoured and ministered to by all nations. Then as to special points, compare "The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee" (verse 13) with xxxv. 2, "The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it." "Thou shalt call thy walls Salvation and thy gates Praise" (verse 18) reminds us of xxvi. 1, "We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." Verses 19 and 20 explain chapter xxiv. 23; see also xxx. 26. "Thy people shall be all righteous" (verse 21) tells how it is that the city shall be called "the city of righteousness, the faithful

city" (i. 26). And all this God declares to be "the work of My hands" (verse 21), as He had previously promised in chapter xxix. 23. In the last verse of chapter lx. the very figure of the last verse of chapter vi. re-appears. There the promise is that from what seems dead and decayed a new shoot—"the holy seed"—shall spring; here we are told of the growth of that "holy seed," the "remnant" of Israel, "A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation"; while the promise, "I, Jehovah, will hasten it in its time," reads like a further and final answer to the prophet's question, "Lord, how long?"

There is a passage in chapter lvii. which has more weight than may at first appear, with reference both to the time and place of writing. Are not verses 3-10 addressed to a people given up to idolatry of the most debasing kind? This we know was Israel's great sin before the captivity; but it is equally clear that they never worshipped idols after that period. Does not verse 5—"slaying the children"—refer to the Moloch worship which was practised by Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 3) and revived by Manasseh (xxxiii. 6). And may not verses 1 and 2 refer to the great persecution by Manasseh, who it is said finally had Isaiah himself "sawn asunder" (see Heb. xi. 37)? Further, the word "valleys" denotes the watercourses of Palestine, which in summer were dried up; there were no such "streams," and no stones worn "smooth" (verse 6) by torrents, in Babylonia. Again, the expression, "the clefts of the rocks," which would have had no meaning in Babylonia, was well understood in Palestine, and had been used by Isaiah long before (chap. ii. 19-21).

Such considerations as these are not beneath the notice of a careful reader of Holy Scripture; but we have greater witness than these, on which we hope to dwell in the next paper.

W. H. B.

ONLY BELIEVE.

Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come."

MORE Prayer, more exercise of Patience, more exercise of Faith, brings the blessing at the last.

GEORGE MULLER.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

(Matthew vi. 8-13.)

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

"Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him. After this manner, therefore, pray YE" (verses 8 and 9).

IN this specimen of prayer, generally known as "The Lord's Prayer," we have a beautiful example of simplicity, definiteness, and conciseness. In these respects it is given as an example. "After this manner, pray YE." In Luke xi. 1-4 it appears to be given rather as a FORM, "When ye pray, say." Although Calvary and Pentecost are not mentioned, because these instructions were given previous to the time of their accomplishment, they are pre-supposed, and, in fact, lie at the foundation of all our approaches to God. No man cometh to the Father but by Christ (John xiv. 6), and it is only by the spirit of adoption we can say, "Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 6).

"Our Father." This is the first note struck. In Greek the word Father comes first—"Father ours," a special term of endearment. THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD. God was first known as GOD ALMIGHTY, and then as JEHOVAH, in Covenant relationship (Ex. vi. 3); but by the title of Father, God was not generally known by Israel. David exhausts the vocabulary in giving titles to God (Psa. xviii. 1, 2), but never calls Him Father, though in Psa. ciii. he speaks of His fatherly pity. It was He who came from the bosom of the Father who made Him known as such (John i. 18). There are five different senses in which God may be regarded as Father.

1st. As the AUTHOR OF OUR BEING, as in Luke iii. 38 Adam is spoken of as being Son of God (see also Gen. i. 26). "Father of Spirits" (Heb. xii. 9), who "made of one blood all nations of men" (Acts xvii. 26-28). In this sense children may be taught this prayer, and claim God's fatherly care and protection.

2nd. By REGENERATION, the whole family of faith, as in Gal. iii. 26, "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." As Abraham was called the father of all who believed in God (Rom. iv.), so now to "as many as received Him (Christ), to them gave

He power to become the sons [children] of God, even to them that believe on His Name" (John i. 12). Paul, in the Epistle to the Galatians, points out the distinction between CHILDREN and SONS. Believers in the former dispensation were regarded as "infants"—children under age; but since Christ came, they receive the Spirit of sonship, whereby we cry, "Abba, Father."

3rd. In NATIONAL relationship God was the Father of Israel; according to Ex. iv. 22, "Israel is My son, My firstborn."

4th. As the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (John xx. 17), the Church, by virtue of her relationship to Christ as His Bride, calls God "FATHER;" and such are not only heirs of God, but joint-heirs with Christ (Rom. viii. 16, 17).

5th. As the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom every family in the heavens and upon earth is named (Eph. iii. 14, 15); this embraces the whole company of angels, and every intelligent creature of God (Rev. v. 11-13).

The title "FATHER" WARMS the heart with divine affection when uttered in the spirit of adoption. "OUR FATHER" ENLARGES the heart to take in the whole family of God as fellow-worshippers. "WHICH ART IN THE HEAVENS" ELEVATES the heart to the regions above, and contemplates heaven, or rather THE HEAVENS, as the FATHER'S HOUSE, with its many mansions; and thus we worship in fellowship with the spirits of just men made perfect, the Church of the firstborn written in heaven, and the innumerable company of angels, through Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant, and in the value of His atoning Blood (Heb. xii. 22-24).

This is the FIRST aspect in which God and heaven are contemplated in this incomparable prayer, namely, GOD AS FATHER and HEAVEN AS THE FATHER'S HOUSE.

CHRISTIAN pilgrim! watchful be,
Many eyes are watching thee;
Satan watches to enthrall,
Worldlings watch to see thee fall:
Saviour, watch Thy servant too,
Guard and guide me safely through.

GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE.—VII.

THE NATIONAL REVIVAL OF ISRAEL.

By JOHN R. CALDWELL, Author of "Shadows of Christ in the Old Testament," "Things to Come," &c.

IN Zechariah xiv. 1-4 we read :

"Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives."

When Jerusalem was last destroyed by Titus in the year A.D. 70, only one nation came against it to battle. Nor was it half the city that then went into captivity; the whole city was razed to its foundations. The Lord did not then interfere and fight against the conquering host, nor did His feet stand again upon the Mount of Olives. No earthquake rent the mountain, and the remnant of Israel was not restored, but scattered.

So it is clear that this passage in no sense applies to any past destruction of Jerusalem; its fulfilment must be future. Now, I refer to this Scripture only to show that Jerusalem must be rebuilt and inhabited, for yet again it must be the centre of God's dealings with Israel and with the world.

Now let us refer to Daniel ix. 24 in further proof of the point I am at. We need not at present go over the verses in detail, as we shall have to return to them again, but notice, "sacrifices and oblations" are referred to, and we know these could only be offered at Jerusalem. The "sanctuary" and "the daily sacrifice" are mentioned, which implies that the temple must then have been rebuilt, and the worship of God re-established: all will be going on in form very much as in the day when the Lord was upon the earth.

Now turn to Matt. xxiv. 14-16:

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand): then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains."

The reference here to "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel," conclusively proves that this also is prophetic of a future day.

Then in Luke xxi. 24 we read :

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

That this has been literally fulfilled is perfectly clear and undoubted. But between this verse and the next there is a great gap, covering eighteen or nineteen centuries. Jerusalem is still trodden down of the Gentiles. "The times of the Gentiles" have not yet run their course.

But read on—verses 25-27:

"And there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory."

This, it is plain, has not yet been fulfilled. Now, all the discourse recorded in Matthew xxiv. and Luke xxi. is spoken in response to enquiries and remarks about the buildings of the temple, and the whole is connected with the future of Jerusalem, and of the temple, and of the Jewish nation.

It is there, upon the battlements of that temple, that the idols of the desolator shall be set up; yea, as we read elsewhere, this same person shall himself sit in that temple as God claiming the worship of the apostate nation.

Turn now to 2 Thess. ii. 1:

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him."

This describes what I have been speaking of, viz., the completion of "the Church," "the Body of Christ." That is the event the Thessalonian saints had been taught to look and wait for. It was "the blessed Hope" to them, and their hearts had laid hold of it.

Verse 2:

"That ye be not soon shaken in mind or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us."

Satan will resort to the meanest tricks if by any means he may "deceive or stumble the children of God. It is evident from the language here used that a letter had come to the Thessalonian Church purporting to be from the Apostle Paul, a forgery and a deception. In confirmation of this read the 17th verse of the last chapter :

"The salutation of me, Paul, with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle : so I write."

Thus he assures them that this letter, at least, is not a forgery. There may be some ground for the thought that the "thorn in the flesh" from which Paul suffered was an affection of the eyes, which prevented him writing, and on account of which his letters were written to his dictation by an amanuensis, and signed by himself. In Gal. vi. 11, r.v., he says :

"See with how large letters I have written unto you with mine own hand."

This being probably the only epistle written by himself, and hence he alludes to the largeness of the writing owing to his defective sight, not to the length of the epistle.

Now, this forged letter was Satan's mean attempt to alarm them and spoil them of their hope : it had declared to them that "the day of the Lord was now present" (see r.v.)—not "at hand," as in the Authorised Version. This would have meant that instead of being "gathered together unto Him"—"caught up to meet the Lord in the air," as they expected and had been taught—they were left behind to pass through the unprecedented terrors of that day.

Was it the thought that the coming of the Lord was near that troubled them? Assuredly not. His coming for His own is one thing, the day of the Lord is quite another. The coming of the Lord is that for which they had been waiting in blessed expectation. To be told that the Lord would return for them before sunset would not have alarmed them; but to be left to pass through the day of the Lord, the day of His vengeance, of the pouring out of the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth, and of the culmination of Satan's rage, that was quite another thing, and well might they be alarmed. It is not, as some say,

that from the first epistle they had been led to expect the immediate return of the Lord, and the second was written to rectify this error by showing that much must first take place. Those who hold such a view fail utterly to observe that the two epistles refer to two perfectly distinct things. The first is chiefly about the coming of the Lord into the air for His Church. The second is about His coming with His saints in judgment to the earth. Now read :—

"Let no man deceive you by any means : for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition : who opposeth and exhalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

You remember that Jerusalem, notwithstanding its wickedness, is still called "the holy city" (see Matt. xxvii. 53). The city and the temple, though rebuilt by an unbelieving nation, will still be owned as "the holy city" and "the temple of God." It is the one place upon earth where Jehovah placed His name and established His sanctuary. His eye still rests upon it, and the time will come when that very place will be the centre of worship, and from it shall go forth the Word of the Lord to all the earth. The generally received thought that the Pope, sitting enthroned in the Church at Rome, is the Man of Sin sitting in the temple of God, will not bear comparison with the words of this Scripture.

The Pope does not claim universal worship : this man will. The Pope professes to honour and act for Christ : this man will deny the Father and the Son.

The system of Popery is as corrupt as Satan can make it, and there have been and are many antichrists, for the spirit of antichrist has long been at work. It is lamentable that in this country Popery should be permitted to have such power, where martyrs bled and were burned to death to secure liberty for the Word of God and deliverance from its darkness and thralldom. Yet such is the delusion that is settling down upon this nation, whose most popular teachers set at naught and criticise the Holy Scriptures, and undermine the foundations of the faith once delivered to the saints. Turning their

ears away from the truth, they are being turned to fables.

But the Man of Sin, a person yet to be revealed, will sit in the temple of God at Jerusalem, denying the Christ that has come in the flesh, and saying, "I am Christ, I am God; worship me." Thus will be fulfilled the word of the Lord, "I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (John v. 43).

But I have referred to this scripture in 2 Thess. here in order to confirm what I have already said, that the temple of Jerusalem will be rebuilt, and Jewish worship carried on there.

Then in Rev. xi. 1 this temple is again referred to as the temple of God:

"And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto My two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the streets of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."

And in immediate connection with it we have mention of the "two witnesses," whose three-and-a-half years' testimony is in Jerusalem, where ultimately they are slain. It is not called Jerusalem, but its spiritual character is described as Sodom and Egypt, and its locality fixed as the place where our Lord was crucified.

All these passages go to prove that this movement, viz., the returning of the Jews to Palestine, the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple, the repopulation and cultivation of the land, must go on, and sooner or later be completed, in order to the fulfilment of all the Scriptures in which the scenes of the last days are predicted.

It is a national, not a spiritual movement, and already it has begun: the figtree is at last putting forth its buds, the winter of Israel's desolation is about to give place to

a springtime of revival and a summer of glory.

Now I want you to look at a few scriptures from which to gather the moral character of the people at that day (Dan. xi. 32-35):

"And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed."

There shall be those among them who "know their God." This is "the remnant according to the election of grace." These I take to be those who have learned that Jesus, whom they once despised and rejected, was none other than the Messiah, and when He shall appear for their deliverance they shall say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him." Then at last shall they "look on Him whom they pierced."

From Zechariah xii. 11-14 it is clear that before the Lord appears there will be amongst them a great work of the Spirit, convicting of the sin of having crucified the Lord, and leading to individual repentance, confession, and faith.

These will be strong in the Lord, and will do exploits. They shall "understand"—and how much that includes it would be hard to say. They shall "instruct many," and this shall bring upon them persecution, and "they shall fall by the sword, and by flame," &c. Others of them shall fall, like Peter, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white; and all this shall go on till "the time of the end." Then everyone that shall be found written in the Book, the Book of Life, shall be delivered (Dan. xii. 1).

CHRIST AS AN AUTHOR.

1. The Author of *Life*, - - Acts iii. 15, mar.
 2. The Author of *Eternal Salvation*, Heb. v. 9.
 3. The Author and Finisher of our
Faith, - - - - - Heb. xii. 2.
- God is NOT the Author of Con-
fusion, - - - - - 1 Cor. xiv. 33.

"THAT SIGHT."

(Luke xxxiii. 48.)

A SIGHT ne'er seen on earth before;
 A sight the solid rocks that tore
 Asunder, while the quivering ground
 Shook with convulsions all around,
 And yawning graves stood open wide
 No more their saintly dust to hide.
 In life those saints owned Christ as King;
 How calm they wait till He shall bring
 Them forth from death, with Him to rise
 In triumph through the azure skies.
 The motley crowd had come to see
 "That Sight," the Man upon the tree,
 Whom late with loud hosannas they
 Had greeted on His palm-strewn way;
 As David's Son they owned Him then,
 Now to His death they say Amen,
 And come to gaze upon "that Sight"
 With more than barbarous delight.

The tender Sufferer felt it all—
 The vulgar stare, the taunt let fall
 From ribald lips, the jest and sneer,
 Till all was hushed in silent fear;
 For, lo! the noon became as night,
 As if the sun had taken flight;
 As if it could no longer bear
 To view the deed transacted there;
 A veil of darkness like a pall
 By God's own hand was cast o'er all
 That awful sight when Jesus died—
 When He, God's Son, was crucified.
 Then scoffers who to gaze had come,
 Like felons stealing to their home,
 Beat on their breasts and wished that they
 Might ne'er again see such a day.
 A frowning God, they felt, was near,
 And tremblingly they fled with fear,
 Lest Nature's throbbing frame should burst,
 And they, like Korah's band accurst,
 Might share their dire and dreadful doom,
 Descending quick into the tomb;
 Nor ever till their Spirit's flight
 Would they forget that day, "that Sight."

But friends remained though scoffers fled—
 'Twas grief that filled *their* hearts, not dread;
 Their tears had formed a veil between
Their vision and that sacred scene.
 With them let us unshod draw nigh
 To this "Great Sight," enquiring why

This death or deaths? How was it He,
 The Son of God, condemned should be?
 The answer flashes from above:
 This is God's gift of sovereign love;
 He gave His Son for you, for me,
 From guilt and sin to set us free.
 He bare our sins in that dark hour
 When pressed by every hellish power;
 Now fear of hell from us takes flight
 When we by faith behold "that Sight."
 As thus upon that Cross we gaze,
 Our hearts and lips are filled with praise.
 Unto the Lamb on Calvary slain
 We'll raise the song again, again,
 Nor ever 'mid the glory bright
 Shall we forget that day, "that Sight."

A. W. P. S.

THE TEACHING OF GRACE.

BY MAX ISAAC REICH.

THE grace of God that bringeth salvation
 hath appeared to all men, teaching us
 that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts,
 we should live soberly, righteously, and
 godly in this present world, looking for that
 blessed hope, and the appearing of the glory
 of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ"
 (Titus ii. 11-13).

The Christian no more belongs to this
 world than Christ. He is heavenly; heaven
 born and heaven bound. He is exhorted
 as a stranger and a pilgrim to "abstain
 from fleshly lusts which war against the
 soul." Having been taken out of the
 world, he has been sent back into it for the
 glory of Him who was in it once for the
 Father's glory. His power for walking in
 separation from it is the Holy Spirit, the
 blessed Comforter, whom the world cannot
 receive, because it knoweth Him not, any
 more than it received the Son of God, because
 it knew Him not. Passing through defile-
 ment, the Christian finds it possible to be
 preserved in the sanctification by the truth,
 and thus pursues in peace his even path,
 looking for the coming of the Saviour to
 change his body and to take him to the
 Father's house (John xvii.; 1 Peter ii. 11;
 Gal. i. 4; John. xiv.).

It follows, if this be the case, and no
 honest reader of the New Testament can

dispute it, that the vexing questions and burning discussions that agitate and excite the men of this world should have no place in the heart of a believer. They would only intrude upon his communion with God. In the arena of politics, with its carnal contentions for the mastery, the heavenly stranger need not have a voice or a vote. His real interests lie elsewhere. He belongs to a kingdom of which his Master said, "My kingdom is not of this world, else would My servants fight." He would ever breathe and diffuse the peace of that blessed kingdom. He submits himself to the ordinances of men for the Lord's sake, in so far as they do not entrench upon his allegiance to Christ, who has the prior claim. He cheerfully pays taxes and tribute, and respects "the powers that be" as ordained of God. He does not, however, wish a place of rule among men where His Lord wore the thorny crown. He remembers Calvary. Yet for all does he make intercession, for high and low, princes and paupers, kings and subjects. He prays for those who guide the affairs of State, not that their ambitious plans might succeed, but that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, and that the Gospel of peace may find an open door among the nations of the earth. Rising above the narrowness of political selfishness, he prays for the rulers and subjects of every land, for God, who is no respecter of persons, would have all to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. The Gospel, the Church, the whole economy of the Grace of God called Christianity is international in its blessed scope (Rom. xiii. 1. 7; 1 Tim. ii. 1-8; John xviii. 36, 37).

The grace of God teaches the Christian to be gentle in his demeanour, to let his yieldingness be known unto all, not to seek his own, but in meekness and poverty of spirit to commit himself to Him who judges righteously. He is not to return evil for evil, but to overcome evil with good. Despised and hated of all, he still loves on, going about in the footsteps of His blessed Master, doing good to all, and carrying sunshine and cheer to weary hearts (Rom. xii. 17-21; Phil. iv. 5; 1 Pet. ii. 19-23).

In his speech he cultivates gravity, serious-

ness, and sobriety, the fear of God being upon him. He not only shuns lying, swearing, and words of heated passion, but avoids exaggerations and one-sided statements of facts likely to produce a false impression. His speech is yea, yea, nay, nay. He speaks evil of no man, and flatters not with his lips. He studies quietness, for he knows that in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin. No corrupt communications proceed out of his mouth, but words of purity and chastity befitting the presence of God. His speech is always with grace, seasoned with salt, edifying to the hearer (Eph. iv. 20-32, v. 1-20; James iii.).

In his home life and outward appearance the New Testament Christian avoids the ever-changing fashions of this world, which he knows must soon pass away, with the lusts thereof. He may not have specific rules as to details or legal prohibitions, such as, "touch not, taste not, handle not"; but he has a divine principle of wide reach, "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind;" and "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Believing women are nevertheless exhorted particularly to avoid the showy ornaments of the world, but to cultivate the priceless adornment of a meek and quiet spirit in the hidden man of the heart (Rom. xii. 1, 2; 1 Cor. x. 31; Col. iii. 17; 1 Tim. ii. 9-11; 1 Peter iii. 1-6).

In his business pursuits the man of God does not hasten to be rich, where his Saviour had not where to lay his head. He has the solemn example of many who, coveting wealth, have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. A glorified Christ being his treasure, he will not lay up treasure for himself upon earth. He desires, when life's race is run, to rejoice in the testimony of his conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, he has had his manner or life in the world. He finds, even if in the lowly position of a bond-servant, means whereby he can adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things. Thus without envy, covetousness and earthly ambition, the heavenly man pursues in peace his pilgrim

way. In doing day after day the will of God, his spirit tastes of a joy no tongue can tell. In the light of the Father's countenance is his present home and eternal life. He can say, though clad in poverty, "Thou hast put gladness in my heart more than in the time when their corn and their wine increased" (Luke xii. 22-36; 2 Cor. i. 12; 1 Tim. vi. 6-12; Titus ii. 9, 10; Ps. iv. 6, 7).

In brief, the Christian has heard the Son of God say to him: "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find *rest unto your souls*" (Matt. xi. 29).

"NO OPEN VISION."

"And the Word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision" (1 Sam. iii. 1).

THE "Open Vision" had a prominent place in the history of Israel as a nation. It was seen in the revelation of Himself by God to Moses in the burning bush, and in the signs whereby he was to prove that I AM had sent him. It was seen in the judgments upon Egypt, and in God's deliverance of His chosen nation from bondage. It was seen in the pillar of cloud by day, and in the pillar of fire by night; in the passage through the Red Sea; in the manna from heaven; in the water from the rock; and at the close of the journey Moses had to remind the people, "Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell these forty years." There was a constant manifestation of Jehovah's presence with them.

And it might have continued after the people had been brought into the land, for we read in Deut. vii. 14, 15: "Thou shalt be blessed above all people; there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle. And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt which thou knowest upon thee; but will lay them upon all those that hate thee." God's direct intervention on their behalf is promised; but the promise was conditional. The nation failed to fulfil God's conditions, and hence sickness and poverty had their place among them, and their enemies held them in subjection.

Yet in Israel's darkest days God had His own few, who were true to Him throughout. Doubtless they would have rejoiced more than any had an "Open Vision" been vouchsafed; but while it was withheld, they knew that God was present and at work, although their faith was aided by no outward manifestation. Theirs was tried faith. They saw not, and yet believed; and therefore their faith was of a higher order than if they had seen and believed.

Such an one is stricken with sickness. This would not be but for the nation's apostasy. God's dealing is with the nation; His promises were to the nation, and the nation has fallen away from Him. The individual suffers; but if he is true to his God, what is that to him? He is prepared to suffer if God be glorified, for he walks by faith, not by sight. Though no doubt he would be exceedingly glad to be healed of his disease by a miracle, yet if God sees fit to withhold such an open manifestation of His working, the faithful believer knows that God works in nature; and when he finds that a supernatural remedy is refused, he is glad to take one that is a product of nature (no less the work of God), and to accept it as a gift of love from a Father's hand. And as if to show that such remedies were not to be despised, God sometimes commanded them to be used, even when he directly intervened on behalf of a sick believer, making the remedy His instrument whereby He worked. This is seen in Hezekiah's case (2 Kings xx.). "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever!"

Let no one dare to say that the time for miracles is past and gone! Jehovah's power is the same now as ever it was in the days of Israel's earthly glory. And soon—aye, no one knows how soon—this mocking world will be transfixed with astonishment, and will tremble at a miracle more astounding than any single one that sacred history records.

Two men are in conversation together, transacting some business matter perhaps. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, one of them is gone! Where? A company of people are dining together; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, a third of the seats

is vacant! And the same thing happens here, there, everywhere. The Lord Jesus is come for His saints, and they are caught up to meet Him in the air, some from their beds, some from their business, for while it is day in London, it is night in Australia. Read 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52, and 1 Thess. iv. 15-18, then say that the time of miracles is over if you dare!

But God will not work to our order, and He has His own time and His own reasons for the withholding of miracles as for their performance. We have been referred to a time when "there was no Open Vision," and we have seen that the reason was apostasy. Surely it is the same to-day. If ever there was apostasy in the Church of Christ, it is to-day. Do we not see her "by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed"? If the Corinthian Christians were carnal for saying, everyone, "I am of Paul," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Christ" (1 Cor. i. 12), what about the hundred and one names by which those who profess the Name of Christ are content to call themselves to-day? But this is only the beginning of apostasy, for in addition we see infidelity openly taught in so-called Christian pulpits, and numbers are drifting into worldliness and ritualism. Can we wonder, then, that there is "no Open Vision" at this present day?

And if, when you are sick, you declare that you take the Lord for the Healer of your body, refusing the remedies which God has provided, you are doing nothing else but demanding from God an "Open Vision." God has manifested Himself to your soul by His Holy Spirit; why do you require an outward manifestation? If you really believe, you do not need it.

The Lord Jesus has spoken to you soul; but as regards outward things, God has chosen to be silent. This silence is foreshadowed in Psalm l. 21, and has continued up to this present time, owing to God's long-suffering, for woe to this world when this silence is broken! "Then shall He speak unto them in His *wrath*" (Psa. ii. 5).

And God will not grant an "Open Vision," an outward manifestation, in your case, any more than he would for a faithful Israelite in the days of old. Nay, rather, if an Israelite

suffered with his brethren, so much the more will a Christian. "For we are members one of another (Rom. xii. 4), and whether one member suffers, all members suffer with it" (1 Cor. xii. 26).

In the light of what has been already shown, the verse which is perhaps in the reader's thoughts (James v. 15) requires no explanation, for surely it was written at a time when there was an "Open Vision." And in the present state of the Church who will say who are "the elders"? Thus one condition of the promise cannot be fulfilled. But however dearly any believer may long for an "Open Vision," there is ample compensation for its absence. "The *Word of the Lord* was precious in those days." And if it was precious in those days, how much more in these? In those days no one had ever heard the words, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." No one then had ever heard the words, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand;" and no one had ever heard the words, "Unto Him that loveth 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."

FIVE DOWNWARD STEPS.

PSALM CVI.

1. They soon forgot His works ...verse 13
2. They forgot God... .. " 21
3. They joined themselves also unto
Baalpeor " 28
4. They learned their works ... " 35
5. They were defiled with their own
works " 39

COMPARE VERSES 12 AND 24.

They believed ... They *sang*.
They believed not... They *murmured*.

COMPARE VERSE 16 AND CVII. 5, 6.

Leanness of soul will give rise to *envy*.
Faintness of soul will give rise to *prayer*.

THREE STAGES OF UNBELIEF.

They waited not for His counsel ...verse 13
Provoked Him with their counsel... .. " 43
Despised the counsel of Most High cvii. 11

FIGURES OF THE CHRISTIAN.—X.

THE CHRISTIAN: AN EPISTLE.

By Dr. J. N. CASE, China.

ATTENTION has frequently been drawn to the fact that much of the New Testament is epistolary in form. In fact, with the exceptions of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John, all the books lay claim to that character. On consideration, this is what might be expected, for this kind of literature is well adapted to impress us with the familiar, friendly, and family character of this last revelation of God.

Yet, many and all-sufficient for their purpose as these writings are, the Lord makes His people also to become epistles. An epistle, as we now understand the word, is a written message sent to someone. Thus, believers are sent into the world to *be* a message from Christ, as well as to deliver one. Most of the New Testament is written to, and mainly concerns, the family of God; we are intended to be a message to those still without. The saying runs, "Actions *speak* louder than words." How important, then, that we in our lives deliver the right message in the right way! Perhaps for one who listens with interest to our spoken words, a hundred record our lives. Our aim should be, as one has said, to become *large-type Christians*—epistles of Christ, known and read of all men.

I need hardly say that the present theme is suggested by the apostle's words in 2 Cor. iii. 1-3. The reference is evidently to the godly practice in the Apostolic Church of servants of Christ, on going from one place to another, carrying with them a letter of recommendation. Apollos, for example, was commended as a man mighty in the Scriptures, and well able to help believers by his ministry (Acts xviii. 27). The Judaizing teachers who followed in the wake of the apostle were also careful to ask for such letters. At first they would, under a cloak, creep into a church formed by the apostle. Having gained the ear of the brethren, they would soon seek to undermine the apostle's authority, and teach things contrary to the doctrines of grace. On leaving, they would ask for a letter of commendation, and, armed

with it, they could obtain an easy entrance into other churches (see verse 1).

But at Corinth the Apostle Paul was well known. For him to take a letter of commendation there would be as if a father, who had been absent from home for a few weeks, were, on returning, to present a letter of introduction and recommendation to his own family. Of course it never enters one's mind to do anything so needless or foolish. In effect the apostle says, "For me to bring a letter of commendation to you, or ask one from you, would be preposterous. If such a letter is asked for, I have it—ye yourselves are our epistles." The Corinthian believers were standing proofs that the apostle was a true servant of Christ. Later in this epistle he writes, "Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me . . . examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith," &c. Were they true Christians? That in itself was proof that Christ spoke in him, for it was through him they heard the Gospel. But they were the apostle's letter of commendation *because* they were epistles of Christ. And on this subject we will now briefly enlarge. For a scriptural figure the one under consideration is rather fully elaborated; the following points are naturally deduced from the passage. †

1. *The Author and Sender of the epistle is Christ.*—He has a message for the world; a message for members of our own family, for our nearest friends, for our companions and neighbours, for all with whom we come in contact; and He designs you and me to *be* this message, for there is no such eloquent and effective sermon as a Christ-like life. The life of professing Christians is often the only Bible, the only Gospel, the only religious book or tract that the worldling will study; and that they read critically and with interest, at once being able to lay the finger on any mistake in the written message. Whether husbands or wives, parents or children, masters or servants, our purpose should be "that, if any obey not the Word, they also, without the Word, may be won by" our godly manner of life.

2. *The Amanuensis is the Holy Spirit.*—"Written," says the apostle, "not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God." Just as Paul seldom wrote a letter himself, but

usually employed someone else as a penman, so Christ does not accomplish this work in soul directly, but always through the agency of the Holy Spirit. His death and resurrection are the groundwork of our acceptance with God, as also they are the procuring cause of the presence of the Spirit in the world, convincing men of sin, leading them to Christ, and regenerating them. Thus, in the work *within* us, Christ acts not directly, but through the Holy Spirit, and in this way we are fitted to become Christ's message to men.

3. *The pen with which the epistle is written is the Gospel-preacher.*—At least such seems the thought in the sentence, "ministered by us." In the writing of a letter some sort of a pen is absolutely necessary. And since the first man conceived the idea of making a mark on something to pass on a thought, what varieties of materials have been, and indeed still are, used as styles! In the production of these living epistles even the Spirit of God usually works through men as instruments. Hence the great honour conferred upon the believer of being in God's hand the means of turning many from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto Himself. God in infinite grace has made His people necessary to Himself in bringing light and salvation to sinners. It is profoundly true, as one has said, that God's extremity is the Church's opportunity. O that she would rise to it! God's servants are much more varied than the kinds of pens that men have formed. All are not the same kind, or made of the same material, or of the same value. If one is a simple quill, let him not be jealous of a gold-tipped pen; or if one is the latter, let him not despise the common steel nib. Each one has his proper gift from God. Let it, then, be our deep desire to be used by the Master to write when and on what it may please Him.

4. *The material written on is the hearts of believers.*—As it is said, "Written . . . in tables that are hearts of flesh." The designed contrast is between the law given through Moses and by the finger of God written on tables of stone; and the New Covenant glory written by the Spirit of God on human hearts. But there are hearts and hearts: hearts of stone

and hearts of flesh. Indeed, at the outset all of us had the former, and that we now have the latter we owe entirely to God's sovereign grace. The allusion seems further to be to a New Covenant promise contained in an Old Covenant writing, which in due time will be fulfilled nationally to Israel (see Ezekiel xi. 19; Ch. xxxvi. 25-27; Jer. xxxi. 33). In the meantime it is being accomplished in the elect of God of this age. It is heart work, for nothing but that will do with God; and because it has its seat in the inner man of the heart, it shows itself in the outward man of the life.

5. *The message sent is the power of Christ to save the worst of sinners.*—This was clearly proved in these Corinthian believers, for already, ideally, and in the purpose of God, they were *saints*, though previously some of them had been everything that is vile and unclean, and all had been living without God and without Christ in the world (1 Cor. vi. 9-11). What a message those changed lives were to men, had they but the wit to take it in! They said as plainly as language could say, None so lost but Jesus can save! None so guilty but may find mercy and pardon in Him! None such slaves of sin but He can snap the chains and set the prisoners free! *In his life* every Christian should be an invitation to the weary, burdened, hopeless ones to come to Christ to find rest and satisfaction, life and deliverance. Our lives as well as our lips should say:

"Christ is my meat, Christ is my drink,
My medicine and my health;
My peace, my strength, my joy, my crown,
My glory and my wealth."

6. *To all men is the message sent.*—It is writ so large that there are none but may take it in. God has indeed written and made it plain upon tables, that he may run that reads it. "Ye are *manifestly* declared to be an epistle of Christ." Yes; if He has truly saved us it cannot be hid—we shall publish in our lives His power to save, to satisfy, to keep. We are to be to the world *Christ's letters of commendation*. By our changed lives we may recommend our Saviour to many who hitherto have not known Him, and have no desire after Him. By life and lip we shall say to all around, "O taste and see that the

Lord is good; happy is the man that trusteth in Him." For it is certain that, did they but know Him, they would trust, love, and obey Him; and in their turn become an epistle of Christ, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God; not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh.

THE DEITY OF THE LORD JESUS,

As seen in Zechariah xi. to xiv.

WE are informed that the Spirit of Christ was in the prophets, and "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory (or glories) that should follow" (1 Pet. i. 11). Now, the Spirit testified no less to the nature and being of this distinguished Sufferer than to the character of those sufferings and glories which were to be His.

Let us briefly look at Zechariah, chapters xi., xii., xiii., and xiv., and we shall find very striking intimations of the Deity of the One who was to suffer and reign in glory, in fulfilment of these prophecies.

Chapter xi. 13. "And Jehovah said unto me, Cast it to the potter; a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of Jehovah."

We observe this is the language of *Jehovah*. He is speaking of Himself, and we know how literally and fully this was fulfilled in the experience of Christ (see Matt. xxvii. 3-10).

Chapter xii. 10. "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."

Again notice *who* is the Speaker. It is *Jehovah*, "Who stretcheth forth the heavens and layeth the foundations of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him" (ver. 1). It is He who promises here to "pour out the Spirit of grace and supplication." He says, "ME whom they have pierced;" and "they shall mourn for HIM." God here speaks of Himself in the *first* person, "ME," and also in the *third* person, "HIM." No one but the triune Being could speak of Himself thus. Oh! this is wonderful. These are some of the "lights and perfections" of the inspired Word. In this passage we have Father, Son,

and Spirit acting in undivided unity in accomplishing the redemption and repentance of Israel.

Chapter xiii. 7. "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."

Here we again learn *who* the Sufferer is. This "Shepherd," this "Man," on whom the sword of divine judgment was to fall, is said to be Jehovah's "Fellow," *i.e.*, Partner. No son of Adam could ever claim this dignity; no man but the Man Christ Jesus, the Son of God, of whom we read, "He thought it not robbery to be equal with God," could possibly be styled by Jehovah "My Fellow."

Chapter xiv. 3, 4, 9. "Then shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives. And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Jehovah, and His Name one."

This chapter looks at the coming of Israel's Messiah, in power and glory, for the overthrow of their enemies, and the establishment of His kingdom "over all the earth." But *who* is the Messiah—this Deliverer? The answer is, "JEHOVAH shall go forth, . . . and His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives." It is the "same Jesus" who, the prophet tells us, was "sold" by a *disciple* for "thirty pieces of silver," who was "pierced" by His *nation*, and "smitten" by His *God*—the same Jesus who was rejected, but who is now to reign; who was crucified, but is now glorified—*Jehovah—Jesus*.

The last spot on this sin-stained earth those blessed, pierced feet touched was the Mount of Olives, and that will be the first they will touch when He returns to "restore the kingdom to Israel," and end her long night of weeping.

"For dayspring again is at hand,
When her night will for ever be o'er;
And those feet shall on Olivet stand,
Which often have stood there before."

Yes, "*Jehovah* shall be King over all the earth in that day—one Lord, and His Name one." Let us confess Jesus Lord to the glory of God the Father, until He comes, whom He will in His times show who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords (1 Tim. vi. 15). T. R.

IN THE PATH OF HIS WILL.

WHEN Satan gains an advantage over us in any way, it will be for our profit to sit down and consider our ways, if perchance we may discover the causes that led up to failure. We believe that a careful examination of ourselves, and the path we have been treading, will make it tolerably clear that at a certain point we left the beaten track of the will of God; and then the enemy's victory was easy, whether that enemy be the world, the devil, or the flesh. We do not attempt an exhaustive list of "causes of failure." At present we shall deal with only one, and yet one of which it may be truly said that, in some shape or other, lies at the root of all our defeats in conflict with the powers of darkness. We believe this "cause" to be a departure on our part from the path of the will of God. His keeping power operates in accordance with certain "laws of the kingdom," and these laws act with the precision of cause and effect. The mere fact that I am a child of God gives me no warrant to count on His delivering grace, no matter where I may be found, and no matter what I may be doing. It is the willing and the obedient who shall eat of the good of the land (Isa. i. 19). They alone obtain promises who "keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight" (1 John iii. 22). Christ came delighting to do the will of God (Heb. x. 7). The psalmist says, "Teach me to do Thy will; Thou art my God" (Psa. cxliii. 10). We have been saved that we should live, not to the lusts of men, but "to the will of God" (1 Peter iv. 2). And in the keeping of His will, we ourselves shall be kept according to His will, for it is written, "Because thou hast kept the Word of My patience, I also will keep thee" (Rev. iii. 10). "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John ii. 17).

If, then, I find myself leaving the path of the will of God, to walk in the light of my own fire, I need not count on His light to guide me, and His power to keep me. Such would be presumption on my part, and not faith; and we know that it is by the power of God we are kept, *through faith* (1 Pet. i. 5).

Even our "little" defeats and humiliations may be traced to departure from the path of the will of God. If, when we should be attending to some particular duty, we are frittering away our time in unprofitable discussion, we need not be surprised if it develops into debate and strife. And when we have time to take our bearings, it does not take much philosophic reasoning to come to the conclusion that if we had been simply at the post of duty, we would have escaped the snare of the fowler. It is in these so-called "little" defeats that we discover that our failure is the result of a definite cause, and that "cause" consists in this, that for the time being we have ceased to do the will of God. It is well for us if we take these "little foxes," and pass judgment upon them in the presence of God. Yea, let us go to the root of the matter, and pass judgment upon the condition of heart from which our failure arose. So shall we be kept from "great transgression," and delivered in the evil time.

w. s.

 BROTHERHOOD OF ALL THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

WE must not forget that this greatest privilege of sonship with God brings with it a second privilege—brotherhood with all the children of God. If God be our Father, then, as a matter of course, every child of God must be our brother or our sister.

I have termed this relationship a privilege, and every truly spiritual mind will feel it to be such; but to the fleshly, selfish man, however religious he may be, it would seem to be an oppressive burden. But the same genuine faith which accepts with glad heart and free the wondrous truth of God's Fatherhood, receives also with joy the kindred truth of the brotherhood of all the redeemed. If we do not recognise in that poor but pious man or woman, with mean garb and unfashionable manners, a brother or a sister on whom our hearts delight to rest in love, we have no right to look up and call God our Father. The same Divine Word which reveals the one truth equally reveals the other; the same genuine faith which heartily accepts the one, accepts

both; and the same Spirit who works in us to cry, "Abba, Father," works in us to feel a brother's love for all whom we recognise as being the Father's children. "For he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, cannot love God, whom he hath not seen" (1 John iv. 20, R.V.).—JOHN DICKIE.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

"WATER" IN JOHN'S EPISTLE.—Does the water mentioned in 1 John v. 8 and the water mentioned in the 6th verse of the same chapter mean the same, or, if not, what do we learn from the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses together?

A REPROVED BROTHER.—Is it Scriptural when a brother takes offence, because he has been re-proved for his conduct, to go off to the nearest assembly, and that assembly to receive him?

DANIEL'S FOURTH KINGDOM.—Has the fourth kingdom mentioned in Daniel vii. 7. finished its career; and if not, what is its *present* condition?

LIFE AND DEATH.—Please explain Romans viii. 10 and 13. In what aspect are we to understand "life" and "death" in these two verses?

TARRYING ONE FOR ANOTHER.—Please explain 1 Cor. xi. 33. Does it mean that those assembled should tarry for those who are late at a morning meeting, or that those who are come together, instead of being too hasty in ministering, should tarry one for another?

CO-OPERATION AND JOINT-STOCK COMPANIES.

QUESTION 387.—Is a member of a Co-operative Society in the same position as a shareholder in a Joint-Stock Company?

Answer A.—An association of two or more persons for the purpose of carrying out, by *private arrangement* amongst themselves, any desired operations, and sharing the profits and losses as may be agreed upon, is called a *private company*.

"A *public company* is established either under a special charter from the Crown, under the 'Joint-Stock Companies' Act, which renders every member liable in his whole property for the debts of the concern, or under the 'Limited Liability' Act, which limits the liability of the members to the amount of their subscribed shares. It is called 'public' because the share-

holders are constituted of *all persons who choose to take shares*, and because it is amenable to regulations enforced by special Acts of Parliament."

I have given the above extract from one of Cassells' Elementary Handbooks, emphasizing in italics the parts in any way relating to the question.

A Joint-Stock Company is a public company, formed under one or other of the Acts above-mentioned, and it is composed of *all persons* who choose to take shares in it. Now, as the "all persons" are assuredly not "*all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ*," it appears to me there can be no question as to whether a *believer* should be a member of a Joint-Stock Company or not—2 Cor. vi. 14 to 17 (R.V.) makes that very clear.

Without in any way commenting upon the conduct of Joint-Stock Companies, which may be, and probably are, as a rule, conducted in an honest and straightforward manner, from a business point of view, the command given in the passage above quoted is, or should be, sufficient to make it quite clear to the mind of a "called-out" child of God whether he ought to be associated (or yoked) with *unbelievers*.

A Co-operative Society organised on the same lines as a Joint-Stock Company—that is composed of "*all persons who choose to take shares*"—would not differ from a Joint-Stock Company, because in either case it would have an association of "believers and unbelievers"—"righteousness and iniquity," "light and darkness;" "the Temple of God with the temple of idols" (covetousness is idolatry)—and therefore contrary to the mind of God, and the *position* of the believer in a Joint-Stock Company or in a Co-operative Society would be the same.

It would, however, be quite within the limits of possibility for a Joint-Stock Company to be formed *entirely of Christians* (in the Scriptural sense of the word), and also for a Co-operative Society to be established on the same lines for some special purpose; and if their business was conducted as directed by Paul in 1 Cor. x. 31, with a view "to the glory of God," the *position* of a member or shareholder would be equally the same in either association.

There can be no valid excuse for a "member of the body of Christ" being "unequally yoked" with unbelievers in any calling or manner whatever, and to endeavour to seek for one is only to temporise with the god of this age. W. D. B.

Answer B.—We would answer, Yes; for both are of the same character, and got up for the same end. The world gets up confederation; the Christian ought to rest only on God. Isaiah viii. 9 to 22 puts the two ways in sharp contrast. God meant each man to earn his bread by the

sweat of his face, and godliness with contentment is great gain (1 Tim. vi. 6 to 8).

Has not the spirit of the world laid hold of us? Not content, we want more, and instead of simple-hearted dependence on God for our need, great or small, we have joined the world to satisfy our covetous hearts.

We have no barns to pull down and build greater. But is the same spirit not working in us as in Luke xii. 16-21, and instead of barns, we resort to worldly associations to make room for our further increase *beyond our need*? Truly it is of the Lord's mercy we are not consumed; but "fear not (have not the world's terror), your Father knoweth ye have need of food and raiment" (Luke xii. 22 to 34).

There can be no doubt that these two, Co-operative Stores and Joint-Stock Companies, in both cases, are banded together, and are in confederacy to promote worldly prosperity by other means than those indicated in 1 Tim. vi. 17. Besides, these joint ventures are means by which honest tradesmen are prevented from making a livelihood.

Isaiah viii. should open all eyes to the evil of both associations, and lead us to long for the time when He who is faithful and true will reign; for in His day He shall spare the poor and needy, and precious shall their blood be in His sight (Psa. lxxii. 13, 14). Contrast Revelation xviii. 13.

T. C.

HOUSEHOLD SALVATION.

QUESTION 388.—What are we to understand by the promise, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house?" We have always claimed it for our children, but can we not claim it as Rahab did, *i.e.*, for parents, brothers, sisters, and servants also?

Answer A.—This question is in relation to Acts xvi. 30-34. In the first place, the words "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (A.V.), are not to be taken as an unconditional promise that if the jailer himself, alone, believed, he would be saved, and that the members of his household would also be saved because *he* believed. The proper rendering of the passage, as it is in the Revised Version, is, "Thou shalt be saved, THOU (emphatic) and thy house," which clearly indicates that if the jailer and his house (who were all Gentiles) believed, they would all be saved, and this is clearly borne out by the context in the subsequent verses. Verse 32 says, "And they spake unto *him* the Word of the Lord and to *all that were in his house.*" Verse 33 says, "And was baptised, *he and all his*, straightway." Verse 34 says, "He set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house;"

or, as Rotherham more literally renders it, "*he* placed near a table and exulted, *with all his house, having believed in God.*" Children, or any other kindred, are not specified particularly, but "all his house"; they *all* believed, and were *all* saved, and were *all* baptised. If children were of the number, they most evidently believed also, and so with the rest, whether kindred or servants.

Rahab, the example quoted by your questioner, believed what the spies told her, and followed their instructions with regard to the scarlet line, and so did her kindred, for if they had not they would not have been within her house, but would have remained in their own houses (like Lot's kindred in Sodom and Gomorrah), and would have perished. Their *faith* saved them.

To claim salvation for our children or any other of our kindred on the ground of the head of the house having believed, irrespective of whether they have believed, or to claim the promise of salvation for our children (as your questioner suggests) *without regard to how we bring them up*, that is, whether we "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. vi. 4) or not, is to pervert Scripture. "He that *believeth* and is *baptised* shall be saved," are the Lord's own words. To follow out the line of conjecture suggested by your questioner might easily be twisted to sanction infant baptism.

I would also refer your questioner to Ezek. xviii.

W. D. B.

Editor's Note.—Whilst fully endorsing the foregoing reply, yet it appears to fail in giving full weight to the words "and thy house." It surely implies more than that everyone who hears and believes the Gospel shall be saved. Is it not intended by God to afford a strong footing for faith on the part of parents and heads of households, and to encourage them to pray and labour and expect that God in His time will grant the coveted blessing—the salvation of the entire household? It gives no license for neglect such as Eli's, for God's way is to bless the use of the proper means, and if a parent neglect to instruct his children and household in the great truths of the Gospel, he may well fear lest they grow up ungodly. But to a believing parent the thought of any of those dear to him in the ties of nature being eternally lost is intolerable, and we ought to thank God for the many encouragements given to such in the Scriptures.

The larger the heart and the bolder the faith the more pleasing it is to God. Faith and effort need not be limited to offspring; the affections of kinship are wider, and are owned by the natural man in deeds of kindness. The spiritual man will seek to bless those who are the objects of natural affection by bringing before them their deepest need and God's best gift.

“CHRIST WITH US.”

AN Address by the Late GEORGE MÜLLER, of Bristol.

A GAIN and again we find the intimate union which exists between Christ and the believer set forth under various figures in the New Testament. He is the Vine, we the branches; He the Head, we the members; He the Husband, the Church the wife. Now, this is very instructive; but the practical point is that we seek to enter into this union for our encouragement, and to help us in our weakness, and emptiness, and nothingness, and that we may draw out of the inexhaustible fulness laid up for the Church in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is our strength, that we know what it means; that Christ is not merely *for* and *in*, but *with* every brother, with every sister. In addition to this, we have to keep in mind His wonderful love to us, His boundless, infinite love. “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.” These are His own words in John xv. 9.

Now, beloved in Christ, the practical question is, whether we do believe this word to be the word of Christ—that He really means what He says, for He means no less.

This love is infinite; it could not be a hair's breadth greater or less than it is; it is love to the weakest and feeblest; and the practical point is for every brother and sister to say, “For me, for me,” so to lay hold on it, that peace and joy fill the soul. It is impossible to enter into its meaning without being happy. I am a guilty sinner, but loved with a love which never knows any decrease; notwithstanding all my failings, it remains the same, yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. It is the same love with which the Father loves Him—no increase, no decrease; and to remember that this word is spoken by the Creator, the One who upholds everything in existence, “I love you as the Father loves Me.”

And then couple with this the Lord Jesus *for* us, as our Substitute; for if there is anything that could alter His love to us, speaking after the manner of men, *sin* could alter it, but sin is put away. He made atonement; He answered for everything; all my evil deeds; all my idle, sinful words and thoughts; all were transferred to Him, and the blessed Surety has answered for every one.

Now, seeing that the one only thing that could stand in the way and alter His love has been removed—even sin—what blessed assurance has the heart that it will be continued without alteration! But the great point, then, is to seek to enter into all this practically and experimentally.

(1) First, concerning our *conflict*. Being born again, we love holiness and hate sin, for if there is no desire after increased holiness and conformity to the mind of Christ, no hatred of sin, no longing more and more to be free from sin, there is wanting proof that we are children of God. In all true children of God is found more or less the prayer of Jabez, “Keep me from evil; that it may not grieve me.” I am not speaking of degree, for there are many different degrees; but in measure it must be there. What are we to do? Seek to carry on in our own strength the conflict against the evil of our own hearts and against Satan? To carry on the battle thus, we are sure to be overcome. What are we to do? Seek to enter into this, that the Lord Jesus is not only *for*, but *with* us. “Thou hast loved me with an unchangeable love. I take Thee at Thy word, that Thou lovest me as the Father has loved Thee. Now I am a weak one; I cannot get the mastery over my evil tendencies, and over Satan.” Thus in our weakness to cast ourselves on Him; in our nothingness to look to the Creator of the Universe, who is our Friend “that sticketh closer than a brother;” who is continually ready to help us; and who has power over the devil, because the devil is a creature and He is the Creator—thus to roll ourselves on Him; to pour out our heart before Him. “I cannot deliver myself out of the power of the devil, and from the evil of my own heart, but I look to Thee; help Thou me.”

Then what shall we find? Weak though we are, we shall be helped, and though not immediately, we shall eventually get the victory over our evil tendencies; and therefore if we only come and lay hold on the strength of Jesus, He will help, and though we do not perceive it for some time, or very imperceptibly only, it will come.

Brethren and sisters, do not be discouraged; do not give up the fight; look to Jesus; He

is with you in the fight, and you will yet bless and praise God for the victory He gives you. The weakest and feeblest saints become conquerors at last.

(2) Another point. Let us seek to enter into this truth concerning our *service*. When we look at ourselves as pastors, teachers, or as engaged in any other work, what do we find? How weak we are! how ignorant we are! for if one of the greatest teachers and preachers, Paul, says, "Who is sufficient for these things?" how much more may we? But Paul also said, "Our sufficiency is of God." He looked to Christ for sufficiency, and so was not conquered, but a conqueror. And so you and I in the little feeble service we seek to render to the Lord, whatever it may be, do not let us look at our weakness, but say, "Though I am perfect weakness—I have not a particle of strength—yet this is only one side. *Jesus* is with me, my Friend, my Husband, Substitute, my blessed High Priest; with me in the conflict, and never leaves, and never forsakes me, and my business is to roll myself in all my weakness on Him."

Ah! if this were done, how strong we should be! Our great hindrance lies in ourselves, for our great tendency is to look at ourselves, and to think we can do in our own strength—to practically say, "I do not need Thee, Lord Jesus; I can do with my own strength." What should we do? Own our weakness and need, and by faith draw out of the storehouse of treasure laid up for the children of God. Then how we shall find ourselves assisted and upheld!

(3) When *reading the Holy Scriptures* we find how little we understand. We do understand a little, enjoy a little, but how many portions there are we do not understand. We should remember when we read the Word that the Lord Jesus is ready to sit on the next chair and look over the Book, and we should put our finger on the chapter and verse and say: "Lord Jesus, I am very ignorant, teach Thou me; my blessed Lord, help me, help me; I do not understand this, but Thou art with Me, and ready to teach me." If this is done, and repeated again and again, we shall find the Scriptures opening to us, and opening in such a way that it comes

with power to our soul. But give up this and go to a commentary; we may get an explanation, but how different to get it this way on your knees from Jehovah-Jesus, by the enlightening and teaching of the Spirit! Commentaries teach the head, but if only in the head, when you come to practical exemplification in the conflict it is of no use. Jesus is with us to be our Teacher, opening up the Scriptures to us, and we shall find it as the two disciples found it going to Emmaus, that our hearts burn within us, and we are filled with joy, peace, and comfort.

(4) But this not merely applies to spiritual matters, but to *all with which we come in contact in the body*. If sickness overtake us it is all for our blessing and profit; there is no other end for which God sends it but to do them good at their latter end. While it lasts it is trying; as men and women we cannot help feeling it. What are we to do? Tell Jesus. "Lord Jesus, Thou seest my pain, my feebleness, my weakness; be Thou my Helper, my Physician. Wilt Thou help and succour me? Show me what Thou wilt have me to do; help me habitually to roll my burden on Thee." What will be the result? See how pitiful the Lord is. "We only have to ask again and again, and wait; but we must ask Him to give submission meanwhile. Some people think life a burden, so as not to wish to live. I have no sympathy with this, for we find life no burden if we roll our burden on the Lord; if we walk with God, and enter into what the blessed Jesus is ready to do for us; if we speak to Him, and not only speak to Him, but put confidence in Him, in the end we shall find every trial, without a single exception, has been for blessing, and thank Him for all His dealings with us.

(5) Another point in which we have to remember the Lord Jesus as not merely for and in us, but with us, is in our *family position*. Our children have to be educated; the difficulties are many and great, but if we bring them to Him He shows His power to help under them. He wants us to confide in Him and come to Him. If we want to know how to regulate the people under our employ well, come to Jesus; lay hold on

this truth—Jesus is with me; I am not alone. I am not sent to this warfare at my own charges. Tell Him you do not know how to direct matters; only own you have no power or strength to manage your affairs; roll them on the Lord.

(6) Then in your *business* or *profession* you are on no account to suppose that you have strength of your own, that you know how to manage matters. That is the great danger, to think you have experience, and know very well how to manage. That is a snare. To the end of our earthly pilgrimage we remain but ignorant ones more or less—weak ones more or less—and are made to see that we are nothing in ourselves. But this is only one side. We are made to see that Jehovah Jesus is with us, provided we are willing to let Him come in, to be a partner in our business, trade, or profession, and that we turn to Him, the infinitely wise partner, who is very rich, for He is mighty to back us up. If any have been going on by themselves, let them say, “I will let the Lord Jesus into the firm, and look to Him, and know Him practically and experimentally with me.” What is the result? Peace; and instead of finding it irksome, and wanting to give it up, we shall find our very business become food for our soul. I say deliberately, after the experience of half a century now of the affairs of this life and the burden of life, to me it is just the same to write a cheque in connection with the affairs of this life, or to bow my knees in prayer, or read the Word, because I do the one to the Lord, and the other to the Lord, and so the one brings blessing, and the other brings blessing.

(7) Now, one word in conclusion. Thus travelling on through life, happy if we have Jesus with us in life, whether our business is temporal or spiritual, and we do not wish to get rid of life, but are ready to serve Him half a century more, or to be taken. But at last the article of death will come, if the coming of the Lord Jesus prevent not. But the Lord Jesus will be with us in the article of death. He was with us when in physical strength. He is with us now when feeble and weak. Even if the mental powers are gone, He is with us. He has not left us.

He has not forsaken us. He passes with us through the valley of the shadow of death. “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.” Ah, to look forward to this death, not a forsaken one, but to have Jesus with us, on our side, to be cheered by Him, so that arm-in-arm we walk with Him through the valley of the shadow of death, O the blessedness of such a position!

But are there not some Christless souls present? Ah, you are alone, you are *alone*, and will have to stand at the judgment seat of God alone, to stand in your own righteousness before God, condemned before one word is uttered. O see to it, before it is too late, that the account between you and God is settled. It is not yet too late. If trusting in your own goodness and worthiness, this foundation will give way in that hour. You will be lost, and lost for ever, if you do not come to Christ. See to it now, and then you will have Christ with you in death and Christ with you in life. I have had Him with me for sixty long, happy years, and I am a happy man.

And He is to be found by everyone here, so that we may have Him for us as the One hanging on the Cross for us, and who thus wrought out a righteousness in which the vilest sinner may be found, and to know Him with us, by the Holy Spirit instrumentally, as a Friend and Helper.

O the blessedness and happiness of it is unspeakable! Therefore seek Him while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near, that you may be happy for time and for eternity! God grant it, for Christ's sake!

“STRANGERS AND SOJOURNERS.”

“STRANGERS here, we lift our eye

To the everlasting rest,

Where are gathering, one by one,

All the dearest and the best.

“Closing years bring thicker gloom,

Earthly beauty grows more dim;

But each opening year that comes

Brings us nearer, nearer Him.”

A FEW SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE
SEVEN PATRIARCHS OF GENESIS
AND THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA
IN THE REVELATION.

ADAM'S blessedness was to walk with God in Paradise in creature innocency. We know how soon that happy walk with God was interrupted—how soon the first man became a victim of a rebel who succeeded in making him one also, and thus acquired "the power of death" over him. He ate of the tree of responsibility, and was driven out lest he should also eat of the tree of life.

In the last book of Scripture we have the counterpart. He who had walked in the garden (Gen. iii. 8) is found walking among the golden lampstands (Rev. ii. 1), and here, as in that day, He mourns over a departure from first estate. "Thou hast left thy first love." Man is man, whether in Eden, at Sinai, in Canaan, or in the Church. How deep *this* fall! "Remember, therefore, *from whence thou art fallen.*" Adam lost his sweet innocency, but here there is the giving up of *heavenly* communion. The serpent who beguiled Eve has been at work again, and succeeded in corrupting the pure minds of the saints from the simplicity that is in Christ.

But the overcomer in Ephesus, whose heart is broken over the fall of the brightest thing God ever set up on earth, even as the Church's heavenly testimony was a greater thing than the first man's creature innocency, has the cheer of knowing that *he* shall not be deprived of Paradise joys. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God." How blessed this allusion to life! Paul, writing to Timothy for the last time, his heart crushed over the state of the saints, and looking forward to still darker times, dwells with evident delight on this same holy theme: *Life in Christ*. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. i. 1), and so in verse 10, "He has abolished death, and brought life and incorruption to light through the Gospel." There is something which ecclesiastical failure cannot touch. The Apostle John's writings are the last written by inspiration, and they all

contemplate the Church as departed from original estate; but how *they teem with life*, eternal life!—the life that was with the Father, now possessed by every believer, let the state of the Church be what it may.

Let us pursue our meditations. We come to *Abel*, the prototype of a martyr. The first man who died, died as a witness for the truth. The first death (and death came in by sin) was a moral triumph over death. He would rather die than give up the truth. He would not cling to a life which had already the sentence of death on it, a forfeited life, a life born outside of the garden of Eden, while the cherubim and the flaming sword told out the demands of the throne of God that the wages of sin is death, necessitating the atoning death of another, on whom death had no claims.

In the mystical order of the Revelation, Ephesus' fall is followed by Smyrna's devotedness unto death. We have here the martyr period of the early Church. But we have also the double activity of the enemy—the religious and the open. We have "the way of Cain," "the synagogue of Satan," a religion without blood. We have also the open opposition of the same restless foe—the devil. "Be thou faithful unto death" is the word of exhortation—the overcomer (and to overcome here is to *die*), shall not be hurt of the *second* death. They that kill the body cannot kill the soul, as the Lord has said.

Enoch and *Pergamos* present features of similarity and contrast as striking as any of those which have preceded. We have a man walking with God. It was the time of the unhallowed marriage union between the sons of God and the daughters of men, the earth being filled with violence as a result. He would not walk with it; he walked with God in separation, carrying the secret testimony in his bosom that he pleased God, displeasing the men of the world around beyond a doubt. Pergamos means "marriage." It is the period when the world changed its tactics and corrupted the Church it could not destroy. The fruit of this unholy coquetry is with us to-day. The teaching of Balaam, first mentioned here, is still applauded. Balaam succeeded in defiling the people he could not curse; he could not

touch their standing, and so ruined their state. But the overcomer who walks with God has enough in Him whom he seeks to please, to sustain him in his lonely walk. "To him who overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the white stone a new name written which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." Enoch's portion shall be his, the secret approval of the Lord, and as in Phineas in his day, when the corrupting teaching of Balaam was producing its deadly fruit among the people of God, God had a man who walked with Him in peace and equity (compare Numbers xxv. 12, 13 with Malachi ii. 5, 6).

Noah was brought safely through the judgments that overwhelmed the world of the ungodly, with a little remnant in the ark, and became the first governor God set up on the earth.

This answers to what we have in the Lord's address to *Thyatira*. "Great tribulation" is threatened to Jezebel, and her children would be killed with death. A little remnant is spoken of, "the rest" or remnant that had not her doctrine, characterised by "the depths of Satan;" and to that remnant, now the only overcomers (the promise to the overcomer preceding the exhortation to hear the Spirit's voice to the Churches from this point), the prospect of identification with Christ in the Kingdom is held out. "Power over the nations," and "ruling them with a rod of iron." Besides this there is the promise of "the Morning Star," the herald of this new era which shall dawn after the judgments have done their solemn work. As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be again at the coming of the Son of Man.

Abraham, the prototype of a separated man, kept his garments clean from Chaldean idolatry on the one hand and Sodom's corruption on the other. The *Sardis* overcomer, too, walks with unspotted robes, preserving himself in the power of communion with God from the defiling influences around. The mass he is outwardly connected with is far from the mind of the Lord. "I have not found thy works perfect before God." The overcomer has learnt Abraham's secret: "*Walk before Me, and be thou perfect.*"

Isaac is a beautiful type. He is the chief object of a father's love, but hated by Ishmael, who also claimed relationship, but one not based on counsel and promise, being the son of the Egyptian bondwoman and the fruit or temporary unbelief in the man of faith. Isaac is the one who is yielded up to God on the altar in the spirit of whole-hearted obedience and devotedness. We have here some of the characteristics of a true *Philadelphian*, one who seeks to be for Christ while avoiding ecclesiastical pretensions. The opposing synagogue of Satan is mentioned again, the re-introduction of Judaism, the mere outward system of lifeless ordinances, the story of Hagar and Ishmael over again, the Jerusalem which is beneath and those in bondage with her. The Lord takes notice of their evil-speaking, and will bring them to worship at Philadelphia's feet, and to recognise them the objects of His love.

We come now to *Jacob*, chastened, crippled, and rebuked, but blessed at the end. He illustrates the history of an overcomer in *Laodicea*. "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten," but the end is glorious. The sight of an enthroned Christ, and the privilege of association with Him in His reign, will dry every tear. Jacob, humbled and broken, had the joy of seeing *Joseph*, type of a reigning Christ, reaching the throne by the pathway of sorrow, established as head in Egypt, and left this scene a pilgrim and a worshipper (Heb. xi. 21).

I have only touched on a few points, drawing attention to what seems to be on the surface. But how rich is the Word, and how varied its glories! And how trustworthy the apostle's dictum: "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable.*"

M. I. R.

BEARING HIS CROSS.

WHAT cannot God do, what will He not do when His heart is set upon blessing His people? It is a common thing with Him to bring spiritual good out of temporal evil. He can extract pleasure out of pain: yea, He can enrich by impoverishing, and turn losses into gain. Unto you it is now given as a matter of His choice favour, not only to believe on Him, but also to be conformed to Him by bearing His Cross.—WM. ROMAINE.

GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE—X.

THE TIME OF THE RESTORATION.

By JOHN R. CALDWELL, Author of "Shadows of Christ in the Old Testament," "Things to Come," &c.

BUT this remnant that know their God form only a small proportion of the nation. The bulk of the nation "do wickedly;" they are against the covenant, and they are corrupted by flatteries. These are beguiled into the league with antichrist, and fill up the cup of their iniquity, so that the long-deferred judgment comes upon them to the uttermost.

The same two classes are found in Isaiah lxvi. 1 and 2. Here is the house that is to be built for Jehovah's Name, doubtless the restored temple at Jerusalem:

"Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool; where is the house that ye build unto Me? and where is the place of My rest? For all those things hath Mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord; but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite heart, and trembleth at My word."

But how does Jehovah regard the worship that is being offered there?

"He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear; but they did evil before Mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not."

He who brings the most costly offering according to the law—an ox—is no more acceptable than a murderer. The sacrifices of unbelief find no recognition with God. But there are those that tremble at the Word, and they find acceptance.

"Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at His word. Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My Name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified."

It is an old, old story, and yet new; the religion of the flesh casting out the godly, and saying, as they relentlessly execute their edicts, "Let the Lord be glorified."

"But He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed."

Thus it appears that the elect remnant

shall have been the subjects of the teaching of the Spirit: they shall understand the reason of the calamities of the past nineteen centuries, and that Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had despised and rejected, was indeed the Messiah. But not until He appears will they enter into the full liberty and joy of salvation. Then shall the Lord deliver them from the yoke of their enemies and from the stain of conscious guilt, and usher them into the blessings of His millennial kingdom upon earth. But first there must be that period of tribulation called "the time of Jacob's trouble," during which the elect shall be preserved—the days being shortened—whilst many suffer martyrdom and are beheaded because of their testimony. These are not losers, though they suffer unto death, but share with the Church, and all who form the first resurrection, the heavenly department of the kingdom.

Having thus traced the twofold moral condition of the nation previous to and at the time of the Lord's appearing, I want now to look at Scriptures which define the period at which these things must come to pass.

Already we have read Dan. ix. 24, and I want you now to look at it a little more in detail. "Seventy weeks." The Hebrew word translated "weeks" means simply "a period of seven." It may mean seven days, or seven years; the context must determine which. In Gen. xxix. 27, 28, it signifies seven years, and so undoubtedly it does here. The definite meaning is 70 periods of seven years, or 490 years.

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city."

Observe, it is all about Daniel's people, that is, the Jews and Jerusalem. The Church has no place in these prophecies.

"To finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness."

Here is the work of grace. We are not told here how it is to be done; but now, in the Epistle to the Romans, all is made plain. Now we see how sin has been put away and everlasting righteousness brought in by the suffering unto death upon the Cross of the

Lord Jesus the Lamb of God. In the full blaze of New Testament light this passage becomes perfectly plain.

"Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the command to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince."

This takes us to the Book of Nehemiah (Ezra belongs to an earlier date), and I accept the dates given at the head of the reference column in our Bibles as in the main correct. Ezra is dated 536 B.C.; Nehemiah, 446 B.C., or 90 years later. In Ezra we get the command to rebuild the House of God; but it was not until Nehemiah's day that the commandment went forth to rebuild the city and its walls. This period, then, started from the date of Nehemiah i., viz., 446 years before Christ. Now, in verse 25 there is a dividing of the 490-year period into sections, viz., 7 weeks, 62 weeks, and then a final week remains to be accounted for.

First, then, there are seven weeks, or 49 years. This (deducting 49 from 446) brings us exactly to the date of Malachi, or 397 years B.C. This is an important point in God's reckoning, for it closes His prophetic communications to the nation, and so completes the Old Covenant Scriptures.

Then there are the 62 weeks, or 434 years. This brings us to the date of our Lord entering Jerusalem as Israel's Prince, the rightful Heir to the throne, riding upon an ass. See Luke xix.*

There are thus 69 weeks, or 483 years, accounted for. At that time Messiah is "cut off"—crucified, rejected by the nation, and God begins a new order of things. Israel, nationally, is set aside; Messiah is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and grace flows out to every kindred, and nation, and people, and tongue indiscriminately.

Now, what about the seventieth week? God has a way of bringing things close together in the prophetic Word which, as to time, may be very far apart. By comparing Luke iv. 16-20 with Isa. lxi. 1, 2, you will see that between "the acceptable year of the

Lord," and "the day of vengeance of our God," there comes in an unmeasured interval, which has already lasted for nearly nineteen centuries! The Lord "closed the book" at the very point of fulfilment. Had He read the concluding clause of Isa. lxi. 2, He could not have added, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." "The day of vengeance" has not yet arrived, and we are nowhere informed how long it may be postponed—how long this acceptable year may be lengthened out. But when vengeance does come, it will be a short work. Grace lingers for a *year*, Vengeance will be a *day*. This is God's way. When David was offered three forms of retribution, and allowed the Lord to make the choice for him—three years of famine, three months before the enemy, or three days of pestilence—the Lord chose the shortest—three days!

But how could we know that such a parenthesis of time would intervene between the two clauses of Isaiah lxi. 2 unless we read it in the light of the New Testament. Even so, between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy the whole present dispensation comes in.

After the cutting off of Messiah we read that

"The people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary."

This we know came to pass. Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed by the Roman army under Titus, A.D. 70, and this determines the nationality of the coming prince, the beast, the head of the resuscitated Roman Empire. The "prince that shall come" must be of the same nationality as the army that destroyed Jerusalem.

The Romans cast a trench about Jerusalem, flooded and kept it in on every side, as the Lord himself foretold (Luke xix. 43).

"And unto the end of the war desolations are determined."

This is still going on; the desolations of Jerusalem and of her people continue until this day, and will until the Lord appears for their deliverance.

When, then, does the seventieth week begin? Read,

"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week."

*This is fully gone into in *The Coming Prince*, by Dr. Robert Anderson, a book published some ten or twelve years ago, and to this day no refutation of his calculations has appeared. The exactness of the dates, the accuracy and literalness of the fulfilment, is beyond all question miraculous and divine.

This covenant is evidently a league between the great head of the Roman Empire and the leaders of the Jews. This final week, or period of seven years, dates from this event. It is the recognition of the Jews as one of the nations of the earth, a position that they have not occupied since Jerusalem was destroyed. It is a compact entered into without God—a "covenant with death;" "an agreement with hell" (Isa. xxviii. 18).

In this the elect will have no part.

Turn now to Isaiah viii. 9, 10, and read the position that the believing remnant take up with respect to it:

"Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear all ye of far countries; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word and it shall not stand, for God is with us."

They see that God is not in it, but they know that God is with them.

"For the Lord spake to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying: Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of Hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples. And I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him."

Thus they bear their testimony against the infidelity of their day.

And in this we see the direction toward which all things in the world are tending. The ungodly world is all for associations, amalgamations, confederacies. If one trade union won't do, then let many trades form a greater federation, and if one nation won't do, then let all nations join in one international federation. Finally, all the ten kingdoms of the Roman earth will be federated under one great head, and the blinded nation of the Jews will go in with it, and sign the covenant that shall be their destruction.

From that day the last week of Daniel's prophecy dates. Then it will be possible to calculate to the very day when predicted events will take place.

Not so now. The acceptable year, the longsuffering of God, knows no dates, no times and seasons. But when that is closed the little while that remains will be found by the faithful of that day to be distinctly marked out.

The events of these final seven years are most momentous. It will then be fully manifested that only those who, in faith, stood out against the league have the approval and blessing of the Lord. The rest are dragged into the vortex, receive the mark of "the beast," and incur the doom of those that worship him.

Already the snare is settling down upon the earth. It is hard, hard to avoid entanglement in the world's trades unions and co-operative schemes, but, with all its trial and difficulty, the separated path is the only safe one. The world's amalgamations, whether of masters or men, by which none can be employed except they "join the union" are utterly godless, and are quickly preparing the way for oppression, under which none may buy or sell but those who receive the Satanic mark.

"TO WORSHIP HIM."

WE have no reason to suppose that the "wise men from the East" (Matt. ii. 1) were *rich* men. Yet in the enumeration of their offerings we find *gold* is the first thing mentioned. This immediately recalls the prophetic word, "To Him shall be given of the gold of Sheba" (Ps. lxxii. 15). That prophecy was already being fulfilled—a slight instalment, it is true, yet pointing forward with unerring finger to that day when, in the words of the poet,

"Ships from the isles shall meet
To pour the wealth of ocean
In treasure at His feet."

That day was far off, yet these true-hearted worshippers of the infant Saviour would by anticipation enter into its spirit. We do not think that the *quantity* of gold presented

by those men could have been great. This would have been out of keeping with the eternal fitness of things. What concerns us to know, and what we are certain of, is this, that it was *gold* they offered to the new-born King. We find it written that "silver was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon," and a greater than Solomon was there. They presented unto Him *gold*. In this presentation of the most precious metal I observe that the offering of our substance to God is essentially a part of our *worship*. These men from the East came avowedly as worshippers. "Where is He," they said, "that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East, and are come to *worship* Him" (Matt. ii. 2). They worshipped Him by offering unto Him, and the first of their offerings was gold. This is significant, and may help to a true understanding of the nature of worship. It is quite a mistaken idea to suppose that worship consists in hearing sermons. Worship does not consist in *receiving from* God, but in *giving to* God. In *prayer* we take the position of petitioners, and ask from God. In listening to the words of some minister of Christ we *receive from* God through one of His servants. In preaching the Gospel to the unsaved our attitude is *manward*—we proclaim to unsaved sinners the ministry of reconciliation. All these are quite distinct from worship, for in worship our attitude is *Godward*—not to make our *wants* known, but to pour out our hearts in adoration before Him; to offer unto Him the sacrifice of praise, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. As regards our worshipping the Lord with our substance, we may not be able to "present unto Him gold," but whatever our offering may be, if it be given out of the fulness of an adoring heart, it shall be accepted of Him. He still sits "over the treasury" as of old. He beholds what is put therein. All hearts are known unto Him. He appraises every offering at its true value. Does a cloud of praise ascend from "the Lord's box" on Lord's-day morning? Or do our meagre and stinted offerings *there* give a contradiction to our vows and songs of adoration in the assembled meeting?

w. s.

HE AND I.

"The Lord thinketh on me" (Psalm xl. 17).
 "Your Father knoweth" (Matthew vi. 8).
 "He careth for you" (1 Peter v. 7).
 "The Father Himself loveth you" (John xvi. 27).

"HE thinketh on me." O what grace!
 On such a one to turn His gaze—
 On me one thought expend.
 "YOUR FATHER knoweth." Precious thought
 That all my needs are known
 By HIM, the SOURCE of all supply;
 Sweet claim, I am His own.
 "He careth for you." Can it be
 That HE who bore sin's load
 My burden seeks—says, "Cast all care
 On ME along life's road."
 "THE FATHER loves you." Here, O LORD,
 With humbled heart I trace
 To its great Head each desert stream,
 Find here the Source of Grace.

JOHN WILSON.

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH.

III.—DIVINE TESTIMONY TO ITS UNITY.

WE have seen good reason from the book of Isaiah itself for refusing to regard the latter part as the utterance of a "great unknown" prophet, or to look upon the book as a piece of patchwork. The comparison of the two parts of the book serves to convince some, at least, that (to use the words of the late Dr. Plumptre) "the resemblance of style and language—a resemblance closer than that between either of them and any other book of the Old Testament—preponderates over the diversities," or, as the late Dr. Delitzsch (1865) still more strongly put it, the "arguments" drawn from such comparisons "are capable of convincing all those who do not, on extraneous doctrinal grounds, hold it impossible that Isaiah should have been the author of the disputed prophecies."

But while considerations of this kind are both interesting and helpful, it must be felt that conclusions based simply upon the balancing of words and style do not rest upon a very solid basis. Happily we are not left in this case to probabilities, for we have the full and explicit testimony of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, the true

Author of the book of Isaiah, to the fact that the book is *one*, and that Isaiah was the writer thereof. This is the stronghold of the believer, the impregnable fortress for all who will take refuge in it, the rock on which we may stand unmoved amidst the surging of the waves of modern thought.*

Before we turn to this testimony as given in the New Testament, we may observe one striking statement in 2 Chron. xxxii. 32: "Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz." This shows that when the book of Chronicles was completed, "the vision of Isaiah the prophet" was a well-known book. And if, as is generally supposed, Ezra had a good deal to do with the final arrangement of the books of the Old Testament Scriptures, is it likely that he would have tacked on to "the vision of Isaiah" a prophecy of his own day without a hint that it had been spoken by another?

We do not quote the Apocrypha as Scripture, but some of its books have their value, and at least express the thoughts of the time in which they were written. In the Book of Wisdom Isaiah is thus spoken of: "In his days the sun went backward, and he added life to the king. He saw by an excellent spirit what should come to pass at the last; and he comforted them that mourned in Zion. He showed the things that should be to the end of time, and the hidden things or ever they came." The references in this statement to the historical chapters (xxxvi.-xxxix.), and to the chapters that follow (xl. 1, 2; lxi. 1-3), show that in 200 B.C. the book was regarded as *one*, and as the book of Isaiah.

In the New Testament the references to Isaiah are numerous, but we will simply refer to those passages in which he is expressly named as the writer of the *whole* book, or of the latter portion of it. The forerunner of the Lord, in giving an account of himself, says: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias" (John i. 23). This quotation is

* The fact that Dr. Delitzsch, some of whose forcible words, written in his prime, have been quoted, should in his later years have yielded in some measure to the reasonings or sceptical critics shows us the need of accepting by faith this divine testimony, and reminds us of the warning: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

from the very first chapter of the second part—chap. xl. 3. Luke, in narrating the ministry of John (Luke iii. 3-6), combines quotations from Isaiah xl. 3, 4 and lii. 10 as the words of Isaiah, and expressly calls the whole book the book of the words of Esaias the prophet. He further tells us that when the Lord "stood up for to read" in the synagogue at Nazareth, there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias, and in what we call chapter lxi. of that book He found the portion of which He could say, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke iv. 17-21). In the Lord's mighty works of healing, Matthew sees a fulfilment of that "which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses" (Matt. viii. 17; see Isa. liii. 4). In Matthew xii. 17 the great prophecy of the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah xlii. is quoted as having reference to Christ, and is also distinctly declared to have been spoken by Esaias the prophet. John quotes Isaiah liii. 1, "Lord, who hath believed our report?" as "the saying of Esaias the prophet . . . which he spake" (John xii. 38). In the Acts of the Apostles we are told that the eunuch to whom Philip was sent was reading Esaias the prophet, and the place of the Scripture which he read was this, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter" (Isa. liii. 7). In Romans x. 16 the Apostle Paul writes, "Esaias saith: Lord, who hath believed our report?" and in verse 20, "Esaias is very bold, and saith: I was found of them that sought Me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after Me," thus quoting from chapters liii. and lxxv.

We have, therefore, the united testimony of the forerunner of Christ, of three apostles, and of the evangelist Luke, to the book of Isaiah as we now possess it. It is true they were not higher critics, indeed they did not profess to be *critics* at all. But John the Baptist was "filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb," and to the other four the Holy Spirit was given for the express purpose of leading them into *all the truth*.

The suggestion that a collection of prophecies by different writers might be spoken of as the book of Isaiah, as a collection or

psalms by various writers are called the Psalms of David, is plausible, but is of no real weight, for it would be putting a mere *human* description by the side of a *divine* one. Never in the inspired record are the psalms as a whole called the Psalms of David, familiar as the phrase is to our ears. The statement that "David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand" (Luke (xx. 41, 42), simply affirms that David was the writer of Psalm cx. This is equally true of Peter's reference to the same psalm, and to Psalm xvi. as the language of David. It is very different from the statement that a book is the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, and is only another evidence of the accuracy of inspired speakers and writers. It is also important to observe that we have not only this particular description of the book as a whole, but several quotations from the later chapters are declared to be the sayings of Esaias, or the words of Esaias, with, in one case, the emphatic addition, *which he spake*.

One writer, while regarding the *whole* book as Esaias's, says, "The second part of Esaias would remain a priceless treasure, whoever wrote it, just as the worth of the Epistle to the Hebrews is unaffected by the question whether it was written by Paul, or by Apollos, or some unknown writer." This is true, but he appears to overlook the important fact that we have no statement *in Scripture* that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, whereas the assertions that Esaias wrote the second part of the book as well as the first (Matt. xv. 7, 8; Isa. xxix. 13) are clear and decided. "What the Spirit saith" is always sufficient for those whose ears are awakened to hear as disciples (Isa. l. 4), and on His testimony they will surely accept with confidence as the book of the prophet Esaias what their Lord received as such.

W. H. B.

"BETWEEN THE TWO EVENINGS."

EXODUS XII. 6 (Margin).

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

IT was said of the day when the sun and moon stood still, that the hosts of Jehovah under Joshua might accomplish their work in the execution of judgment, "There was no day like that before it or after it" (Josh. x. 14).

There was another day of which it might be truly said of its value, "There was no day like that"—a day which stands marked out from all the days of Time, and will stand out through the ages of Eternity unparalleled, the centre-fact round which eternal ages roll—that day which brought Redemption through the Atoning Sacrifice of God's beloved Son.

Every Jewish day had two evenings marking its commencement and close—"From even unto even shall ye celebrate your Sabbath" (Lev. xxiii. 32).

There is one day marked out by these two evenings in the Gospels. In Matt. xxvi. 20 we read, "Now when the even was come, He sat down with the twelve;" in Matt. xxvii. 57, "When the evening was come, Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus"—two periods of one day. The **FIRST** evening was the **COMMENCEMENT** of the fourteenth day of the first month, the Passover day, when Jesus sat down with the twelve at even, for the Passover was to be killed between the two evenings. What a variety of circumstances transpired in that one day from evening to evening! First, the Passover feast, the last which Jesus celebrated with His disciples on earth; after that, the first Lord's Supper, Judas having gone out. Then those wondrous words of the Lord Jesus recorded in John xiii., xiv., xv., xvi., concluding with the prayer in chap. xvii. Then came Gethsemane, with its solemn scenes, its blood-like sweat, its agony; the betrayal, when Jesus was forsaken by His disciples and betrayed into the hands of His enemies. Then His examination before Caiaphas. The next morning began the trial before Pilate and Herod; the scourging; the going forth bearing His cross; then the crucifixion between the two malefactors; the mocking, the reviling; the forsaking of His God in those three solemn hours of unparalleled darkness at mid-day from the sixth to the ninth hour; the thirst; the vinegar; the committing His mother to His beloved disciple; the expiring, or giving up the ghost, saying, "Father, into Thy hands I commit My Spirit." "When even was come" (Matt. xxvii. 57), **CLOSES** the solemn day.

Then began the fifteenth—the day of preparation for the Sabbath. The malefactors crucified with Christ not having died before the preparation day commenced, the Jews be-

sought Pilate that their legs might be broken (John xix. 31), for if they had lingered during that day they must have continued on the cross during the Sabbath, for the taking down from the cross would have been considered a breach of the Sabbath. The Jews obtained permission for the breaking of the legs of the malefactors, but a soldier with a spear pierced the side of Jesus to make the work doubly sure and death certain beyond a doubt—the heart was pierced, and blood and water flowed. John was still at the cross, and bears his testimony to this. Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate, and begged the body, who called the centurion to know whether Jesus had been any while dead (Mark xv. 43, 44), and gave the body to Joseph, who, with Nicodemus, wrapped it in linen and spices, and then the sacred body was laid in the new tomb, the women lingering there.

When the third evening came round the Sabbath began, and that Sabbath day Jesus lingered in the tomb, having accomplished His stupendous work and rolled off the sin laid on Him, bringing in everlasting righteousness. During that Sabbath the seal made the sepulchre sure, and the guard was set.

When that Sabbath was finished, on the fourth evening the women go to buy spices for the anointing (Mark xvi. 1), and Mary Magdalene and the other Mary visit the sepulchre (Matt. xxviii. 1). Ere morning dawns the stone was removed, the sepulchre opened—the Lord had arisen. He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, then (John xx. 1-17) at eventide Jesus came into the midst of His ten disciples, showed His hands and His side, and spake peace unto them.

Mark these five sunsets: The first, Jesus keeps the Passover with His disciples; second, the burial; third, the rest in Joseph's tomb; fourth, the close of the Sabbath, when the women go to the sepulchre; and ere the fifth sunset Jesus appeared in the midst of His disciples. After the first sunset Jesus sat down with them, knowing all that should come to pass; before the fifth He is with them again, speaking peace, in resurrection life—Redemption fully accomplished, the commencement of everlasting rest and of glory yet to come.*

* See "The Days of the Passover, Crucifixion, and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus," by Thomas Newbery. Price 1s.

A CLOSE WALK WITH GOD.

I AM constantly pressing on myself (and which I pray God to give me) the maintenance of a close and constant walk with God. Always, and everywhere, and in everything let our communion with Him be kept up unbroken. Doctrines, however clearly seen or firmly held, will never, never meet the urgent wants of the soul. It is God we need—God Himself. God in Christ. And we may always enjoy His presence. He is constantly speaking to us; but, alas, few, few have ears to hear Him (see the word "if" in Rev. xiii. 9). He speaks to us in His Word; let us listen to Him speaking there. He speaks in His daily providence, He speaks to us in our hearts, but He speaks in such a very still, small voice that unless we carefully listen to Him we shall miss it, for the din and clamour of a noisy world, and of our own trifling hearts, will quite drown His voice. O what lives of heaven begun on earth might we lead if we were only believing and faithful.—JOHN DICKIE.

Correspondence.

HOUSEHOLD SALVATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

DEAR SIR,—Will you kindly allow me to say a few words in connection with the "Editor's Note" on Answer A to Question 388 in *The Witness* for July? In replying to the question, conciseness and brevity were aimed at for the sake of space, but it is freely admitted that far more may be implied in the passage (Acts xvi. 30-34) than appears in Answer A.

In 1 Tim. ii. 1-4 (to which the reader will please refer) we have the mind of the Spirit about prayer, and it is our duty as children of God to pray, not only for our own children and kindred, our households generally, or for those with whom we are acquainted amongst the unsaved, but for *all men*. God's will is impartial in that respect, and though *we* may specially plead for our loved ones we *ought not* to be the less fervent in prayer for all unsaved souls.

Then, as regards answers to our prayers, our Father has graciously promised that *whatsoever* we ask in the Name of His Son, He will grant our request, but conditionally—that we ask in faith.

The passage in Acts xvi. 30-34 cannot imply more than that if we make supplications, prayers,

and intercessions for our children, our kindred, and our households according to God's mind; *believing that we have what we ask for*, our prayers will certainly be answered in His own time and way. We ourselves may not see the answers, but that ought not to shake our faith; they will surely come. See Heb. xi. 6 and Matt. xxi. 22.

We have *our* responsibility and our encouragement. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. xxii. 6). This is written for our instruction as well as for our encouragement, but it does not follow that all children will attend to the instruction and training of parents (Prov. xxii. 15). Why or wherefore is too large a subject to enter upon here (Ezek. xviii.); but one thing is very certain—children are much more likely to be, and possibly are, much more influenced by the actions and behaviour of their parents than by *words* of instruction only.

God has given precious promises to His children, and gracious encouragement to make large petitions, but He has also given them *their* responsibilities, and it is their duty to see that they fulfil them. If they do, they can confidently claim the answers to their prayers. The Lord is gracious, and His desire is that *all* should be saved. The Lord Jesus told the Scribes, and Pharisees, and Jews, "Ye will not come to Me that ye may have life;" and as it was then, so it is now. We have numerous living instances of God's faithfulness in answering prayer in the families of many of His honoured servants, where every member of each family is at the present time engaged in the Master's service.

Much more could be urged on this subject, but it would be trespassing too much on your valuable space. The SALVATION OF SOULS is a subject for the deepest and most earnest attention and consideration of God's family. Prayer, and supplication, and intercession are the most powerful instruments in that cause.

One more remark. God in His infinite love and grace has provided a *way of salvation* for ALL. In the exercise of His sovereign grace "*Many are called but few are chosen.*"

W. D. B.

GOSPEL WORK IN CENTRAL AFRICA.

LUANZA, LAKE MWERU,
1st April, 1899.

MY DEAR MR. M'LAREN,

"Who hath called us with an holy calling" is the text of the day. The mind furnishes others of a like nature:—"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider," &c.; "We pray that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of

faith with power, that the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you," &c.

What a faithful friend the old Book is! How living are its words! "Called of God," it says, and the soul leaps with joy, remembering the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. "Called to glorify the Name of Christ," says this faithful witness, and the heart cries yearningly, "Lord, help me." "Consider Him," cries the unerring guide of the Word of God, and a channel of unailing strength is discovered to endure, and we are asked to endure hardness. He is worthy for whom we should do this.

Another Lord's Day has drawn to a close with me here in Africa, and at the close of it my soul rejoices in having again set forth a Saviour to a needy people—oh, so needy! When will the Word get to their hearts? The chain that the devil has been twining and twining around Africa is of mighty strength. Did we not know of almighty power and a true word, "The Gospel is the power of God," &c., the density of despair would freeze the soul of the African missionary. Like David, we would strengthen ourselves in our God, and stand on this battlefield for God, meeting the devil's every thrust with the shield of faith and its glorious motto of "It is written."

Could we transport you out here for an hour or so to one of our little meetings, I know your "Praise the Lord!" would be great. Picture yourself quietly seated on a chair in one of Luanza's beautiful streets, the sun meantime fast approaching his place of rest on the other side of the Kundelungu Mountains. 200, 300, or perhaps 400 people sit on the ground before you. Even Scotland can't produce that. That is how they used to do when Christ was here. They sat and He spake. May it often be so here in Africa. As they sit may He Himself speak. Attentively they listen. This, I know, will rejoice you as it does us. But there is another place, the complement of this. It is the quiet of one's chamber, when crushing thoughts overwhelm, when we think how slow they are to believe the message. Then the heart seems like breaking—a message of life and love so slighted. But I stop. That place, holy ground, is no doubt better known to you than to me. May the ranks of the praying ones be increased.

During the week the school goes on still. On Mr. Crawford's return I expect that one thing that hampers will be removed, viz., the lack of printed matter. He will probably bring back the gospels in the language of the people. Presently I try to keep the few readers in school in printed matter by means of printing copies of hymns, &c., with some type I have here. The press itself is broken, but I set up the type, ink with hand-roller, and then take off copy after copy with the hand.

Perhaps I would be sent to look for other work by our friends P. & I., but the Lord knows it is the best I can do, and I know He will bless it. By this time you will have received the letter of commendation I sent a month ago.* You will therefore know that brother Pomeroy is on his way home, also that Mr. C. goes out to the lakes with him, seeing him on the Zambesi steamers. The character of brother P.'s work cannot be too highly spoken of, and the natives here love him. May the Lord take him home in safety and restore him is our prayer. Jim Anderson went out as far as Kamboli, and to-day, after a month's absence, we have had the joy of welcoming him back again. He had a little fever on the road back, but that, I think, will soon be erased while he rests here. The roads which we crossed together six months ago are now, he says, like rivers. The rainy season is a trying time for travelling. Such a condition would suggest calamity, but it is not so. The land still needs rain. When these rains are over, then come months and months of drought, when the sky will be cloudless, the land rainless, and the trees leafless—a scorching sun above, with parched land beneath. Here a week ago the natives were saying, "Our crops are dying; if rain does not come we shall have a famine." But, praise God, we have had rain during the week—heavy showers almost daily.

Mr. and Mrs. M'Lachlan went off a week ago to Mweru. He will probably take over a fortnight to reach it in this sort of weather. May the Lord take them in safety, give them a place in the hearts of the people, and bless their labour.

God has fixed me here, it seems, for the present. I hugged the hope to my breast for long that the close of the rains would find me making my way to another spot of the vast vineyard here. For the present God has made me lay that hope aside. Brother Pomeroy is off home, Mr. Crawford will be absent for about six months, and I have promised to await his return. What can I say? God has filled my hands, and God help me to be faithful in it. Lubaland has not yet heard the gospel, with its millions, but a gospel pioneer must always be a man who knows God—a man who knows himself, a man who knows the African and African speech. If God would raise up that man I should gladly be his servant. Meantime I would fix my eyes on the work of to-day, and pray for grace for to-day's service. The future is God's.

As to language, Mr. C. gave us a nice start, and now we try to work on that. Fluency is not reached in a day, but God has helped, and

*The letter of commendation here referred to is a gem. It is written by Wilson, and signed by the six brethren. It arrived about two weeks later than the above.—T. M'L.

does help. I am fond of the language. It is more of a heart language than our hypocritical one. Crawford revels in it. We poor learners are captivated by its natural sweetness. I confess this, that one must not only be African in speech but African in thought, and a plastic mind is here demanded. God give us adaptability.

I have not been deluged with letters. If the folks at home knew what an incentive is a little word of cheer they would give it. Tell the folks we read all our letters with joy.

As to health, I am bound to give thanks. My first year in Africa, and yet for the past five and a half months I have had no fever. And now, in closing, let me ask you to kindly give my love to saints interested. Pray on, and power will come and praise will be intensified.—I am, yours in Africa for God,
JOHN WILSON.

(Since departed to be with Christ.)

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

"WATER" IN JOHN'S EPISTLE.—Does the water mentioned in 1 John v. 8 and the water mentioned in the 6th verse of the same chapter mean the same, or, if not, what do we learn from the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses together?

DANIEL'S FOURTH KINGDOM.—Has the fourth kingdom mentioned in Daniel vii. 7. finished its career; and if not, what is its present condition?

LIFE AND DEATH.—Please explain Romans viii. 10 and 13. In what aspect are we to understand "life" and "death" in these two verses?

1ST PETER.—Is the 1st Epistle of Peter addressed specially to converted Jews?

PALMISTRY.—What is the Christian's position towards palmistry? Should he believe and practice it, or does Scripture condemn it?

CHRIST'S INTERCESSION.—What is the meaning of John xvi. 26, and how is it to be reconciled with Hebrews vii. 25?

THE TWO GOSPELS.—What is the difference between the gospel of the grace of God and the gospel of the kingdom, and how does Matthew xxiv. 14 apply?

DEATH—TEMPORAL OR SPIRITUAL.—Is it life and death in the literal or spiritual sense that is referred to in John xi. 25, 26, and whether is "Though he were dead" (A.V.) or "Though he die" (R.V.) correct?

PROPHECYING—IS IT EXISTENT NOW?—Does the teaching which we get in 1 Corinthians xiv.,

in connection with prophesying, apply to the present time?

THE CHURCH'S PREROGATIVES.—We hear it stated again and again that "It is the Church that receives, and the Church that puts away." Seeking to abide by "What saith the Scriptures in all things," would value help from God's Word on these two points.

ENTERING INTO REST.—Does Hebrews iv. 10 refer to Christ having entered into rest after He had finished the work of redemption, or is it in reference to one who has entered into rest of soul by accepting Christ? Also, in verse 11, What are we to understand by the words labour and rest in this verse? What is the rest that we can obtain by labouring for it?

A REPROVED BROTHER.

QUESTION 389.—Is it Scriptural when a brother takes offence, because he has been reproved for his conduct, to go off to the nearest assembly, and that assembly to receive him?

Answer A.—If, when the brother went to the nearest assembly, he told the brethren his version of the matter, and endeavoured to win them over to his side, and if they, acting upon that alone, received him, to the prejudice of those whom he had left, a grievous wrong has been done. If, on the other hand, the brother went to that assembly and was received as an acknowledged believer in Christ (for it does not appear that he was put away as a wicked person), making no statement regarding those with whom he had been associated, the assembly he went to may have acted in all innocence, and the brother may have had no other thought than a desire for more peaceful surroundings.

If the brother who is "buffeted for his faults," and takes it patiently, has nothing to glory in, what shall be said of the one who, when reproved for his sin, takes offence at the reproof?

Those who reproved him will know whether they were themselves "without sin" (John viii.) They will likewise know whether they were "spiritual" (Gal. vi.), and whether in reproving the brother they did it "in a spirit of meekness, considering themselves, lest they also should be tempted."

If these things be so, and if they had no object but the glory of God and the good of the brother, then they can joyfully look forward to "the day when the Lord, the righteous Judge, will reward His servants."

J. A.

Answer B.—Scriptural? Why, it is the very opposite, both for the brother who takes offence at just reproof, and for an assembly to receive him, knowing the circumstances under which he comes. If such a state of things be allowed to exist, our assemblies will soon become so many

nurseries or spoiled babies, all standing pouting in separate corners.

The angel's word to Hagar when she fled from Sarah would be most appropriate for the runaway brother: "Go back to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands" (Gen. xvi. 9).

When Peter was to be blamed, Paul withstood him to the face (Gal. ii. 11), but Peter did not run away to another assembly, nor did he set up a new gathering, as so many are doing to-day when they are justly reproved for their folly, but, on the contrary, he afterwards writes of "our beloved brother Paul" (2 Peter iii. 15). If we do wrong and require reproof, let us take it patiently, and in the gracious spirit of the Psalmist, who said: "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness: let him reprove me, it shall be as oil upon the head: *let not my head refuse it*" (Psa. cxli. 5, R.V.).

Brethren, do let us put away childish things, knowing that "the ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise" (Prov. xv. 31). T. B.

Answer C.—There is no special scripture for a case of this kind. We must bear in mind that all the assemblies of believers gathered into the name of the Lord Jesus are not separate Churches, but are units of the *one Church*, which is His body, of which each individual believer is a member, and of which He is the Head.

Such a state of matters as represented in the question seems to indicate that the spirit of *love*, so particularly and emphatically urged by the Apostle John in his first epistle, must be wanting in the assemblies.

It would be injudicious and, in fact, impossible to lay down any hard and fast rule in such a case. The question may be asked, Was the brother rebuked in a scriptural manner? Let us remember the exhortation of Paul, in Gal. vi. 1: "Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of meekness, looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted." See also James v. 19, 20.

If a brother, by his life or conversation, is bringing dishonour on the name of the Lord, he merits rebuke; but if he be in a *right spirit*, and if the rebuke be administered in the manner stated above, he can hardly fail to acknowledge his fault.

There is a word for the offender in 1 Thes. v. 12-15.

Would it not be in accordance with the mind of the Head of the Church if, in a case such as that propounded in the question, the two assemblies (not "the oversight"), which do not appear to be very far distant from each other, were to meet together to inquire into the merits of the case in a spirit of humility and brotherly love? Would it not be well for all parties con-

cerned? Remembering that if they ARE gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus, *He* is present in their midst, and if they, in spirit, look to Him for instruction and guidance they will certainly receive it.

The course to be adopted with a disorderly brother is clearly laid down in 2 Thessalonians iii. 6, 13, 14.

W. D. B.

Editor's Note.—Any reply to such a question as this might prove misleading, seeing so much depends on details that are not given; but one cannot shut their eyes to the fact that such irregularities most frequently arise, not because of the rebuking of conduct that is unquestionably evil, but because of some course or action, taken with a good conscience, but overstepping the limits of so-called "fellowship," and so forming a breach of an unwritten law. In such a case the "rebuke" might be quite reasonably resented, and the going to another meeting and being received by them might be the result of an honest difference of judgment, and not of a spirit of lawlessness.

That oneness of mind about such cases should be sought in patience and in loving interchange of views will not be disputed, but the high-handed course pleases the flesh, and is, alas! too often followed.

"TARRY ONE FOR ANOTHER."

QUESTION 390.—Please explain 1 Cor. xi. 33. Does it mean that those assembled should tarry for those who are late at a morning meeting, or that those who are come together, instead of being too hasty in ministering, should tarry one for another?

Answer A.—If we note the preceding verses from verse 17 we have the key to verse 33. The Corinthian Christians were "having the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, in respect of persons" (James ii. 1). They walked by sight, not by faith, despised the poor (James ii. 6), and were thus out of harmony with God's thoughts, forgetting as rich ones "to rejoice in that they were made low," and that God had "chosen the poor, rich in faith."

Thus walking as men, they selected their company, and social position regulated their coming together in caste groups. Paul tells them plainly from verses 17 to 22 that coming thus "ye cannot eat the Lord's Supper, for in eating everyone is taking before other his own supper," and in effect says, Why did you not satisfy your hunger at home, and come to observe the Lord's Supper as I delivered it to you?

In verses 30 to 33 he shows this as the reason why many of them were weak and sickly, and many had fallen asleep. Therefore he says, Tarry one for another, for we are members one

of another, and let the Lord's Supper be eaten in remembrance of Him alone: earthly distinctions merged in Christ Jesus, where there is neither rich nor poor, but all are one in Him.

If any hunger let him eat at home, that ye come not together unto judgment (verse 34), for making a common meal of the Lord's Supper, instead of discerning, by faith, the Lord's body (verse 29).

Note well, when Jesus said, "This is My body," He meant, "This represents My body," just as the Holy Spirit in Rev. i. 20 says, "The seven stars which thou sawest are the angels of the seven Churches, and the seven candlesticks are the seven Churches—that is, each represents an angel or a Church.

T. C.

Answer B.—Is not the key to the meaning of the exhortation "to tarry one for the other" in 1 Cor. xi. 33 contained in verses 20 and 21? We read there, "When therefore ye assemble yourselves together, it is not possible to eat the Lord's Supper: for in your eating each one taketh *before other his own supper*" (R.V.). The celebration had lost its original character. Instead of being a collective memorial feast, it had degenerated into a series of independent meals for the satisfying of the individual appetite.

The apostle was seeking to correct this, and the exhortation before us, though it may include the two alternative suggestions of your questioner, probably goes a good deal deeper, and may be a word to us to avoid looking at the Lord's table as an occasion for offering merely individual worship or receiving individual blessing, but to seek first that the whole assembly may enter into its privileges, "that all may learn, and all may be comforted." "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." "We are members one of another." W. H.

Answer C.—1 Corinthians xi. 33 neither means tarrying for late-comers, nor yet for each other in the ministry of the Word. Strictly speaking, this scripture has no present application, because the abuse it was written to rectify does not exist in our assemblies to-day. The abuse is specified for us in verse 21, "For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper, and one is hungry, and another is drunken," and consequently comes the exhortation, "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry the one for the other, and if any hunger let him eat at home" (verses 33, 34).

That there are late-comers to our morning meetings is a notorious fact, to our shame be it confessed; and that there are some unscrupulous brethren who constantly overreach others in the ministry of the Word is also true, but there are other scriptures to deal with these abuses. Let us "rightly divide the Word of Truth," and then shall we be workmen without shame. T. B.

THRICE, "LOVEST THOU ME?"

Notes of Address by the late Mr. HENRY DYER.

IT is remarkable that whereas in John xx. the Master gave three times to His little band that word, "Peace be unto you," He should again, to one of that band, and in the presence of all, thrice say, "Simon, lovest thou Me?" Turn now, if you please, to chapter xxi., while we read together its earlier verses. "At the sea of Tiberias." Far away from the place of the previous occasion, we find them now in distant Galilee. "Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a-fishing." We are not told what led this leading apostle (for he is elsewhere spoken of in the gospels as the first of the twelve) in his usual energy to be thus prompting the others; but we may remark this, that in going back to their own country it was a more difficult task to preach the new faith and the Name, and more easy to be there with some earthly occupation. This may have been one of their temptations. But the main reason will appear as we read the narrative. "Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved." Love is quick-sighted. "As soon as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread." Fish that never swam in Galilee's lake, bread that never was baked in earthly oven. It was divinely provided, Jesus himself preparing it—no angel even, but His own holy hands, willing and delighted to get ready the meal for them, hungry as they would come from their night of fishing toil. "Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught." And this was as much His providing as the other. The same One who provided that fish with the coin in its mouth of the exactly required amount, guided all these great fishes into their net. "And none of the disciples durst ask Him, Who art Thou?" The solemnity of the Divine Presence gets felt in all our souls. "Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise." No hasty eagerness, even with their hungry appetites.

One other remark I would make, as to this being the third time of the Lord's showing Himself to His disciples (verse 14). That is

to say, the third time John makes any record of; not that there were not other occasions, but these three are divinely selected. Each one of these appearances of the heavenly Master—in His resurrection, glorified Body (for "He raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory")—was to meet some form of our natural unbelief. First in Jerusalem, in that upper room, against the unbelieving fear of what man could do; eight days afterwards, to meet unbelief as to the vital subject of the resurrection, to feed our hearts with Himself as the evidently risen One, bearing the marks of His atoning death; thirdly, unbelief as to their temporal supplies in the carrying out of the work which He had given them to do—"I go a-fishing," and "we also go with thee"—when He had called them away from it years before. It was a lucrative profession, and an honourable one, but they had been called away from it. And now they were going back to the country where their Master's miracles were wrought, and where, when He was with them, they lacked nothing. But now He was murdered, and they cast out, without the prestige that His presence had carried, and, instead, the present reproach of His Name. Then came the moment of temptation. We must needs have some occupation to provide for our wants.

"So when they had dined." And what a dining was that! "Is this fish of my catching?" would Peter say. Not a bit. And the very food he ate went to kill his unbelief and to feed his faith; every morsel of the meal is instruction to our souls whenever we sit at Wisdom's table. Peter had such a dining as gave him wisdom, as well as earthly, passing bread. "Jesus saith, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My sheep." Shepherd, or herd, My sheep. The difference is between giving food and giving exercise to the flock, leading them along the paths. "He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest

thou Me." Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love Thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep." I would explain that two entirely different words are here used for our English word "love." Each time the Master uses a word expressive of calm, deep, God-taught affection. Peter, on his side, in the ardour of natural affection, uses an excitable, strong, bubbling-up, emotional word, that almost implies a caressing kiss. Presently the Lord turns round and uses Peter's own word—gives it him back again. And Peter is grieved because the third time the Lord gives him his own word, as if He would say, "Do you stand by your own word? Do you really mean you love Me enough to put your arms around Me, and give your all for Me?" Therefore Peter was grieved because the Lord had said something different, and questioned his sincerity. Ah! there was another man who kissed Jesus, and then sold Him; so little are mere words, even with kisses, to be depended upon. But Peter still keeps to his own impassioned language.

Now, I have said the chief introductory things I wished to say. I have reminded you of the solemnity of the dealing of the Lord with our souls. May He so reveal Himself as that we may learn three things: 1st, No fear of man; 2nd, No unbelieving eyes to dim the words of the risen One; 3rd, No distrust, but that whosoever He sends us He will provide for our need. All sent ones of the Lord have a warranty from Himself to say: "All my wants shall be supplied." Oftentimes by our own work, for there is always a place alongside of faith for the activities of obedience.

Now, next I would consider the effect of this dining hour upon the twelve. All their wants being supplied, what had they to do? To rush off into the busy activities of work? First of all: Has the heart got warmed? The Lord would say: Lovest thou Me? That comes before action. But consider the first of these three a moment. "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?" It is to be remarked that

Peter had said in Matthew xxvi., "Though all shall be offended, yet will not I." Now the Master brings up to him his own words. "Is it really true that you love me more than the rest? You said that though all should be stumbled you would not be; now you have come up to the old spot in Galilee with an empty scrip, and faith has failed you. But who was it led on this chilly action? Is it true *you* love me more than the rest? Did John first make the proposal? Was it James who said, I go a-fishing? Who did?" The first lesson I have to learn is, Never let me think I love Him more than some other, or the Lord may show me how soon I may stray away from Him. What if Peter had gone on? He wouldn't have been an apostle worthy of the name. He would only have been a respectable Christian fisherman. Who led them? The very one who boasted, "I love you, if none else does." And the point of the answer is this: He indulges in emotional language, says caressing words, but each time the Lord bids him do loving actions. "Lord, Thou knowest I passionately love Thee." "Let Me see it then by your feeding My own." How simple are the four Gospels, but what an ocean of love is contained in them, and not in words, but in deeds! Peter was trusting to his passionate language, but the Lord bids him to war with deeds. Perhaps you may be heard praying with the deepest emotion, with most impassioned language, but when it comes to action you are not found more impassioned than others. And what if I myself warn against the snare, and be found doing the very thing? 'Tis deeds; that is the great answer to our subject. "Dost thou love Me with distinguishing love? Show it with actions. Can you feed My lambs and tend My sheep on Galilee's lake? I took you away that you might give yourself to pastoral work, and that is not words, but deeds—toiling for others."

Now, one other thing I want to say, and that is, the Lord puts this service in three different shapes. First, "Feed My lambs;" next, "Shepherd My lambs," that is, walk in and out among them; and then "Feed My sheep." Now mark the distinction between the first two. Turn to Paul's labour

among the Thessalonians as a specimen of one who with love to his Master was also full of love for them, for whom his Master died. 1 Thess. ii. 7. 8: "But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children; so, being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us." "Not the mere language of our lips, for so difficult is it to get from town to town that we do it at the risk of our lives." That is what I call feeding the lambs. Now read verses 11, 12: "As ye know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory." Himself going in front to lead them. The one the feeding, the other the shepherding. When they were grown up a little, then would He lead them into the paths of testimony and service, into endurance of reproach, lead them in the "paths of righteousness." I would have you remark what Psalm xxiii. says as to what the shepherd does. "He causeth me to lie down in the green pastures;" this is the feeding. "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness;" this is the shepherding, the exercising of the saints. And though it be "through the valley of the shadow of death," He is with me as He leads me. And as this is the action of the Chief Shepherd, so let it be the action of those who serve under Him. Not words, but actions; let the business of our lives be to think of the flock for whom He died. When Paul parted with the Ephesian elders he enjoins them to feed the flock, or to shepherd the flock. But a person may feed so far as word is concerned, and yet not be much of a pattern to those whom he feeds for them to follow. He says: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased by His own blood." Won't you give your love? Didn't Jesus give His? Yet how little do we know what it is to deny ourselves for the sake of those for whom Jesus died. Perhaps not even willing to

give up eating flesh, some little indulgence, lest we destroy one for whom Christ died. "Peter, I don't want language, caressing words. You have come into Galilee towns, and you are not following in the steps in which I led you when I was with you; but I find you on that lake, and from that you gave the emotional words." And the Lord gently rebukes him by giving him back his own language. "Do you really fondly love Me? Then be willing to suffer for the flock for which I suffered." And the flock would thrive if there were more of this truly shepherd care. Not the just getting them baptised and to come to the Lord's table, and then off to our varied occupations; but we need those who fill all the interstices of their time in weeping with mourning saints, and seeking backsliding saints.

First, then, we have "Feed My lambs"; secondly, "Shepherd My sheep"; and then "Feed My sheep." The *feeding* comes twice; what is the difference? I would remind you that very different help is needed for young saints than for those more experienced. All through Scripture we find that the saints are to be treated with different kinds of food. In Psalm xxiii. we have first the green pastures, and then the table spread in the presence of our enemies. The green pastures are good, but there will be hours of conflict and of ever-deepening experience, when stronger food will be required, and then there is the table spread in the presence of our enemies. Paul says to the Hebrew saints that he is not able to give them the strong meat, but must feed them with the milk of the Word. "For strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." But he found them of an age when they needed the elementary things of God's great love, and were not able to take in the Melchisedec food. For when did Melchisedec feed Abram? Not when first he came from Mesopotamia, but when he had been fighting for his brother Lot; then it was that he brought forth bread and wine. When I get into Church trials and toils for souls, what is to requite me? The Lord giving the approval of Melchisedec bread and wine. "Forasmuch as ye know

that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." So the simpler, elementary work is always needing to be done; but there is work further on than that.

Next, the passage shows us that all Church work we do is to spring from the warmth of Christ's love to us, and our love back again to Him. "Lovest thou Me?" Yes, Lord. Then "feed My sheep." I am to carry into every assembly that I visit the love wherewith I myself am loved. If I go to the north, or if I go to the south, it is not to be because I like it, but because Jesus died for those saints there; and not for the sake of the saints only, but for Jesus' sake, to whom the saints are dear. If I see Jesus in any one, what cannot I do for that soul? Are there not members of Christ whom I may serve as if it were the Master Himself, and doing all unto the Lord in every action of my life? How sweet then the joltings of an omnibus, the weary toil of a hot walk, if I know that it is carrying me nearer to a member of His. "Bestow the love upon My lambs, and upon My sheep." Not indiscriminately, but feed them with the marrow and fatness of Scripture, and lead them in the path their feet should tread. "Lovest thou Me?" "See My people, and pour the love upon them." We cannot bring our alabaster box of ointment, for He is in resurrection now; but I know of others for whom something may be done. Let your love be such as may be expended upon them; carry back your minds to John xiii., and go, wash their feet. I ask grace for each of us to go away hearing these words ringing in our ears, and that we may hear them ever, "Lovest thou Me?" And give back, not swelling words, but loving actions, expended upon those whom He loves.

THE LONE WAY.

NIGHT'S shadows slowly gather

Round my lone way;

Lord, guide my faltering footsteps,

Lest I should stray.

Through life's brief way, Lord Jesus,

O keep Thou me,

Until, beyond earth's shadows,

Thy face I see.

"A LITTLE ONE."

GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE—XI.

THE TIME OF THE RESTORATION.

By JOHN R. CALDWELL, Author of "Shadows of Christ in the Old Testament," "Things to Come," &c.

BEFORE concluding this part of our subject, let us glance again at the Book of Daniel ix. 27:

"And He shall confirm the covenant with [the] many for one week."

This I take to be the last, the seventieth week, of the prophetic epoch named in verse 24. It is therefore as all the rest, a period of seven years.

"And in the midst of the week."

Now the middle of seven years must be three-and-a-half years. That again is equal to 42 months, and that (calculating the year as is usual in the prophetic Scriptures at 360 days) amounts to 1260 days. Again, a year is sometimes named "a time," and the same period is described as "a time, times, and a half"; which is simply another way of stating three-and-a-half years.

This notable prophetic period is thus described in the Scriptures under four different designations. It is:

1st. $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, or half a period of 7 years.

2nd. 42 months.

3rd. 1260 days.

4th. A time, times, and a half.

All this, you observe, is most explicit and accurate.

Now, it may be in some sensational prophetic periodical, or it may be in some large and erudite volume, or it may be in a pamphlet written by some notable astronomer, that you find calculations professing to show when the times of the Gentiles will end, and when the Lord will appear.

These are usually based upon such numbers as that in Dan. viii. 14, "two thousand and three hundred days"—taking the day as representing a year of 360 days; or upon the thousand, three hundred, and five and thirty days of Dan. xii. 12, taking on the same principle a day for a year. But so far every such calculation has been falsified; dates again and again have come and gone, and none of these things predicted have happened.

The root error is this, they all proceed

on the assumption that God has revealed the duration of this present age—this acceptable year, this interval in His dealings with Israel during which the calling out of the Church proceeds. But we are satisfied that God has not revealed it. If from any of these dates the period of the Lord's appearing, and the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, can now be calculated, could not the Lord Jesus have calculated it as well in His day? Has the modern astronomer greater insight into the significance of these figures than He? Had it been revealed, how could the Lord Himself have said:

"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, not the angels which are in heaven, NEITHER THE SON, but the Father" (Mark xiii. 32).

Hence the practical exhortation based upon its not being revealed:

"Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is."

But as soon as the people of Israel see a covenant entered into with the great head of the ten federated kingdoms of the earth, by the majority of the nation which by that time shall have a national *status* among the nations in Palestine and Jerusalem, then, from that day the godly among them shall be in a position to calculate exactly when the period of their tribulation shall terminate in the revelation of the Messiah, the Lord from heaven.

"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away" (Dan. xii. 11).

That, we learn from ix. 27, is "in the midst of the week."

"And the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand, two hundred, and ninety days."

That is just thirty days over the three-and-a-half years.

"Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred, and five and thirty days."

Blessed moment indeed for the persecuted remnant of Israel, when their great Deliverer shall appear, setting the oppressed eternally free, and destroying their adversaries by the brightness of His coming.

Meantime it is not to Jerusalem we look for the deliverance that is to come to us. Locality does not enter into our expectations. Every eye is directed upward to the heavens,

"From whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto His own glorious Body" (Phil. 3).

It is our privilege now to share His reproach, His sufferings, His rejection, and to be gatherers of the harvest He has sown in the agony and cries of Calvary.

It is not for us to mend the world, or make the nations of it better, but in fellowship with Him to be gathering out of the nations, from every kindred and tongue, a people for His Name, to form that body of which He is the Head.

SANCTIFICATION:

WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURES? *

By T. D. W. MUIR, Detroit, U.S.A.

IT is a source of pleasure to meet with anyone who is really exercised about God's truth. Regarding this there is but one standard, the Bible, which is the Word of God. Therefore, "To the law and the testimony; if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. viii. 20). And the Spirit of God, the Author, is the only One who can interpret the Word of God. In the understanding, then, of the Word, two things are necessary:

(1) A man must be *born* of the Spirit of God.

(2) A man must be *subject* to the teachings of the Spirit.

Inasmuch as the Spirit of God always speaks according to the Word, it is thence we must get our doctrine as well as the law of our new life.

In examining the subject of Sanctification, it is well to clear the ground by looking into the root meaning of the word. It is uniform in both Old and New Testaments, viz., "to separate" or "set apart." Usually this is for some purpose in connection with the service of God. There is one instance, however, in Isaiah lxvi. 17, in which it is not so, but the opposite, even a setting of themselves apart to do evil: "They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord."

Now, such a use by the Spirit of the term "sanctify" shows us that the idea of being "made holy, or sinless," is not necessarily connected with sanctification. The reference already given from Isaiah lxvi. evidently means that they *separated* themselves from the Temple of Jehovah and His altar to do evil, and, hence, they were to be dealt with in judgment.

Then, we may say we have the word used in connection with inanimate things, such as

The seventh day (Gen. ii. 3).

Mount Sinai (Ex. xix. 23).

Altar of burnt-offering (Ex. xxix. 36, 37).

The tabernacle (Ex. xxix. 43, 44).

The laver (Ex. xl. 11).

The temple (2 Ch. vii. 16-20).

Our daily food (1 Tim. iv. 5).

A dwelling-house (Lev. xxvii. 14, 15).

A field (Lev. xxvii. 17-22).

Now, in none of these things can the thought of essential holiness enter, for there is nothing essentially holy about one day more than another, or one mountain than another, or in one piece of gold, silver, brass, or wood, more than another. The simple explanation is that God set those apart for Himself, and hence they were said to be "sanctified." The same can be said of the food we eat; it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer, and thus is set apart for our temporal refreshment and blessing, and "not to be refused."

Again, it may still further help to the understanding of the word "sanctify" to note how the Lord Jesus applies it to Himself: "Say ye of *Him whom the Father hath sanctified*, and sent into the world," &c. (John x. 36); and "for their sakes *I sanctify Myself*, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (John xvii. 19).

Here we have the Lord Jesus, the spotless, holy One of God, "sanctified by the Father," and again sanctifying Himself. What does it mean? Clearly that God sets Him apart for the work He is to do, on the one hand; and He sets Himself apart for the same purpose—to do the will of God, in order that *we* might be sanctified through the truth. *He could not be made more holy*, for He was absolutely such from the beginning.

But I have simply quoted these scriptures

to show the use of the word. And this is its use as applied to the believer, whether it be in relation to his *standing* or his *walk*. And when we speak of his "standing," we mean what the believer is *in Christ*. And when we speak of his "walk," we mean the measure in which he *manifests*, in his daily life, what he is in Christ. The confounding of these two aspects of the truth is where much of the confusion comes in. To avoid this confusion we shall look then at the subject of sanctification from the two-fold standpoint of what we are, and what we are being made.

I. ALL BELIEVERS ARE SANCTIFIED.

You will possibly have noticed that the epistles are generally addressed to Christians, who are usually called "saints"; the term simply means "sanctified ones." And it was not a select few among the many of God's people who are thus addressed. They are all so denominated, not because of a "second blessing they have received, or a "higher Christian life" they have attained unto since they were justified, but because they were "in Christ."

The believers at Corinth are so addressed—"To the Church of God at Corinth, to them that *are sanctified in Christ Jesus* and called saints," &c. And yet, the whole epistle is largely taken up with correcting wrong things both in practice and doctrine. In chapter vi. 9, 10 we read of what they were before God saved them; but verse 11 tells us they were now "washed," "sanctified," and "justified" in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God! Note the order—and it is perfect—washed, sanctified, justified. This reverses the theory held by many, that a man is first justified through faith in Jesus, and later on must pass through a second experience in order to be sanctified.

The fact is, they *all go together*, and the moment a poor, guilty sinner believes on the Lord Jesus Christ to the salvation of his soul, he is washed, sanctified, and justified in His name. Christ is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Cor. i. 30). I am, and have, all in Christ risen. It is not a question of *attainment* on the part of some. This is the portion and position of the feeblest babe in Christ. We are said to be:

Sanctified by *God the Father* (Jude 1).

Sanctified by the *Lord Jesus* (Heb. ii. 11).

Sanctified through the *Holy Spirit* (1 Pet. i. 2).

Sanctified by the *will of God* (Heb. x. 10).

Sanctified by the *Blood of Christ* (Heb. xiii. 12).

Sanctified by *faith in Him* (Acts xxvi. 18).

Sanctified and *perfected forever* through the one offering of Jesus Christ (Heb. x. 14).

All this is absolutely true of all who are in Christ, and nothing less than this would give them a place in the presence of a holy God. But, remember, it is only "*in Christ*" that all this is true of any, and is *the result solely of His finished work* on the cross, and not in any sense because of any good found in them.

II. WE ARE BEING SANCTIFIED.

It is equally true, however, that the believer is being sanctified. This goes on daily, if there be the daily going on with God and His Word. In that wonderful prayer of our Lord Jesus in John xvii. we find Him praying for His own: "*Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth*" (verse 17). And again, He "*gave Himself for the Church, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word*" (Eph. v. 26, 27). In the same connection, read Titus ii. 14.

Thus do we see His desire expressed to have us manifest *practically*, what His grace has made us *absolutely* in Christ. In other words, He wants us to reflect Him in this dark, unholy world, of which Satan is ruler and prince; being set apart from that which is of the world, to seek those things that are of God!

In 1 Peter ii. 5-9 we are called an "holy nation, a peculiar people," and hence God tells us we are to be holy, because He is holy. We are exhorted to "*reckon ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God,*" because we have already died with Christ (Rom. vi. 1-11). For the same reason we are exhorted to "*mortify,*" or make dead, our members which are upon the earth (Col. iii. 5); and yet again, to "*put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof*" (Rom. xiii. 14).

All this, and much more to the same effect, we are exhorted to do; and we would not

have the standard lowered one atom. God has put no lower standard before us than His Son when He says: "*He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked*" (1 John ii. 6).

Many there are, however, who make high pretension of "*living without sin*"; but they can only honestly speak thus because of a *human estimate of what sin is*, and a *human standard of holiness!* Sinlessness, while we are in the body, is unknown to Scripture, though often loudly professed by some who would know better did they read their Bibles. Alas! some get so far with this fallacy as to boast that they don't need the Bible now! They prove this by ignoring its most positive commands.

(The concluding portion will be given in next number.)

THE LORD'S PRAYER—II.

(Matthew vi. 8-13.)

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

"HALLOWED BE THY NAME."

THIS is our second division, and the words, "Hallowed be Thy Name," suggest the thought of GOD the centre of universal worship and HEAVEN as a HOLY TEMPLE, as said the Psalmist: "*Jehovah is in His Holy Temple, Jehovah's Throne is in the Heavens*" (Psa. xi. 4); and as God said (Isa. lvii. 15), "*I dwell in the high and holy place;*" and Solomon in his dedication of the Temple recognises this (2 Chron. vi. 18), "*But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house which I have built.*" The whole illimitable universe of God is one vast temple, filled with the omnipresence of God, and pervaded with His glory; with its ample floor, and gallery above gallery, rising higher and higher, and expanding wider and wider, throughout infinitude, with its crowd of holy worshippers, the innumerable company of angels in general assembly, the seraphim answering one to the other, "*Holy, holy, holy, Jehovah of Hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory*" (Isa. vi. 3). And as seen after the resurrection morn in Revelation iv., v., with the four-and-twenty elders, the spirits of just men made perfect, the Church of the

first born written in heaven, "those loved ones gone before whose pilgrim days are done," and in due time those who come out of the great tribulation with their palms of victory and their robes of purity; while the whole intelligent creation joins in the worship and the praise. This is the Temple in which we worship, as said the Psalmist, "But as for me, I will come into Thy house in the multitude of Thy mercy, and in Thy fear will I worship toward Thy holy Temple" (Psa. v. 7).

The NAME of Jehovah is expressive of all that He is, every divine title being, as it were, a letter which when combined spell out His Name, the Triune Jehovah. This is recognised by the seraphim (Isaiah vi.) addressing Adonahy the Sovereign Lord as "holy, holy, holy," acknowledging the Father, the Son, and the Spirit as the object of united praise, adoration, and worship.

"THY KINGDOM COME."

"Thy Kingdom come." Looked at in the light of these words, HEAVEN presents itself as the PALACE of God, the GREAT KING. "The Kingdom of God" is also styled "the Kingdom of the Heavens," because, as Daniel expresses it, "the heavens do rule" (Daniel iv. 26). There are the principalities and powers in heavenly places, employed and honoured of God in His kingdom, and He who has redeemed us unto God has made us kings and priests unto Him, for it is a faithful saying, "If we suffer we shall also reign with Him" (2 Tim. ii. 12). And in Rev. iv. the spirits of just men made perfect are seen, under the emblem of four-and-twenty elders seated on their thrones, clothed in white raiment, and on their heads crowns of gold.

When the Lord Jesus was asked by Pilate, "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" His reply was, "My Kingdom is not of this world . . . now is My Kingdom not from hence" (John xviii. 33-36), implying that His Kingdom was heavenly in its origin and character, "the Kingdom of the Heavens."

This petition naturally leads us to look forward and desire that time when the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all His holy angels with Him, when He shall sit upon the throne of His glory, not only

inheriting the throne of His father David, but also manifesting the kingdom and glory of His heavenly Father, when it shall be said, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. xi. 15).

THE NAZARITE.

THE QUESTION.

HE drinks no wine! No wine of earth
Can claim t'inspire his singing;
Yet mark his constant, holy mirth,
As though his soul were winging
Her homeward way 'mid sunbeams bright,
Instead of our sad, downward flight,
'Mid murky clouds to endless night—
What secret has this Nazarite?

He has no thews; his woman hair
Speaks weakness, shame, and hiding;
Yet lion as 'twere kid he'll tear,
The strongest force deriding.
A thousand foes he'll put to flight;
With ass's jaw prevail in fight—
Almighty power! resistless might!
What secret has this Nazarite?

Our old creation scene, though fair,
Is filled with dead and dying;
He seems to breathe another air,
The power of death defying.
The death within us doth unite
Our souls to this pervading blight;
His head still crowned, his garments white,
What secret has this Nazarite?

THE ANSWER.

The secret is it that you ask
Of joy, strength, elevation?
To answer is an easy task—
One word gives explanation:
Jesus alone my heart's delight;
Jesus alone my strength, my might;
Jesus at new creation's height,
Alone can keep His Nazarite!

I too was sad, or only forced
As crackling thorns my laughter,
When, lo! the loveliest Person crossed
My path. Enough; thereafter

No wine could move itself aright
To vie with love, whose depth, and height,
And sweetness are my soul's delight—
This secret has the Nazarite.

I was, and am indeed still weak,
But 'tis the same sweet story;
The love whereof I love to speak
Has made that shame my glory.
My woman-hair but hides from sight
All that I was—my wretched plight;
And now my Saviour's grace and might
Suffice a helpless Nazarite.

O dream not that I've not been bound,
Or count myself thy better;
'Tis but that I at last have found
One who has burst my fetter.
He threw His arms about me quite;
Stood in my place where God *must* smite;
Thus died; then took to glory bright
The heart of His poor Nazarite.

And when some death-defiling sin
Comes suddenly across me,
My course I must again begin;
The days before are lost me.
Dost think I am discouraged quite?
Where can I turn? His love more bright,
Like one clear star 'mid stormy night,
Leads ever home His Nazarite! F.C.J.

HOSPITALITY.

THERE are two passages in the New Testament which plainly inculcate this duty. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Heb. xiii. 2).

"Use hospitality one to another, without grudging" (1 Peter iv. 9). And it is noteworthy that in both instances an exhortation to love immediately goes before.

"Given to hospitality" and "a lover of hospitality" form a leading characteristic of a divinely qualified overseer.

The hospitality of Gaius receives honourable mention both by the Apostle Paul (Rom. xvi. 23) and John (3 John v. 6).

It is one of the ways in which love delights to express itself—that love which is of God, and therefore God-like.

One of the lines of service specially named

as pertaining to the woman is, "if she have lodged strangers" (1 Tim. v. 10). The man may desire to show hospitality, but the working of it out really devolves upon her who "guides the house." The labour and care, the attending to the wants and comfort of the guest fall upon the wife, and it is encouraging to all such to know that woman's ministry in this respect is honourably mentioned in the Scriptures, and shall in no wise lose its reward.

Those who have for many years sought in some degree to show hospitality can testify to the profitableness of the command. Indeed, by such it is not regarded as a command merely, though it is plainly so, but rather as a precious privilege and a high honour.

Children of God and servants of the Lord may meet again and again at Conferences and other gatherings, till they know one another by sight and by name, but no friendships are thus formed comparable to the happy intimacy that results from intercourse in the household and around the family board.

Gifts may be made up and sent to servants of the Lord in distant spheres, and correspondence be carried on, but those who have been received into the home, and thus have become known and loved, are ever after regarded with a deeper and more effectual sympathy.

Those who could, but do not, lay themselves out to entertain strangers, who spend money on other things, but grudge to provide a spare bedroom, little know the loss they sustain and the blessing they forego.

Is it in vain that the Holy Spirit adds, "thereby some have entertained angels unawares"?

Was the blessed communion of Mamre, the promise of the seed and the intercourse about Sodom, not a recompense to Abram for the hearty entertainment he provided?

Was the hospitality of the woman of Shunam not amply repaid, as according to the prophet's word she embraced a son, and again received him back from the dead in resurrection?

Were the two disciples not rewarded who, as the spontaneous outcome of their burning hearts, constrained the unknown stranger to

go in and tarry with them in their humble home at Emmaus? O rich reward of kindness shown to the stranger, when the Lord of Glory took His rightful place and broke to them the bread and made Himself known to them in the act.

And in the coming day of the judgment-seat, will the Lord forget the kindness shown to His own: "I was a stranger, and ye took Me in"?

May the Lord stir up His people to consider this much-neglected command, and it will no longer be the complaint of those who undertake the responsibility of providing for the strangers at the Conference times that they know not where to find accommodation for the servants of the Lord. J. R. C.

GOD'S PROVISION FOR KEEPING HIS REDEEMED PEOPLE RIGHT WITH HIMSELF.

PART I.

AMONGST the various departments of service in the Church, there are three which I would specially refer to. First, there is the evangelistic side of service—that is, encouraging, directing, and leading out the saints of God into gospel work in this and other lands. There is also the very important work of exposing the heresies of these last days by bringing the Word of God to bear upon them, and so keeping saints sound in the truth. But there is another line of service at least of equal importance with these two, that is, seeking to keep the saints not only right as regards the truth of God, but *right in heart and conscience with the God of Truth*. I believe I am right in saying that this line of truth was never more needed, or less appreciated, by many saints than it is to-day. Work, work, work, is the order of the day, and little time and little heart for being alone with God and His Word. I refer specially to those who have been converted in recent years, and in saying this I am not blaming them—far from it. I believe the blame lies with those who ought to have looked after them. So many have professed and are professing conversion of late years. Many of these have followed

the Lord in baptism, and gather to remember the Lord in the breaking of bread. And there they are left, with few if any to enquire how they are getting on with the blessed God. Under such circumstances, is it any wonder if some of them disappear and become lost in the world, or in the world's religious associations; and even if they do continue to come to meetings, there is a sad lack of godly exercise of conscience regarding the holiness of God, and regarding sin as seen in the light of His presence.

The great doctrine of the one perfect offering of Christ, giving believers in the present age a perfect conscience, was the one truth above all others that, from about sixty years ago and upwards, wrought such a mighty revolution in the experience of many of the Lord's people. It was this, more than any other truth, which gave to those who apprehended it a liberty in Christ which made sectarian bondage intolerable. They intuitively felt that if they were to live, and walk, and serve in the joyous liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, they must come out of all humanly-devised systems, and take their stand on the Word of God. What is needed more than anything is for believers to be led into the grandeur, glory, and perfection of the Cross of Christ, not only to meet the ruin of *lost* sinners, but to meet the need of *saved* sinners. This aspect of the sin-bearing of Christ is by far too little known and too little taught. As I have said, many believers who had been living in bondage were brought out into liberty mainly by the apprehension of the perfection of the one offering of Christ, in its embracing the sins of believers as well as the sins of unbelievers, and by seeing that the atoning death of Christ meets their present need, as erring, sinning saints, they "had no more conscience of sins" (Heb. x. 2). Most young believers who have a clear deliverance at conversion start with having no "conscience of sins"; but unless the believer's conscience is kept under the power of the Cross all the way along, what was once *no more conscience of sins* may be so abused as to become *no more consciousness of sin*. The expressions are very much alike, but are very different in their import. By

presenting a perfect sacrifice before the eye of faith, our God has made provision for a believer having a perfect conscience, that is, a conscience having no sense of guilt. And that is not because there is no sense of indwelling sin, nor because this root of sin in a believer is not often operative, but because faith sees how, at the Cross, Christ made restitution for all the sins of a believer, past, present, and future. And not only this, but at the Cross the nature which is the source of the sin was judged and put to death. A believer will always, if walking in the light, be painfully conscious of sin, and too often of sins; but a fresh look at the Cross, if it is seen in its all-embracing magnitude, whilst it will reveal the hideous nature of sin, will keep the conscience of the believer free from every stain of guilt.

But there is no such experience in Scripture as a believer having no consciousness of sin. Such an experience, whoever has it, whether saint or sinner, is a delusion, and is of the devil.

There are many believers who are quite sound on this point; they make no pretension to being free from the root of sin which dwells in them. Yet that root seems to give them little trouble, nor does the *activity* of that principle of sin in them give them much uneasiness. Many saints can sing with great energy:

“I brought my sins to Jesus:
He cleansed them in His blood,
And in the Cross of Jesus
I found my peace with God.”

But the question never seems to strike them, What am I doing with my present sins? Am I bringing them to Jesus as I did my sins before conversion? or am I allowing them to lie on my own conscience until it has got so benumbed that things which would once have brought me to my knees before God in confession have now ceased to give me any trouble?

In saying these things, I believe I am laying bare the condition of many a child of God in the present day. There is a flimsy, superficial peace of conscience which many have, that they never got at the Cross. They got it by trifling with sins which have never been confessed in the presence of God.

The importance of a believer's conscience being kept in a healthy condition cannot be overrated. There are many scholarly and gifted efforts being made to keep the saints of God sound in the faith; but that which makes saints a prey to the devil, laying them open to embrace his blasphemous heresies, is seldom hinted at. “Holding faith and a good conscience, which (last, J. N. D.) some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck” (1 Tim. i. 19). To argue with believers who have put away a good conscience will only in most cases feed their pride. If we are to succeed in delivering those who have been led, or are being led, into the heresies of these last days, we need to begin with them where the devil began with them. He begins by spoiling the conscience. Before he attempts to lead a believer aside from the truth of God, He seeks to lead them away from the God of Truth; and if he succeeds in getting them to depart in heart from the Living God (Heb. iii. 12), he will soon manage the rest. When Paul by the Spirit gave his parting charge to the elders at Ephesus, he said, “And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace” (Acts xx. 32). Let us mark well it was first to God he commended them. Whatever be the amount of truth a believer has learned, no one is safe if the conscience has become so defiled that it has lost its power to detect and to witness against sin; and no doctrine in Scripture will keep the conscience of the believer right with God but the doctrine of the Cross. The truth of the priesthood of Christ will give us power to walk in the light of the presence of infinite holiness. His advocacy will lift us up, and restore the broken link of communion. The laver of the Word will wash away *contracted* defilement; the truth of a living, loving Saviour will meet the need of the heart; but if there is guilt lying on the conscience of either saint or sinner, nothing can remove that but the doctrine of the SHED BLOOD.

We hear much in these days, and rightly so, of the efficacy of the blood-shedding of the Son of God to remove the burden of guilt from a convicted sinner's conscience; but we seldom hear of the same blood-shedding being needed to remove guilt from the conscience

of a sinning child of God. "And He is the propitiation for *our sins*" (1 John ii. 2). We have learned about the advocacy of Christ putting a sinning child right with the Father; we have learned about the faithfulness and justice of the Father in forgiving the penitent child (chap. i. 9); but have we also learned the basis on which He can alone act in doing so? Have we seen that every unholy desire, every unholy thought, or word, or action of which I have been guilty *since my conversion*, cost the Son of God His life's blood on the Cross? How could God as a Father be "faithful and just" in forgiving me as His child if those sins He forgives had not been borne away by the atoning death of Christ? My sins were all future when Christ bore them away. "God, who knew them, laid them on Him"; but these sins were never removed from my conscience until I brought them and laid them where God had laid them—by appropriating in faith the death of Christ as my just desert, and also as a perfect expiation of my sins; and if I had never so come, these sins would have sunk me to hell.

Whilst my sins since conversion can never do that, are we as believers to think lightly of sin because our sins as children of God do not endanger our eternal safety? They, as we have said, cost the Redeemer His life. God as a Father could not forgive a single unholy thought or desire had not that thought or desire been expiated at the Cross. One reason why there is so little exercise of conscience about sin amongst many believers is because we have allowed a most important doctrine to drop almost entirely out of our theology; that is, Christ, as the "propitiation for our sins" as believers before the Father, could righteously forgive us, and the necessity for the appropriation of this truth *all the way along*, if our consciences are to be kept as they ought to be. Will the reader carefully look at Heb. ix. 13, 14, and observe how it reads, "*Shall* purge your conscience"; and note this said to those who are called "holy brethren" (chap. iii. 1)? But more of this in next paper.

G. A.

THE Christian is like the ripening corn, the riper he grows the more lowly he bends his head.

THE VANISHED VISION.

IN the Transfiguration scene the passing away of the vision is clearly connected with Peter's proposal to make three tabernacles. It was a wonderful sight. The three favoured apostles saw their Master transfigured before them—His raiment "shining, exceeding white as snow" (Mark ix. 3). "And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias, talking with Him." How awe-inspiring, how transcendently grand this sight must have been!

How long the vision might have continued we cannot tell. This much we know, that the impetuous Peter broke the silence, and at once the vision passed away. We read that "he wist not what to say." And not knowing what to say, he concluded that something must be said, and that he was the person to say it. How often we have seen it thus when saints were gathered to wait on God. As the meeting went on "from strength to strength," the spirit of adoring worship seemed to take possession of every heart. This led up to a period of silent waiting on God—the silence of adoration, recalling that time in the history of God's ancient people when "the priests could not stand to minister, by reason of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God" (2 Chron. v. 14). Adoring hearts were saying, "Lord, it is good for us to be here;" "This is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven." Before their enraptured gaze there arose a vision of Gethsemane, of Calvary, of the Ascension from Olivet, when suddenly the voice of some impetuous Peter is heard. To him the silence was either an awkward pause, or a suitable opportunity for letting his own voice be heard. He jumps to the conclusion that something must be said, and that he is the person to say it. And lo! the vision is no more. Who is there that has not had a similar experience of the vanished vision?

We do not say that the mere breaking of the silence must needs dispel the vision. The failure is due to the silence being broken by one not in "the trend" of the meeting—not in the leading of God. Perhaps, like Peter, he "wist not what to say." How

good would it be for the saints if those who do not know what to say would say nothing! But the flesh cannot wait on God. Self dies hard, even where Christ is professedly owned as Lord in the midst. There are those who take the "pause of silent waiting" as an intimation from heaven that they must rise and deliver an address. They recognise it as an opportunity to be seized, and which if not seized will entail undoubted loss upon the Church. They feel they must break the silence, else some other one will break it! But he who waits on God will not reason thus. He may break the silence, but the vision remains. He leads out to Christ. The adoration continues. And longing hearts still bear testimony, "It is good to be here."

Regarding what may be called the "open meetings" (the memorial feast, and meetings for prayer) we have often heard the remark made, "A wonderful meeting, *up to a certain point.*" The meeting went on ascending, and might well have ascended until the close. But when a "certain point" was reached the key-note was suddenly lost. Some one, out of the divine unison, rushed into the vacant space and struck the misleading note. Practically the meeting ended there, although, as a matter of fact, it may have continued for three quarters of an hour. We need to give heed to that word which says, "Be still, and know that I am God." If from that stillness we speak, the opening of our lips shall be "right things." The Lord shall be exalted, and weary eyes shall behold Him, to the glory of His Name. w. s.

SUCH A FRIEND.

I HAVE some little intimacy with the Friend of sinners, and what He manifests to me of Himself increases affection. He teaches me to loathe myself; every day He lets me see and feel the total ruin of this body of sin and death, and will not let me look at anything in or of myself, from whence I may draw one moment's comfort. Thus He makes Himself more lovely. Self-loathing renders Him precious. The more we get out of self, the more we grow into Jesus. Tired of our works and duties, we learn to

value His righteousness. Feeling we cannot keep ourselves, we know how to trust His faithfulness, who hath undertaken to keep His people unto the end. O what a Friend is this! whose love is like Himself; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.—WM. ROMAINE.

NOT IMPUTED.

Hebrews ix. 26-28; 2 Corinthians v. 18-20.

IN Hebrews ix. we read, "Now, once in the end of the age hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself," and in 2 Corinthians v. 19, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

The word translated "put away," in the Epistle to the Hebrews, occurs only once elsewhere, viz., in Hebrews vii. 18, "For there is verily a disannulling (or setting aside) of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof." This refers to the law of priesthood, and God sets it aside meanwhile, in order to bring in the Melchisedec priest. But the law is there though meanwhile annulled, but in the time, yet future, of Ezekiel xlii. 14 it will again be in force.

Now, our two scriptures in Hebrews ix. and 2 Corinthians v. teach us that sin being the barrier in the way of God's love reaching the sinner, God has, by means of Calvary's work, set it aside. It is no longer in the way, and God's message now is that He is not imputing (in this day of grace) a world's sin, but waiting to pardon—beseeching sinners to be reconciled. A man, for instance, may give a month's bill to his creditor, promising to pay at the expiry of one month and three days. When the three days of grace expire, he may have to ask his creditor to wait a week; if the creditor is willing he simply retains the bill—the debt is still owing, but it is not imputed.

Now, God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish—in the day of grace not imputing their trespasses unto them. But if grace is slighted, then God will impute sin, and will judge and condemn every Christ-rejector (Heb. x. 26, 27; Rev. xx. 11-15).

To participate in the benefits of Christ's death, faith is necessary, and that faith is evidenced first by owning God's judgment against us, by taking Jesus as God's gift, and making His work our only plea.

The world's sins are not forgiven; they are only not imputed meanwhile, and so Jesus says, "If ye believe not in Me ye shall die in your sins." So the contrast in the case of the believer and the unbeliever is fully stated in Hebrews ix., "And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many."

Now, Aaron, on the day of atonement, stands in two senses as the type of Christ: 1, As, clothed in fine linen garments, he offers the sin offering (Lev. xvi. 4), answering to Christ giving Himself, the Just One for the unjust; 2, As high priest, after his work in this respect is done, he entered into the tabernacle to give effect to that work on behalf of all those who took their proper place as needing it (Lev. xvi. 29-31). This answers to Christ, after His resurrection (for He only then became a priest), entering into heaven itself to plead the merit of Calvary's work on behalf of all who put their trust in Him (Heb. vii. 25, and v. 9).

It is worthy of note that the word translated "bear the sins of many," has in it the sense of "bring up." If we take it first in application to Calvary, then we learn that He, the spotless One, brought up our sins before God, and in His own body received the judgment due to them, which wrung from His spotless soul the bitter cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" But along with this we have the precious truth that in the power of endless life He presents Himself before God to plead the merit of His death on behalf of every sinner who trusts Him.

Aaron trusted in the blood, and, though a sinner, he drew aside the vail, and stood under cover of the same blood that satisfied God on the mercy-seat (Lev. xvi. 14). Only those are under the blood for whom our living High Priest makes atonement in the holiest (Lev. xvi. 17; connect 1 John ii. 1, 2). Please note that in 1 John ii. 2 the words, "for the sins of" the whole world, are not

in the original; and the passage ought to be read, "He is the propitiation for our (believers' sins), and not for ours only, but for the whole world." Thus Christ, as the purger of our sins, having sat down on the throne of God, has turned that throne into a mercy-seat, and as long as He sits there it is so. But when once the Master of the house (Lev. xvi. 6; connect Heb. iii. 6) is risen up, that throne becomes a throne of judgment.

Meanwhile, Calvary's work is not speaking for the nation of Israel, simply because they refuse Him who speaketh from heaven, but the moment they turn to the Lord, Jesus, their long-rejected Messiah, will plead the merit of Calvary's work on their behalf, and so "all Israel shall be saved."

Has the reader accepted Him as his own? Then are you safe. But delay, and the door may soon be shut, and you be left outside, crying, "Lord, Lord, open unto us," only to hear these awful words, "I know you not." Meanwhile, He is "a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knoweth them that trust in Him" (Nahum i. 7).

T. C.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

"WATER" IN JOHN'S EPISTLE.—Does the water mentioned in 1 John v. 8 and the water mentioned in the 6th verse of the same chapter mean the same, or, if not, what do we learn from the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses together?

LIFE AND DEATH.—Please explain Romans viii. 10 and 13. In what aspect are we to understand "life" and "death" in these two verses?

1ST PETER.—Is the 1st Epistle of Peter addressed specially to converted Jews?

PALMISTRY.—What is the Christian's position towards palmistry? Should he believe and practice it, or does Scripture condemn it?

CHRIST'S INTERCESSION.—What is the meaning of John xvi. 26, and how is it to be reconciled with Hebrews vii. 25?

DEATH—TEMPORAL OR SPIRITUAL.—Is it life and death in the literal or spiritual sense that is referred to in John xi. 25, 26, and whether is "Though he were dead" (A.V.) or "Though he die" (R.V.) correct?

PROPHECYING—Is it EXISTENT Now?—Does the teaching which we get in 1 Corinthians xiv., in connection with prophesying, apply to the present time?

THE CHURCH'S PREROGATIVES.—We hear it stated again and again that "It is the Church that receives, and the Church that puts away." Seeking to abide by "What saith the Scriptures in all things," would value help from God's Word on these two points.

THE TWO GOSPELS.

QUESTION 391.—What is the difference between the gospel of the grace of God and the gospel of the kingdom, and how does Matthew xxiv. 14 apply?

Answer A.—The difference is only in the way it is designated. It is but one gospel.

In Acts xx. 24 Paul says the ministry he received of the Lord Jesus was "to testify the gospel of the grace of God." In the next verse he tells us he went about "preaching the kingdom of God." They are one and the same.

What Christ preached at Nazareth, those "words of grace that proceedeth out of His mouth," and which He said "He must preach to other cities also" (Luke iv. 43), He calls "the kingdom of God."

"The gospel of the kingdom" in Matt. iv. 23 was connected with healing, casting out devils, and the like. And so we find it almost always, whether in His own preaching, as Matt. xi. 20, xii. 28; or that of the Apostles, Matt. x. 7, Luke x. 8; or of Philip, Acts viii. 5-12. Into this "kingdom" the harlots were entering before the Pharisees. Of this kingdom—not the millennial—the keys were given to Peter.

In Luke ix., observe what are identified (verse 2), "He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick." (Verse 6), "They went preaching the Gospel and healing everywhere."

There is much in the New Testament about the kingdom in its coming manifestation, as Matt. xxv. 31; xxvi. 29; but much more about the present kingdom which specially now concerns ourselves. This kingdom they "preached"—that is, proclaimed it as heralds. The time is not come for the future kingdom to be thus proclaimed. It is still a matter of prophecy and hope. "This gospel of the kingdom"—the same that the Lord and His apostles had been preaching, and which was to be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations (Matt. xxiv. 14)—could hardly be a different gospel from that in chapter xxviii. 18-20; Mark xvi. 15; and Luke xxiv. 47; none of which refer to the millennial kingdom, but to the present power of Christ to save. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace

reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." w. c.

DANIEL'S FOURTH KINGDOM.

QUESTION 392.—Has the fourth kingdom mentioned in Daniel vii. 7 finished its career; and if not, what is its present condition?

Answer A.—In verses 1 to 6 of Daniel vii. we have other three beasts mentioned, which correspond with the head of gold, the breast and arms of silver, and the belly and thighs of brass in Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the great image in Daniel ii., and these, we learn from the explanation of the vision given by the messenger, represent the three kingdoms—Babylonian, Medes and Persians, and Greece. To continue the parallelism, the fourth beast in chapter vii. and the legs and feet of the image in chapter ii. represent the great Roman empire. This fourth beast Daniel describes as "terrible and powerful, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet, and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns."

To enter deeply into this subject would occupy too much space. A few leading points only will, therefore, be touched upon, leaving our enquiring brother to search out more details for himself.

The legs of iron and the feet and toes of iron and clay of the image in Daniel ii., and the fourth beast in chapter vii., as we have said, typify the Roman empire in its temporal and secular aspect, and the woman seated on the beast in Revelation xvii. clearly points to the spiritual sovereignty of the Roman hierarchy, designated in the 5th verse as, "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of the harlots, and of the abomination of the earth." By comparing these two passages—Daniel vii. and Revelation xvii.—it will be noticed that their acts and deeds correspond. In one it is, "devouring and breaking in pieces, and stamping the residue with its feet"; in the other it is, "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses (martyrs) of Jesus"—both indicating dire secular and religious oppression and persecution, and the description of the woman unmistakably points to Rome. Under the Pagan-Roman dominion our Lord was crucified, and His saints martyred by thousands upon thousands, and under the combined temporal and spiritual dominion of the Roman hierarchy history tells us millions of the saints of God were burnt, tortured in every conceivable, fiendish way, and massacred—to wit, the Holy Inquisition! the Star Chamber! &c. These servants of Satan (this "wild beast") were, so

to speak, "drunk (intoxicated) with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus," and its persecution is still carried on where it has the power. That the Roman hierarchy and "Babylon the Great," described in Revelation xvii., are one and the same there can be little doubt, and the fall of Babylon, described in Revelation xviii., refers to the fall of this same Roman hierarchy. The condition of the fourth beast of Daniel vii. and of the woman in Revelation xvii. is, therefore, the condition of the Roman hierarchy at the present time, and its career is not yet finished, but its progressive condition is foretold in chapter xviii.

Daniel saw (ch. vii.) in his vision the whole prophetic history of the temporal and spiritual course of this terrible fourth beast, from its rise as Pagan-Rome to the destruction of the spiritual Babylon—the woman seated upon the beast—and the final destruction of the beast itself, as foretold in Revelation xix. 20. He saw the close of this dispensation, when "The Ancient of Days did sit," when "The beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame" (Dan. vii. 11, and Rev. xix. 19, 20). Then he saw "One like unto the Son of Man, and He came near unto the Ancient of Days, and dominion, and glory, and a kingdom that shall not pass away was given to Him"—the Christ of God (Dan. vii. 13, 14).

This "wild beast" is the spirit of Antichrist which arose in the apostles' days and culminates in the Satanic trinity—(1) the dragon, (2) the wild beast, and (3) the false prophet—the second beast (Rev. xiii.) manifested and embodied in the "man of sin" (the "son of perdition").

In writing the above, dogmatism is not intended, and the writer exhorts readers thereof to "search the Scriptures and see whether these things be so."

The efforts that are now being put forth to obtain the union of the Eastern and Western Churches, and the union of the Anglican Church and the Church of Rome, will, it is believed, eventually be crowned with success; then "The woman, arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, having in her hand the golden cup full of abominations" (Rev. xvii. 4), will say, "I sit a queen and am no widow, and shall in no wise see mourning." It remains, therefore, for every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ (the people of God) to obey the command given to them in Revelation xviii. 4: "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not joint partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." w. d. B.

Editor's Note.—It appears unquestionable that the fourth wild beast of Dan. vii. is the Roman power according to Luke ii. 1-3 and iii. 1, and other scriptures. No other kingdom succeeded

the Grecian. No fifth earthly kingdom is mentioned. The fourth continues till it is destroyed at the manifestation of the Son of Man in judgment.

At present it is broken up into a variety of different kingdoms, the details of which dismemberment are not made the subject of prophecy. But it is clear that at the time of the end, and before the final judgment scenes, there will be a reuniting of the Latin Powers; one vast confederacy will be formed under a mighty sovereign, energised by Satan. It will be the Roman empire resuscitated in all its leading characteristics. The fourth wild beast will represent it morally in its final form as accurately as at its beginning.

ENTERING INTO REST.

QUESTION 393.—Does Hebrews iv. 10 refer to Christ having entered into rest after He had finished the work of redemption, or is it in reference to one who has entered into rest of soul by accepting Christ? Also, in verse 11, What are we to understand by the words labour and rest in this verse? What is the rest that we can obtain by labouring for it?

ANSWER A.—It might be true to say of Christ that in resting He ceased from His work, as God did in creation. This, however, is not what the verse refers to. It would not be relevant to the argument. The phrase is quoted from Psalm xcvi. 11, where it is used literally of entering into the land which God had provided them for a rest. And the expression is repeated ten times in the two chapters as typical of the rest provided for believers to enter into through Christ's finished work. It is not simply resting, as if self-attained, but entering into—going in and taking possession of—a rest provided by another; "My rest," "His rest," "the [said] rest" (iv. 3, GR.).

It is illustrated by the Sabbath rest (verse 4) given by God to man, because He Himself had rested on that day. And to this illustration he returns in verse 9, using the word "Sabbatism," and showing in verse 10 that similarly we are called to "enter into His rest," who has rested from His work for us, having obtained eternal redemption. This we do by ceasing from our own works. Paul constantly uses the term "works," as in Titus iii. 5, "works [as a ground] of righteousness," while always insisting on the obligation of "good works" (see verse 14).

"Labour" (iv. 11) is in the sense of "give diligence," as rendered in R.V. Compare chap. vi. 11, "The same diligence" as in work and in labour of love, shown in their case, is to be exercised to the full assurance of hope—only another way of describing the "rest" of chaps. iii., iv.—the exhortation being needed because we are so prone to be "slothful" in this matter of "faith and patience." w. c.

GOD'S REMEDY FOR HEART HARDENING.

Address by Mr. JAMES WRIGHT, of Bristol.

HEBREWS III.

THE apostle teaches us in the Epistle to the Galatians, chap. v. 17, that "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would"—that is, the flesh cannot have all its own way. The Spirit is mightier than the flesh. And in the verse before it says, "Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." There is conflict, but the Spirit is mightier than the flesh. "Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world" (1 John iv. 4)—greater is the One for us than all those against us. And the secret of victory over the working of the flesh is to walk in the Spirit, and in proportion as we walk in the Spirit "ye cannot do the things that ye would."

I want to cast the light of that important statement upon some points in this chapter. We have here THREE GREAT TENDENCIES AND WORKINGS OF THE FLESH brought before us, and we have, on the other hand, THREE MANIFESTATIONS OF THE PRESENCE AND POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT in the believer—three *downward* tendencies and three *upward* tendencies illustrating the conflict spoken of in Galatians. Three works, tendencies of the flesh, more or less manifested in the believer, because of the corrupt, evil principle still latent in us.

The three downward, evil tendencies spoken of in this chapter, are—

- (1) Hardening the heart.
- (2) Erring in heart.
- (3) Departing in heart from the living God. So there is marked progress—three downward steps very closely connected.

The three works of the Holy Spirit, the upward manifestations and tendencies of the Holy Ghost, brought before us here, are—

- (1) Hearing God's voice, or "hearkening."
- (2) Entering into rest.
- (3) Holding fast the beginning of our confidence.

And if we look at those three we shall find that the three are set over against one

another, and the more the heavenly, spiritual, upward tendencies are developed in the believer, the more the others are held in abeyance, and he is practically delivered from their power.

"To-day, if ye will *hear His voice, harden not your hearts.*" The one is set in opposition to the other. *Hearing* is the work of the Spirit—what the Spirit leads the believer to. *Hardening* the heart is carried on by Satan.

Now, if we hear His voice, listen to His voice, as we are told in Isaiah lv., "Hearken diligently unto Me," we are more and more safe from that process which is called "hardening the heart."

What is *hardening the heart*? How did Pharaoh, for example, harden his? By rejection of God. "Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice to let Israel go?" "I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go" (Ex. v. 2). By the obstinate rejection of God and disobedience to His plain command, that is how he hardened his heart, and hardened it more and more to His utter destruction.

Now, that process of hardening can never be carried out fully in the believer, because grace interposes to prevent that, yet the principle is the same. That which leads you and me as believers not to obey instantly the plainly revealed will of God in His Word, is that which leads unbelievers to utter destruction—the same principle, but not permitted to work its way out; if it did, it would destroy us. I say, inattention to the clear expression of God's will leads to this. If I see a thing revealed as the will of my Father, and for some reason or other I deliberately decide to shirk it, put it aside from various motives—it is not convenient, not to my interest, it would injure me—that process is hardening the heart, and the inevitable result of such a course is to harden the heart, sear the conscience, and make me less and less attentive to the voice of my Father. Therefore, this word comes so home to our hearts—"To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." And then the solemn warning of Israel is brought in to show the relationship of hardening the heart to being shut out from blessing. Not that all those who perished in the wilderness were

eternally lost, but they forfeited the special inheritance and blessing God had prepared for His people, and into which He brought their children.

The secret, the principle, the cause of this process of hardening the heart is disobedience to the known will of God. Therefore, beloved fellow-believers, let us take heed to this, and remember that it is the instruction of our Father. He does not want us to harden our hearts, and sear our consciences, and He tells us the cure for it is to *listen to His voice*.

Now, practically, we should consider what that means. How can I, as a child of God, hear the voice of my Father? When Israel was in the wilderness God spoke with an audible voice from Mount Sinai, and that voice was so terrible that they entreated not to hear it any more, and asked that God would give them a mediator to stand between them and Himself. He appointed Moses to be such an one between a holy God and a failing people. But there came a time when God ceased to speak by mere men. He spoke, you know, by judges, and then by prophets, according to the word in Hebrews i., "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets"—that long period during which God in grace was not silent. O what a terrible thing it is when God is silent! "Be not silent unto me, lest, if Thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit" (Psa. xxviii. 1).

It would be a terrible thing if God were continuously and uninterruptedly silent toward His creatures. He is not silent, blessed be His Name! for He spoke through generations by "men of God." Then He spoke by His Son, and there was no terror then—people were not afraid of Jesus, even little children loved to gather round Him, and He, on His part, did everything to encourage them; He put His hands on them and blessed them; publicans and sinners were not frightened away even by His holiness. O how lovely that God should manifest Himself and come so near to fallen creatures in the person of His Son! That Son humbled Himself, "took upon Him the form of a servant" (Phil ii. 7, 8), and went on to the

bitter death of the Cross. God spoke by His Son, and so this salvation "began to be spoken by the Lord" (Heb. ii. 3) with His own blessed lips. "Come unto Me and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28). What a blessed Gospel! "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John iii. 14, 15). These words fell from the lips of the Son of God Himself. Verily the salvation of God, which is all of grace, "began to be spoken by the Lord."

So we see it is entirely different, this second revelation of God. What a contrast between Moses and Christ, between Sinai and Calvary! God speaks now from the throne of grace. After the Lord Jesus had ascended, He sent down the Spirit, and that Spirit influenced the minds, and took possession of the understandings and hearts, and the very fingers of the apostles, so that instead of thoughts being committed to them, which they were at liberty to express in any words they liked, the very words they wrote were the words of the Holy Ghost, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor. ii. 13).

And so the words of the Spirit given us by the hand of the apostles are as much scripture as the words of Isaiah and Jeremiah, and their authority is as sound as that of the only begotten Son of God Himself, because the same Spirit that spoke in Him wrote by them, and therefore, says Paul, "The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor. xiv. 37). Now one by one these apostles went. As long as they lived the believers were the subjects of *oral* instruction. At last only John was left, and he said, "I *write* unto you," preparing the way for a new condition of things when there should be no more oral instruction. So when he wrote to the seven churches (Rev. i. 3), "He that hath an ear let him hear what *the Spirit saith* unto the churches," when the parchments reached Ephesus, Smyrna, &c., what did the angel of these churches read? The words of the Spirit. So the Spirit *spoke* through *written* parchments, and that in-

augured the present state of things, of all God speaks being by the written Word, the Holy Spirit's writing. These are God's words, and if you or I now obey the injunction to "hear" we must come to this Book to-day, we must be moulded by them, let them be written in our very hearts; above all, we must hear with an obedient ear—hearing in Scripture means *obeying*. "Hear, and your soul shall live" (Isaiah lv. 3).

We have eternal life, but do we want to *grow*? A babe is supposed to grow, and God is disappointed (speaking after the manner of men) if believers do not. This is alluded to in Hebrews v. 12: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." "I cannot give you teaching suitable to men, but have to give you what is suitable for babes." So we want to get on, we want the fulfilment of that word of Christ (John x. 10): "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." What is the simple secret? *Hearing*, dear friends. We got life by *hearing*, and we get this fuller, deeper, more abundant life by *hearing*. It is *communion with God* that deepens the spiritual life. And mind, that communion cannot be on one side. I must not be content to spend the time on my knees crying to God in prayer, and not listening to Him. I say it is an insult to God to exalt *prayer* above *hearing*. I admit at once that it is a marvellous thing that God should allow us to speak to Him, that He should listen to the babblings, the poor, broken utterances of men of the dust. And I tell you a *more* wonderful thing, that in the height of glory He so interests Himself in us that He stoops down to speak to us.

Now, the first thing is to *listen*—to hear in faith and obey. And then that unlocks the tongue. If the word of God comes into my heart, that is the way to loose my tongue. Look at the miracles of Christ. They brought to Him a man who could not speak or hear (Mark vii.). Did He loose his tongue first? No; He unstopped his ears, and *then* He opened his mouth. We must *hear* before we *speak*. And this is a

principle that goes all through the life of the believer. If the spirit of prayer flags we have not to work ourselves up into a prayerful state; we go on our knees with the Book before us, and, as He speaks to us, He overwhelms us, and shows us our deep need, and then we say, "Abba, Father." Do not you see it is a sense of need, coupled with the apprehension of Himself, that creates the fruit of the lips? That is how He creates it—by the revelation of Himself—God bending down to listen to His poor creature. When I realise that—that He has given us His Son, and that the very movement in me towards Himself is His own movement, or I should not be moved—it unlocks my tongue. But do I pray? I think not. *The very result of that movement in me is to begin with praise, and prayer is always more scriptural when built up on a good foundation of praise.

"*To-day*, if ye will hear His voice." That "*to-day*" is everlasting: it is *every day*. When is that? Yesterday? Yes. *To-day*? Yes. *To-morrow*? Yes. It is *perpetual*. God is saying, "*To-day*, if ye will hear My voice."

Now, I say again, this is God's remedy for heart-hardening: "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Gal. v. 16). If I walk in obedience to God's Word, and listen to Him with whole-hearted obedience, that will deliver me from that principle which leads to heart-hardening.

(*To be continued.*)

THE ONLY HAPPY LIFE.

WHEN God makes us His willing subjects, He promises us such blessings under His government as the world has not to give, and the world (I can witness for Him) is not able to take away. Faith gives Him credit, and according to our faith He fulfils His promises and makes us really blessed. Here you see, sir, I get upon my own ground—living by faith—the only happy life. An emperor has nothing to be compared with it, whether you look at the blessedness of our King's subjects as they relate to spiritual, to temporal, or to eternal things.—WM. ROMAINE.

GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE—XII.

ANTICHRIST.

By JOHN R. CALDWELL, Author of "Shadows of Christ in the Old Testament," "Things to Come," &c.

I WANT now to look at Scriptures which show the character of the coming potentate called "antichrist," or "the man of sin," though in Scripture the same person is referred to under many titles.

And first let us read John xiv. 30 :

"The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."

Also, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4 :

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost : in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not."

Here we have two titles applied to Satan—he is "prince" and "god" of this age. Now, what is the difference? As "prince," he is the political head of this world; as "god," he is its religious head. Satan is at the back of all the powers of this world, and Satan is the instigator of all this world's religion. The consequence is that the world's political powers and the world's religious systems will all combine for the furtherance of Satan's designs: they will be in league together against God and against His Christ.

Now, Christ is the rightful Prince and God of the world: Satan is a usurper, therefore Satan will claim the power and the worship that rightly belong to the Lord Jesus. Satan will have his man as the political head of the world's power, and he will have his man, as the religious head, instituting an apostate order of worship, and by Satanic ingenuity and deception maintaining his dominion over the consciences of men. These two Satanic heads are figured to us in the book of Revelation, chap. xiii., as two wild beasts—the first being Satan's prince and the second his false prophet.

In the book of Daniel it is recorded that God gave Nebuchadnezzar a vision of the world-powers covering the whole "times of the Gentiles." It was a great image. The head was of gold, the breast of silver, the thighs of brass, the legs of iron, and the feet of mingled iron and clay. Nebuchadnezzar himself was that head of gold, and doubtless

as he beheld the vision it appeared to him grand and attractive. But later on in the book (chap. vii.) God gives to Daniel, the man greatly beloved, the man with whom was the secret of the Lord, a vision of the very same period and events, but instead of a grand and glorious image, it is four wild beasts, monstrous, cruel, bloodthirsty, destructive. Such is the vision of the times of the Gentiles as presented to the spiritual eye of the seer. How characteristic are these two views of the world's glory!

Will you now turn to Rev. xiii.?

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion; and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority."

We are not left in doubt as to who "the dragon" is who gives to this beast his throne and great authority. In chap. xii. 9 we read:

"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world."

The power with which this beast is invested is therefore Satanic, and whatever truth or falsehood the Devil may have uttered when he told the Lord Jesus that the power and glory of the world's kingdoms were given to him, and that he could bestow them on whom he would, it is evident that in the time approaching to which Rev. xiii. points, it will be literally true that the world's potentate will be the nominee of the devil, and will have received from Satan his dominion and authority.

"And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death: and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast."

That is to say, this great Power will, as it were, be regarded as a thing that had been slain—"wounded to death;" yet it is resuscitated, it rises again to power, to the great astonishment of the world.

When our Lord was upon earth the existing Power was the Roman Empire. That has been broken up into fragments, and at present the Roman or Italian Power is not by any means one of the greatest in Europe.

But when the ten kingdoms into which all those nationalities will be resolved are finally united under one Imperial head, the great confederacy will have all the characteristics of the Roman Empire; it will wield all its ancient Imperial authority and possess all its power for destruction and oppression. Such a resuscitation of the Roman Empire will indeed appear like the healing of a deadly wound; it will be like a resurrection of the Empire.

All the world "wondered." This is not so much astonishment as admiration. Devised by Satanic ingenuity, everything about this Imperial power will appeal to the pride and vainglory of the natural man.

"And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?"

That is, they worship "the god of this world." And such will be the enormous force at the disposal of this Power that it will be generally regarded as invincible. To proclaim war against such a Power would be madness. Only consider how many millions of trained soldiers there are at the present time upon the continent of Europe, exclusive of Russia. Imagine these all federated under one head, all at the bidding of one sovereign will, and who would be mad enough to attempt resistance? Is it to be wondered at that unbelieving Israel should enter into league with such a Power?

"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies: and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him."

The expression, "All that dwell upon the earth," which occurs again and again in this book, is a characteristic term. It means those that are settled down upon the earth. They may be nominally Christians, but they are such as we read of in Phil. iii. 19:

"Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things."

If they are settled down on the earth it is a sure sign that their names are not in the Lamb's Book of Life.

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

I do not think this means the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, though it is true He was foreordained to be the Lamb slain, but rather the names written from the foundation of the world. Compare Rev. xvii. 8, which gives the same expression definitely.

If this be so, your name is not written in the Book of Life when you believe; rather your believing on the Lord Jesus is the result of that sovereign grace of God which entered your name from eternity in the Book of Life. And is it not wonderful that the Book of Life is also the Book of Death, for it is the Book of the Lamb slain! It is through His death that we are enrolled among the living.

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads."

In verse 15 it says, "He had power to give life." In the margin you will find it reads correctly "breath," not "life." God does not delegate the power to give life even to Satan. In verse 16 the mark may be either in the right hand, where it would not be seen, or on the forehead, where it would be visible to all; but the result is the same. Be it secretly or openly, the man who receives it is the slave of Satanic power.

"And that no man might buy or sell, save he that

had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."

Here is "exclusive dealing," as it is softly termed, otherwise known as "boycotting," carried to its legitimate end. This is what all the world's combinations are tending to. Instead of liberty it is bondage.

"Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six."

Here are three sixes. I am not prepared to interpret it. Only in Scripture the number six is connected with man, and the works of man.

"Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work." Man never attains to the perfect number—seven. Man ends his days at six, and the sum total of all man's work, and skill, and science, and politics, will be but 666, and then all will be dashed to pieces to make way for the perfect work of the Son of God and the new creation. Many are the fanciful interpretations that have been given of this mystic number, but I believe that many details of prophecy are not intended by God to be understood until the time comes for them to be required. Then they will become blessedly plain to the anointed eyes of those who are in the secret of the Lord. They will no longer be matters of vain speculation, but full of practical value and needed instruction.

Now, you notice in this chapter there are two beasts. The first is the political power, the second the religious; and these two are confederate—they act together, the one backs up the other. The second says that all must worship the first, and that all who dwell on the earth must make an image to the beast. The second exercises all the authority of the first; he has all the power of his armies at his back, and he has power to do "great wonders," giving breath to the image, causing it to speak, and condemning to death all who refuse to worship the image.

This second beast corresponds exactly with the description given in 2 Thess. ii. of "the man of sin," "the son of perdition," "the wicked [lawless] one":

"Whose coming is after the energising of Satan,

with all powers, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish."

This, I doubt not, is the antichrist—the one who shall secure the confidence of the apostate Jewish nation—the false prophet, the deceiver, who, when it suits himself, will turn again and rend them.

In John v. 43 we read:

"I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."

This is the one who comes in his own name. He works wonders, but they are miracles of destruction. What a contrast to the miracles of the Lord Jesus, which were all works of grace. The only one that seems different was the cursing of the barren fig-tree. But it goes to prove the rule, for when a curse must be pronounced it is only a tree, and not a man that suffers. His mighty works were all redemptive; they were all the undoing of what sin and Satan had done—the destroying of the works of the devil.

In Dan. xi. 36 this same person is called "the king." His identity with the "wicked one" of 2 Thess. ii. can hardly be questioned. Of him it is said in verse 37:

"Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers."

This shows that the antichrist must be a Jew. He casts even the Old Testament behind his back, in addition to denying that Jesus is the Christ. Alas! that such an one should be trusted, and believed, and accorded divine honour by the Jewish nation; yet such is the depth of apostasy to which the unbelieving majority will then have fallen.

CONSTRAINING LOVE.

No time away the Christian idly throws;
It is a sacred trust, and well he knows
The service of his gracious Lord demands
A willing, grateful heart, and active hands.
Do worldlings ask, What motives can thus
move?

We answer, It is LOVE—constraining love
Of Him who for our souls a ransom gave,
Bled, groaned, and died, and triumphed o'er
the grave.

ATTRACTING TO THE TRUE POSITION.

WE have heard it said that while "the bare truth" may keep you in a scriptural Church position, it takes *grace and truth* to draw others to that position. It will be admitted that this is generally the case. There may be exceptional instances in which people are attracted to an ecclesiastical position by the truth alone, apart from any manifestation of grace or power. But in these cases it will be found to be a drawing of like unto like.

If there is to be a drawing of the godly—of those whose hearts are truly longing after God—there must be something more than the claim and the professed proof that we are on "Divine ground." "Yes," these longing souls will say to us, "we see the texts you point us to, but we want to see evidence of their power." They see the truth we hold, but they know right well that "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John i. 17); and if, in our case, grace be awaiting, they will very naturally conclude that something serious is wrong. They will refuse to be drawn.

We may lecture them on their obstinacy, drive them into a corner with our logic, and flatter ourselves we have convicted them of wilful disobedience; but they do not move. We admit that there may be cases in which there is a prejudice against scriptural lines—cases in which men are not prepared to "buy the truth" and pay the required price. It is not convenient for them to move. And they are not sorry when they discover serious inconsistencies in those who profess to tread the way of truth.

But what of those with every evidence of devotion to the Lord's Christ? If they are conscious of no magnetic power attracting them to the spot where Christ is professedly owned as Lord, this should surely be the signal for searching of heart so far as we are concerned. If the magnet has lost its power, we ought to get into the presence of God as to this great matter. We may be valiant for truth, and hold it with an iron grasp, but if there be not manifest in us "a savour of Christ" the scattered saints will refuse to be charmed, let the charmer charm never so wisely. Let

us be clear on this point, that there is no attractive power like the attraction of *life*. Its pulsation will be felt, its warmth will be acknowledged. The various courtesies of love that accompany a manifestation of the Christ-like spirit will break down the prejudices of many who are opposed to "the Way." By manifestation of the truth we shall commend ourselves to their consciences. If *mercy* as well as truth be with us (2 Sam. xv. 20) we shall treat them as beloved for the Master's sake. We shall recognise them as brethren—bound up with ourselves in the bundle of life with the Lord our God. We shall gain their confidence. After that, everything will come easily and naturally. Oneness of spirit shall assert itself—not by the formulation of a law, but by the silent operation of the great law of love. And that oneness of spirit, spreading from within, will ere long be visible without; for God will give it a body (an outward manifestation) as it may please Him.

Even "Philistines" may acknowledge that the "Ark of God" is with us; but if we have not the God of the Ark, humiliation is in store. Moses recognised that the consciousness of God's presence was the highest and truest separation; for we hear him say, "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence" (Ex. xxxiii. 15). If God be indeed with us, that great fact shall be perceived and acknowledged; for it is written of Asa that "they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that *the Lord his God was with him*" (2 Chron. xv. 9). w. s.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

IV. HEAVEN AS THE THRONE OF GOD.

(Matthew vi. 10.)

"Thy will be done also on earth as it is in heaven."

THE word "ALSO," though generally omitted in translations, is of importance, as not only expressing comparison, but combination; it implies that God's will is perfectly done in heaven, with a desire that also, and in like manner, it may be perfectly done on earth. Jehovah's throne is in heaven, as He says in Isaiah lxvi. 1, "The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool." One of the titles of God is, **JEHOVAH OF HOSTS.**

In Psalm ciii. 19-22 we read, "Jehovah

hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all. Bless Jehovah, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His Word. Bless ye Jehovah, all ye His hosts; ye ministers of His, that do His pleasure. Bless Jehovah, all His works in all places of His dominion." And in Isaiah xl. 26 God says, "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things: that bringeth out their host by number: He called them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth." From this we learn that among the innumerable suns and systems which compose the starry heavens, there is no defection, "not one faileth," and that this little world is the only revolted one in God's vast empire, the only one clamouring for "Home Rule" (see Psa. cxlvii. 4, 5).

In Revelation iv. 1, 2, John writes: "After these things I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven . . . and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and One sat on the throne." There is this characteristic of heaven, there is but one will there; and as the law of gravitation rules in the material universe, so the will of Him who sits upon the throne keeps all in action, order, and harmony. From chapters v. and xxii. 1 we learn that it is the throne of God and of the Lamb. As the Father's will is thus perfectly done in heaven, so we are taught in this petition to desire that that same will may ALSO in like manner be done on earth.

V. HEAVEN AS THE BETHLEHEM, OR HOUSE OF BREAD.

"Give us this day our daily bread" (Matt. vi. 11).

The Apostle James wrote (chap. i. 16, 17): "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." God has not left "Himself without witness . . . and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts xiv. 17). He openeth His hand and satisfieth the need of every living thing. It is well to feel and confess our daily dependence on God's providential care, but man cannot "live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. iv. 4). The

psalmist said Jehovah "had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them the corn of heaven" (Ps. lxxviii. 24). Our Lord explains this: "Moses gave you not that bread from heaven, but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world. . . . And the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John vi. 32, 33, 51). As Israel through their forty years' wandering in the wilderness fed upon the manna which fell from heaven—the omer for each man (Ex. xvi. 16-36), and on the sixth day a double portion, intimating that Christ the Bread of Life is a portion for time and for eternity, the Bread of God enduring unto eternal life. But the importance of the dew in connection with the manna must not be overlooked. The dew fell first, then the manna fell upon it, and when the dew was gone up there appeared the manna, and the manna was sandwiched and saturated with the dew. It is the Holy Ghost who reveals Christ and makes Him the source of Divine life and sustenance to the soul.

In Matthew vi. it is, "Give us this day" (the aorist imperative), the portion of the day in the day, taking no anxious thought for the morrow. In Luke xi. 3 it is, "Give us day by day" (the imperative present), showing continuation, expressive of our dependence on God for our continual supply for body and soul. It is our Father in heaven who reveals Christ to us by His Spirit, and makes Him the Bread of Life to our souls. It is a heavenly Christ on whom we feed, He who came forth from the Father and came into the world, and who again left the world and returned to His Father, so that we now know Him as the "hidden manna," Christ Jesus—Christ in resurrection, heavenly glory, the anti-type of the manna laid up in the golden pot; and it is on the Christ, the spiritual man, the One anointed with the Holy Ghost; truly man, but not only man, one with the Father and with the Holy Spirit.

"Give us this day our daily bread." None of these petitions are selfish; the heart expands to the whole family in the present wilderness condition, that the whole family of God may be supplied daily for body and

for soul, that no cupboard may be empty, and no soul suffering famine from the lack of the Bread of Life. It is significant that BETHLEHEM, where Christ was born, in the Hebrew signifies THE HOUSE OF BREAD, and this reminds us of the prodigal son in the far land, where "no man gave unto him," saying, "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger? I will arise and go to my father." And when he came to the father he received the paternal blessing, and not only bread, but the fatted calf, and a home, with a welcome.

FIGURES OF THE CHRISTIAN.—XI.

THE CHRISTIAN: A LIGHT.

By Dr. J. N. CASE, China.

LIGHT stands as the symbol of righteousness, purity, and truth. The term is used of the nature and manifestation of God. It is applied to Christ, who also once and again employs it to describe Himself (John i. 5-9; viii. 12; ix. 5, &c.). In its absolute sense it cannot be ascribed to any man, not even to him who, officially, was greater than the greatest of the prophets (John i. 8). For even John, in his day and generation, was but a lamp (John v. 33, R. V.). Christ is "the Light of the world" (*i. e.*, the sun of the spiritual realm). He alone, like the sun, is pure and *undevived* light.

So, when the Lord said to His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world," we at once understand that they were to be the world's light as they received it from Himself, and transmitted the same. Since Christ is as the sun, which shines by its own unreceived light, then the Church is well compared to the moon, which only shines as it is shone upon. Thus there is a radical and eternal distinction between Christ and His people as the Light of the world.

As long as He was personally in the world He was personally the Light of the world; but on Calvary the sun, as it were, set in thick clouds and darkness; since then, for the world, it has been night, and night is the season when the moon appears. Christ, then, is still the true Light of men, but now

He shines not directly, but on and through His people.

In this series of papers we have introduced only such figures as chiefly apply to Christians in their individual character. So, in further briefly pursuing this theme, we will examine it from the same standpoint.

1. *The believer is likened to a lamp.*—Readers of the Authorised Version are familiar with the terms candle and candlestick; but those who use one of the several other useful translations to be procured know that the terms should be rendered lamp and lamp-stand. The difference between the two things is evident, and has often been pointed out: A candle contains in itself all that it requires for its whole existence; a lamp must frequently be replenished. No created being can possibly be self-sufficing; of all creatures a Christian can, spiritually, be least so. He requires from his Lord constant attention. He must receive from above constant supplies of grace, wisdom, and strength.

A neglected lamp turns dim, smokes, gives off an unpleasant odour, and ultimately goes out. Of old it was a part of the High Priest's service, morning by morning, to attend to the lamps in the Tabernacle—cleansing, using the snuffers, and refilling with oil; in the evening his hand re-lit the same. It has been aptly observed that while he was provided with tongs and snuff-dishes, there is no mention of an extinguisher. This foreshadowed the service of our great High Priest for His people still in the wilderness. But for this every light would soon burn dimly, yea would go out. Still this cannot be, for it is in the everlasting covenant that the fire His Spirit has once kindled shall never be put out. "A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench." Let us rejoice in these words, telling us so plainly as they do of the compassion and skill of our Saviour and Priest.

As we have seen, John the Baptist was a burning as well as a shining light. Some Christians are like the electric light—all light and no heat; others are as a furnace—all heat and no light. Let us aim to be like the old-fashioned fireplace, giving out both

light and heat. God is both light and love; so they be who have been "made partakers of the Divine nature."

A lamp is lit to put on a stand to give light to all needing it. Our Lord, in His teaching, indicated three places where it ought not to be put, viz., under a bushel, under a bed, or in a cellar (Luke xi. 33; viii. 16). In these sayings we are pointedly reminded of the things which in all ages and lands would militate against the shining forth of the light that is in His disciples. These evidently are love of the world and its gain, sloth and self-ease, and fear of man.

2. *The believer is compared to a luminary.*—The word light in Philippians ii. 15 is properly *luminaries*. In the Septuagint it is used of heavenly bodies, all of which diffuse light. It is only once again used in the New Testament (Rev. xxi. 11). There it refers to the light which shone upon and was reflected by the heavenly Jerusalem. Of her it is said: "And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine upon it; for the glory of the Lord did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

The chief thought, then, in the scripture before us (Phil. ii. 15, 16) is that Christians are *light-diffusers*. They receive it not alone for themselves, but also to give forth to others.

In the teaching of our Lord the outward conduct of His followers is spoken of as the light. Men beholding their good works do not admire or praise the lamp, but glorify Him whose handiwork they are, and whose grace they show forth. In this passage believers act as lights by spreading abroad the Gospel. Just as light is necessary for the maintenance and development of life in the natural world, so the light of God's truth is necessary for the bestowment and growth of spiritual life. Hence the pregnant sentence: "Among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." Were not the mind diseased by sin, and man by nature far from God, truly the light would be a pleasant thing; but now, alas! men often hate the light, and will not come to it lest their deeds should be discovered and reproved. The prince of darkness, the god of this age, blinds the minds of unbelievers lest the light

of the glory of Christ should shine unto them.

Lights are of use where otherwise it would be darkness. How foolish it would be to crowd most of the lights of a large house into one room, and leave other parts in total or semi-darkness. And yet, is not that being practically done with so many of Christ's light-diffusers crowded together in the British Isles, while the great majority of mankind are sitting in gross, heathen darkness, a darkness that truly can be felt? Reader, is this a point of interest or importance to you?

3. *The believer is spoken of as a reflector.*—The Revisers render 2 Cor. iii. 18, "Reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord," giving the usual reading in the margin; but most other Greek scholars (including the American Revisers) render as in the Authorised Version. It is a nice question, and where such authorities differ, how shall plain men decide? We can get no help from other passages, for the word is not used elsewhere. But I think that we shall not be far away if we understand it in both senses—beholding as in a mirror, and reflecting as a mirror.

The reference is clearly to Ex. xxxiv. 27-35. In intercourse with Him in secret, Moses' face was illuminated with Jehovah's glory. It was so vivid that the people were afraid at his approach, though he himself, it is significantly said, "wist it not." Thus, within he gazed upon the glory of God, and when he came out he reflected its rays abroad. So should it be in our case, with this difference: Moses looked upon and reflected material glory; we are to gaze on and reflect the moral glory of Christ. In the mirror of the Word we see the moral excellencies of the Redeemer, and as we are heart and soul taken up with these, we show them by faith in our lives (1 Peter ii. 9, R.V.). But here and now we may not further enlarge on this.

This leads us back to where we began. Just as naturally the face of Moses was destitute of a ray of Jehovah's glory, and he was only able to shed it abroad as he was from time to time receiving it, even so is it with us. If he remained long out of God's presence the light faded away, and he became as other men. In this there is a lesson that we cannot fail to take in. We do well to

remind ourselves that we cannot produce the light, or even store it up; we can only diffuse it, and that we can only do as we are dwelling in the sunshine of His presence. The reflector of the lamp, whether of glass or metal, must be kept bright and clean, and be set at the proper angle, otherwise no light will be reflected from it. We must watch against the thousand and one things that may come in and dim the spiritual reflector, or put it out of position, and hinder us in reflecting His beauties. If we endeavour to walk in the light, even as He is in the light, we shall then have true fellowship with God and with His people, we shall diffuse the precious life-giving light to those around, and our own faith will be as the light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

SANCTIFICATION :

WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURES?

By T. D. W. MUIR, Detroit, U.S.A.

III. SIN IN US, YET NOT ON US.

"IF we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. . . . If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us" (1 Jno. i. 8-10).

Now, you will please notice again that the apostle is writing to believers (1 John ii. 12), and he *includes himself* with them. He is not, therefore, speaking of unsaved or un sanctified ones, as we have heard it ignorantly objected. He is speaking of saints, whose *sins were forgiven* never to be remembered (Heb. x. 17), but who had sin *in* them, and were deceived if they said they had not. In 1 John i. 9 we have *one* side of the provision God has made for restoration of communion broken by sin being allowed to act and bring forth its fruit, namely, *confession*. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." In chapter ii. 1, 2 we have the *other* side of the provision: "If any man sin we have an *Advocate* with the *Father*, Jesus Christ the Righteous." God is still our Father, though sin has marred our fellowship with Him. God is not the Father, nor the Lord Jesus the Advocate of the unregenerate. From the above it is evident the Apostle John, who

leaned on Jesus' bosom when He was here, did not profess to have reached

SINLESS PERFECTION

in his life and walk.

From the Word of God, then, we learn:

(1) *That the believer is sanctified in Christ Jesus*. This is perfect and absolute, and is the effect of the threefold work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It cannot be added to, or made more complete, for we are "complete in Him" (Col. ii. 10).

(2) *That the believer is being sanctified* as day by day he is submitting himself to the cleansing power of the Word of God, which, *negatively*, shows him what he should not be and do, and, *positively*, shows him what he is to be and do. Thus God gives no license for self-will in anything—it is God's will in everything, as it is revealed in the Word of God. Paul took the first step in practical sanctification when he asked: "Lord, what wilt THOU have me to do" (Acts ix. 6)? His own will was set aside, and God's will became the only rule of conduct and service.

IV. HEAVEN IS A HOLY PLACE,

and nothing unholy shall ever enter there (Rev. xxi. 27), and yet it is to be filled by some of the vilest and most hell-deserving of earth's sons and daughters, all "made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. i. 12). How? By virtue of the precious blood of Christ. They were meet for it then, and God alone will get the glory. So perfectly has Christ answered every claim of Divine justice on account of sin, that He, as "the first-born among many brethren"—in resurrection—the Head of the new creation, has entered into the holiest of all, and, by virtue of His blood, we have boldness, or liberty, to enter with Him (Heb. x. 19-22). Praise His name!

But here the subject of

THE TWO NATURES

comes in, and we must very briefly look at it in the light of God's Word. By nature all are children of wrath, children of disobedience (Eph. ii. 3-6), and children of the devil (John viii. 44). Shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, no amount of training,

secular or religious, could make us children of God. Nicodemus was a "good sinner," if such can be, and yet to him was said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit; marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (John iii. 6, 7).

Note the two births :

*Of the flesh, a natural birth ;
Of the Spirit, a heavenly birth.*

The first made us members of a ruined family, of which Adam is the head. The second made us members of the family of God, of which Christ in resurrection is the Head. Now, as Adamites, we were utterly ruined, so the Cross shows me that God not only deals with my sins, but with me the sinner, setting me altogether aside, as one fit only for the judgment of God. In Christ, however, I am seen as having passed through the judgment, and am now standing on resurrection ground—no longer in Adam, but in Christ.

But I am seen as a responsible man with

TWO DISTINCT NATURES.

The one is called "the flesh," in contradistinction to the other, which is called "the Spirit" (Gal. v. 17). It is also called the "old man," because the other is called the "new man" (Eph. iv. 22-24; Col. iii. 9, 10). In Romans vi. 6 the "old man" is spoken of as being crucified with Christ, the same being taught in Gal. ii. 20: "I am (have been, R.V.) crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," &c. *Actually* we were not there, for we were not born. But *judicially* we were there. In the judgment of God we were put to death in Christ crucified, and raised in Him, as the risen One. Now we are called on to reckon ourselves dead unto sin, but alive unto God (Rom. vi. 11). God thus takes us into His own reckoning about ourselves, and hence we are to "make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. xiii. 14). I am exhorted to be "filled with the Spirit" (Eph. v. 18). "To be led by the Spirit" (Gal. v. 18), and to "walk in the Spirit" (Gal. v. 16). Why? That I

may not fulfil the lusts, or desires of the flesh.

THE BATTLE BETWEEN FLESH AND SPIRIT will continue to the end.

But Christ is coming, and then we shall be changed into His glorious image, for He will *present us in the glory, without a spot—defilement—or wrinkle—decay—or any such thing* (Eph. v. 25-27). Meanwhile we have His Spirit to guide us and teach us, that we may walk worthy of God unto all pleasing. Outside, there is the devil and an alluring world—within is the flesh. But He is greater than all, and can give us power to walk with God till Jesus come !

WHAT I AM NOT, YET OUGHT TO BE.

IT is not my doings, past or present, that troubles me most. So long as a man is taken up with these, he will never know himself. Neither is it what I am that troubles me most. The thing that grieves me, even to heart-break, is this : What I am not, while yet I should be it. It is this dreary margin, these miles on miles of waste, between what I ought to be and what I am not, that lays me in the dust, and makes me oftentimes feel that such a word as abhor myself is too feeble to express *my feeling*. Yet out of all these humbling and heart-breaking experiences come my sweetest hours ; such a frame of spirit God so loves that He cannot keep out of the heart where He sees it ; it is His choicest dwelling-place (Isa. lvii. 15). Of all the sacrifices which men render Him, there is no sacrifice so acceptable as to offer to Him a broken and contrite heart (Psa. li. 17).—JOHN DICKIE.

THREE GATHERINGS.

1. Gathered for Life, - Matt. xxiii. 37.
2. Gathered for Prayer, - Matt. xviii. 20.
3. Gathered for Glory, - 2 Thess. ii. 1.

FOUR DOXOLOGIES.

- | | | | | |
|--------------|---|---|---|----------------|
| Twofold, - | - | - | - | Rev. i. 6. |
| Threefold, - | - | - | - | Rev. iv. 9-11. |
| Fourfold, - | - | - | - | Rev. v. 13. |
| Sevenfold, - | - | - | - | Rev. vii. 12. |

Correspondence.

THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT.

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

I HAVE just returned from the Zionist Congress at Basle, and am thankful to the Lord for having led me there a second time. On my first visit last year I was greatly impressed with all I saw and heard. This year I was even more so—firstly, because I have recently gone through all the promises concerning the restoration of Israel, and I take these promises as literally as the dispersion has been literal; secondly, the earnestness and great desire which God has put in the hearts of His earthly people to return to their land.

There were representatives from all parts of the world, speaking many dialects and languages, yet all united on one subject. They were of all shades of religious opinion, from the most bigoted to free-thinkers. Some of them underwent great privations in coming, owing to the long, hot journeys and observance of the dietary laws, but they told me that on arriving at Basle they forgot all hardships. A Jewish gentleman who came to a fortune of 150,000 roubles (considered in Russia a large sum) went, on receiving it, to a synagogue and made a vow that he would not touch it, but that all should go for Zion. On my asking if he regretted his act, he said that if he had the riches of the Rothschilds he would do the same. While telling him the Gospel, I pointed out that when the Jews are back in their land they will undergo great tribulation, and he admitted it. He told me that he was descended from David, so I referred him to Zech. xii. 10, and asked what he thought of that. He said it might come true.

The Congress was similar to last year's. Dr. Herzl, the president, in his opening speech said: "What is to be the nature of our achievement? We will say it in one word—a charter. Our exertions are directed towards obtaining a charter from the Turkish Government. . . . Not until we are in possession of this charter, which must embody the necessary public legal guarantees, can we commence a great, practical colonisation." He also said that the German Emperor takes a deep interest in the national idea, and has great influence with the Sultan.

At a private meeting in the Casino there was a proposal made by the American delegate to colonise Cyprus, as difficulties from the British Government were not to be anticipated, whereas the steps which had been taken to obtain concessions from the Turkish Government were not likely to be immediately successful. But this idea was not generally accepted, one speaker

declaring it would be Zionism without Zion. A delegate, however, said to me: "I think it would be a wise plan, because we Jews manage to get in at the back-door if we cannot get in at the front."

Dr. Max Nordau said: "We have placed in the right light the position of the Jewish nation amongst the other nations of the world. We have shown that in spite of the efforts of many of our sons to entirely forget their nationality, or at least to deny it, and unmistakably to assimilate with their surroundings, they are everywhere considered strangers, even as intruders." How literally throughout the centuries have the curses pronounced upon disobedience to God's commands been fulfilled (Deut. xxviii. 37-64). It is to be deplored that God is comparatively so little sought to lead and bless His earthly people in their efforts, but we know from Ezek. xxxvi. 21 to 28 that it is in unbelief the return is to take place, and so we may believe that He is working, even though unrecognised by the Jews. In this connection I may mention a young, orthodox rabbi who on one occasion at the Congress rose up to speak, taking a text of the Bible (Is. lx. 1), but was stopped by the chairman as out of order, and complaining to me about it I pointed out to him that Israel had to go back in unbelief, which doubtless is the reason why so little reference is made to God and His Word. On his becoming better acquainted with us he began to lean more towards the Hebrew Christians than to the orthodox Jews, and we had much interesting and, I trust, profitable conversation about Christ. I found after a time that we were old acquaintances, I having once dined with his father, a noted rabbi still living, when he was a boy of ten. He said if I should ever visit him he would give me a hearty welcome.

This year several Hebrew Christians were present, and each one had constant opportunities to preach Christ and used them. We met every morning at our different hotels for prayer that God would use us as a testimony to our brethren according to the flesh. We were warmly received, and recognised as brothers, and we were not only listened to by courtesy and for peace, but were often followed by many asking question after question. We distributed New Testaments, portions, and texts, explaining them all as the truth is in Jesus, and pointing to Him from the Old Covenant Scriptures. Some orthodox rabbis enquired what my opinion was, as a Christian, with regard to their restoration. I said I fully believed in it, because the Word of God declares it. One especially was very glad that I believe in the Bible literally, as they have heard of the so-called Higher Criticism, and are indignant at the writings of these learned people, whose wisdom God esteems folly.

Besides the work at Basle, which continued from morning to night, I was privileged to visit the Jews in Zurich, Strassburg, and other places in Alsace Lorraine, where there are many of them. Though they are not Zionists (Dr. Max Nordau said the opponents of Zionism were not outsiders, but among themselves), I could easily approach them on a topic in which all were interested—the trial of Captain Dreyfus. It was quite enough to say I had just met a correspondent of a leading London paper who had seen him at Rennes to secure their attention, and then it was easy to lead the conversation on to the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Zurich has a beautiful synagogue, built about twelve years ago. We went in to the Sabbath morning service, and found it very full, but a cold and formal ritual. On coming out we met some Polish Jews who were also present. Seeing written outside the synagogue, in large, gilt, Hebrew letters, "Even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations" (Isaiah lvi. 7), I said, "What inducement will the nations have, in seeing the lack of spirituality in their worship, to join them?" They were in sympathy with my thought, and said: "It is because of the liberty the Jews have here. We prefer the oppression and persecution of Russia and Roumania, and clinging to our God, than liberty and forgetting Him, and becoming lifeless in our worship." Then I said that while I sympathised with them, they were in error too, and then I had an opportunity to unfold Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms, pointing that Jesus is the Messiah and Saviour, and there is no spiritual life without Him. I could multiply such instances, but space forbids. I believe many were impressed. May the Holy Spirit deepen and complete any work of God begun in any precious souls!

ISRAEL I. ASCHKENASI.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

"WATER" IN JOHN'S EPISTLE.—Does the water mentioned in 1 John v. 8 and the water mentioned in the 6th verse of the same chapter mean the same, or, if not, what do we learn from the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses together?

CHRIST'S INTERCESSION.—What is the mean-

ing of John xvi. 26, and how is it to be reconciled with Hebrews vii. 25?

1ST PETER.—Is the 1st Epistle of Peter addressed specially to converted Jews?

PROPHECYING—IS IT EXISTENT NOW?—Does the teaching which we get in 1 Corinthians xiv., in connection with prophesying, apply to the present time?

THE SOURCE OF SICKNESS.—Does God send sickness?

SAVIOUR AND LORD.—Is it possible for any one to have accepted Jesus as Saviour, yet never to have owned Him as Lord?

WHO ARE THE FAITHFUL?—"Hast kept My word, and hast not denied My Name" (Rev. iii. 8). Does this apply exclusively to scripturally gathered companies of the Lord's people?

THE BASIS OF REWARDS.—Please explain in *The Witness* Matthew xxv. 34, 35, 36. Will the people on the right hand receive their inheritance on the ground of what they had done, which is recorded in verses 35 and 36? In other words, Will they be saved on that ground?

CARNAL AND SPIRITUAL.—Do the words "no condemnation" and "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us" of Romans viii. apply to both those "who walk in the flesh" and "in the Spirit"?

LIVING OF THE GOSPEL.—What is meant by these words in 1 Cor. ix. 14: "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel?" If it mean that those who preach the gospel should in temporal things be ministered to by those who hear the gospel, why is there not opportunity given in our gospel meetings for such ministry?

LIFE AND DEATH.

QUESTION 394.—Please explain Romans viii. 10 and 13. In what aspect are we to understand "life" and "death" in these two verses?

Answer A.—The Spirit of God, and of Christ, and the spirit of the prince of the power of the air, the god of this age, are in direct antagonism, and cannot both have supremacy in the same individual. If the Spirit of Christ, which is the Spirit of Life, dwells and reigns in the heart and soul of the believer He (the Spirit) will so influence the mind of the individual that He will war against and "make to die" (mortify) the members that are in the flesh (the body)—that is, the evil lusts, passions, and desires of the natural heart, or as it is called in Romans vi. 6, "the old man".

The believer can never be perfect or righteous in himself, but "Christ died for our sins, and

was raised again for our justification ;" He died in our room, and we are to reckon ourselves as having died with Him—our Substitute. In this aspect the body is dead because of sin ; although the believer has no sin *on* him, he has sin *in* him—that is, in the flesh as long as he is in the body. Paul, in chapter vii. 24, says, "Who shall deliver us from this body of death ?"

"The Spirit is life because of righteousness"—that is, the state of righteousness consequent upon perfect obedience. The Lord Jesus perfectly fulfilled the law ; He was perfectly obedient, and we read, in chapter v. 19, "For as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One shall the many be constituted righteous"—righteousness is imputed to them who believe on His name. Therefore, He who has the Spirit of Christ is alive in Christ Jesus ; he is justified from all things, and is constituted righteous. In verse 11 Paul says, "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from among the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from among the dead shall quicken (make alive) also your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you." In this aspect the spirit of the believer is life (alive).

Verse 13, "If ye live after the flesh ye must die." This taken with verse 1 may appear paradoxical, but it is not so. The *unbeliever* who has never been born of the Spirit, and who has not the Spirit of Christ, must die. But these words were written to Christians, to those who were in Christ Jesus, and were beyond condemnation, consequently could not die. The correct rendering of this passage is, "Ye are about to die." A similar passage occurs in 1 Timothy v. 6, "But she that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she lives"—that is, she is about to die, or she is in a spiritually moribund state. If a child of God falls away so far as this, God must and will chasten him, possibly even unto death. We have an illustration of this in 1 Corinthians xi. 30, "For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, a not a few sleep."

"If by the Spirit ye mortify the deeds (doings) of the body ye shall live." By a full surrender of ourselves to the influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit we shall overcome the evil lusts and desires of the flesh and of the mind, God working in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." If we do this we shall not only live, but, as Peter says, "If ye do these things ye shall never stumble, for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

W. D. B.

Answer B.—To understand "life" and "death" in Rom. viii. 10 and 13, it is necessary to refer to

the context. By a careful examination of the earlier verses of the chapter, I find the following outline of thoughts, leading up to what (for me, at least) is conclusive as to what aspect we are to understand "life" and "death" in the verses in question.

TWO LAWS, verse 2 : (a) "The law of the Spirit of life" ; (b) "The law of sin and death."

TWO MANNERS OF LIFE, verses 4, 5 : (a) "Walking after [according to] the Spirit" ; (b) "Walking after [according to] the flesh."

TWO MINDS, verse 6 : (a) "The [spiritual] mind of the Spirit" ; (b) "The [carnal] mind of the flesh."

TWO STATES OR CONDITIONS, verse 9 : (a) "In the Spirit" ; (b) "In the flesh."

And on the condition that "Christ is in you," TWO CONSEQUENCES follow (verse 10) : (a) "Life because of righteousness" ; (b) "Death because of sin" (both in the believer).

"Grace" and "law" ; "Spirit" and "flesh" ; "life" and "death" are contrasted in these verses, thus I arrive at the following two CONCLUSIONS regarding verses 10 and 13 : (a) In verse 10 "life" is (being the result of Christ, "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (ver. 4), rendering perfect satisfaction to the righteous requirements of the law) "because of righteousness" ; and "death" is (being the result of "sin condemned in the flesh", ver. 3 ; "the body of sin destroyed", Rom. vi. 5-11 in us), "because of sin" having been thus treated. So it is clear "life" and "death" in verse 10 mean the life the believer has IN CHRIST, and the death the believer died WITH CHRIST. (b) In verse 13 it is not the difference between life in Christ and death with Christ that is referred to ; but it is life if BY THE SPIRIT the deeds of the body are put to death, and it is death if living after the flesh.

"Life" and "death" in verse 10 are the outcome of Christ's work FOR us. "Life" and "death" in verse 13 are, the one, the outcome of the Spirit's work IN us, and the other, "the wages of sin."

D. J. R.

THE CHURCH'S PREROGATIVES.

QUESTION 395.—We hear it stated again and again that "It is the Church that receives, and the Church that puts away." Seeking to abide by "What saith the Scriptures in all things," would value help from God's Word on these two points.

Answer A.—It is clear from 1 Cor. v. that when one is to be "put away," or as it is usually called, "excommunicated," it is not only to be an individual refusal of fellowship, but also a united act "when ye are gathered together." It is analogous to the stoning of Achan under the law when "all Israel stoned him with stones" (Jos. vii. 25). It is not contemplated in Scripture that this should be a frequently re-

curing event. It is a most solemn, awful occasion full of warning and heart searching, and ought to be turned to practical account by individual self-judgment on the part of all.

The usual argument is, "The Church puts away, and therefore the Church receives," and hence the receiving of a believer, it is contended, must be after the same mode of procedure; it must be when gathered together, a united act of the whole Church.

It is further contended that the introduction of Paul to the assembly at Jerusalem is a specimen of this approved method to be observed invariably, and thus a rigid rule is established which in many cases cramps and frustrates the affections and operation of the Spirit, and practically imposes a barrier, which God never set up, to fellowship with gracious and godly persons who had not attained to an understanding of the simple, scriptural way of gathering.

It is hard to understand how an unbiassed reader of Acts ix. could fail to see that Paul's reception was altogether exceptional. The disciples did not believe in his conversion, and, being ignorant of the facts and of his manner of life at Damascus, it was necessary that Barnabas, who knew all about it, should in the most prudent way declare to the apostles, and through them to the Church, that he was no hypocrite desiring admission for mischievous ends, but a genuine child of God.

It is clear from the narrative that, had there been no special ground for doubt, and even alarm, as to his motives, there would have been no need for the mode of procedure adopted. Life is attracted to the living, and love, when unfettered by human restrictions, is quick to welcome those who are being drawn to follow in the way of truth. When hundreds or thousands were being daily added, not a word is recorded as to procedure.

Nevertheless, in the deepest and truest sense, it is "the Church that receives." Every individual saint composing the local assembly ought to receive and to welcome to their hearts' affections and genuine fellowship every other child of God who is associated with them, not because of their having joined themselves unto the assembly, but because they belong to Christ.

In order to this there must, of course, be full confidence that the one received is a true child of God, and not chargeable with any sin of practice or doctrinal heresy that would scripturally debar them from fellowship.

Sometimes the "binding and loosing" of Matthew xviii. is said to refer to receiving as well as to putting away; but if any take the pains to look into the use of the words in a Greek Concordance, it will become apparent that the reference is to putting away as a judi-

cial act, and to the restoring upon repentance the one put away (or setting at liberty of the one bound), and that it has no bearing whatever upon the receiving of one another as children of God and members of Christ.

J. R. C.

PALMISTRY.

QUESTION 396.—What is the Christian's position towards palmistry? Should he believe and practice it, or does Scripture condemn it?

Answer A.—If the brother who asks the question will refer to a dictionary, he will see that the meaning of the word "palmistry" is, "The art or practice of *divining* or telling fortunes by the lines and marks of the hand." If divination is practised as a trade or profession, it comes under the category of things which the Israelites were commanded not to do, and whosoever practises them is "an abomination unto the Lord" (Deut. xviii. 10). If palmistry is practised for amusement, it does not alter the case, because it is imitating that which is evil, and Christians are exhorted to be "imitators of God" (Eph. v. 1), and to avoid all appearance of evil. Palmistry is deceit.

W. D. B.

DEATH—TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL.

QUESTION 397.—Is it life and death in the literal or spiritual sense that is referred to in John xi. 25, 26, and whether is, "Though he were dead" (A.V.) or "Though he die" (R.V.) correct?

Answer A.—It seems almost certain from the subject of the chapter that literal death and resurrection are spoken of by our Lord, who was about to show His power by raising the body of Lazarus from the grave, and to strengthen the faith of Martha told her he was the Resurrection and the Life—the words, "He that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live," referring to the sleeping saints, "And he that liveth, and believeth on Me, shall never die," to the living ones (1 Thess. iv. 15-18 and 1 Cor. xv. 50-53). The reading of the Revised Version rather favours this view; but if the words are taken spiritually they are true, for it is just as much the power of God alone to quicken a sinner dead in trespasses and sins as to raise a literal dead body to life, as our Lord told the Jews (John v. 25-29), and He showed in these verses the difference of the hour that now is, when those spiritually dead hear the voice of the Son of God and live, and the hour which is coming when those literally dead shall hear His voice and come forth from their graves, and there are many texts to prove that the sinner who lives and believes on Christ shall never die eternally (John x. 28; Heb. vii. 25).

M. S.

THE GRACE and GLORY of CHRIST.

An Address at Leominster Conference by Dr. NEATBY.

Read Matthew xiv. 14-33.

I. THE BREAD OF LIFE.

IN listening to the account of the Lord's work in Mexico which has just been given by our brother [Mr. E. Harris], I have been struck with the great darkness and need of this world of sin; and I have been thankful to retire into the thought that Christ has seen it from the very place of glory itself. The blessed Lord looked down upon a world spiritually dead—alive enough to natural things, but dead Godward. "Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, *then were all dead*" (2 Cor. v. 14). And into this scene of moral death, with nothing in it to attract, He came in love. In the scripture before us He is in that world amid a vast company not only of dying men, but of men dead spiritually and Godward, and He is moved with compassion. "And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and He healed their sick." This same love should have been found in the disciples, and this same compassion should have given character to them. If their Master and Lord was moved with compassion, surely they also in less degree should have been so too. They should have taken their cue from Him. He is thinking about the wants of the people, but they are looking at the desert place, and thinking of sending the hungry multitude away from the Lord Jesus Christ! Just the opposite of His thoughts. That is my natural heart, which looks at the resources around and away from Christ.

"This is a desert place send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves victuals." The desert yields nothing; it has only what is brought into it. It has not "blossomed as the rose" yet. But it will do when the Lord Jesus shall take the reins at His coming. Even "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose" (Isa. xxxv. 1). This can only be when He returns. One reason that we should be continually crying in our hearts, "Come, Lord Jesus." It should be

the constant cry of every redeemed heart. My brethren, is it so? It is a true and scriptural prayer on the face of it, and yet how seldom is it heard in our assemblies! We need it more than we know. There are more unevangelised heathen in the world to-day than there were fifty years ago—many millions more. We do not even *overtake* the need by all the efforts to spread the Gospel which God has put into the hearts of His people to use. Therefore, whatever else we may say and do, let us be sure to say, "Come, Lord Jesus."

The disciples count their *loaves*—one, two, three, four, five. It does not come to much, and is soon done. But it would have been difficult to count the *people*. God tells us there were 5000 men, besides women and children—perhaps 15,000 altogether. Truly this was "man's extremity"—so many hungry people, and only five loaves such as they took with them on a journey; they would not go far in such a multitude. Nothing can be got in the desert, and so the disciples say, "Send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves victuals." O how it grated on the Lord's ears! It was pain to him—it was the opposite of all He was feeling and thinking at the time. The disciples, moved by unbelief and hardness of heart, want the multitude sent away to buy for *themselves*. But what of those who had no money to buy for themselves, and those who would faint by the way, who could not go to the villages and buy? Did they not know that One was there of whom the Psalmist said, "He will satisfy her poor with bread?" (Ps. cxxxii. 15). Surely the disciples ought to have known that He could satisfy the people with bread. O why did they not tell the people to be seated, and be prepared to receive from Him what He would give? Why should not faith have done that? Why did they think of sending the people away when they had Christ? Where was their faith? But where is *our* faith? There are, alas! a thousand questionings, a thousand disputes and divisions. Woe be the day! But how little of the bowels of Christ and the compassions of the Lord Jesus, to go out and meet the need which is everywhere!

But notice the gracious compassions of the Lord: "*They need not depart.*" There is all fulness in the Lord, "in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Of Him it is written: "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands." Oh, if only the disciples had known it in their hearts! But *ourselves!* What of our own hearts? Oh, if only I knew the heart of my God, as revealed in Christ Jesus. Oh that the love of Christ constricted us! Oh that we had the sense in our souls that the people need not depart! There is all the fulness of the Godhead in Christ. Bring the people near; *don't* send them away, for Christ has that which satisfies for all eternity—not the body only, but the soul. What a Gospel we have! What a Saviour we have! and what a Lord! Shall not our hearts learn more of Him, and be more ready to bid the people be seated.

Now, when our Lord was going to distribute the bread and feed that multitude, He said to His disciples, "Give *ye* them to eat." I do so like that word. He places all His resources at their disposal. They belonged to Christ, and Christ deigned to belong to them. We find Him to-day constantly placing Himself at the disposal of faith. We may take of His fulness, and freely dispense to others of the riches of His grace, even as we have fully received.

There are but five loaves. They come to a poor thing in our hands, but in His hands they are more than enough for 15,000 people. "Bring them hither to *Me.*" Do we ever leave that "Me" out? It is the essential factor in all calculations. Let us never leave it out! Leave the five loaves out, if it must be, but don't leave out the "Me." "And He commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to Heaven He blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitude." The command for the people to sit down implied their *dependence*. It also implied *faith*, for why should they sit down if they were to receive nothing? Before distributing the bread the Lord looks up to Heaven to bless it! He blessed de-

pendent man. What a feast to see Him lifting His eyes and heart to Heaven—lifting up His voice to thank His Father for the loaves He has given! And what an example for us! Brethren, don't be afraid if the last loaf is in your hand. Lift up the heart to that Heavenly Father, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and count on Him. Be consciously in His presence, and in the presence of that Father care will vanish. Care and "Father" cannot go together. If they do, then there must be hypocrisy in saying "Father." A child has no care in his father's presence. When I was a child I had no care—it would have been out of season. Care is my God's, and He for bids it to me.

"He blessed, and brake." The Lord Jesus breaks the bread, and as He breaks it, it becomes more and more. It is wonderful, divine! He does not command the five loaves to become at once a great pile of loaves enough for all, but He goes on breaking the loaves till all that multitude, 15,000 people perhaps, have had enough, like the widow's cruse of oil that failed not. Put your confidence and trust in God, dear brethren. If any one here has fully trusted God, and He has failed you, do let us know. Be sure and let me know if God has disappointed you. How beautiful it is to know that the disciples, who had been so weak in faith at the beginning, were made the distributors of the Lord's bounty at the end. He did not set them aside because of their weakness. He might have done so, and said, "I must give the bread to the people *Myself.*" But He did not. He made those poor, unbelieving disciples the distributors of His abounding grace to that hungry multitude. O what a God, what a Lord we have! We know Him very poorly. Tell me, How often to-day have you spoken individually to Christ and got an answer in your souls? We might have these communications as often as we would. If He is "dwelling in your hearts by faith," He is not far off; nor is He dull of hearing! Is He so dwelling? My brethren, do not be content without daily and hourly communications to and fro between you and the blessed Lord.

(To be continued.)

LEAVING GOD "A FREE HAND."

(“But if not.”—Daniel iii. 18.)

MANY thousands of the Lord’s children have been helped in the study of Daniel iii.; yet how many have never once looked upon these words in verse 18 other than as a part of a great decision.

How true it is, as a well-known writer puts it, some verses which we have read and re-read again and again become suddenly a new message to us when lit up with the Divine explanation. A certain verse, perhaps, which has aforesaid been *only a verse*, now becomes a *voice*, which speaks to the heart as never before.

Such, I think, the words above will be to many who ponder them in relation to the subject of prayer. How very often, in prayer, we leave no room for God to abundantly answer, and how equally often we think the only right or suitable answer should be “Yes.”

These men, remember, left God “*a free hand*,” and so should we. We admire them for their lofty faith in saying, “But if not,” and yet in the secret place with God our prayers are often spoiled by conditions and limitations (see Psalm lxxviii. 41). It must not be *Nay* in any case, and if it does come, we count it *not* an answer.

Do we see our portrait here? Or may we not account for many failures in prayer because we left God, as it were, no room to act? A strong, robust faith will always add, “But if not.” Write it up, that you may see it every time you pray, and if sometimes a definite *No* is the result of some special pleading, thank Him for it, because it was part of the Divine love and purpose to withhold; and all His purposes of love are ever right.

Have we ever sat down to think out what we have often passed on to others? Maybe we have sometimes urged disappointed saints to look up and remember Romans viii. 18, and yet shortly after a cloud has come over our spiritual horizon—a *denial*, perhaps, has come to some prayer of ours, and we have crept back, cold and disconsolate, into our dark holes of semi-unbelief.

What was the matter? Only the “But

if not” left out. Had it been there the *No* would not have shut God out, for we should have been ready to thank and praise. Yea, as happy to “thank the Lord” for *Nay* as we are ready to bless Him for the *Yes*.

J. A. S. (Cheto)

GOD’S CHOSEN PEOPLE.—XIII.

LYING WONDERS.

By JOHN R. CALDWELL, Author of “Shadows of Christ in the Old Testament,” “Things to Come,” &c.

IT was the Jews, not the ten tribes, who rejected Messiah—crucified the Lord of Glory, who came to them in His Father’s name—and it is they who will receive the One who shall come in His own name.

But the same unbelief and enmity characterises the whole of the Gentile nations of which that which is called Christendom is made up. They, too, have rejected Christ as presented to them in the Gospel, which has been preached among them with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven, and they too, along with the apostate Jews, will be carried away with the strong delusion of the last days, and become worshippers of the beast and his image.

The Roman, the Greek, and the Protestant Churches are all nominally Christian. But the leaven of Error has so wrought in the measured meal of Truth that in all of them the simple, blessed, fundamental doctrines of the Gospel are corrupted, obscured, and well-nigh obliterated. Not to speak of the Greek and the Romish Churches, even in Scotland among Presbyterians truth is perverted and error taught unblushingly. The doctrines of inspiration, atonement, regeneration are explained away, and toned down till they are unrecognisable; the doctrines of hell and of eternal punishment are denied as inconsistent with the character of a God of love; the old orthodox faith is voted out of date now, and the Scriptures torn to tatters by the “higher critics. All this, and much more that might be noted, is preparing the way for the final casting off of the faith, and for the acceptance of a religion that will please the flesh and form a basis for the union of all sects, even Jew and Gentile uniting in the one apostate, idolatrous worship.

The word "falling away" in 2 Thess. ii. 3 is very strong—it does not apply to heathens or idolators, but implies an apostasy from the faith, a giving up of that which once was recognised as truth; it is Christendom turning its back upon Christianity and denying the faith.

The result will be the most terrible blasphemy that ever was perpetrated upon earth. The "man of sin," the "son of perdition," will be the full-blown development of that which originated in Eden. It was but the taking of a forbidden fruit. But what did that necessarily involve? It was the principle of insubjection to the will of God. It was that which, if left to develop uncontrolled, would hurl God from His throne, and give the dominion to the creature.

Thus the "man of sin," the "lawless one"—the matured fruit of insubjection to the will of God—is seen sitting in the temple of God, and saying that he is God!

This evil age, then, begins with the murder of the Son of God, and ends with the worship of the one who says, "I am God."

The Lord Jesus "gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver us from this present evil age"—that we might be a separated people standing out against its ungodliness as light in the midst of darkness, as salt in the midst of corruption.

Meantime there is that which hinders the development of this man of sin—"that he might be revealed in his time." That means that he cannot be manifested until his own time arrives. That time cannot be until the calling out of the Church the body of Christ is completed. We are not taught to look for antichrist, but for Christ.

"For the mystery of iniquity [lawlessness] doth already work"—

i.e., the evil principles that will culminate in "the lawless one" are already at work; the spirit of antichrist has long been operating in a hidden way. As John says, "Already there are many antichrists." The spirit of antichrist appeals to Jewish unbelief, and confesseth not that Jesus the Christ hath come in the flesh (2 John 7). Antichrist denies that Jesus is the Christ (1 John ii. 22), but appealing to Gentile unbelief, or the un-

belief of apostate Christendom, he also denies the cardinal truth of the New Testament. "He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son."

The word rendered "work" means working with Satanic energy, working like dynamite, which by and by will explode and overthrow all that makes for peace and liberty.

But that wicked one is he "whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming."

The same is plainly taught in Rev. xix. 19, 20, where the beast and the false prophet are cast into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone. The same is seen in Isa. xi. 4:

"But with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked one."

Thus, not to mention many other Scriptures bearing on this event, the three, *viz.*, Isa. xi., 2 Thess. ii., and Rev. xix., are in exact agreement, and prove that when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven He will find the cup of human iniquity to be full, and the earth ripe for the long-deferred judgment.

Further referring to antichrist, the apostle in 2 Thess. ii. tells us that His coming, which is after the working (energising) of Satan, shall be "with all power and signs and lying wonders."

To these three words I wish now to draw your attention.

The word here rendered "power" is the same as that from which our word "dynamite" is derived. It means power in the sense of physical force, not power in the sense of "authority," which is another word in the original.

The word "signs" implies that they are significant acts, having a deeper meaning than appears on the surface.

The word rendered "wonders" means that they were supernatural acts, at which men could not but look with astonishment.

Now, we find these same three Greek words (not always rendered in our English

version by the same words) used in Acts ii. 22 of our Lord :

"Jesus of Nazereth, a Man approved of God, among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him."

Remember that the Lord Jesus again and again appealed to his works. John x. 37, 38 :

"If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not; but if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him."

John xii. 37 :

"But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him."

John xiv. 11 :

"Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; or else believe Me for the very works' sake."

These were, so to speak, His credentials as the sent One of the Father. You remember when the Lord was sending Moses to be the deliverer of Israel, He gave him certain miraculous signs to work in their presence, in order that they might be convinced that Moses was really sent by Jehovah. The rod became a serpent, and on being taken up became again a rod. His hand became leprous, and was restored again. Water from the river was turned to blood. These were his credentials as Jehovah's ambassador, in order that they might believe and obey Him.

Even so the Lord Jesus did not come without His credentials. His works were the putting forth of divine power; they were supernatural, and therefore produced wonder or astonishment; and they were signs, or significant acts, each having a hidden meaning, each full of instruction to those who were willing to hear and learn.

Again in 2 Cor. xii. 12 we have the same three words used by Paul concerning the miracles which the Lord wrought by him. To these he makes reference as his apostolic credentials :

"Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds."

Paul could claim to be acknowledged as an apostle of the Lord on the ground of his Christ-like character (1 Cor. iv. 9-13), on the ground of his sufferings for Christ's sake

(2 Cor. xi. 23-33), and in the verse before us on the ground of the miraculous works which in their character were identical with those of the Lord Jesus.

If any man now-a-days claims to be an apostle (as some do among those known as Irvingites) let him show openly, and not in a corner, the "signs and wonders and mighty deeds" which constituted the credentials of the Lord Jesus and of His apostles.

Then again we have these same three words in Heb. ii. 4 :

"God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His will."

Here it is not only the apostles, but also others, such as Stephen, who were honoured to be the first heralds of the Gospel.

Now, to find these same three words applied to "the man of sin," "the wicked one," gives them a very special significance:

"Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders."

These are what he puts forth as his divine credentials, and so "he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by means of those miracles which he had power to do" (Rev. xiii. 14). But the power by which they are wrought is Satanic, not divine, and for the purpose of deceiving men into the belief of a lie, and not the belief of the truth. Satan was a liar from the beginning, and a murderer. And this man whom Satan exalts and energises is also a liar, a deceiver, and a murderer. This is he whom all the world will wonder at or admire; this is he with whom the deceived nation of the Jews will enter into a league or covenant; this is he for whom a deceived world is waiting. When he arises the cry will be peace, liberty, plenty, good times now. Alas! it is all under Satan's dominion, and this is the goal to which a world that has rejected Christ and the Gospel is surely and swiftly coming.

And all this "deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish" is "because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved."

The very abundance of the proclamation of the Gospel, the very fact that the Bible is translated into so many languages and

scattered so freely, is condemnation to those who receive not "the love of the truth." The truth of the Gospel is a revelation of the love of God in Christ. To receive not the love of the truth, I believe, means the not believing of the message of love contained in the Word of the truth of the Gospel. How can those who have heard such love and rejected it, who have listened to the truth and have not believed it, be anything but entangled by Satan's snare and deceived by Satan's lie.

"For this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they might be damned that believed not the truth."

The "not" here is a forcible negative, and implies having heard, but having made choice not to believe for the reason that they "had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Whatever counsels of grace God may proceed to work out after the Church is taken to meet the Lord, one thing seems perfectly plain, namely, that those who have heard the Gospel and have rejected it, preferring self and sin to Christ, shall inevitably be carried away with the "strong delusion." As a swimmer caught in a current that is too strong for him and carried out to sea, so shall they be carried away in the current of error to everlasting destruction.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

V. HEAVEN AS THE HOLIEST OF ALL.

(Matthew vi. 12.)

"And forgive us our debts [trespasses]."

WHEN HEAVEN is contemplated as the TEMPLE of God there is within it the HOLIEST OF ALL, for God is holy; He dwells in "the high and holy place." But sin having entered the universe through the fall of angels and the transgression of man, God in His mercy has provided the Ark of the Covenant, with its golden propitiatory sprinkled with the atoning Blood, ONCE on the surface EASTWARD beneath the eye of Him who dwells between the Cherubim, and SEVEN times BEFORE it to meet the eye of him who draws near to God thereby—a beautiful and expressive type of the Lord Jesus Christ, "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation

[propitiatory] through faith in His blood" (Rom. iii. 25). And this blood avails not only for earth, but also for the heavens, "For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things on earth or things in the heavens" (Col. i. 19, 20). "Without shedding of blood is no remission of sin," for God, though merciful, will never clear the guilty. He must be just when He justifies, and this can only be on the ground of FULL ATONEMENT, made through the blood of the spotless LAMB OF GOD, shed once for all, and on Calvary, and ever pleaded by the High Priest of our profession before the throne of God.

So that when we say, "Forgive us our trespasses," it is on the plea that He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be accepted in Him as righteous before God.

When the Pharisee and the Publican went up into the temple, the Pharisee had gone, Cain-like, heaping up his good deeds like the fruits of the earth (Gen. iv. 3, 5), and was rejected. The Publican, smiting upon his breast, alluding probably to the brazen altar in front of the temple, where the daily lamb was being offered up, said, "God be merciful to me on the ground of reconciliation made" (Luke xviii. 13); blood shed, atonement made.

We have considered the heavenly aspect of this petition. There is also an earthly example suggested. "As also we forgive our debtors." This second word "also," generally omitted in translations, is of importance. The idea is not the measure of forgiveness, but that our forgiveness of others is a pre-requisite to our being forgiven by our heavenly Father, as our Lord explains in verse 15, "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." See also chapter v. 23, 24.

In the Father's house above, unjarring, perfect harmony prevails—all is unity, all is love; and this heavenly harmony and peace presents a model for imitation on earth in the household of faith, the family of God, if God's will is to be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Perhaps we are little aware how

much the absence of this brotherly love towards the whole family of God may interfere with the serenity and sunshine of the soul. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 John iv. 16). "And every one that loveth Him that begat loveth Him also that is begotten of Him" (1 John v. 1). "And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as also God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. iv. 32).

FIGURES OF THE CHRISTIAN.—XII.

THE CHRISTIAN: A GRAIN OF WHEAT.

By Dr. J. N. CASE, China.

"THE good seed are the children of the kingdom" (Matt. xiii. 38). So explains the great Teacher in unfolding to His disciples the parable of the tares. In an earlier one of the same series He had used seed as symbolic of the Word of God (Luke viii. 11). For the Lord was not bound by cast-iron rules, and did not fear using the same figure to indicate different things. Another striking example of this is seen in His using the serpent, the common figure of the head and fount of all evil, to indicate something good, and that which, at least in one characteristic, He would have His disciples imitate (Matt. x. 16).

Christ may have had in mind the words of the prophet, and purposed to do among the nations what later will be done in the houses of Israel and Judah, namely, sowing them with man as seed (see Jer. xxxi. 27). Both kinds of seed are needed. In the one we have the Gospel as a doctrine, in the other as a life.

In John xii. 24, 25 we have another important scripture as bearing on this subject. "Verily, verily, I say unto you," the Lord again says, "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." In these words we have set before us a great and universal law of the spiritual kingdom. It was a mere truism that it applied to the vegetable kingdom; of course the point of the passage is that it as truly rules in the spiritual realm. Verses 24 and 25 are often

divided; the first is referred to the Lord, the second to His disciples. This is a mistake. They both alike refer to Christ and to His true followers. Verse 24 teaches that death and the grave are the only path to life and fruitfulness; verse 25 shows that self-renunciation is the only true method of self-preservation. These principles of the kingdom of heaven were exhibited to perfection in the life and death of Jesus Christ; they are also seen in operation in the ways of all in whom He again lives. For of this also it may be said, "Which thing is true in Him and in you." But it is as applying to ourselves that we desire, by God's help, to examine a little further into this matter.

1. *Let us think of a grain of wheat not yet sown in the field.*—What is it but a germ of life self-contained and self-sufficing? It is "bare grain," and "it abideth alone," and must for ever do so unless it fall into the ground and die. In its present state it neither receives in nor gives out. All that it asks for is to be preserved from moisture, warmth, and sunshine, those disintegrating forces of Nature which would lead to its breaking-up. Have we not in this the illustration of a type of Christian experience that is far too common? It was known even in apostolic days. Or saints at Corinth, as a whole, the apostle sadly writes: "For ye are yet carnal . . . and walk after the manner of men." That is, they were simply living: the life that is natural to fallen men. It is a life that centres in, is occupied with, self and self-interests; a life in which the things of God and one's brother are practically ignored. And again, speaking of believers, and even professed servants of Christ, the apostle says: "They all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ" (Phil. ii. 21), evidently having in view the same class of Christians, for everything in the connection proves that he regards them as true believers, yet their minds are set (compare Col. iii. 1) on the things of self, to the neglect of the interests of Him whom they, with their lips, call Lord. In a word, they were "running their own little concern in a corner," and were forgetting the concerns of the great Firm: to which they professed to belong. His own ease, pleasure, reputation, comfort, these are

the things which influence him. His very service in the Gospel, or in the Church, may be a self-chosen work and done for his own glory. But in a matter of this sort it becomes us to be practical and personal. Let writer and reader ask himself how far this describes his own life. Am I day by day occupied with my own interests or with the interests of Jesus Christ?

The contrast to all this we have in the first recorded saying of Christ, "Wist ye not?" as a lad of twelve He asked Mary and Joseph; "Wist ye not that I must be in the things of My Father?" Space forbids our further dwelling on this, but for private reading I suggest a study of Philipians ii. There we find four bright examples of persons who were animated by the opposite principle to that we have been looking at, every one of whom looked not on his own things, but the things of others. These are the Christ, Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus.

2. *The grain of wheat falling into the ground and dying.*—The cold, damp, dark ground is the place of death and destruction. Certain outside forces lay hold of the tiny seed, and it speedily loses its form and comeliness. But though destroyed it is not annihilated. The germ of life contained therein is set in motion, and soon bursts forth in another and more beautiful form of existence. From the ruins of the old body it has clothed itself with a new one. Though at the beginning it was small and unseen, the law of its being forces it upward into the sunshine which waits to welcome it, yea, actively assists in drawing it upward. And we have, "First the blade, then the ear, then full corn in the ear." The Apostle Paul follows this out in his famous argument for the resurrection of the body. "Thou foolish one," he exclaims, "that which thou thyself sowest is not quickened except it die," &c. (1 Cor. xv. 35-38).

Observe the larger life it has now entered on. It is at last in a condition to benefit from all natural sources. Earth, light, air, rain, snow, and dew all minister to its growth and development. Formerly it existed for itself alone, now it brings forth fruit, thirty, sixty, it may be even a hundred-fold. And this fruit is not for itself, but for the benefit of others. Christ's life was one

of perfect self-renunciation for the benefit of others. Hence we hear Him say: "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. Father, if Thou be willing . . . nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done. Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? . . . Father, glorify Thy name."

With Him this life of self-renunciation and perfect obedience led up to and culminated in the death of the Cross. But for this, even He would forever have been the *bare* grain, as far as saved sinners are concerned, abiding for ever alone.

But this falling into the ground and dying tells also of an experience which Christ's followers must pass through. Personal experience is the key to the doctrine. Such as have gone through it know what it means; to others it is not easy to explain. Upon the old self-life spiritual forces act. God wounds to heal, kills in order to make alive, brings down with a view to lifting up. Jehovah, by His Spirit, blows upon the seed, and the man feels withered up root and branch. Sickness, bereavement, losses, frustrated plans, and disappointed hopes—any and all of these may prove the ground into which the ear of wheat falls. We learn more and more of the heinousness of sin, the plague and deceitfulness of our own hearts, and we die; we die to all hope of sanctification and fruitfulness from self and self-effort, as before we had died to all hope of righteousness from that source. Henceforth we can say: "For me to live is Christ," and we go on to *realise as an experience* that we live, yet not we, but Christ liveth in us. But the two experiences of putting off the old and putting on the new, of laying aside self and clothing us with Christ, go on together, and will do so to the end of our earthly career.

3. *The result of the grain of wheat falling into the ground and dying.*—The chief lesson deduced by the apostle from this figure is the change of form, the new, higher, and more beautiful existence on which it enters. This we have already briefly dwelt on.

Our Lord drew another lesson from it. He showed that it would be greatly multiplied. It is sown a single grain, and from it scores of similar ones spring. For it is another law

of Nature that like produces like. Scatter thistles and you reap thistles; sow wheat and you garner wheat.

In a very real sense the few grains of wheat around Christ when He was on earth—of course I mean His true disciples—have increased into the multitude of believers now in the world. For, in that sense, we are all “the apostolic succession.” Yet more really from Him, the Christ, the one grain of wheat that fell into the ground and died, has sprung up this mighty, mighty harvest. Verily, His death has not been in vain. In the great host of the redeemed He sees the fruit of His death of shame and woe. He sees of the travail of His soul, and is and shall be eternally satisfied, as we shall, in our measure, if we are willing in our turn to fall into the ground and die. It is the only road to fruitful service, whether at home or abroad. The meaning and reality of this may God Himself teach us! Amen.

GOD'S PROVISION FOR KEEPING THE BELIEVER'S CONSCIENCE RIGHT.

PART II.

I SHALL begin this paper by quoting the passage with which I closed the last one: “For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the Living God” (Heb. ix. 13, 14). Let us mark, again, it does not say *has purged*, although this is blessedly true in the experience of all those who got a full deliverance at conversion. But the purged conscience we then got will not last us all the journey through if there be no *renewal* of it. That is just where the weakness of present-day Christian experience comes in. There is so much of living upon a *past thing*, and consequently there is so little of the freshness and present joy which *all* believers ought *always* to have. What I am trying to teach does not imply that this’ fresh or continuous purging is needed, because the believer will be always

trifling with sin. Nor does it refer solely to the trouble which indwelling sin may give to an exercised child of God.

A fresh look at the Cross may often be needed to remove the stain that is brought on the conscience by one or both of these causes; but the Christian who is making progress in practical holiness well knows there is another reason for living continually under the shadow of the sin-bearing of the Cross. Would to God that more believers knew about this. As the child of God grows in the knowledge of God, as he apprehends more clearly His infinite holiness and His unbounded, unchanging love, and as he thus emerges into clearer light as to what God is, sin becomes more and more hideous, so that the imperfect conceptions we had of the Cross when we came at first, and which then met the need of the conscience, will not meet our need to-day. Clearer light will reveal this to us, that much which we once were not able to judge as being sin, will now appear to be so black that we are ready to exclaim with Agur: “Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy” (Prov. xxx. 2, 3). Psalm lxxiii. also illustrates this. When the writer of it was out in the dark, he thought he was an ill-used man; but when he drew near into the sanctuary of God he exclaimed: “So foolish was I, and ignorant, I was as a beast before Thee” (verses 13, 14, 17, 22). The Apostle Paul gives us a similar experience (see 1 Cor. xv. 9; Eph. iii. 8; 1 Tim. i. 15). Nothing could meet the need of a conscience which is growing in the knowledge of what self and sin are, but a clearer apprehension of the one perfect sacrifice of Christ, and a fresh appropriation by faith of that one offering to meet my present need. If my conscience is to be *kept purged*, I must needs see that the impurities which attach to all I have done, even when doing the right thing, and all the unholiness within me which once for lack of light I did not discern, that all were included when Jehovah laid my sins on His beloved Son (Isa. liii. 6), that they were all borne away when “Christ bare our sins in His own body on the tree” (1 Peter ii. 24). When a child of God gets

anything like a full sight of the love which God has lavished upon him, and what it cost ere that love could reach him, consistently with infinite holiness—when he sees in the light of this his own base ingratitude, his distrust in such a God, how much he has sought his own ends, where he sees so many sins of omission, which no one knows but the Christian who aspires to dwell in the “holy place,” where alone sin can be seen in its appalling hatefulness, and where alone the Cross can be seen in its grandeur and glory, and in its all-embracing infinity and eternity, it is then that a child of God, seeing things in their true character, will know how much he needs the Cross all the way along.

The Levitical ordinances given through Moses to Israel teach the same truth. In Exodus xix. 4 we read: “Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you unto myself.” In chap. xxv. He told them to make Him a sanctuary, so that He could come down and dwell among them (ver. 1-9). When the sanctuary was FINISHED—every part of it, “as the Lord commanded Moses”—He come down in a cloud and filled the tabernacle, so that “Moses could not enter in, because the glory of the Lord filled the place.”

At this point we see Israel redeemed by blood whilst in Egypt; we see them redeemed by power in the passage through the Red Sea. They were set free from Egyptian bondage, and brought UNTO GOD. And, as we have seen, Jehovah Himself dwelt among them. Let us observe carefully that it was at this point the Levitical ritual began. The reader who fails to note this will miss the whole gist of what I am attempting to teach. Amongst all the sacrifices instituted or commanded by the Lord to be offered by His people Israel, there was one *redemption offering*, and only one. That was the passover lamb. All the rest, from Leviticus i. and onwards, were for the express purpose of keeping a *redeemed people right with God*. We all know that the various offerings, from the burnt-offering to the trespass-offering, all point to the Cross of Christ—that is, all the offerings in which there was the shedding of blood.

Each of these offerings presents the one offering of Christ in a certain aspect. I do not attempt to go into the spiritual teaching of these various offerings. That has been far better done than I could do it.* What I am endeavouring to teach is, that the spiritual teaching of all these offerings applies in the first place, *not to lost sinners, but to saved sinners*. In doing this I am seeking to expose, and to combat the notion which has been, and is, so hurtful to the believer’s conscience, and so opposed to his growth in grace, viz., that when we come as condemned sinners, and get clear of our burden of guilt at the Cross, we have no more to do with the Cross. Hence such expressions as “the believer is past the Cross,” or “a saved sinner never needs to go back to the Cross.” These expressions are perfectly true, but not in the sense in which some seem to understand them. Believers are all past the Cross in the sense of being all on *heaven’s side of the Cross*; but if we are past the Cross in the sense of not requiring any more to repair to the Cross, we are on slippery ground. We who are already safe in Christ do not need to go back to the Cross. The “one perfect offering” was *to perpetuity* (Heb. x. 12). The Cross goes on with the believer. Christ was the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. xiii. 8), and he is the Lamb slain to the end of the world. All the journey through the wilderness I need Him as the Lamb that was slain; and if I do not see and *feel* that I need him in that character, it is because I have never learned what SIN is. I not only need to know Him as the propitiation for *past sins*, but I need to know Him as the propitiation for *present sins* (1 John ii. 2), and also to use Him as such.

The godly man who wrote that hymn beginning with “My sins were laid on Jesus,” wrote it “I lay my sins on Jesus.” I am not finding fault with the change which has been made. “My sins were laid on Jesus” is the *major* side of the truth, but it is only one side of the truth; but many seem to sing it as if it were all the truth, and as if, when they once brought their sins to Jesus, they never need to do it again. *Well, not the same sins; but, as I have already said, as we grow in*

*I refer to the “Levitical Offerings” by the Editor.

knowledge of the holiness and love of our God, we see many things within us and about us to be sin which once we did not see; and how or where can we get rid of the sense or guilt which a discovery of these things brings upon the conscience, but just where we got rid of our burden of guilt when we first came?

"I brought my sins to Jesus,
He cleansed them in His blood."

And where can I go with these sins which the Holy Spirit is bringing to light by His gracious operations in the soul? *Where can I go* but to that same Saviour "who took me as I was" when I came a vile sinner, fit for nothing but eternal burnings?

"I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad;
I found in Him a resting place,
And He has made me glad."

I know of no other way but just to do the same over again. Not now as a guilty sinner, who often did not know any better, but as one who has so much and so sadly lived to self after he did know better. Oh, the vile-ness of sin when seen in the light of what God has done for us, and what he has made us unto Himself! And where can the conscience find a refuge from the vile-ness of self but under the shadow of the Cross?

As I have said, increased light makes fresh disclosures of evil within us, and new discoveries of the impurities which cling to all we do. But these new revelations to us are no new revelations to our God. The guilt which attaches to these things was all fore-seen, and all provided against, when the LORD made *all* our sins to meet on the spotless head of His own Lamb. And it is there alone the conscience can find rest all the journey through.

In thus seeking to exalt the Cross as necessary to meet the present need of a believer's conscience, I am not in any way touching the doctrine of the believer's perfect standing and perfect acceptance in Christ. I am only endeavouring to guard against the *abuse* of that precious doctrine; to guard against the snare so common, although not expressed, that because the Cross has given me a perfect *standing* before God, therefore I do not need the Cross *all the way along* to give me also a perfect *state* as "pertaining to the conscience."

G. A.

GROW NOT WEARY, MY BELOVED LORD.

By WILLIAM LUFF.

O GROW not weary, my beloved Lord,
Although with all Thy tilling, weeds
still grow

Upon Thine acres; beautiful and broad.
Have patience, Master, still Thy care
bestow.

My friends grow weary, and love seems to
fret,

Because of imperfections that still mar
The garden of my life. With dire regret
Wilt Thou, too, fail, my one last lingering
Star?

I am aware of myself, O God,
And grow impatient. Be not Thou as
weak

As my poor faith and hope, lest the foul sod
Be left with none its fruitfulness to seek.

Do mothers grow impatient with their charge?
Alas! they may, and turn them from their
door.

Thy love is more than mothers'—full and
large,
Thy heart of love will show its patience
more.

I want to do the right, and yet, perchance,
The want, the will, are often far too chill;
But in the secret depths Thy searching glance
Can read the longing to perform Thy will.

O grow not weary, my beloved Lord,
For Thou hast done so bravely in the past,
At such expense, Thou canst not now afford
To give me up as reprobate at last.

"I will not leave thee, child: the precious
blood

Is on thy brow. I love thee, love thee
still.

I do not chide thee. Thou art understood
By My true heart. I love thee, and I will.

"And as for patience, hast thou never heard
I am the God of Patience. I am grieved
To see thee fail; but, faithful to My word,
I yet will perfect where I am believed.

"Have faith! Have faith that triumphs
over sins;

Faith that believes I will forgive and save;
Faith in my patient love, a faith that wins,
Amid its failure, all that faith can have."

EMMAUS.

THE beautiful story of the journey to Emmaus is both natural and uncommonly touching. All the narrative portions of the New Testament are so, but this, at the close of the third gospel, is interesting to no ordinary degree. Discouragement bordering on despair seems to have filled the mind and heart of the disciples, and it looks as if they thought of separating and returning to their ordinary occupations; they had well-nigh abandoned all hope of ever seeing their Lord again, and how could they possibly succeed in their work without the presence of their beloved Master?

Two of them were returning to their home at Emmaus, a village a little more than seven miles from Jerusalem. The journey was anything but a level one. The two disciples were not of the twelve, and, for anything we know, may not have been of the number of the seventy. We cannot tell who the companion of Cleopas was, and it is of no consequence to us, as we may be certain he was a believer in the Lord Jesus. How true is that saying, "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." It was so here, for the discourse of the two brethren naturally turned on the subject of which their hearts were full. The question of all questions occupied their whole attention, Was Jesus the Messiah of Israel or not? His words and deeds of power proclaimed Him such. But, on the other hand, how could the Messiah be crucified and put to death? This was the problem they were endeavouring to solve as they journeyed.

Just then, a stranger going their way came up with them, introducing Himself by making a kind and simple enquiry. The unknown very naturally enquired what the subject was that seemed to engross them. Did He not know what the subject was? Had He not reason to know? If, then, the stranger knew the subject on which they were conversing (and He did know), why did He ask the question? It was His manner to do so; it was "on this wise" that He chose to instruct them. So in John vi. 5-14, He enquires of Philip, the calculating disciple, "Whence shall we buy bread that

these may eat?" Was it not to prove the dear disciple? Jesus knew the peculiar tendency—the besetting sin, we may say—of the honest disciple, and here was an occasion to prove him. And so, in our striking narrative, the two brethren, though quite sincere, were "slow of heart" to take in all that the prophets had spoken of Israel's Messiah. Three objects the Lord seems to have had before Him—First, to share in their discourse; next, to reprove them for their slowness of faith, and give them the needful instruction from the Scriptures; and lastly, to reveal Himself to them. Each of these objects was completely gained. The united testimony of the prophets was set before them, and their faith in the prophetic word was confirmed. The last and highest lesson was given to them in a way of revelation, and this perfectly accords with the Divine order, which is ever the same in all time, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father, and he to whom the Father will reveal Him."

The combined object being gained, the Lord vanishes from their sight, leaving them in wonder, astonishment, and joy. Loving as His heart was towards them, and earnestly as He desired to sustain their faith and love, He yet keeps His secret with them till the last moment.

With what patience and touching interest does the stranger listen to the account of His poor, discouraged disciple; and with what tender compassion and depth of profound discernment we may never be permitted fully to know, He saw their need and had both power and grace to meet it fully.

Cleopas is astonished that such a question should be asked by one who had just been to the feast at Jerusalem; and he enquires very simply and naturally if the person who had just come up with them was only a stranger in Jerusalem, recently come in from the country? Dear, simple disciple! Yes, Cleopas, the person to whom you address this question is truly a stranger in Jerusalem, unknown to all save a few of His more intimate disciples. "His own knew Him not." They had cast Him out and crucified Him. But to the few who did receive Him—and they were very few—"to them gave He power to become the sons of

God, even to as many as believed in His name." Beautiful it is to see the patience of Jesus waiting upon the slowness of His servant; He listens with interest to the whole account, as a stranger would to a deeply interesting recital. Is there not a sweet lesson for every one of us here? Is not our Lord as gracious and attentive to "His own" to-day as He was yesterday on earth? Is there anything of change or abatement in His love? None whatever. Yesterday He died for us on the Cross; to-day He lives in glory to secure fully that salvation; to-morrow we expect to see Him and be with Him forever. To-morrow we shall be introduced fully into that salvation we now hope for—the salvation of hope—for by it we are saved.

It is quite clear that the stranger, on His first utterance, had secured the attention of the two friends. But as He proceeded to unfold the deep things of the prophetic word they could not but listen with awe, for from the greatest master of Israel they had never heard such an exposition. "Their heart burned within them" as they were shown the testimony of the Old Testament Scriptures to the Messiah. Prophet after prophet was quoted, as it were from memory, for it is not likely the stranger had a prophetic roll with Him. And as each prophet was quoted in succession increasing light was thrown on the whole subject, for so correctly, justly, and with such spiritual power was the deep subject handled, that each quotation imparted and received light mutually. "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." The remarks on each portion must have been very short, but strikingly to the point.

(To be continued.)

THE BELIEVER'S HOPE.

ALL worldly hopes disappoint, but He cannot. The believer looks at sin and triumphs. He looks at the troubles arising from sin (and they all arise from it), and he carries on his triumph to the end. He looks at death and still is happy, for he has hope in his death. He looks beyond death to a God of hope and a glorious immortality.—WM. ROMAINE.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

"WATER" IN JOHN'S EPISTLE.—Does the water mentioned in 1 John v. 8 and the water mentioned in the 6th verse of the same chapter mean the same, or, if not, what do we learn from the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses together?

CHRIST'S INTERCESSION.—What is the meaning of John xvi. 26, and how is it to be reconciled with Hebrews vii. 25?

PROPHECYING—IS IT EXISTENT NOW?—Does the teaching which we get in 1 Corinthians xiv., in connection with prophesying, apply to the present time?

SAVIOUR AND LORD.—Is it possible for any one to have accepted Jesus as Saviour, yet never to have owned Him as Lord?

WHO ARE THE FAITHFUL?—"Hast kept My word, and hast not denied My Name" (Rev. iii. 8). Does this apply exclusively to scripturally gathered companies of the Lord's people?

CARNAL AND SPIRITUAL.—Do the words "no condemnation" and "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us" of Romans viii. apply to both those "who walk in the flesh" and "in the Spirit"?

LIVING OF THE GOSPEL.—What is meant by these words in 1 Cor. ix. 14: "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel?" If it mean that those who preach the gospel should in temporal things be ministered to by those who hear the gospel, why is there not opportunity given in our gospel meetings for such ministry?

FIRST PETER.

QUESTION 398.—Is the 1st Epistle of Peter addressed specially to converted Jews?

Answer A.—From the internal evidence afforded in the epistle I gather that it was written from Babylon (chap. v. 13), where Peter and Mark were staying together (cf. chap. v. 13, last clause of verse, with Acts xii. 12; xv. 37; Col. iv. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 11), and was sent by the hands of Silvanus, "a faithful brother" and preacher (cf. chap. v. 12 with 2 Cor. i. 19), specially written to the Jewish Christians scattered throughout the different provinces of Asia Minor (cf. John vii. 35; Acts ii. 5-11; viii. 4; xi. 19, with 1 Peter i. 1; ii. 11, 12; iv. 3). Nevertheless, though specially addressed to Jews, there is little, if any-

thing, in the epistle not equally applicable to Gentile converts, of whom, doubtless, many were found in these assemblies. The teaching on faith, obedience, and patience; the exhortations to love, holiness, and the practice of other specific reciprocal duties; the truths taught as to Christ's death (i. 19; ii. 24; iii. 18), His resurrection (i. 3, 21), His ascension (iii. 22), His coming again (i. 7, 13; iv. 13; v. 4), and the last day (iv. 5, 18), are all for Jew and Gentile alike.

D. J. R.

Answer B.—If we read carefully through the epistle we notice many passages which appear to relate to Jews only. For instance, in chapter i. 10 he says, "Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should *come unto you*," and again in verse 12, "To whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto *you*, did they minister these things." Then, again, he quotes from the Old Testament, "Ye shall be holy, for I am holy," a precept given to the Israelites (Lev. xix. 2), and again, in chapter ii. 25, he says, "For *ye* were going astray like sheep, but are now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." This passage seems to infer that the persons addressed had known Jehovah, and had gone astray from Him, but had now returned to Him; this could not have been said of Gentile converts. Many other passages in this epistle seem to indicate that it is addressed primarily to Jews, and as Peter was the special apostle to the Jews, as Paul was to the Gentiles, there is every reason to believe that it was addressed to Jewish converts who had been scattered abroad through the provinces named in the first verse on account of persecution.

In the second epistle he salutes those "who have obtained like precious faith," and in chap. iii. 1 he says, "This is now the second epistle that I write unto you"; and in verse 15 he writes, "And account that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation, even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, *wrote unto you*." This may possibly refer to the epistle to the Hebrews, If so, both of Peter's epistles were probably addressed to the Jewish converts, though they are equally applicable to Jews and Gentiles in their teaching. W.D.B.

THE SOURCE OF SICKNESS.

QUESTION 399.—Does God send sickness?

Answer A.—We are warranted, I think, from Scripture in tracing sickness, directly or indirectly, to four sources—

(1) God, as its *efficient* and *ultimate* source (Lev. xxvi. 16; Deut. xxviii. 22, 27, 35, 61; 2 Sam. xii. 15; 2 Chron. xxi. 14-19 and xxvi. 20).

(2) Man's *original sin*, as its *inherent* source.

By sin came death, which is the worst any sickness can result in (Rom. v. 12).

(3) Man's *actual sin*, as its *meritorious* source. The transgression of a natural law incurs the infliction of the penalty annexed. (Turn up Scripture passages where sickness is threatened as a punishment for sin—e.g., Lev. xxvi. 18—and this will be clear.) Sin, too, will meet with future retribution.

(4) Satan, as its *instrumental* source. He is permitted by God to inflict diseases upon persons as he did upon Job (Job ii. vi., vii.).

Whether directly or indirectly emanating from God, sickness has a threefold object—(a) For the manifestation of His own glory (John ix. 3 and xi. 4); (b) To try or prove the Christian (Job v. 17; Isa. xxxviii. Ps. lxxvi. 10, 11; Heb. xii. 6); (c) To punish the wicked (1 Sam. v. 6; Acts xiii. 11; 1 Chron. xxi. 15).

D. J. R.

Answer B.—Bear in mind that famine, war, pestilence, disease, pain, and death are all the result of one vital principle—SIN. "By one man sin entered into the world" (Rom. v. 12). This was the channel, but evil originally emanated from him who is the primary author of all the miseries that afflict the human race—SATAN (1 Chron. xxi. 1; 2 Cor. xi. 3).

Now, in order to "rightly divide the word of truth," we must perceive the difference between that which God permits and that which God wills. For instance, in Matthew xix. 8, when the Pharisees enter into controversy with the Lord regarding the matter of divorce, they seek to justify themselves by stating that "Moses commanded to give a writing of divorce and to put away." He replies, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so"—thereby showing that although God permitted it He did not will it. So with sickness; God permits it, but does not will it. "God is not the author of confusion (i.e., chaos, tumult, or unquietness), but of peace" (1 Cor. xiv. 33), and therefore never *sends* sickness in the same sense as He sent His Son

What is Satan's other name? "Apollyon, the Destroyer" (Rev. ix. 11). What does he seek to destroy? All God's handiwork, and so not alone the souls, but the bodies of men, and Scripture clearly shows that all pain and sickness come directly from him, permitted of God, and this is part of the "mystery of God" (Rev. x. 7) which we get glimpses of from creation to the Great White Throne.

Take the case of Job. Divine permission must be accorded ere Satan can bring evil and death on his family and possessions (Job i. 12). Again, the man in the country of the Gadarenes (Mark v.), possessed of a legion of demons (not

devils—there is only one devil). “No man could tame him, crying and cutting himself with stones”; and finally, when these unclean spirits cannot continue their work of malignity and destruction any longer on the man, they ask for and obtain permission to enter into the swine, and the whole herd are immediately destroyed. Then the case of the apostle (2 Cor. xii. 7), who, “lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations,” was given “a thorn in the flesh, the message of Satan, to buffet him,” and the suffering was so grievous that “he besought thrice that it might depart from him.”

Sickness may come upon us as saints of God, for one or other of two reasons—CAUSE and PURPOSE. God says to Satan in reference to Job, “Thou movest Me against him, to destroy him, without cause.” God never says “without purpose,” for He had a purpose in permitting all these calamities to come on Job, in order that he might be not only “a perfect and upright man,” but a proved and devoted man, and that the accuser might be put to lasting silence. And so with us; sickness may come on us, not because of wrong-doing, but in order that the purpose of God may be fulfilled in us—that we should “be conformed to the image of His Son” (Rom. viii. 29); and suffering and sickness are often necessary to this end.

But look on the other picture, and what a solemn warning it is to us as children of God! “For this CAUSE many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep,” *i.e.*, the sleep of death (1 Cor. xi. 30). For what cause? Carnality had led to selfishness (verse 21), selfishness led to the lack of self-judgment (verse 31), and these things finally culminated in their terrible “sin unto death,” in “eating and drinking judgment to themselves, not discerning the Lord’s body,” and this was the cause of their bodily sickness and weakness, and for some of them went forth the word, “Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?” Therefore, as “No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but rather grievous,” we give praise to God, not because of but in spite of the affliction, being “in all these things more than conquerors through Him that loved us” (Rom. viii. 37), and like the prophet of old, though our eyes survey desolation on every hand, yet being lifted up by faith above our circumstances, we can raise our voice in a “harvest thanksgiving” to the Lord, “YET I will rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation” (Hab. iii. 18). c. g.

Editor’s Note.—It is of little moment to us to know the source of sickness. That it is one of the many consequences of sin cannot be disputed. That Satan has power to inflict it upon both mind and body is proved by many scriptures.

That God permits it, and permits Satan on certain occasions and under definite restrictions to bring sickness upon the children of men, and even upon those who are the sons of God, is also abundantly evidenced in the Scriptures. Usually it is Satan who is permitted to inflict it (see Job ii. 7; Luke xiii. 11; 2 Cor. xii. 7). The Lord in healing sickness was destroying the works of the devil (Acts x. 38; 1 John iii. 8). Even when the Lord is said to send it in judgment it may be that, as in the case of Paul’s “thorn in the flesh,” it is through Satan’s instrumentality that God works.

But this, at least, is clear, when the child of God suffers it is only by the permission of God, and not one pang can be inflicted beyond that which He appoints, who is “touched with a feeling of our infirmities.” It may be a preventive discipline, as with Paul, “lest I should be exalted above measure.” It may be chastisement for disobedience, and as such it may be unto death, “for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”

But, however sent, or for whatever purpose, it is invariably for blessing to the believer—“All things work together for good to them that love God.”

We are not taught in Scripture to trace any form of evil to God as its ultimate source. But “the origin of evil” is a problem to be left as God has left it—it is too high for our comprehension.

THE BASIS OF REWARDS.

QUESTION 400.—Please explain in *The Witness* Matthew xxv. 34, 35, 36. Will the people on the right hand receive their inheritance on the ground of what they had done, which is recorded in verses 35 and 36? In other words, Will they be saved on that ground?

Answer A.—Scripture is very plain as to the basis of rewards. It will be “to every man according to his works” (Matt. xvi. 27; 1 Cor. iii. 13-15; 2 Cor. v. 10, &c.). At the same time it is very plain that they are not “saved on that ground,” in the sense of saved from the sinner’s doom, but only by grace, by the atoning work of Christ, and through faith (Eph. ii. 5, 8, 9; Acts ii. 21, x. 43, xiii. 39, xvi. 31; Mark xvi. 16). Therefore only within the sphere of those who are thus saved can the reward of works (in a good sense) apply. The conduct of “the sheep” in Matt. xxv. 40 is the *fruit* and *evidence* of their faith. That of “the goats” marks the contrary.

That works are the basis of rewards is clearly shown in this discourse of our Lord; but the especial and evident aim of it is to teach us how He estimates, and how He will reward, the way His people are treated in His absence; that what

is done to any that belong to Him is done to Himself. Therefore the important matter for us is to lay to heart this lesson, whatever place we may suppose the portion of Scripture to hold in the prophetic chart.

"Eternal life" is spoken of in two distinct aspects: 1st, As in John, commonly, in the sense of a present possession, "being passed from death unto life"; 2nd, More commonly elsewhere, as the future life in contrast with the present one, this to be given up for the sake of the other. Under this aspect the "inheriting of eternal life" is set forth as a reward (Matt. xix. 29; Rom. ii. 7; 1 Tim. iv. 8, vi. 12, 19). So of "the kingdom," or the place of honour in it (Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 29, 30). While all the saved will doubtless be found there, some will have special places as the reward of faithful service here. All of grace indeed from first to last; but though works are the "basis of rewards," none are "saved on that ground." w. c.

THE LATE MR. TALBOT-CROSBIE.

REFERRING to the obituary notice in our last, we have much pleasure in adding the following notes:

Converted to God in 1839 as a young man, Mr. Talbot-Crosbie was by birth and education a member of the Church of England, then established in Ireland, and, as owner of his landed estate, had the right of presentation to six livings in County Kerry. These for many years he filled by taking the greatest care only to appoint clergymen of true Christian character and evangelical opinions.

But when the Revival came, and with it the deep and heart-searching resolve to seek in all things the mind of God, he left, with most of his children, the communion of the Established Church, and with them was baptised as a believer, and began to unite with other recently-converted persons in and around Ardferf in meetings for prayer, Bible study, Gospel work, and the simple and unsectarian fellowship of the Lord's Table. These meetings have been continued up to the present day, and great has been the blessing of God upon them, both in the joy, the abundant spiritual power, the comfort and edification of believers, and the salvation of many souls. Mr. Talbot-Crosbie himself in all these gatherings ministered abundantly and often with great power and natural eloquence, helped by a singularly impressive manner and a wonderful voice.

He had very important and valuable interests of a temporal kind to serve, always for the benefit

of the country and his immediate tenants and neighbours; but the greatest joy of his life was in his Bible, in the ministry of the Word, and the fellowship of saints.

It was not only by leaving the Church of England that he proved his faithful loyalty to Christ. He had also held the offices of Deputy-Lieutenant and Justice of the Peace, besides being active in all public work of the county, and earnest on the Liberal side of politics. But such was the influence of the new-found liberty of Christ, the heavenly inheritance assured, and the Lord's coming presently expected, that he resigned his official positions and honours, and retired completely from all public platforms and activities, to the no small astonishment and regret of many, even Christians.

He was a man of men, strong of will, clear of judgment, energetic, virile, courageous; but withal so gentle, gracious, patient, affectionate, as to knit to himself the hearts of all around him in love and reverence. A wiser counsellor, a firmer friend, or a more consistent Christian it would be hard to name. His illness was seven months long, without pain or distress, except of increasing weakness, and his mind was unimpaired to the end, and filled with the joy of hope.

The funeral took place on Wednesday, 6th September, when, in the hall of Ardferf House, which faces and is close to the old Abbey, the first portion of the burial-service was conducted by Mr. Lindsey Talbot-Crosbie, of Scotstoun House, second son of the deceased, who read a chapter from the Book of Revelation, followed by the singing of part of the hymn, "For Ever with the Lord." The funeral *cortege* then wended its way through the demesne to the Cathedral ruins, the tenantry, relatives, and friends following. Arrived at the burial place, Mr. George F. Trench (son-in-law) read portions of Scripture which Mr. Talbot-Crosbie specially enjoyed, and engaged in prayer, after which he referred to the kind and noble qualities of the deceased in all his dealings, the source of all being his belief in and his love of the Christ his Redeemer. He entered on active life a good, just, kind, and generous man, anxious for the welfare of his fellow-men, and at the end of 82 years he was the same. A short address was also given by Mr. David Talbot-Crosbie, testifying to the esteem, love, and reverence in which his father was held by all his family. Another hymn, "In Emmanuel's Land," was sung, and a short prayer by Mr. Trench, in committing the remains, "Earth to earth," brought a most affecting scene to a close. Colonel Talbot-Crosbie, the eldest son and heir, who is abroad, was unable through ill-health to be present.

*THE GIFT OF PROPHECY: DOES
IT EXIST NOW?*

MMUCH depends upon a right understanding of what prophecy is. In Rom. xii. 6-8 it is distinguished from teaching and from exhortation. In 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29 prophets are again distinguished from teachers, and also in Acts xiii. 1. In Eph. iv. 11 evangelists, pastors, and teachers are mentioned apart from prophets. It is therefore clearly recognised in Scripture as a distinct gift conferred in apostolic times upon some and not upon others. (See 1 Cor. xii. 29.)

To evangelise, or, literally, "to declare the glad tidings," is the privilege of all—(see Acts viii. 1-4)—but that does not constitute every one who does so an evangelist in the sense of Eph. iv. 11. An evangelist is one specially gifted and fitted for and devoted to the work of the Gospel.

The teacher cannot go beyond the written Word. His work is to expound and apply that which is already revealed through apostles and prophets, and which is given to us in the Scriptures. Timothy was to commit to faithful men the things he received from Paul, in order that they might be able to teach others, thus anticipating the cessation of the prophetic gift. To add to that which is revealed and written, or to take from it one single word, would be a heinous offence on the part of any teacher.

But that which was given to a prophet to utter was actually and absolutely the Word of God, and herein lies the deep distinction between "prophecy" and all other ministries. In fact, the question, What is prophecy? involves the whole subject of inspiration.

In 2 Timothy iii. 16 we read: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God"—or, literally, "is God-breathed." In 1 Peter i. 10 we read: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, testifying beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." And in 2 Peter i. 21, "Prophecy came not in old time by

the will of man, but men spoke from God being moved by the Holy Spirit."

Taking these three Scriptures together, it is clear that the prophet was merely the instrument by which the Holy Spirit spoke or wrote His own words. It was not the man who was inspired—a common, but erroneous, idea—it was the words he uttered or wrote that were God-breathed. So little had the mind and will of the prophet to do with the words given him, that, having uttered or written the prophecy, it was his privilege afterwards, equally with that of those who heard it or read it, to search into its meaning and application. Truly, "no prophecy ever came by the will of man" (2 Peter i. 21, R.V.). Nay, there are instances in which prophecy was uttered against the will of the one who spoke it—he was compelled by the Spirit to say the opposite of what he would have desired to say. (See Balaam, Num. xxii. 38; the old prophet, 1 Kings xiii. 20-22; Caiaphas, John xi. 49-52.) All this is peculiar to the gift of prophecy. It has no application to teaching, preaching, evangelising. These ministries are exercised according to the will, and intelligence, and ability of the one who ministers. The words of the prophets (and apostles also, for they possessed the gift of prophecy), being God's words, formed part of the Scriptures. It would be blasphemy to place on a level with the God-breathed words of prophets, the words of any teacher or preacher, be he ever so godly, ever so highly gifted as a teacher, ever so spiritual in his understanding and exposition of that which is written. Could any words more fitly describe this essential characteristic of all prophecy than those of the Psalmist, "My tongue is the pen of a ready writer" (Psalm xlv. 1).

The men of the high priest's house who held the Lord had in their ignorance a more correct idea of what the gift of prophecy was than those now-a-days who confound it with teaching, preaching, and exhortation: "When they had blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face and asked Him, saying, Prophecy who is it that smote Thee"? They were mocking His claim to be a Prophet, as afterwards the Roman soldiers mocked His claim to be King. Their meaning was, "Declare

by inward prophetic inspiration who it is that smote Thee," for otherwise a blind-folded person could not have known.

But there are two passages which have been adduced in support of the theory that prophecy is merely a form of preaching, teaching, or exhortation of a specially spiritual kind. One is 1 Cor. xiv. 3, "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, exhortation, and comfort." Thus, it is argued, "Whoever speaks to edification, exhortation, and comfort is prophesying." Is it not perfectly clear that this is a fallacious deduction and a false conclusion? It was simply intended as demonstrating the superiority of the gift of prophecy to the gift of tongues. No such blessed results followed the exercise of the gift of tongues when they were not understood. But it by no means follows that a teacher or exhorter whose words bring edification and comfort is therefore a prophet!

Again, it has been argued from the same chapter, verse 22, that because prophecy was "for those that believe," therefore all ministry in the Spirit to believers is a modified form of prophecy. Again the fallacy is evident. The ministry of the teacher is for those that believe, and ought ever to be to edification and comfort; but, as we have already seen, it differs essentially from the gift of prophecy, and the two are never confounded in Scripture.

Another misconstrued passage is Rev. xix. 10: "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." This has been taken to mean that all testimony of which Jesus Christ is the subject, is prophecy. Does it not rather teach that all prophecy of Old or New Testament testifies of Jesus; that is its object: and the prophetic Scriptures are but as a body without the Spirit if that be not seen. It was the unfolding of this great truth by the Lord Himself that caused the hearts of the disciples to burn within them on the road to Emmaus.

But it may be asked, Has the exhortation, "Covet to prophecy," no application to us? The answer is, consider the whole chapter, and it becomes evident that the point on which all turns is, "Seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the Church"

(verse 12). At that time, ere yet the New Testament Scriptures had been nearly completed, whilst practically the Church had little more than the Old Testament in a permanent written form, and the great truths of the new dispensation were only beginning to be unfolded, the grace of God provided the gift of prophecy for the edification of the Church. It was an absolute necessity until the Holy Scriptures of Old and New Testaments were completed and accessible to the Church.

But since the completion of the Scriptures, wherein are furnished "all things that are profitable for life and godliness," the gifts for edification are those of exhortation and teaching, both of which deal with the written Word, and dare not go beyond it. The force of, "Covet earnestly the best gifts," surely now is, Covet to be able to edify by teaching and exhorting. (See Col. iii. 16; Heb. iii. 13, x. 25; Eph. iv. 29). In 1 Cor. xiv. 6, two different kinds of ministry are referred to, "revelation and knowledge"; two methods by which the mind of God is communicated, "prophesying and doctrine" [teaching]; two ways in which that which has been communicated by God is given out. That which is spoken by revelation is prophecy. That which is the result of knowledge is doctrine or teaching.

The passing away of these miraculous and temporary gifts is referred to in 1 Cor. xiii. 8. When we read, "Prophecies shall fail," it cannot mean that any prophetic announcement shall fail to be accomplished. It must answer to the succeeding statement as to "tongues," that is, the gift of tongues—"they shall cease." That is, the gift of prophecy and the gift of tongues would pass away when their purpose was fulfilled.

It is a common idea that prophecy only refers to the foretelling of future events. But Scripture assigns no such limit to the scope of prophecy. No doubt much that was communicated to the early Church by those possessed of the gift of prophecy was truth concerning the person and work of the Lord Jesus, and concerning the character and calling of the Church.

That has all been preserved for us in the writings of the apostles and prophets which

compose the New Testament. There is no new revelation for this dispensation requiring a revival of the apostolic or prophetic office; all the needs of the saints for this age till the Lord's return have been foreseen and provided for by the wisdom and foresight of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures.

And it may be well to refer in concluding to an incidental evidence of the passing away of the gift of prophecy. In 2 Peter ii. 1 we read: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you." It is Satan's method to simulate the true messengers of God. When there were true prophets Satan raised up his false prophets to oppose. But as to the future, we do not read, "There shall be false prophets," but "There shall be false teachers." That is, in this time when the prophetic gift has for this dispensation passed away, Satan's emissaries do not assume the rôle of prophets; but by false, insidious teaching, professedly based on the Scriptures, they undermine the faith and introduce destructive heresies.

Again, it has been taught, and generally recognised, that the second epistles have a special bearing upon the last days of the dispensation. The more carefully they are examined, the more will this view be confirmed.

Can it, then, be without design that there is not in any of the second epistles a single allusion to either New Testament prophets or to the gift of prophecy? Nor is there any such allusion in the Epistle of Jude, which evidently has special reference to the last days.

In view of all the Scriptures referred to, and the whole teaching on the subject to be found in the Word of God, we have no hesitation in saying that the gift of prophecy does not now exist in the Church. But it by no means follows that the teaching of 1 Cor. xiv. has no bearing upon the present time. It is largely a chapter of *order*. The principles it contains for regulating the ministrations of the assembly are unrepealed, and apply to the exercise of whatever gifts for edification do now exist, notwithstanding that the gifts of prophecy and of tongues have been withdrawn. J. R. C.

THE GRACE and GLORY of CHRIST.

An Address at Leominster Conference by Dr NEATBY.

Read Matthew xiv. 14-33.

II. THE INTERCESSOR AND COMING LORD.

"AND when He had sent the multitude away, He went up into a mountain apart to pray." He is there now. He has gone up on to the mount to pray. He has gone up on High, and is in the presence of God for you and me, for us poor, failing ones. For, indeed, we are very poor in apprehending how rich we are! Christ is for us in the presence of God. He is presenting us to God now—me as I am speaking, you as you are listening. O, what could I do without Him, in all my weakness, and worse than weakness, culpable weakness? He is there on the mountain while the disciples are on the stormy sea, "tossed with the waves" (verse 24). But He knows it. He sees, and never forgets them. And He never forgets us! May we know the joy of it, and may it be ours! Remember how the sisters at Bethany sent in their trouble for the Lord when Lazarus was sick. But four days passed before He said, "Let us go to Bethany." Was He not thinking of them? Yes, He was, for we are told He loved Lazarus. Then why did He not go? Because He did not do anything in independence of His God and Father. "As the Living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father." The Father's time had not come till Lazarus had lain four days in the grave. If the sisters had had deeper knowledge of Christ they would have been quite sure of His heart toward them. If they had had a simpler confidence in Him they would not have had any fears. But Martha, going out to meet Him, said, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died," and poor, pensive Mary, who sat quietly in the house, said the same. But the Lord Jesus thought of them, counted their tears, and felt with them in His great heart of love, though He did not immediately go to them. So the Lord above saw the disciples toiling on the stormy sea, but He did not go to them till the fourth watch. It seemed long; but the fourth watch did come. It does seem long, Lord, but the fourth watch surely comes, and Thou

wilt be here. Though it seems long, yet faith waits, and waits patiently. Faith knows He will come at the right moment, and longs for it while it waits patiently.

THE OBJECT OF FAITH.

Much has been said at our Conferences about Peter and his failings, and sometimes I am afraid we are a little hard on him. But Peter had a heart for Christ, and Christ knew it. Peter had devotion to Christ which was a very genuine thing. Peter spake one of the best words ever spoken. In John vi., when "many disciples went back and walked no more with Him, then said Jesus unto the twelve, "Will ye also go away?" No self-confidence here! No "I will go to prison and death" now! But he humbly said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life"—as much as to say, "We might go away, alas! but we've nowhere to go." Does it not remind us of the words of Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre: "Sir, if Thou have borne Him hence, tell me where Thou hast laid Him." There was only one "Him" in all the world to her, and she thought the gardener must be thinking of "Him." The disciples were troubled when Jesus came to them walking on the sea, but He said, "It is I; be not afraid." Remember, Peter does not venture on the water without authority from the Lord. "*If it be Thou*" had immense power over Peter. Winds and water must obey Him, and he steps out to go to Jesus. Blessed Object to go to! You are going to Him, and I am. We shall soon be with Him. Peter had a good word from the Lord. We have heard of some who have gone out to China or Africa without a call. That is a perilous thing to do. But here Peter hangs on Christ's will, as he loves His person. He does not trust his own love to the Lord to guide him, but asks for the very word of Christ, and he has it: "Come." Then he steps out on the path of faith, out of every outward support on to the stormy waters. His object was right and His warrant was right, for Christ's word was his warrant, and Christ Himself his object. This is characteristic of our path—of the path of faith down here. Our Object is

Christ—the "mark or the prize of the high calling of God;" our warrant is the word of the Lord; and the power for obedience is the Holy Ghost. All goes well while Peter looks at the Object. The waters are as solid as the vessel had been, and much more steady. But it is evident that he turned his eye away, for it says, "He saw the wind boisterous and was afraid"; he saw what the wind had done, the evidence of the wind. He was not occupied with Christ. His eye had got from Christ, and he begins to sink. It is remarkable that this occurred when he saw the wind was high. Tell me, is it easier to walk on water when it is quiet, or when it is rough? With Christ it is easy to do one or the other. Without Him it is impossible to do either. As soon as Peter took his eyes off the Lord, water was water, and he began to sink. He cries, "Lord, save me!" and the Lord Jesus answers the cry of His feeble servant, and stretches out the mighty hand that in its day had laid the foundations of the world. "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Could Peter answer that "wherefore?" It was unreasonable for Him to doubt when he had asked for and received a word from the Lord. May the Lord write these lessons on our hearts!

GOD'S REMEDY FOR ERRING IN HEART.

Notes of an Address by JAMES WRIGHT, of Bristol.

HEBREWS III.—PART II.

FOLLOWING the hardening of the heart comes the second working of the flesh—"erring in heart," and that is very closely connected with the previous one, which leads to it. Erring is wandering out of the way, and you find in very many passages where hardening of heart is referred to, spiritual blindness (of which wandering is the result) is connected with it (see Matt. xiii., Isa. vi. and lxiii.).

It is well that we should consider the bearing of "erring in heart" upon the believer's pathway. Every hour we spend out of the straight road, we so far delay our progress. When Christian turned aside into the arbour, and went to sleep, and lost his

roll, he lost much precious time; so if the believer err in heart, every hour spent in that erring course is so much time lost. That is one way of looking at it. Covenant grace will sooner or later restore him—granted; but so long as he is pursuing an erring way it is lost time. The Psalmist seems to have grasped that in Psalm cxix. 10, where he says, “With my whole heart have I sought Thee; O let me not *wander from* Thy commandments.” Why? Is he afraid of being destroyed? Oh, no; he had a *goal* before him, and that goal was God. As he expresses it in Psalm xlii. 1, “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God.” Here there is another figure—a *vace*, with a goal he wants to reach, and the goal of the Psalmist was God, and he felt that every time he wandered to the right or the left of that straight course he lost time in reaching the goal. That is the idea that I want pressed on our hearts. Time is very precious; these moments are passing beyond our reach; we cannot recall one of the past moments of this day. It is a question of great importance how we spend our time, for waste of time will surely affect our reward at the judgment-seat of Christ.

But now another deeper thing. You observe it is erring in *heart*. When it comes to erring in *walk*, every one sees. If I were to do something very inconsistent to-morrow, the world would be sharp to see it, and say, “If *that* is Christianity, I would rather not be a Christian.”

But the point here is not erring in walk, though that is sure to follow; but God begins at the beginning, and says, “They do always err in their *hearts*.” There is always an erring in heart before there is erring in the steps; there is always the wandering of heart from the inflexibly straight line of integrity before God before there is visible deviation in the conduct. Ah! and often the one may go on long before the other is manifested. But how wise it is to use this word for the purpose for which it is given, viz., to enable us to *detect* erring in our hearts before this has manifested itself in the erring steps. It is said, according to another verse in this very epistle (chap iv. 12),

to be “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”—a knife, a sacrificial knife, I understand that to mean. Just as the priest divided the body of the victim, and laid all the secret parts open, so the knife of the Word of God, parting asunder soul and spirit, is as surely a discerner of, and enables *us* to discern, the thoughts and intents of the heart. It is wise to let the Word do its work, because by that means we find out what is wrong in this living sacrifice of ourselves. You know we are called upon to present ourselves “a living sacrifice” (Romans xii. 1), and that means all this body; it means what this body is doing every day. If I present my body a living sacrifice, it means that I present my brain, my eyes, my ears, my tongue, my hands, and my feet; so it is a very practical thing; it means your whole life, and that this should rule all actions in which these members operate. If I let the Word do its work on me, and show me when I am wrong, I get great gain.

But do let us remember where the evil begins. As the upward, heavenly direction begins within, as the first step Godward is in the heart, viz., self-condemnation on account of sin, and the glad acceptance of the provision of God in His Son, for we must believe in the heart before we “confess with the mouth,” so the downward work begins within, and erring in heart produces all the outward steps. So it behoves us to exercise self-judgment, and to put our finger on what is wrong. This is just the meaning of the apostle’s word, “If we would judge ourselves we should not be judged (1 Cor. xi. 31); that is, discern the character of our ways of thinking, speaking, acting—bring these to the bar of the Word, and judge what is wrong. What is the result? We are not chastened; our Father will not use the rod if we do this work of self-judgment.

Now, what is the remedy set against this working of the flesh, “erring in heart”?

ENTERING INTO REST
(chapter iv.). If I enter into rest according to this passage, I shall be effectually saved

from erring in heart. If day by day you enter into rest, you will be saved from erring in heart.

Let us look at this expression. The apostle speaks of two rests,

THE REST OF CREATION,

God's rest after the six days of creation, and then of the rest into which Joshua brought the children of Israel,

THE CANAAN REST.

Then he says, "There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God." How very often this expression is taken as alluding to a future rest reserved in heaven for them. That is not at all the meaning. It is that after the two mentioned there abides a third; that is the simple meaning. A very similar form of speech is that expression in 1 Cor. xiii., "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." That is, I have spoken of two, faith and hope; there is another, or there *remaineth* another to be spoken of, viz., charity, and that is the greatest of the three. Exactly in the same way the apostle says, "I have been speaking of the Creation rest and the Canaan rest, but another remaineth to be spoken of."

Now, what is that rest? That it is not a future thing is plain from the next passage, "We which have believed *do* enter into rest." So this rest, which the believer enters into, and labours not to come short of, is a rest we are intended to enjoy *now*. Yes; while in these bodies of humiliation, we may enter into rest. The rest has two aspects: (1) Rest of *conscience*; (2) Rest of *mind*; and both *in Christ*.

The ultimate object of this epistle is to magnify Christ as the Substance of every type.

If the apostle speaks of the high priest Aaron, what is his object? To magnify Christ as the Great High Priest. If he speaks of Moses, who was "faithful in all his house as a servant," it is to magnify Christ as "a Son over His own house." If he speaks of the tabernacle, it is to contrast it with the true Tabernacle in the presence of God, and if he speaks of creation "rest" and Canaan "rest," it is to throw into glorious relief the "rest" which the believer's soul enters into when (1) he trusts

the atoning blood that purges his conscience, so that he enters into "peace *with* God"; and (2) when he believes that "the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand"; and so enters into the "peace of God"—that is, the very Divine serenity itself. Christ's peace, or perfect serenity of mind, can never be disturbed by *circumstances*, because all things are under His feet; and the soul that *believes* this, and knows also by faith that he is *in* Christ, enters into his Lord's place or serenity.

All the unrest and turmoil of earth do not disturb *Him*, therefore they ought not to disturb us. If earthly ecclesiastical "foundations be destroyed," and the question be raised, "What can the righteous do?" the answer of faith is, "The Lord is in His holy *temple*"; and in view of the overturning of earth's political foundations, faith finds undisturbed *rest* in beholding "the Lord's *throne* in heaven."

Another aspect of the "rest" of faith in Christ is the *fixedness* of heart which the believer knows who trusts in the infinite *wisdom* of his Lord.

In the presence of *apparently* irreconcilable statements of the Holy Spirit in the inspired Word, he is calm and undisturbed, knowing that what he knows not now he will know hereafter.

The Lord Jesus, when on earth, had many followers, but one day He spoke some very deep, mysterious words that they could not understand, and, instead of coming to Him to explain them, they went away saying, "This is an hard saying: who can hear it?" Then Jesus said to the *twelve*: "Will ye also go away? and Peter, as the spokesman of the rest, said: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." As much as to say, "Those words about eating Thy flesh and drinking Thy blood are a perfect riddle to me; but, Lord, I cannot go away from Thee, for if I do, I do not know where to go. Thou hast the words of eternal life, and Thou hast linked me to Thyself with a link that can never be broken. I must *wait* for Thee to explain those enigmatical words, but I cannot go away." And so, if we really believe in the unerring wisdom, as well as in the redeeming grace and

Almighty power of Christ, our spiritual understanding will "rest," amid all the as yet unexplained mysteries of His Word and His providence, finding our perfect satisfaction day by day in Him who feeds us according to the integrity of His heart and guides us by the skilfulness of His hands (Ps. lxxviii. 72). And thus "entering into rest" in Him, we shall be preserved from "erring in heart."

(To be followed by "Departing in Heart.")

THE LORD'S PRAYER—VII.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.
(Matthew vi. 13.)

"AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION."

THIS petition reminds us of our weakness and liability to fall, by the remembrance of Eden, and the experience of our first parents there. If they, created upright, and surrounded with every blessing, with no necessity without, and no tendency to evil within, fell into temptation, how much need have we to ask God to deliver us from entering into temptation, from turning aside into bye-path meadow, or from going into scenes, or engaging in occupations, or reading books having an evil tendency, or, as it were, casting ourselves down from a pinnacle of the Temple (see Matt. iv. 5-7) through spiritual pride or self-sufficiency. How precious is that promise, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. x. 13).

There will be a temporary answer to this petition during the millennial period, when the temptations of the old serpent the devil will be suspended during the thousand years he is confined in the bottomless pit; but after this he must be loosed for a little period. There is a brighter prospect far: HEAVEN is represented as the PARADISE OF GOD, and in that Paradise, whilst there is the tree of life in the midst of the garden, there will be no forbidden fruit, and no beguiling serpent, neither temptation to evil from without, nor tendency to evil within.

"BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL."

God has made provision for the believer's present deliverance from the power of evil, and this deliverance is threefold.

First, Whilst WALKING IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD. "By the fear of Jehovah men depart from evil" (Prov. xvi. 6).

Secondly, By ABIDING IN CHRIST, for he that "abideth in Him sinneth not" (1 John iii. 6).

Third, By LIVING AND WALKING IN THE SPIRIT. "This I say, then, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Gal. v. 16). "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 2-4). "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. v. 23).

In the NEW HEAVEN and the NEW EARTH deliverance from evil will be complete. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away" . . . "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. xxi. 1-4).

And in the heavens above throughout all eternity, when the redeemed of every dispensation and of every age are gathered together around the throne of God and of the Lamb, and in the presence of the holy angels, when there will be neither adversary nor evil occurrent, this petition will receive its complete and everlasting fulfilment.

MY WANTS—MY HAPPINESS.

THE height of Jesus' grace is so exactly suited to the depth of my distress, that I am ready to glory in it. I would not be without one single want. My wants are my happiness. They make Christ so exceedingly desirable, that fresh wants add to Him, in my eyes, fresh beauty. It is a pleasure to be in His debt—yea, the greatest I know of. I would not have inherent righteousness if I could get it for nothing. I would not be rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing from Him, if it were possible. w.r.

FAITH MUST LEARN TO DIE.

ONLY a tomb he found
 On Canaan's sacred ground;
 Only Machpela's sepulchre
 The present portion of the heir;
 Not now, but in the life to come,
 The patriarch must claim his home.

Only a passing glance,
 As in a dream or trance.
 His eagle eye was not yet dim,
 But cross the Jordan—not for him;
 For him a lonely death with God,
 His sole Companion on the road.

For Thee, the Cross alone,
 Abraham's greatest Son,
 For Thee, Thine own Jerusalem
 Had but the thorny diadem;
 We trace the path Thy feet have trod
 As the rejected Son of God.

A wailing place, that's all—
 Remnant of temple wall—
 'Tis all that Thou can'st call thine own,
 City where the Shekinah shone;
 To thee, Messiah's earthly bride,
 All other portion is denied.

Yet hand in hand at last,
 Death and bereavement past,
 Their festival will ne'er be done
 Around Messiah's kingly throne;
 The secret of the life of faith
 Is, *Resurrection follows death.*

M. I. R.

GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE—XII.JACOB'S TROUBLE.

By JOHN R. CALDWELL, Author of "Shadows of Christ in the Old Testament," "Things to Come," &c.

[Will our readers please make note of a printer's error in our last which escaped correction? Page 169, article "Lying Wonders," first paragraph, 5th line—"One" and "His" ought not to have had capitals, as they refer not to Christ but to antichrist.]

WE have seen from many Scriptures that the Jews shall be restored to their land in the latter days, not as a believing nation, but in unbelief, a remnant only of faithful ones standing out against the ungodliness of the vast majority. We have seen that the restored nation will build the

Temple at Jerusalem, re-institute the Levitical ordinances, prominently "the daily sacrifice," or the morning and evening burnt-offering (Ex. xxix. 38, 39), and that for three-and-a-half years this shall go on amidst apparent prosperity—their religious liberty being guaranteed by virtue of the covenant entered into and confirmed by the greatest earthly potentate, "the Prince that shall come."

We have seen what kind of person this is, and the Satanic character of "the man of sin" who exercises the authority of the first beast, with whom he is in league. We have further seen how thoroughly he succeeds in deceiving and ingratiating himself with the nation. Having rejected and despised the Christ of God, they receive and honour the antichrist.

But "in the midst of the week," that is at the expiry of three-and-a-half years, this great one in whom they trusted will cast to the winds the covenant; their guaranteed liberty shall be put a stop to; by force he will cause the daily sacrifice to cease, and instead of the worship of Jehovah he shall claim to be himself God, and demand that the idol he sets up shall be worshipped.

Now, I want you to look with me to some Scriptures descriptive of this period of trouble, this second half of the last week of Daniel's prophecy.

Turn to Jeremiah xxx. 5:

"For thus saith the Lord, We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace."

Doubtless they supposed that peace was assured by the covenant they had entered into; they were saying, "Peace, peace," but there was no peace for them by any such means.

"Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it."

Two remarks may be made here: First, it is a time of trouble without parallel. It is the same as that spoken of in Dan. xii. 1:

"A time of trouble such as there never was since there was a nation, even to that same time; and at that time Thy people [the Jews] shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the Book."

This corresponds exactly with the Lord's words in Matthew xxiv. 21 :

"For there shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor never shall be."

And then He goes on to speak of the elect and their deliverance by the appearing of the Son of Man.

These three passages clearly teach that no time of tribulation before or after will compare with that. It is pre-eminently "the great tribulation." And it is instructive to note that the word used by the Lord in reference to it in verse 8, "the beginning of sorrows," is the beginning of "the travail pains," thus intimating that deliverance would be wrought, and life from the dead would result from the tribulation.

Secondly, notice that the preservation and deliverance of the elect or the "remnant" is assured in each of the three passages. Satan cannot deceive the elect, neither can he destroy them. And the fact that this unparalleled tribulation issues in deliverance and the full blessing of Israel, is proof that *it has never yet taken place*. Great were the sufferings of the guilty nation at the last destruction of Jerusalem, but these were not "the time of trouble" here referred to, for no deliverance of a national sort was wrought then.

Jeremiah xxx. 8, 9 :

"For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him. But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them."

Read also verses 10 and 11.

Read another passage descriptive of this tribulation, Ezek xxii. 17-22 :

"And the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of Man, the house of Israel is to me become dross; all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are even the dross of silver. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it to melt it; so will I gather you in Mine anger and in My fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of My wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of

the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I, the Lord, have poured out My fury upon you."

And yet another (Zech. xiv. 1) :

"Behold the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee, for I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle."

This hostile gathering will consist of the armies of the great anti-Christian confederacy, the ten kingdoms of the resuscitated Roman world directed by "the beast," and "the false prophet." The awful length to which they shall be permitted to go in cruelty and rapine is described in the subsequent verse; but in verse 3 the scene changes :

"Then shall Jehovah go forth and fight against those nations." Verse 4, "And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south, . . . and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee."

The blessed feet which trod that mountain so often in the days of His flesh and of His humiliation shall indeed again descend upon it in glory and in power. Accompanied by all the resurrection saints, a glorious retinue, He shall come for the deliverance of the faithful remnant, and the establishment of His kingdom over Israel and the whole world.

His glorious appearing will take place just at the moment when human pride and anti-Christian hate seem about to triumph in the extermination of Jehovah's people, and thus the falsifying of His Word, and the frustrating of His purposes. With one fell stroke shall the mighty hosts be paralysed, multitudes slain, and the beast and the false prophet, their leaders and instigators, shall be taken and cast alive into the lake of fire (see Rev. xix. 19-21). The remnant who rejected the covenant, discerning it to be an agreement with hell, not cut off from the city, but having entered into their chambers to wait for the Deliverer, shall then triumphantly sing: "Lo, this is our God—we have waited for Him." The bright and blessed songs of Is. xii., and Is. xxv. and xxvi., all belong to that day of Salvation, the year of the Lord's redeemed, and of vengeance on their foes.

But dark as are those three-and-a-half years from the breaking of the covenant to the appearing of the Lord, God does not leave Himself without a witness, nor does He leave the people of the Jews without a testimony in their midst. He raises up two specially-gifted witnesses who prophesy 1260 days. They are clothed in sackcloth, and miraculous power is given them, so that any who desire to hurt them are consumed by fire proceeding from their mouths. They have power to shut heaven that it rain not, to turn water into blood, and to smite the earth with plagues. The Jewish people might hate their faithful testimony and deride their predictions of coming wrath, but they could not stop them till their work was done. How entirely in contrast to the gracious ministry of the present age, such a testimony was, is clearly seen. And this alone suffices to prove that it pertains to a future dispensation when the Church and its patient, unresisting endurance of the sufferings of Christ has been withdrawn from the earth.

But at the expiry of the 1260 days of their testimony, the indignation of "the beast" is aroused; he makes war with them, overcomes them, and kills them. For three days their dead bodies shall lie unburied in the streets of Jerusalem, three days of rejoicing and sending of gifts throughout all the earth—for the telegraph shall convey the news to every corner of the confederate kingdoms of the world. But the spirit of life enters into them; they stand upon their feet, to the utter consternation of their foes, a great voice from heaven summons them on high, and they ascend up to heaven in a cloud whilst their enemies behold them. At the same hour there shall be a great earthquake, a tenth part of the city shall fall, and seven thousand men shall be slain. Such is the final testimony! What its results are we are not told, but it may be assumed that many would give heed, and that the elect would be confirmed in their faithful, patient endurance.

Those awful three-years-and-a-half are the period during which the judgments of Rev. vii. to xix. are fulfilled. Seals are opened, trumpets sound, vials of wrath are poured out. Earthquakes, famine, pestilence, plagues, and war desolate the earth. Multitudes are

beheaded for their allegiance to the Word of God, and their refusal to worship the beast and his image. Alas! alas! for that day—it is

"A day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord; and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy: for He shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land."

Tribulation is the heritage of the saints. "In the world ye shall have tribulation" are the Lord's own words to His own saints. It has ever been so more or less, and will be till the dawn of the Millennial day.

But surely the tribulations that are common to every age, at some periods intensified and at others greatly modified, are altogether different from that "time of trouble" which we have been considering. To be partaker of the sufferings of Christ is an honour, and to share in His coming kingdom and glory will be the recompense.

But to be upon the earth during the day of vengeance, when Satan's power will have reached its climax, and when the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all nations, is surely not to be desired, and gladly do we welcome the teaching of 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, which so plainly declare that the coming of the Lord and our gathering together unto Him must precede the manifestation of the man of sin and the tribulation of the last days.

BIBLE STUDIES.

TWO THINGS GOD'S WORD WILL NOT DO.

- I. Will not pass away, . . . Mark xiii. 31.
 - II. Shall not return void, . . . Isaiah lv. 11.
- T. B.

PAST—PRESENT—FUTURE.

- | | | |
|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Psalm xxii. | - Past. | - The Cross. |
| Psalm xxiii. | - Present. | - The Crook. |
| Psalm xxiv. | - Future. | - The Crown. |

YESTERDAY—TO-DAY—FOREVER.

THE LAW OF SILENT INFLUENCE.

WE read of Joash that he "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days of Jehoiada the priest" (2 Chron. xxiv. 2). This passage, among many that might be quoted, appears to set forth the great law of silent influence that operates in the spiritual as well as in the natural world. Jehoiada the priest was a man who took a decided stand for God and righteousness. Under his influence things went well with Josiah. As long as the priest lived, the youthful king did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. It may be urged that this doing of righteousness must have been superficial in its character, seeing that Josiah transgressed the commandment of the Lord as soon as Jehoiada was dead. But this does not affect the point that Jehoiada's influence was for good—its effect being such that one man at least was constrained to walk in the right path. If that man failed at a later day, when the influence for good was no longer operative, we must not conclude that the influence had been unreal. Godly testimony is never without a salutary effect, even although those who come under its power should afterwards depart from the Lord and fail to "end well." The presence of a godly person in a company has often been known to put a bridle on the tongue of the blasphemer. Although that influence is only for the time being, no one will question its reality on that account. When Jehovah reigns, the "strangers" acknowledge the influence of that reign by "submitting themselves" (2 Sam. xxii. 45; Psa. xviii. 44; Psa. lxxxi. 15). Although their submission is only a "feigned obedience" (see marginal reading), the influence that keeps them externally correct is none the less real.

While the life of a good man will undoubtedly influence others for good, the life of a bad man, and the influence of an evil time, will have an exactly opposite effect. We are told of Manasseh that he "made Judah also to sin" (2 Kings xxi. 11), and we read of a time when, "because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Matt. xxiv. 12). Here we have influence

telling in the wrong direction—the downward direction. It may be the sinister effect of one man's testimony, or the general depression that accompanies abounding iniquity. But the effect is the same—increasing departure from God.

In the light of these things let us learn that there is one thing we all possess, and that is an influence either for good or ill. We cannot divest ourselves of that influence. It follows us, clings to us, is a part of us. Whether we are active or passive, speaking or silent, it operates with the certainty of a fundamental law. It is the effect of *character*. It is solemn to think that we are, all unconsciously it may be, influencing the lives of our fellow-men. Truly no man liveth unto himself. How all-important, then, to see that our influence is on the side of truth, and purity, and God.

And not only are we influencing others, but others are influencing us. Our destiny may be affected for better or for worse by the influences that surround us—by the people with whom we associate. I need not flatter myself that it does not matter who or what I associate with—that external influences can have no effect on *me*. It is written that "evil companionships corrupt good manners." We are exhorted to "avoid the appearance of evil"—to go not in the path of the wicked, and to be followers of them who through faith inherit the promises. It is written that "he that walketh with wise men shall be wise." The Psalmist said, "I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy precepts." Scripture recognises the importance of our keeping clear of unhallowed influences. We may, through circumstances beyond our control, be brought into contact with persons or things that are apparently unfavourable to spiritual progress. Yet, if we are in the path of the will of God, all will be right that seems most wrong. We shall prove that greater is He that is with us than all the unfavourable circumstances that can be against us. But if we have a choice in the matter, and if we choose deliberately to place ourselves within the circle of influences withering to the soul, we are sinning presumptuously, and need not pretend to count on God for deliverance in the evil time. w.s.

EMMA US.

(Continued from page 179.)

MOST likely He began at Genesis iii. 15, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman," &c. After making some striking remarks on this original promise He might have proceeded to Genesis xiv. 18, taking up Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem, of righteousness and of peace, showing that he was a type of the great Messiah. Then he would explain the promises made to Abraham, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Then Genesis xlix. 10 would be quoted, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah," &c. On this prophecy He might have enlarged, showing how it had been fulfilled in the timely manifestation of Jesus in the flesh."

Next, He might have expounded Deut. xviii. 15, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, from thy brethren, like unto me." Here they were shown how Christ in His whole mission had fulfilled that great promise to Israel. The two brethren would here be struck with thoughts of Israel's deep guilt in rejecting the great prophet sent unto them. Then he would have proceeded to the types, sacrifices, and ceremonies of the law, showing how they were all intended to prefigure the Messiah, and how they were accomplished in his ministry, sufferings, and death.

In the multitude of passages quoted, we may be quite sure that Numbers xxi. 9 would not be passed over. The stranger would have illustrated to them the great deliverance to the Israelites, who had been poisoned by the fiery, flying serpents, as He had done before to Nicodemus (John iii. 14). Here would be shown the greatness, fulness, and freeness of the great salvation, "Look and live"—a free offer on the one hand, and a simple acceptance on the other. We may suppose he next quoted the passage in Isaiah vii. 14, and although a miracle was here predicted beyond the power and foresight of man, the heavenly Stranger would show that it was perfectly accomplished in the Person of Jesus, who had lately died on the Cross.

The all-perfect Teacher would have pointed out to them that the time of Christ's personal appearance in the world had been the subject of prophecy (Dan. ix. 24-26). On this the heavenly Teacher would have pointed out to them when the "seventy weeks" commenced, and how the great events of the prophecy had been, and would be, accomplished. Then Malachi iii. 1 was shown them, and its accomplishment in the ministry of the Baptist, and the preaching of Jesus in the temple. The sacred Minister might have shown them that in the person of Jesus the prophecies were fulfilled which declared that the Messiah should descend from Judah, and from Jesse, and from David (Isa. xi. 1-10). The prophecy of Micah as to the place of Messiah's birth would then be quoted. What a prophecy was this, that the Being whose goings forth were from everlasting would humble Himself to the form of a servant, and die on the Cross! Now Hosea xi. 1 would be shown them; then Isaiah ix. 1, 2; then Zechariah ix. 9. Nor would the treachery of Judas towards Jesus be forgotten; Psalm xli. 9 compared with John xiii. 18; then Zechariah xiii. 7 with Matthew xxvi. 31; then Psalm lxix. 21 with Matthew xxvii. 34. Psalm xxii. 16 and Isaiah liii. would be shown them, with its clear accomplishment.

In some such manner as this, the risen Lord might have passed over the whole field of prophetic Scripture, alleging and testifying to their accomplishment in every instance where Messiah's sufferings had been spoken of. He showed them finally that "thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations."

This blessed discourse went on till the disciples came to their home, and most likely was continued at table, up to the moment that the Unknown, taking the bread, gave the usual blessing. And now, specially attracted by His manner or love in giving thanks, they look more closely at their Guest. The veil passes away, and "they knew Him" whose words had by the way so touched them. They know it is the Lord Himself; but He vanished instantly from their sight.

MNASON.

A GLORIOUS PROGRAMME.

"HE will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people . . . He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." All the poor, bewildered nations will awake with wonderful surprise when God in one moment will destroy this covering. Death He will abolish. "And sorrow and sighing shall flee away;" "and the rebuke of His people shall He take away . . . It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is *our* God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us." If man thought for one moment, he would flee from the coming wrath. We love to tell him in the preaching of the Word how he may pass from death to life, from the power of Satan to the kingdom of God's dear Son.—J. DENHAM SMITH.

Correspondence.

AUSTRALIAN ASSEMBLIES.

To the Editor of THE WITNESS.

DEAR SIR,—A desire to visit assemblies of believers in these colonies had for several years previous had a place in our hearts. At length a change of scene and labour seemed necessary, and the way was made clear for us to start. Towards the end of March, with my wife and infant son, I left Wei-hai-wei. One month later found us landing in Brisbane. Brisbane is a thriving modern city of fully 100,000 inhabitants. There we found five fair-sized companies of Christians gathering, as we believe, on primitive and scriptural ground. We were heartily welcomed among them, and from first to last received no small kindness; and this, I may say, has been our experience in the numerous other places we have visited in that colony, and in that of New South Wales and Victoria.

We found God's children, as a whole, hungering for the pure milk and strong meat of the God-breathed writings, and it led to much exercise of soul that needed truth might be ministered from time to time. And we sought to remember that needed grace is equally important; and truth that does not lead to the manifestation of grace is surely not needed truth.

Outside of Brisbane we visited some eight or ten other places where there are churches of the saints. With three or four exceptions, they were found to be particularly weak and needy. All seemed to greatly appreciate our visit.

After about two months in Queensland we passed on to the mother colony, New South Wales. Of this Sydney is the capital, with a population of about 450,000 inhabitants. In the city and its suburbs there are now eight companies of Christians, who gather on each first day of the week for worship and the Lord's Supper. Several of these are large and hearty meetings, with a good deal of local gift in them. In all, with perhaps one exception, regular gospel work is carried on, both in Sunday school, open-air, and Sunday night meetings indoors. We were privileged to visit and labour in seven of these assemblies; and, so far as we could judge, they are seeking to go on with God, walking in the midst of the paths of truth—not "loose," by any means, and yet not so extreme on the other side as many in these cities were several years ago. Outside of Victoria, and practically outside of Melbourne, the extreme views have wrought their own cure. Most have seen the unscripturalness of them, and have found deliverance, in God's mercy.

About two months were spent in New South Wales, most of the time in Sydney. After staying off for about two weeks' rest at a lovely place in the country—where, also, a few meetings were held—we came on to Melbourne, the largest city of Victoria. The population is said to be a little larger than that of Sydney.

There we found a different state of affairs among the assemblies. Owing to the divisions caused by those who we trust had a zeal for God, though not according to love and knowledge, the assemblies are weaker both as to numbers and gift; there are five such meetings seeking to go on with God, to worship and serve Him, build each other up in the faith, and preach the gospel to those still without, and the Lord is with them, blessing them to these ends.

At Geelong we had several meetings with the believers. There our veteran brother Mr. H. Ord still resides. He is now far from strong, and is not able to do much outside of the local assembly, where he is, of course, a great help. We have also spent a week at Bendigo, perhaps the first, and still one of the chief cities of the gold-mining industry. It is a well-built town of some 36,000 people. Here, too, there is a nice, simple, yet hearty company of the Lord's people, who welcomed us among them. A Sunday night meeting in the open air, held regularly by these friends, is probably one of the largest and most encouraging meetings of the kind in the colonies.

I hope to visit a number of the assemblies both in Tasmania and New Zealand. Of the latter colony I hear good reports of the progress, in recent years, of simple meetings in

those lands. South and West Australia, very needy fields, I shall not at this time visit.

On these visits I have seen a good deal that has called for exercise of heart. Many brethren are earnest and spiritual, and devoted to the welfare of God's children and to the spread of the gospel; but, with sadly few exceptions, their time and energy must be given to business. In these Australian colonies proper (not including New Zealand), as far as I can learn, there are only about twelve men giving themselves wholly to the ministry of the Word and preaching the gospel. Two of these, I believe, are colonials born; the rest are from England or Ireland. Of Scotch brethren, though there are many in the assemblies whom we have come to know and love, there is not one giving himself entirely to the work.

All-round men, called of God, are needed to give themselves to helping already established churches, and who will devote a good deal of time to the inland towns, villages, and bush districts of these important English-speaking colonies. Men of mature age, who could not face the learning of a difficult language, if fitted and sent of God, would here find work ready to their hand. And such as are spiritual, and really gave themselves to the work, would be, I doubt not, sustained by the prayers and practical fellowship of fellow-believers in the cities. It is true God's servants should look to Him for all their supplies, yet it may encourage some to know that there are believers in these colonies, who would deny themselves to help in the spread of the simple gospel, and of those truths which are such a stay and comfort to many of us.

It may encourage you to know that *The Witness* is looked for by hundreds through these colonies. It has shown me the responsibility of writing in its pages—the importance that it should be a word from the Lord. I trust that this letter may lead to a clearer understanding of the state of assemblies here, that it may lead to increased prayer for them and for the writer, and that others may be led forth by God to labour for Him in these spiritually needy places.—Yours in Christ's love and service, J. NORMAN CASE.

Melbourne, Australia, Oct. 10, 1899.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

CHRIST'S INTERCESSION.—What is the meaning of John xvi. 26, and how is it to be reconciled with Hebrews vii. 25?

CARNAL AND SPIRITUAL.—Do the words “no condemnation” and “the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us” of Romans viii. apply to both those “who walk in the flesh” and “in the Spirit?”

LIVING OF THE GOSPEL.—What is meant by these words in 1 Cor. ix. 14: “Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel?” If it mean that those who preach the gospel should in temporal things be ministered to by those who hear the gospel, why is there not opportunity given in our gospel meetings for such ministry?

THE SOURCE OF SICKNESS.

QUESTION 399.—Does God send sickness?

[This question was dealt with in our last, but the following reply, which has since come in, we deem worthy of being inserted still.—ED.]

I HAVE observed that there are *three* causes for a Christian being sick, or physically unwell.

1. Because we dwell in bodies liable to disease and decay. This cause we find in Philippians ii. 25-27; 1 Timothy v. 23. Both these men would appear to have overtaxed their bodily strength, and by transgressing the laws of health they suffered for it, as any unconverted man would do.

2. There is the special culture and pruning which the fruitbearing branches receive (John xv. 2). The deep trial which the Bethany family were called to pass through (John xi.) seems to me to be a notable instance of this. The design of this was, first, that the Son of God might be glorified (verse 4), and also for their own spiritual benefit. Compare Luke x. 38-42 with John xii. 2, 3, and we cannot fail to see the progress in spirituality they had made. Also note it was a family *specialty* loved (verse 5) which was selected by the Lord to show forth His glory.

3. Suffering bodily affliction on account of sin. The death of David's child is an instance of this (2 Sam. xii. 14). Also 1 Corinthians xi. 30-32 and James v. 14, 15 teach the same truth. I might almost add a fourth cause of affliction. It may be sent or allowed as a part of *Divine fitting* for some special department of service in the future. Would not Hebrews ii. 10 and v. 7-9 be of this character?

Regarding the first cause of sickness I have cited, whilst no doubt God can, and does *overrule* such sicknesses for blessing to His people, yet there is much sickness of this nature which is *preventible*, if we were more careful to understand and obey the laws of physical health. It is well to be exercised under every kind of affliction so as to profit by it; but it is also well

to seek to distinguish between that which God lays upon us in a direct way and that which we bring upon ourselves.

G. A.

"WATER" IN JOHN'S EPISTLE.

QUESTION 401.—Does the water mentioned in 1 John v. 8 and the water mentioned in the 6th verse of the same chapter mean the same, or, if not, what do we learn from the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses together?

[The answers to this question would form a respectable volume; and, strange to say, each one differs from all the others; no two writers take the same view of the passage. We give the reply which most commends itself to us, though we need hardly say that it still leaves room for questions, and for further light.—Ed.]

Answer A.—The types of old that had to do with Israel's fitness to draw near to God might be summed up in the words, "blood and water"—that which atoned for sin, and that which put away uncleanness. When the Lord Jesus died upon the cross, and the soldier pierced His side, "forthwith came there out blood and water." Upon this the Apostle John dwells very particularly, and, though his first object may have been to declare the reality of the Lord's death, it is evident from his previous reference to the paschal lamb that he had the Old Testament types in his mind. Now, if we remember that the first epistle was written at about the same time as the gospel, we cannot resist the impression that in the epistle he refers to the historical fact recorded in the gospel. The word "came" takes in the whole of the Lord's manifestation and work—He came "by water and blood." And as if to emphasize the truth, that His cleansing from sin could only be on the ground of His having atoned for that sin, the apostle adds, "Not by water only, but by water and blood." And to this fact "it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." The Spirit beareth witness to Christ, and to all that Christ accomplishes. Then, not apparently as anything additional, but as enforcing the truth already expressed, we read, "For there are three that bear witness, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one."

We may perhaps compare with this the truths of John iii., where the Lord speaks of the necessity of a new birth "of water and the Spirit"—a birth in which cleansing and the imparting of new life are combined. But when it is asked, "How can these things be?" the answer is found in the words, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Thus are we directed to Christ, who by His death becomes the source of that eternal life which is imparted by the Spirit in the birth spoken of above. w. h. v.

SAVIOUR AND LORD.

QUESTION 402.—Is it possible for any one to have accepted Jesus as Saviour, yet never to have owned Him as Lord?

Answer A.—It can hardly be possible for any to have accepted Jesus as Saviour and not to own Him as Lord. All recognise the title, though what it implies may be little apprehended either as to intelligence or practical subjection to Him as such. We accept the Saviour as a free gift, wholly and absolutely. As Lord, it is for us to yield to Him ourselves and our service. And this is at best a matter of degree.

The "owning" of Jesus as Lord may consist in the lowly, unassuming practice of loving obedience; or, it may be, in nominally so owning Him, and yet not doing the things that He says. We have to beware of formally claiming the attitude and being found wanting of Him at the last. We may be strictly fulfilling in some outward points, while omitting the higher matters of His law. For instance, Romans xiv. 10 and James iv. 11 show that where we are judging our fellow-servants we are failing to own Him as Lord. w. c.

Answer B.—I believe such a thing is possible, and also sadly common. To have trusted Christ for eternal salvation is the first step in a believer's experience; but so many halt there, and get no further. Whereas it is the special purpose of God, in "calling out" the Church, to have a people on earth (where Christ was rejected) to bow to His authority and own His Lordship whilst He is now seated on the right hand of God, the Lord Jesus has given a complete code of laws for the guidance of His disciples as to worship, walk, and warfare. And is it not true that there are many who are really safe in Christ, and who yet with the Bible in their hand know almost nothing concerning His will, especially regarding worship, and, I might almost add, they seem to care as little?

Over twenty years ago the Lordship of Christ was taught in power, but now man's blessing seems to be everything, and the honour and glory of the Son of God is more and more getting but a second place with many, and with some no place at all. G. A.

Editor's Note.—"No man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." All who are quickened and indwelt by the Holy Spirit do own Him as Lord, as well as Saviour, just as by the same Spirit they say, "Abba, Father."

Many also say, "Lord, Lord," but obey not His Word, and do not in their hearts own His authority in any measure. Such are not genuine believers.

The new man, which is "created in righteous-

ness and true holiness," which is "after the image of Him that created him," must ever own Jesus as Lord, however the knowledge of His will and obedience to it are hindered by the flesh and fleshly considerations.

That Christ's claims as Lord are lamentably dishonoured is too true, and this cannot be too earnestly pressed upon the heart and conscience of the children of God, but to divide the saints into two classes—those who own Jesus as Saviour and Lord, and those who own Him only as Saviour—finds no warrant in Scripture.

WHO ARE THE FAITHFUL?

QUESTION 403.—"Hast kept My word, and hast not denied My Name" (Rev. iii. 8). Does this apply exclusively to scripturally gathered companies of the Lord's people?

Answer A.—"My word" is explained in verse 10 as "the word of My patience," the promise of coming glory, the "keeping" of which consists in patient continuance, or patient suffering. Can it be said that these are confined to "scripturally gathered assemblies"? Or is it there that the brightest examples of patient suffering for Christ are found? What of "the noble army of martyrs," before any such assemblies as those described were heard of? What of the faithful sufferers for Christ now in other lands, where such assemblies are unknown?

Further, the question seems to imply that the "word," the promise of His coming, refers to the details attending the moment of His return, which now occupy so much attention, deeply interesting

as these are, instead of the eternal future, which this will introduce. But "that blessed hope," in view of which we are called to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, is "the appearing of the glory that awaits the Lord Jesus and His saints, and lies beyond the circumstances of that moment, joyful as they will be." And "that blessed hope" is not confined to the scripturally gathered assemblies.

Answer B.—It is never safe to pronounce judgment on fellow-saints. That is the sole prerogative of the Son of Man. There may be true loyalty of heart to Christ, and yet much ignorance of Divine order and ordinances in the Church.

Many believers have suffered martyrdom on account of their loyalty to the truth of God who knew little or nothing of gathering unto the name of the Lord, as many believers have been taught in these last days. That should never lead us to undervalue, or hold slackly, the truth which we have learned; but it should help to keep us from making a merit of our privileges. It is faithfulness to the light we have got, rather than the measure of our light, which is pleasing to the Lord, and which will doubtless receive His commendation in the reckoning day. G. A.

QUESTION 404.—PROPHESYING: IS IT EXISTENT NOW?—Does the teaching which we get in 1 Cor. xiv., in connection with prophesying, apply to the present time?

In reply to this question, the reader is referred to article by the Editor on "The Gift of Prophecy," page 183.

THE THIRTIETH YEAR OF THE WITNESS.

IN continuing the issue of *The Witness* for 1900 we purpose (D.V.) adhering to the object for which it was begun twenty-nine years ago, viz., to present the Truth in its variety and breadth, with definiteness and moderation, keeping back nothing that we deem to be profitable, yet seeking to present it in such a spirit as to give no unnecessary offence to any one.

We would again record our gratitude to God for help vouchsafed in the past, and for blessing given through the truth ministered in the pages of *The Witness*, of which many of the Lord's people in various lands have communicated their testimony and thanks, to our joy and encouragement.

During next year we hope to have the continued help of those well-known writers who have hitherto

contributed articles for *The Witness*, as well as short-hand notes of valuable addresses by such teachers as Dr. NEATBY, Mr. JAMES WRIGHT, Mr. R. C. CHAPMAN, the late Mr. HENRY HEATH, and others.

The EDITOR purposes continuing the series of papers on "God's Chosen People," and to give a number of miscellaneous articles on subjects of importance, as well as to add the accustomed "Note" from time to time to Answers to Questions.

We desire the continued assistance of those competent to write on Scripture subjects, and also of those who send in Answers to Questions, and shall be thankful for the prayers of all who love the Lord Jesus, for wisdom and grace to continue this service, and for increased blessing thereon.

J. R. CALDWELL.