

THE
GOLDEN LAMP;

OR,

TRUTH IN LOVE

FOR

THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

“ I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD : HE THAT FOLLOWETH ME SHALL NOT
WALK IN DARKNESS, BUT SHALL HAVE THE LIGHT OF LIFE.”

John viii. 12.

“ Now are ye light in the Lord : walk as children of light.”

Ephesians v. 8.

“ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works,
and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”—*Matthew v. 16.*

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THE GOLDEN LAMP.

“LOOSE HIM, AND LET HIM GO.”

THE words of Scripture are always precious. When we take them up in the direct context they speak to us from God; and oftentimes, when out of their more immediate relation, they breathe the utterance of the heart to God as no other words can.

The departing saint has often recalled the words of the psalm, “Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.” They had been uttered often before, when mourning “because of the *voice of the enemy*,” and “*when fearfulness and trembling*” had well-nigh overwhelmed. The desire to “depart,” and to be at rest, found expression from the heart of the devoted Paul when he wrote to the Philippians; but the wings were not then vouchsafed. There must be “a little more rough tossing,” and then, but not till then, “to earth adieu.”

But when the time of departure has arrived, when “the wings like a dove” are about to be given, how may the dying saint, who rests implicitly on Jesus only, cry out in the triumph of an eternal joy, “Loose me, and let me go!” for death has lost its sting, and the grave its victory, and the thin veil that shuts out the immediate presence of the Lord, long loved and served, is about to be rent asunder, and to reveal the King in His beauty.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints; and happy that death to them; for we read,

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

Some such comforting, triumphant thoughts will have filled the hearts of many when the notice of which the following is a copy was placed in their hands.*

"Loosed from his earthly tabernacle, and taken to be
'with Christ,'

WILLIAM YAPP,

Aged Sixty-seven,

AT LAUREL COTTAGE, LEOMINSTER, ON SATURDAY MORNING,
November 28th, 1874.

"In prosecuting labours of love for the Lord and His Church, slight illness fell upon him a few days

* A departure from the rule hitherto observed of confining articles to the unfolding of truth will seem fitting, we trust, under the circumstances. The death-bed experience of one known to very many who will read this account may be profitable and encouraging. Extracts from two letters out of a very large number kindly sent to his widow will show how lengthened and valuable his testimony has been.

Mr. Venn writes:

"Your dear husband was one of the first to greet me with true Christian affection on my coming to Hereford forty years ago; and however we differed on some minor points, yet I always felt one with him in all essentials, and never ceased, and never shall cease, to regard him with sincere esteem and Christian love. Many indeed will mourn over his loss, and many will have reason to bless God for having ever known him. Would that more had his large heart and his untiring zeal in his Master's service!"

One of his most recent acquaintances thus writes:

"I cannot express to you in a letter how greatly I enjoyed the three hours I spent with dear Mr. Yapp a few weeks since, the only time we *ever met*. It seemed that, knowing his time on earth was short, he was bent on confirming those he was leaving behind, that we might be faithful witnesses for our absent Lord, and cling fully to those truths, and above all to the One so precious to his own soul. I never learnt so much in three hours, I believe, as I did during those I spent with your dear departed one."

previously; but instead of recovering, as usual, he became prostrate and sank, overcome with the very much toil he had had, especially of late.

“His blessed Master, who had given him remarkable energy in His service for many years, gave him the triumph of faith in his hours of weakness. He longed for that blessed hope—the coming of our Lord for His Church—and meanwhile greatly desired to occupy the many doors of service opened to him, especially that of gathering the Lord’s servants for prayer and counsel, which he was thankful to have been permitted to do on four occasions this year, at Leominster, with most happy results.

“Words of kindness, prayer, outbursts of thanksgiving and praise, came from his lips, often in a continuous stream, even when in a state of semi-consciousness. During his last night, he feebly tried to join a word in many a home-song. When told that perhaps he did not know one which seemed specially suitable, he sought, with very hurried breathing and faltering voice, to raise the tune :

“Rise up and hasten! my soul, haste along!
 And speed on thy journey, with hope and with song;
 Home, home is nearing, 'tis coming into view,
 A little more of toiling, and then to earth adieu.
 Come, then, come! and raise the joyful song,
 Ye children of the wilderness, our time cannot be long;
Home! home! home! oh, why should we delay—
 The morn of heaven is dawning, we’re near the break
 of day!”

“When he saw clearly at the last what the will of God was as to his departing, he suddenly quoted the Lord’s words respecting Lazarus—‘Loose him, and let him go,’ and then very earnestly added, ‘Loose me, Lord Jesus! Let me go, Lord Jesus! Take me to Thyself, Lord Jesus! Loose me this very moment, if it be Thy will, Lord Jesus!’”

Our beloved brother was too well known to need any detail of his labours here; but having gathered up a few fragrant fragments from his dying bed, when at Leominster attending his funeral, we would leave them on record in the pages of the *Golden Lamp*, as a feeble but loving tribute to him to whose prayers its readers are probably more indebted than to the pens of those who contributed to it by writing.

We must confine ourselves to the last few hours of that precious life before "the silver cord was loosed," or "the golden bowl broken;" before "the pitcher was broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern."

Until Friday morning, the day before his departure, our beloved brother seemed to look forward to restoration. He had often been brought very low before, and it was no strange thing for him to go down to the gates of death. He thought that his "adorable Lord" had some further work for him to do, wherein he might perfect strength in weakness. But on that morning the symptoms were such that all around him saw that the end was not far off, and with a rebound of joy, from the joy of service to the joy of his Master's presence, he received the welcome news—"The Master calleth thee." The current of his thoughts, even though they often wandered, will be understood by the following notes of his utterances during the last two days, chiefly taken, unknown to him, by a kind friend and helper.

On Thursday morning, as he was about to receive some nourishment, throwing up his trembling hands and head, he exclaimed, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!" and after partaking of it, he cried out with great energy, "Now unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood; to Him be glory." And then for some minutes half-unconsciously he echoed the words, "Loved—washed—sins—blood—all—washed—blood—all—clean—all washed;"

and again collecting himself he said to his wife, “Is it not all washed? Is it not all clean?”

When taking some wine he would say, “New wine of the kingdom! drink—new wine—new wine—with Him—with *Him*—HIM—HIM!” He dwelt with much joy on the words, “Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty;” and repeatedly said, “The King! The King! The King! See the King—in His beauty! beauty! beauty!”

With feeble, faltering voice he started the first line of many hymns; among them, “O Christ, He is the Fountain;” and finding he could not sing, dwelt on the words, “Christ—the Fountain—the Fountain—the deep—deep—sweet—sweet—well of love—Christ—Fountain,” &c. “Safe in the arms of Jesus” brought comforting thoughts to him, as it has to many, as he peacefully whispered the words, “Safe—arms Jesus—safe—gentle—arms—safe—gentle—breast.” “A little while our Lord shall come,” and “For ever with the Lord,” seemed also to express his joyful anticipations. This last hymn was especially in his mind, and was frequently quoted.

He repeated the first verse of—

“Here we rest, in wonder viewing,”

enjoying much the second line, so like the language of Scripture—“*All our sins on Jesus laid;*” and then exclaimed—

“O teach us more of Thy blest ways,
Thou *holy, holy, Lamb of God.*”

Having suddenly sung the line,

“I am so glad that Jesus loves me,”

he for some minutes alternately repeated, “Jesus loves *me*” (then turning to his wife), “Jesus loves *you*,” “Jesus loves *me*,” “Jesus loves *you*.”

Within the last two days between thirty and forty comparatively long prayers flowed from his heart and lips, intermingled with incoherent words, and yet

breathing out the deep longings of his heart for the welfare of the Church of God, and the glory of his blessed Lord.

The spirit prayed, while he took no notice of those around him. The subjects of his half-conscious utterances were those that had occupied him in life: the Church—her wants, trials, divisions, and sorrows; individual saints and their necessities; the conferences in Leominster, in which he had taken so deep an interest, and on which he had expended so much of prayer, of time, and of means. Such subjects were alluded to most touchingly, and then put into the Lord's hands with unwavering faith and confidence.

He exclaimed several times, "It is the Lord's Church—it is the Lord's Church! He loves it—He loves it! He will take care of it, He will perfect it." His heart seemed to oscillate between the Church on earth and Christ above. He loved the people of God, because they are precious to Him; even as in the days when he had strength, he cared not how he toiled, or journeyed, or suffered, if he could but cheer a child of God, or help him to follow the Lord more fully.

At another time he said, "Everything is going wrong everywhere; but that's no business of mine." And again: "There is such a storm coming—ah! there is such a storm coming! but I shall be out of it, I shall be with the Lord—yes, I shall be at rest." His wife asking what she could do without him, he replied very tenderly, "My precious Mary, I am going, but you must stay behind; the Lord will take care of you and bless you; and you must serve—yes, you must serve—and be a better servant far, far, than I have ever been."

At another time he said, "The Lord has laid His hand on me very firmly; it is very gentle, but very firm. When He does lay on He does lay on; what He does He does thoroughly—very gently, but very firmly; but He is still Jehovah-Rophi." And then

continued feebly whispering, “The Lord who healeth—the Lord who healeth”

On Friday morning the following sentences fell from his lips, sometimes word by word at intervals, at other times continuously, as his failing energy rekindled awhile: “The Lord is a righteous judge.” “My soul shall make her boast in the Lord.” “I want to understand my position before God, what my possessions in Christ Jesus are;” and again he repeated, “My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.” When comparatively well, he used often to speak with wonder of the Lord’s grace in bearing with his “manners in the wilderness;” and still he asked, “Why does the Lord suffer with me to the last?”

“Do you know William Yapp?” he said to an old friend by his side. She answered warmly in the affirmative. And he replied, “No; you do *not* know William Yapp, you don’t know William Yapp; he is a poor good-for-nothing sinner—oh, such a debtor, such a debtor to the grace of God!” “Such a debtor—grace abounding—grace abounding,” he whispered.

While eating some grapes, he repeated twenty or thirty times, “His flesh—meat indeed—meat indeed! His blood—drink indeed—drink indeed!” And turning to his wife, he asked, “Is it not meat indeed? Is it not drink indeed?”

Speaking of his departure, he said, “I do not *wish* to die; I would rather wait for His coming, if He please—not else, NOT ELSE ;” and then again repeated, “His flesh—meat indeed! His blood—drink indeed!” He then dwelt upon the words, “The blood—the blood! Life indeed—life in the blood—life indeed!” “The light of life: He that hath the Son hath eternal life—inexpressible life and light in the Son of God—He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life. Blessed God! life eternal in His Son! eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord! Amen! He giveth us—He *giveth* us

—eternal life in His Son. Nothing shall be able to separate us from eternal life in God's dear Son."

The four words, "life, love, light, glory," appeared to fill him with delight, and he repeated them over and over, varying their order, but always ending with "glory" as the climax. He then vainly tried to sing, "Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness," dwelling upon the words, "My beauty are, my glorious dress;" and then added, "To see *Him*, see **HIM** whom I love! God's love! the Father's love! the Son's love! The eternal Son of God shed His blood! The Lamb of God shed His blood for sinners! The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin! The Lord of Glory! He would that we should live *like* Him who gave up His life for us! He redeemed His people to be *like* Him! I want the last moments of my life here to be *like* Jesus! They tell me I am going to die. Wonderful glory to be with **HIM**, the Lord Jesus!"

To his wife, who spoke of being left alone, he replied very feelingly, "I will never, never leave thee; never, no, never, forsake thee. God, God be with you and bless you," adding some tender words of fond affection.

It is known to many that one of the last acts of this noble open-hearted brother in Christ was to take the Waterloo House, at Leominster, for the purpose of accommodating brethren whom he hoped to assemble together in the Lord's name for mutual prayer, counsel, and conference on matters concerning the welfare of the Church of God. Some of these blessed and refreshing gatherings had taken place, and our beloved brother's heart had been increasingly cheered by the universal testimony he received of the help and encouragement they had been to those who had attended them. On three of these occasions it was our privilege to be present, and in regard to the last, held on the three days following Monday, September 28, we can truly say it was the best. But oh, how little, when we took our leave, did any of us think that we were to

see that bright smile of love no more, nor hear those loving words of welcome and farewell again. His dear wife, feeling deeply the weight of the responsibility, asked him if he had any wish respecting the Waterloo.

“The Waterloo!” said he, “It is the Lord’s. He will take care of that, if He takes me away.” At another time, when asked about the same matter, he said, with a triumphant tone, gazing and pointing upwards, “Ah! ah! ah! *There, there* is the Lord of the Waterloo! He will guide.”

Very frequently and emphatically did he express his desire to bow entirely to the will of the Lord. *Subjection to the Lordship of Christ* was truly a ruling principle with him. That *He* might have His rightful place in *the worship and service* of His people, our brother had sacrificed much between thirty and forty years ago; and the maintenance of this truth was one great aim of his life. If only he could discern the will of the Lord, so sure was he that it was the path of blessing, that he would take it at any cost. Many a time, in some unpleasant service, he has said, “I would rather do anything than that; but I believe it is the Lord’s will.” And so he would do it, and gladly own afterwards how the Lord helped, and profited others. So now, when still doubtful whether the path was to be onward here for a little longer, or upward, he again and again wished those around him to understand how thoroughly he desired the will of his Lord to be done, “without a murmur, without a question, without hesitation.”

Once, when repeating—

“A little while, our Lord shall come,
And we shall wander here no more,”

he added, “I am not impatient; I am not resisting His will. Better to depart and to be with Christ. Let the good pleasure of the Lord be done in me! I desire to do what the Lord would have me do.” “Do guide us to thyself, our blessed God and Saviour. I

desire to do and go where Thy will may be accomplished in me. Thy will be done."

About one o'clock on Friday a very old friend came to see him. He greeted him with his own pleasant smile, and with both hands outstretched; and ended his parting words of affection to him with an earnest entreaty that he would live for and serve "my noble, glorious Lord."

To another friend he said, "They tell me, William, that I shall be in heaven to-night. Then let us sing 'For ever with the Lord.'" Two or three times the request was repeated, and he tried to lead the tune himself; but it was hard for them to sing, or to follow his attempt to lead. He could sing; they could but weep, sorrowing most of all, as those who fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, that they should see his face no more. They could follow him to the ship; but they could not go on board, nor sing—

"Spread the sail, and catch the breezes
Sent to waft us through the deep
To the regions
Where the mourners cease to weep."

About twelve hours before his departure, he expressed with much energy his confidence in the Lord's power, if it were yet His will, to raise Him up. "They tell me I must die. Why should I die? The Lord is able to build me up again; yes, He is able—He is able to build me up—and work such a work in me as He has never done, and show forth His mighty power in me. Yes, He is able."

Afterwards, when reminded by his wife that he was going home, he said to her with an earnest look, "Will you come along? Will you come along?" She replied that she wished she could; and he answered with much feeling, "No; *you* cannot come. *I* am going; but *you* must stay. And you must serve that blessed Lord, and work for Him, far more, far more than I have done. He is worthy; yes, He is worthy."

Towards midnight, when the surgeon, who with his brother-in-law attended him, called for the last time, and was kindly making suggestions to prolong his hours, he suddenly quoted the words, “Loose him, and let him go;” and then, turning first to his wife, and then to his brother-in-law and to a friend by his side, he cried out again and again, “Loose me! let me go!” and then, looking steadfastly upward with a prolonged effort, he prayed, repeating the words already mentioned in the paper announcing his departure, “Loose me, Lord Jesus! Let me go, Lord Jesus! Take me to Thyself, Lord Jesus.”

Afterwards he called to his brother-in-law, to whom he was deeply attached, “Sing, doctor, sing! Sing, doctor, sing!” And as he lay or rather sat up in bed, with his head resting on his beloved wife’s shoulder, able now to speak very little, he drank in the precious promises of God’s word repeated in his ear, and enjoyed the quiet singing of such hymns as “The sands of time are sinking,” “Rise up and hasten! my soul, haste along!” Long after the latter was finished he continued whispering, “Home—home—home—Jesus—home—nearly home! Jesus, my blessed, glorious Lord! my blessed, glorious Lord!” &c.

About two hours before his departure he suddenly called out, “Hold the fort! hold the fort! for I am coming—coming—coming!” His latest words, uttered within the last half hour, were, “Home—home—Jesus—home!”

At a quarter past four on Saturday morning, without a struggle or a groan, his happy spirit passed away into the presence of that Lord whom so long he had loved, and whom so faithfully he had served.

Of him it may be said, more than of any other perhaps whom it has been our privilege to know, that his love never failed. His heart might break, but his love never gave in, even though he had often to say with Paul, “the more abundantly I love you

the less I be loved." With him he could add, "But be it so."

To the above fragments much more of what was personal might have been added, the outflow of his loving heart towards one so soon to be left a widow, and to others around him. Such words live in the memory, and do not bear a record; but what we have gathered here is given as the last testimony of a dying saint to the faithfulness of sustaining grace, and to the deep, full joy that flows from the well-spring of eternal love.

So swiftly ended a life, noble, consecrated, and devoted, having one purpose, and that Christ. To serve His Church was ever his highest ambition; and life, health, strength, ease, means, each and all were laid as willing offerings on God's altar. By him all saints were recognised as having a claim on him. The sorrowing and the erring had his sympathy and his help, and many a bereaved heart has he made to sing for joy.

He has been loosed, and now is free; and may we, who are called to remember those who have walked as guides before us, and to follow their faith, seek to be imitators of him, as he was of Christ. May those on whom any share of our brother's labours and service falls carry them on with his prayerfulness and zeal; and may the memory of his disinterested life and labours—his self-denial and zeal, his love to all saints, his lowliness, humility, and grace—rest on all who were privileged to know him.

With five years of prayer and of toil he edited the *Golden Lamp*, and now may prayers ascend for those who still seek to carry it on in the spirit of their departed brother, to whom to live was truly Christ, and to whom death has been assuredly great gain.

H. G.

A brief notice, and also some account of the funeral will be found in *The Gospel Watchman*.

“ LOOSE ME, LET ME GO.”

Loose me, and let me go, dear Lord ;

I long to be at home !

Thy voice I hear, and that sweet word,

“ Come, weary pilgrim, come !

“ Thou soon shalt all my glory see,

And know as thou art known ;

For ever dwell above with me,

To reap as thou hast sown.

“ My everlasting joys are thine,

My throne and my reward ;

In robes of beauty thou shalt shine,

And ever serve thy Lord.”

Thanks, thanks, dear Lord ! I hear Thy voice !

Oh, loose me, let me come !

The prospect makes my heart rejoice ;

I long to be at home !

This very moment set me free,

If, Lord, it be Thy will ;

My Saviour, let me come to Thee—

Oh, now Thy word fulfil !

I come, I come ! Take wings, my soul,

And fly to thy sweet rest.

Friends, all your burdens on Him roll,

And be for ever blest !

* * * *

Loosed from the earthly house of clay,

He now is with the Lord ;

Oh, may we follow in the way

Marked for us in the Word !

Moumouth, Dec. 2nd, 1874.

W. D.

PAUL'S STRAIT.

“ For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”—PHIL. i. 21.

SUCH was the language of a prisoner when contemplating the termination of his imprisonment, either by death, or freedom from his chain. It was the language of one who described himself as less than the least of all saints and chief of sinners, yet not a whit behind the chiefest apostles ; albeit he was nothing.

He (Paul) had journeyed, laboured, preached, taught, discussed, and contended for the truth ; he had in per-

son rejoiced and wept with his brethren, and known heaviness of heart for sinners, his brethren according to the flesh and strangers, but he was then in bonds; a prisoner, not for crime, but for Christ, and in all the palace his bonds were manifest to be in Christ. Paul was bound, but the word of God through him was not bound. From that prison were sent forth those epistles which the Holy Ghost, who dictated them, has used and is still using, for instruction, encouragement, consolation, and admonition to the whole Church of God.

In him, as in many others, we see that the *faithful* saint can never be *useless*.

What important service David performed for Israel after he fainted in battle (2 Sam. xxi. 15-17), and was confined to his palace. Paul too had a worthy object before him in life and in death: Christ if he lived, and gain if he died.

His words, with the context, discover to us a conflict in his soul, a struggle between desire for his personal gain, and the claim of the need of the saints. He was in a strait betwixt two, not between Christ and the world, not between suffering and compromise of the truth, not between selfish desires and disinterested service; but between a desire for real gain by departing to be with Christ, and remaining in labours and suffering for the Church.

He hesitated not to depart through uncertainty of his rest, nor from undue cleaving to earth and life. No, he was rather willing to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord; and his surrender was made in cheerfully remaining to serve.

Beloved, believing reader, may you and I be like-minded; so ravished with the beauty and glory of Christ, walk so closely with God as our Father, and be so familiar with His presence as our home, that it may be *subjection* in us to remain here, cheerfully to serve and suffer. Christ to live, and gain to die. To Paul it

was Christ to live. As long as he was in the body, it was Christ known and trusted, Christ adored and served, Christ dwelling in his heart by faith, Christ preached and taught, Christ imitated in his life, and so exhibited, practically manifested to the Church and to the world; in a word, Christ magnified in his body. Thus were beholders Christ-directed, led from the servant to the Master; and yet the servant was loved and valued.

Beloved in Christ, let us by grace seek to reproduce this. Such a life will be worth living, and yet it will be gain to die. Yes, it will be rest instead of toil and conflict; better still, cessation from sin; but best of all, as I judge, fuller consciousness of nearness to Him whose presence *now* is our rest and joy.

Paul's struggle ceased, and he was more than content with freedom from his chain, and service for the furtherance of the saints and their joy of faith. Like his Master, his delight was in the will of God His Father: he also could say, "Even so."

He lived and served, and when the hour of his departure arrived, without the struggle, he said, "I am *now ready* to be offered." He no longer felt the need of saints so as to produce the conflict; he could trust them with the Lord. It had been Christ to him in life; Christ was now to be magnified in his death, and he by falling asleep was to *gain*—to depart and be WITH CHRIST, the far better thing.

Dear reader, let us learn from him to delight in the will of God *each day*, and leave to-morrow and the last day of our pilgrimage with Him, counting on the needed grace, that grace which proved sufficient for Paul, and for all who have trusted it, remembering as he did that the proper hope of the church is the coming of the Lord, and our gathering together unto Him.

With this hope he lived, served, and suffered; with it he also fell asleep; and is still, with many, many more departed ones, *waiting*, while we are *watching*, to wear the crown.

H. H.

THE OLD SONG MADE NEW.

THE old sweet song, made new
 By wondrous chord,
 Known only to the harpers there
 Before the Lord!

The melody we know;
 For sweet and low
 On earth we sing the song He loves,
 With hearts that glow.

Only the trembling notes
 Rise feebly here,
 While in the glory they will rise to Him
 All full and clear.

And listening angels then
 Will call it "new;"
 No discord in the harmony,
 So sweet and true.

But we are singing *now*;
 And He we love
 Is listening to the songs of earth
 With those above.

And soon the sweet, fair morn
 Of joy will come,
 And we shall sing the old sweet song
 Within our home.

Not "new" to us! Yea, Lord,
 Thou knowest well
 That here the half of all our joy
 We cannot tell.

But we *do* sing to Thee
 With trembling voice;
 And though the shadows are around us, still
 Our hearts rejoice.

C. A.

“TIMES AND SEASONS.”

THE beginning of another year may serve to remind us of God's goodness to His creature man, in giving him these divisions and periods of his fleeting time. The heavens are God's great clock for man, according to the word: “And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven; . . . and let them be for signs, and for *seasons*, and for days, and *years*.” (Gen. i. 14.)

The alternations of day and night existed *before* the calling into being of the heavenly bodies (see Gen. i. 5), and by these alternations the animals, and apparently man, as a creature, could have lived: the darkness for his sleep, and daylight for his activity, would have sufficed for this.

But he would have lacked those larger divisions of his time which now so warn him of its flight; for without the “two great lights”—the sun and the moon in their constant revolutions—he would never have had *months* and *years* marked off for him, as he always has had.

God had too much delight in His creature man, for whom He was preparing this creation as a dwelling-place, and also as an empire, not to furnish him with a clock in it. The “beast of the field” did not *need* this vast and perfect time-keeping mechanism of the heavens, nor did “the fowl of the air,” nor could they use it; day and night were enough for animal life, and were all they could understand. But man is “formed erect, that he may behold the heavens,” said even a heathen writer; and new and wondering and worshiping emotions must have filled Adam when, within the first few hours of his newly-begun existence, he marked the movements and changes of the sun and the moon, and the glittering of the stars. We may suppose him uttering something like David's words: “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon

and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man?" &c. (Ps. viii. 3, 4.)

And surely we may say this early appreciation of His creation-work by man, the creature of God's delight (see Prov. viii. 31), was itself, as it were, recompence to God for having made it all.

Presently man sinned, and God for his sake cursed the ground, changing its nature; but the mighty time-keeping movements of the heavenly bodies were apparently not deranged. The sun's revolutions, marking out for man his fleeting years, and the moon, showing him his passing months, are as true to their time as ever—never a moment before nor a moment behind—so true, that all man's effort with his instruments of measurement is to approach the perfect accuracy of the measurements of the heavens. What goodness of God to fallen man this is!

As a sinner, he needed the ground to be changed from its spontaneous fertility; it was wisdom and mercy in God no longer to allow him an Eden, and to check him from sinful riot by the need of "the sweat of the face" to obtain bread; but it was equally gracious of God to continue to man the clock of the heavens in all its accuracy; for as a sinful one he more than ever needed to be shown the rapid flight of his time. "Teach us then," says the Psalmist, "to number our days, and we will bring a heart of wisdom" (Ps. xc.12; see Hebrew); but it is only God's children who really pray thus. Thoughtless, rebelling man disregards the voice of Time, though so kept for him by God; or, what is worse, multiplies instruments with which to mark its flight, only to measure it out for earthly pleasure; often, in the weariness of the unsatisfied heart, to "kill" it; or to husband it for earthly gains, saying, "Time is money." He still lives as though time were eternal, and eternity a trifle, a brief and little thing! God's voice, by the death and resurrection of His Eternal Son, never having reached him,

what wonder is it that he disregards the lesser voice of creation around him?

Not so with us as saints of God. We say—

“Time and eternity are ours,
The world, and life and death;
The heaven of heavens, the throne of God,
And depths of hell beneath.”

“*All things* are yours,” says the apostle; “and ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.”

In the same epistle in which Paul speaks of our being chosen in Christ “*before the foundation of the world,*” and of “*the ages to come,*” in which God shall “show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus,” he also speaks of “redeeming the TIME, because the days are evil” (see Eph. i. 4; ii. 7; v. 16); and whilst Paul’s “gospel” (Rom. xvi. 26) was, “according to the commandment of the EVERLASTING GOD, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith,” he reminds the saints of God (Rom. xiii. 11) that so precious were their days below, as law-fulfillers now through the indwelling Holy Ghost, that awaking out of sleep they should know “the TIME;” “for now,” says he, “is our salvation nearer than when we believed.”

We do not want man-made, religious, annual “times and seasons;” we turn from them: but those given us by God we would, as His creatures and His children, observe as they glide by, and profit by them.

The same Moses whom God instructed to tell us, in Genesis i., of the coming forth of the earth and heavens, and of our human race, from the bosom of God’s eternity, and whom God made the historian of the first 1500 years of its course, wrote also Psalm xc., in which he marks the “*threescore and ten,*” or at utmost “*fourscore,*” of even Israelites’ lives, and because of its brevity urges his plea with God (vv. 13, 14): “Return, O Lord, *how long?* . . . O satisfy us *early*

with Thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad *all our days.*"

Thus may the lapse of time and the coming of another year be a help to us; but the wings of love outstrip the wheels of time. Saints are longing, the church of God is longing, for the reigning day with Christ. Isaac Watts says:

"Oh that the months would roll away,
And bring that coronation-day;
The King of Grace shall fill the throne,
With all His Father's glories on."

And a later hymn begins thus:

"Fly, ye seasons, fly still faster,
Let the glorious day come on
When we shall behold our Master
Seated on His glorious throne;
When the Saviour
Shall descend to claim His own."

Yes, there are longings of the saints which time is not quick enough to satisfy; but they are understood and responded to by HIM whose love to us first gave them birth in our hearts, and who, on His part, desires that day more, yes, far more, than we do. We may not long for "the wings of a dove" in order to "fly away and be at rest" (Ps. lv. 6) in the least spirit of impatience or complaint, but it delights the loving and waiting heart of our glorious Lord Jesus when He hears "the Spirit and the Bride say, COME," and He fans the flame of this longing for His advent by Himself adding, "Let him that heareth say, COME;" whilst He also points the thirsty sinner to the rivers of living water that flow during this "little while," and says, "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. xxii. 17.)

Thus may we, as His saints and as His church, spend any portion He may appoint us of this new year on which we are entering, "looking for that glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus

Christ," of which, as no time, nor day, nor hour, can fix the date, or tell us how near it is, so also no lapse of time can bring us to it so quickly as our longing hearts would wish.

And whilst "the more sure word of prophecy," and simple faith in it, thus makes the day already dawn, "and the day star arise *in our hearts*" (2 Peter i. 19), may we bless the Lord, as the apostle teaches us in that same epistle (iii. 9), that the "long-suffering" of the Lord continues, because He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance;" and may we testify still the gospel of His grace to this guilty, doomed world. H. D.

THE DIVINE PROPORTIONS OF TRUTH.

WE need to be often reminded that the truth is one whole. Scripture does not speak of "truths," as we are often apt to do, but of truth, and this as impersonated in the Son of God, who claims for Himself that He is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life"—the way *on* which, the truth *in* which, and the life *by* which we have to walk in our access to the Father.

The truth has to be bought, and not to be sold; it is the divine wisdom, and of infinite value. The smallest fragment of it is precious, because it is of God. The small and the great in truth are alike presented for our acceptance; and hence we are told, in the sermon on the mount, by the lips of our great Law-giver, that he who breaks one of these *least* commandments, and teaches men so, the same shall be least in the kingdom of heaven.

The Lord here recognizes the relative place of great and small in the things of God; and it is most important that we should see and maintain the *relative proportions* of truth. While the less are not to be forgotten, the greater must not be brought down to

the level of the less, thereby converting, so to speak, God's gold into silver; nor, on the other hand, must His silver be counted as gold. Each is necessary; neither is to be confounded. In Rom. xii. 6, Paul writes of "the analogy (or proportion, *αναλογία*) of the faith," and it is in accordance with this that all ministry in the church has to be maintained. Every disproportion in the truth of God is a deception, and many of the falsities that abound are of this character. There may be a germ of truth, but if it has lost its proportion with the whole it becomes the source of untold errors and delusions.

This tendency our Lord marked in the Jews' dealings with the truth of God. "They tithed mint and anise and cummin," but omitted "the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith." (Matt. xxiii. 23.) The relative weight of the precept that commanded the tithing of all the produce of their land, and of that which commanded "judgment, mercy, and faith," was lost sight of, and the Pharisees in their hypocrisy became very religious and very zealous, but not according to God; for the right estimate of these duties had not been relatively obtained by weighing each in the balance of the sanctuary. The life of Christ gives us a measure and a standard by which to estimate and weigh everything. There the small is not made great, and the great is not made small. Everything is there in its divine proportion and in its perfect harmony; and this proportion and this harmony represent to us THE TRUTH as seen in Him, and given to us by God for our imitation.

We may well ponder our Saviour's words to "the scribes and Pharisees," those "hypocrites" to whom He spoke the seven terrible woes at the close of His ministry among them. "These (*i.e.* "the weightier matters of the law") ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other (the less weighty matters of the law) undone."

We are ever in danger of laying hold on God's truth partially; that is, in accordance with some ill-guided conception of our own as to the relative value of different parts of truth. Those to which from any particular cause we have been led to pay much attention naturally assume a larger proportion to our eye, as to the eye of a painter an object which is near often excludes from the vision a far larger object that is at a greater distance. A picture can only be taken from the stand-point of him who paints it; it cannot be otherwise. Hence the mischief that accrues to those who take their views of God's truth from the narrow and contracted views of any man, or of any body of men, who, occupying a stand-point of their own, can only present truth accordingly.

His divinity will be the most divine who confines himself to God's whole written record, unless perhaps he has time to read on all sides, for no human production ever contains an absolutely unbiased unfolding of all truth.

It is a matter of great regret that generally persons who read at all confine their reading so much to the writings of those with whom they agree. Thereby their views are contracted, and the result is too often a bigotry and a one-sidedness all the greater because it is attained second-hand. Disciples, rather than original teachers, are the real bigots. The latter have weighed matters, and to them the *pro* and *con* both have weight; the former have weighed neither, and accept only the result given to them by another. We have an anointing. (1 John ii. 27.) May we learn to know more of its value!

The danger we speak of has been foreseen by God, and His provision against it in the writers of the New Testament is evident to us all. Paul, James, Peter, and John have each to contribute their quota in the epistles, revealing to us God's will concerning us; and in the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John

have each to portray, according to their own individual idiosyncracies, under the control of the Holy Ghost, their records of the life of our blessed Lord.

In this we see a principle of great importance, if, even under the influence of the Spirit of God, we would have a relatively perfect conception of Christ or of truth.

In conclusion, we would particularly bring this subject to bear on what for distinction's sake we might name "church-truth" and "Christ-truth." We do not like the distinction, nor the definition; but still it will explain what we mean. Christ is the Sun of Righteousness; the church is the moon that derives all her light and heat from Him. She has nothing of her own; and her borrowed light is cold though bright, and yet blessed, because in the night it points to the Sun, and in the day is content to be hidden in His greater light and glory. The purpose of God is seen in the woman clothed with the sun, and having the moon under her feet. (Rev. xii. 1.)

Romanism has inverted God's order, and has virtually put Christ under the feet, and has clothed with the moon that which it calls the Bride of Christ. Romanism is but the Babylonish mystery of iniquity, which belongs to the natural heart, and ever finds a sphere of development where the natural heart exists. Hence our need of watchfulness; for whenever the church, church principles, or church topics occupy a place beyond that of their relative importance, Christ Jesus is displaced, and the silver has got into the place of the gold.

Christ ever subordinates man to God, and Scripture ever subordinates the church to Christ; and we must be careful that we do not virtually subvert God's order, even while avowedly maintaining it. We assuredly do this when in our own thoughts, or our intercourse one with another, in our study of the Word, or in any thing else, Christ gets less than His proper place.

Let the proportion between the space occupied in the word of God, in what it says of Christ and of the church, be preserved in our minds, and we shall not be far wrong. A brighter, healthier, holier Christianity will then characterize us, because less out of the proportion of truth; and the weightier matters of Christ will not then be found displaced by the far less weighty matters of the church.

So help us, Lord Jesus, to thy great glory, and to our great blessing!

THE HEAVENLY AND THE EARTHLY CALLING.

THERE is a danger of pressing a type beyond its limits, so as to obscure or neutralize other types bearing on the same subject. The saved sinner is (1) a *creature*; (2) a servant, or rather (*δουλος*) a slave; (3) a son of the Father; (4) co-heir with Christ; (5) part of His body; (6) an unit of His Bride. The obligations consequent upon each of these privileges are distinct; neither must the positions be merged in one, so as to lose sight of the others.

The calling of Israel was an earthly calling; *i.e.* God on mount Sinai, a spot of earth, called to men in the body to come to another place on earth, which He assigned to them as an inheritance, just as He had assigned to the seventy nations (*Deut. xxxii.*) their inheritance. If an Israelite, *as an Israelite*, could find his way to the heavens, he would be out of his place, away from his inheritance.

The calling of the Christian, on the other hand, is from the heavens to come up into the heavens, where his inheritance lies. As regards earth, he is looked upon as having died and been buried. If he should go to worship at the future temple at Jerusalem, or seek inheritance among the twelve tribes, he would be out of his place, as Lord Brougham was, who, being a

citizen of England, applied to be a citizen of France also.

The future Israel consists of men still in the body. Theirs is not the spiritual body, as ours will be, but a body capable of dying. (Isa. lxxv. 20; Ezek. xlv. 25.)

Our God has a heavenly family, redeemed from the earth, which He has given to His Son in resurrection, and designated by various names—the Church; temple; living stones; spiritual house; Isaac family; born from above—whom He has given to His Son Jesus as His Bride. Eve, as explained by Eph. v. 25–32, foreshadows this: taken out of His side (members of His body), formed during His sleep, presented to Him when awakened, and his companion for ever; sharing in His lordship and rule; to be seated on His throne in the heavens, and now seated in Him on His Father's throne.

There is also a royal queen, of earthly mould (Ps. xlv.)—the nation Israel, whom the King, when He visits earth, places at His own right hand. Her location is definitely marked out in Ezekiel xlvi. 1–13, with many attendant circumstances. The virgins, her fellows, are *nations*. (See the use of the term in Old Testament.)

She too will be radiant with laughter (Isaac = laughter); but her joy, though great, will not be so great as that of those who, not seeing, have believed in Jesus.

Unless these distinctions are kept in mind, we fail often in applying Scripture as regards times, places, and persons. And, after all, our great ignorance, so conspicuous at every step, teaches us to be very humble, very meek, very patient, though diligent in learning, bearing in mind what the Spirit saith, "He that thinketh he knoweth anything knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." By-and-by it will be revealed to our amazement; then we shall praise as we ought.

R. N.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

2 Cor. v. 1-10. In these precious verses three conditions of the believer are described.

1. *Being in this "tabernacle"* (v. 1), which corresponds with being "at home in the body," and consequently "absent (or from home) from the Lord." (v. 6.) In this, which is the present condition of every child of God, we are said to groan, being burdened, burdened with a body of sin and death." (Rom. vii. 24; viii. 23.)

2. *Having the tabernacle dissolved; i.e.* loosened and let down; its cords cut, its stakes pulled up, and the temporary abode taken down. This is spoken of as being absent from the body, or from home as to it; but at the same time as being present, or at home, with the Lord. This describes the condition of the disembodied spirit. To this Paul points with earnest longing in Phil. i. 23, of which he says, comparing it with anything here, it is "far better," because it involves being with Christ, in a nearness and a homeliness such as now cannot be.

3. *Being clothed with the heavenly and eternal building*—the glorified condition. This is resurrection, of which the Spirit is the present earnest. The prospect of this makes affliction light and momentary; for it is seen as working "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." While looking at the unseen, all seen things appear only temporary, and the unseen become realized as everlasting.

To whichever of these three conditions we direct our thoughts, we can say "we are always confident;" for all centres in Christ. (1) Now, not having seen, we *love Him*. (2) Departing, we shall see and be *with Him*. (3) Being raised, or changed, we shall be *like Him*. Till then we cannot be fully satisfied; for "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

1 Thess. iv. 17. "So shall we ever be *with the Lord*." If the glimpses of His grace here so delight our souls, what will it be to know Him fully as He is—no veil, no cloud between, unhindered communion of spirit, nothing in us to grieve His heart, or cloud the full manifestation of Himself—and this for eternity! Known and loved now by His Father and our Father as heirs of all this, how we should be ashamed to bear a care in His presence!

Mark viii. 6-8. The human principle of enriching is, *get*; the divine is, *give*. Seven loaves and a few fishes, *given* in fellowship with the Master, yield seven baskets full of fragments.

Matt. xix. 27-30; xx. 1-16. *What is the connection between these chapters?* The connection seems to lie in this. The parable of the labourers who receive each a penny, shows that all God's dealings with man are in grace; they must be so, for man is a bankrupt sinner. In this parable we have the murmurers at grace, and the receivers of grace. God here deals in the sovereignty of grace, and man who knows not his lost estate ever rebels at this.

In chap. xix. 27, Peter was talking as if he and his fellow disciples deserved something, and while the blessed Lord fully recognized their faithful service, imperfect though it had been, and gives a gracious promise of reward (*vv.* 28, 29), yet He introduces the "*but*" in *v.* 30, and in the parable that follows He shows that God claims the right to do as He wills with His own. This is the principle of grace. God acting in grace to man *gives all*. Man standing in grace before God *claims nothing*.

Heb. xiii. 7. *Are those "that have the rule" the same as in vv. 17, 24?* "Remember your guides that *spake* to you" would be more correct, and seems to point to the faith and walk of *past* leaders. But Christ *remains*—He is "the same," &c. (*v.* 8.) The guides in *vv.* 17, 24, are *present* ones.

JOSEPH: A TYPE OF CHRIST.

CERTAIN persons in the Old Testament are clearly types of Christ. Adam and Melchisedec, Moses and Aaron, David and Jonah, are referred to as such in the New Testament; and there are others, in whose lives many things remind the thoughtful and godly reader of his Saviour, and amongst these is Joseph.

Each of these living types of Christ shows Him in a different way. Adam, as a head in whom others yet unborn stand or fall; Melchisedec, as a king-priest after the power of a resurrection, endless life (see Heb. vii.); David, as the rejected king, who nevertheless *shall* reign; and Jonah, as the three-days buried one, who rises again, and makes His voice still heard in an evil Nineveh world.

But Joseph is a type of Christ in another way; viz., as the apostle Paul speaks of Him in 1 Tim. iv. 10, "The Saviour of ALL men, specially of those that believe."

The words here used imply "Saviour" of *men* apart from their *believing* in Him; such are named afterwards—"specially of those that believe." Christ is the Saviour of all men in this life's things. "Every creature of God is good," says Paul (1 Tim. iv. 4); and it is *through Christ* that men get these "good things," however little they remember, or own it. But for Him who once died, and is now the Risen One, God could not, worthily of Himself, continue to give rebellious man the breath he draws, or the fruits of the earth which he reaps. Well does one among us say—

God is the Just and Holy One;
 Man's guilt for vengeance cries:
 I marvel to behold the sun
 From morn to morn arise.

The lights of day and night appear,
 Sun, moon, and stars combine

In course and order through the year,
On vile mankind to shine.

The ocean passes not its bound,
Nor sweeps the earth again ;
The heavens bedew the parched ground,
The clouds give timely rain.

The seasons fail not, and the fields
Are green, and fruitful still ;
Man's heart to God no harvest yields,
Save a rebellious will.

God to the scorers of His love
May yet His kindness show ;
For Jesus intercedes above,
Once crucified below.*

It was when God "smelled a savour of rest" in the sacrifice Noah offered that He gave an *absolute* promise of summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, to man while the earth remained. (See Genesis viii.) Noah rested on God's mercy through Christ; and the response to his sacrifice was a foreshadowing of the value to God of the death of Christ.

Christ is thus "the Saviour of ALL men" as respects this life's things, as well as "*especially*" the Saviour "of those that believe" in Him, in forgiving their sins, and giving them grace in their souls. It is in this twofold salvation that Joseph is such a type of Christ. But for Joseph, not only must his own brethren have died of want, for aught we know, "for the *famine* was in the land of Canaan" (Gen. xlii. 5), but all Egypt must have perished, and other lands also, "for the famine was sore in all lands." (Gen. xli. 57.) But it was also through Joseph that salvation came "*especially*" to his brethren, when by him they learnt their guilt and confessed it, and through him were brought to God.

At the very outset of Joseph's history (Gen. xxxvii. 2) it is written, "These are the generations of Jacob," and then Joseph *only* is named; and the narrative

* *Hymns and Meditations.* By R. C. CHAPMAN.

begins with his godly separateness from his brethren's "evil report," and then tells of all that he endured till he becomes a rich blessing to his brethren and to the Gentiles.

Joseph was thus the *one only* link of continuance to the chosen seed, or to the nations. "The generations of Jacob" were by *him*. Is he not in this a type of Christ?

His two dreams also foreshadowed the twofold "Saviour" God intended him to be; and knowing God had given them to him, like Samuel (1 Sam. iii.), he faithfully related them, however much he might be hated for doing so. (Compare Ps. xl. 9, 10.)

The first of these dreams was about this life's things; and patiently did Joseph both wait and work until it was fulfilled; and not *ten* only of his brethren, as at first, but at length *all eleven* of them were bowing before him for corn; for when but ten came, he "remembered his dreams" (Gen. xlii. 9), and worked wisely till all their eleven sheaves bowed to his sheaf. Nor did Joseph rest in this fulfilment of his *first* dream; still less did he use it to glory over his now dependant brethren. "He remembered the dreams," the second as well as the first.

The second dream was of heavenly things, as the first had been of things below. It was of "the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars" owning him as blessed of God to them, and was rightly interpreted by his father as meaning that he, and Joseph's mother, and his brethren should one day own the place in which God had put him. But *grace* must work in the hearts of his still carnal-minded brethren, and *resurrection* must wake Rachel his mother from the grave where she had lain ever since the birth of his younger brother Benjamin (see Gen. xxxv. 18), and must re-unite them as a family in "the land of the living," where "the righteous shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," before this second dream can have its

complete fulfilment; for evidently in this life his departed mother did not, and could not, know her son Joseph's honours; nor can mortal ones shine in heavenly brightness.

But grace is heaven begun, and is "*glory in the bud.*" And thus, when his brethren were brought to him for corn, diligently and wisely did Joseph seek for them the knowledge of God's grace in their souls. He sought to lead them to a remembrance and confession of their *sin* in having hated him, and rejected God's appointments in him; for *confession of sin* is the needed preparation for the reception of the grace of God; and that grace is the *only* road to heavenly glory.

Here, again, what a picture to us of the way of Him who is the "Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe!" Like Joseph, the Lord Jesus Christ delights to supply men's bodily wants out of that store of earthly things which by His death and resurrection are now His to give. But this is but a means in His hands for pleading with their stubborn hearts; it is a "goodness of God" by which He seeks to "lead them to repentance" (Rom. ii. 4); even as in the days of His flesh He fed the multitudes in Galilee, that He might not have to send them away, but might still teach them the word of life.

Wise indeed were Joseph's ways of dealing with his sin-hardened brethren. First, he would not speak to them a word of their mother-tongue—the language of their infancy. He made himself strange to them; "for he spake to them by an interpreter." The familiarity of their youthful days he could not allow; nor could he give them any advantage through natural relationship. They must come confessing their sins, and in that way only.

And is not this still Christ's way with men, whether it be with "His own"—the Jew—or with us Gentiles? Vainly do any seek a birthright-claim, or a natural link with Him, whether it be Jew or mere professing

Christian. He feeds all men in their bodies; but He makes Himself 'strange' to all sin-hardened souls, that He may plough up the fallow ground of their hearts with a sense of their sin. "Therefore if any man be in Christ" (2 Cor v. 17), it is not by knowing Him "after the flesh," but it is "a new creation." What an end this makes of being a Christian by birth, or by baptism and catechism!

Joseph's next lesson to his brethren was, that their *money*—the earnings of their hard-working lives—could no more settle the matter of their past sins than could the advantages of birth. In vain did they protest that they were "true men;" in vain did they give in their money for all the corn they came for: Joseph had it put back into their sacks. What was its value to him compared with his desire to teach them that payment for such items could not settle for years of pride and hatred of God, and all the lies they had told? And the returned money had some effect; a trembling began in them.

Thus Elisha also taught Naaman. And when the money he had brought was all of it declined, the cleansing went deeper into Naaman than his body; and he would thenceforth worship none but the God of Israel. (See 2 Kings v. 17.)

Thus also does Christ teach men that God's grace is "without money and without price;" that no labour of their hands can even help in the matter. It was right of Joseph's brethren to bring their money for the corn they wanted; but Joseph, seeking to arouse their slumbering consciences, would not accept it. It is right for men willingly to pay for what they require of this life's things; but alas for them when they make their honesty with men a covering for their dishonesty of soul with God!

But they came to Joseph for corn a second time—glad of his granaries, but with their sin still unconfessed. And he takes yet a third way with them. He still

increases his liberality to them in earthly things; they have not only corn, they even *dine* with him. Joseph, however, keeps separate from them at a table of his own, doubtless in sorrowing love observing them. But they were still untaught; they soon got over their alarm at being brought into the house of "the lord of the land" (Gen. xliii. 18), and also their wonder at being placed around his table according to their ages (xliii. 33), and indulged freely in the good things provided, and drank wine till they "were merry."

No cup of joy had Joseph over them yet; and, full of the yearnings for their blessing, had himself probably drunk nothing all the time from his own silver drinking-cup at his side; for it could only be grief to him to see them "merry" in their worldly-mindedness and their sins.

In the morning when they were to commence their journey, he made his steward tie up in the sack's mouth of even the youngest that empty cup, which was such a fit emblem of his grief over them the evening before. Followed by the steward, and the cup found with them, all their self-justifying ends. Guilt laid to their charge stares them in the face, and they now come before Joseph, and say, "What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." (Gen. xliv. 16.)

This last, tenderest, and deepest stroke of Joseph's wisdom had taken effect; and they now stood before him as guilty ones, no one of whom could be "surety" for another; and this was the only ground on which Joseph could fitly, and with blessing, make himself known to them, and teach them also God's goodness through him. They had indeed stolen from him a cup far dearer to him than his silver tankard—they had robbed him of the joy of seeing them taught "the fear of the Lord." (See Prov. xxiii. 15-18.)

And who is not reminded in all this of Christ's

teaching (Luke xv.), of the "joy there is in heaven over one sinner that repenteth," and of how the Pharisees in that chapter would have robbed Him of that cup of joy over others if they could, and did deny Him it in their own case?

Surely, then, Joseph is a type of Christ as "the Saviour of all men; but *especially* of those that believe." And the length and minuteness of his history, reaching from Genesis xxxvii. to 1., suggests to us that every part of it should be studied in its typical aspect, and also for an example to us in both suffering and doing the will of God. H. D.

(To be continued, God willing.)

CHRISTIAN ATTAINMENT.

THOUGHTS ON PHIL. iii.

THERE is undoubtedly an earnest desire on the part of many Christians to walk on a higher level of experience and of faith. But where such longings exist the enemy of souls will be certain to present something that is unreal, however much it may glitter. Our endeavour, therefore, must be to seek guidance from the word of our God, and so to avoid the bye-paths that will lead astray into some of the strongholds of Satan, whence escape is difficult, and often only effected with sad and too visible results.

No one probably ever knew more of the higher walks of Christian life than the apostle Paul; and in writing to his beloved Philippians he tells them, from his own knowledge and experience, what the pathway of practical holiness is, where it begins, and where it ends down here. To the latter point we specially direct our attention, as it is here that mistakes are apt to arise through substituting or confounding the work of Christ for us, with that of the Spirit of God in us.

Most of the important questions of doctrine and experience have in Scripture some special portion that

treats of them. Such is Phil. iii. on the attainments and developments of the spiritual life in the believer. We will ponder it a little; and may our eyes be anointed with heavenly eye-salve, that we may see what God would have us see, and nothing more or less.

The subject opens in chapter iii. with the words—“Finally, my brethren, *rejoice* in the Lord.” *Joy in the Lord* (which has to be distinguished from other joy) lies at the root of all advance. Without it the soul is on a sea of uncertainties, living amidst doubts and fears, faith’s resting-place not having been realized.

He who knows what joy in the Lord means is led by the apostle along a “safe” path—onward and upward, yet onward and downward too; ascending into life, but ever descending into death also. Such is the paradox of our life; “sorrowing, yet always rejoicing;” living, but bearing about a body of death; crying out, “O wretched man that I am!” yet shouting with the voice of triumph, “There is therefore *now* no condemnation.”

The ship that can safely carry much sail is that which is well ballasted. To enable Paul to bear the abundant revelations and their unutterable glory, there was given him a thorn in the flesh—a messenger of Satan to buffet him; and so if we ourselves would tread the high path safely, we have in our present state to bear in mind both the body of death in which we groan, and the spirit of life in Christ Jesus in which we rejoice ever more. God has in infinite grace linked these opposing principles in our being, for purposes infinitely wise; and if we are intelligent in the things of God, so far from being discouraged, we shall thank God that flesh and spirit are antagonistic, and that they will remain so to the end.

We learn this in the epistle to the Ephesians, where those seated in heavenly places are commanded to put on the whole armour of God, and *stand* prepared for constant conflict during all this “evil day,” till the

cloudless morning dawns ; fighting, but victorious ; faint oft-times, yet pursuing still.

“ To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but *for you it is safe*,” says the apostle ; and surely in these days we need to take heed to his “ safe ” teaching. Having given three warnings regarding those of whom we are to “ beware,” he lays down three characteristics for those who would safely walk in the pathway of holiness. They worship God in the Spirit, *i.e.* the Holy Spirit.* They boast in Christ Jesus. They have no confidence in the flesh.

Thus worship and service are not by the power of the natural man, but of the Spirit of God. Boasting and confidence are in Christ Jesus our risen Lord, and not in anything to be found in the flesh. Who can boast in Christ but he who has learnt that hard lesson, “ In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth *no* good thing ” ? No thought, word, or deed, that can pass as “ good ” before the eye of the holy God, can come from man, from what he is by nature. All progress is the result of the indwelling of Christ in us.

This was Paul’s boast in Gal. ii. 20—“ Not I, but Christ ” who “ liveth in me,” and this he also presents to the Philippians. He goes through what the flesh was to him, or had done for him, and then adds, “ But what things were gain to me, those *I counted* loss for Christ ; yea, doubtless, and *I count* all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord ; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win (or gain) Christ.” All the gain he might find in the world he gave up for that which was to be found in “ gaining Christ,” and stood not in his “ own righteousness ” as a man, but “ in the righteousness which is of God,” “ through the faith of Christ.”

In verses 10 and 11 the apostle continues to describe

* The best MSS. read here “ *worship by the Spirit of God* ; ” so Lachmann, Tischendorf, Alford, &c.

the object of his life: "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death, if by any means I might reach unto the resurrection from among the dead."* Now all this knowledge, power, fellowship, and conformity, is the result of the operation of the Spirit of God, who, when ungrieved, acts with "all might" in and on the consecrated vessel, and causes Christ to dwell in the heart by faith. (Ephesians iii. 16, 17.) The truth here is subjective, involving a growth that springs from a personal knowledge of Christ. This Paul sought in the power of a resurrection that led into a fellowship of Christ's sufferings, and into a conformity to His death.

What we have to dread is a supposed holiness that leads not down into this fellowship of suffering, without which holiness is an assumption, the result of pride, a delusion, and not a reality. We have much to learn in the order of the expressions in verse 10. For our acceptance and standing in Christ, the order is "from death unto life;" but the order here is, from resurrection into suffering and death, which is the order of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, as we see in Romans viii., that blessed chapter which winds up with tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword. "As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

In our thoughts of holiness and discipleship we are in danger of putting the cross and its sufferings out of sight. It was not thus that Christ would nerve the heart of His new convert Paul. Within three days of the glorious vision that laid him in the dust, did the Lord say to Ananias, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my sake." So, too, in Luke xiv., after our blessed Master had given the gracious

* *Reach* (καταντήσω) is better than *attain*, which is the rendering of a different word (ἐλαβον) in the following verse. "From among the dead" is the reading of the best MSS.

invitation in the parable, "Come, for all things are now ready," He turns to the multitudes that follow Him, and tells them what discipleship involved, and what following fully really meant.

There is a following of Christ in the inward life and in the outward walk, the realities of which Paul knew full well—towards which he pressed with such untiring step—even to become more and more like Christ here, with the joyful anticipation that he should be absolutely so, when, awaking in His likeness, he should see Him as He is.

In this alien soil the trees of the Lord's right-hand planting are ever surrounded with influences within and without that seem to hinder perfect growth, and yet these hindrances are designed of God to facilitate a development which nothing else could accomplish. In full view of these hindrances, and of the indwelling power of God, the apostle shows, in verses 12-14, how he was straining every nerve *so* to run that he might obtain, *so* to fight that he might be crowned.

Describing his position in the race given him to run, he writes: "Not as though I had already attained, or am already perfected" (the perfect tense is here used): but I press after ($\delta\iota\omega\kappa\omega$) if that I may apprehend (*i.e.* lay hold on) that for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press after ($\delta\iota\omega\kappa\omega$ as in *v.* 12) the mark (or goal) for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." These verses describe, with a clearness that cannot be gainsaid, the deeply important truth of the growth of the power of the divine life, and that which is necessary to secure it.

In Christ, Paul was "perfected for ever," as we read in Heb. x. 14; but in the matter of spiritual attainment he says he was not perfected; for *that*, he was looking forward to a future day, when the necessary

imperfections under which we are found by the will and providence of God shall have passed away. *Then* the flesh will be dead in us, even as now in Christ we die to it. *Then* "the body of our humiliation will be fashioned like unto the body of His glory." *Till* then, forgetting attainments already made, and looking forward to attainments to be realized in the future, he says, "I press after." There was a race, and he ran it, not as uncertainly; there was a fight, and he fought it, but not as one who beat the air. The race was too real for that, the conflict too sharp, the mortifications of the flesh and the fleshly will too bitter; for, says the mighty man of God, "I *keep under** my body, and bring it into subjection." (1 Cor. ix. 27.)

How intensely real was the warfare! how bitter the antagonism! But he was victorious; for he was more than conqueror through Christ Jesus. Realizing his standing in Him, he says, "I can do all things." He stood in Christ, and faith told him that all things were his to use and to hold in this conflict against the world, the flesh, and the devil; and his faith grew as he used them. This is the real secret of holiness and of life—to use what is possessed; remembering the important word, "To him that hath shall more be given."

Faith always makes the best use of God's appointed means. Thus if David would slay Goliath, he did not say, "It is all of God, and I can do nothing;" but he went and chose five smooth stones, such as were best suited for his sling, and then he went with God into the battle, and we know the result.

We are in danger of two opposite extremes. We either make God nothing, and go in our own strength, and are sure to fail; or, making ourselves nothing, we think it matters not how we go or when. It was not so with Joshua. He knew God was with him,

* *ὑποτάττω* is the word of deep significance here used, and means to strike under the eye, to beat the face black and blue; hence to subject to hard treatment, to bruise.

and therefore he spared no pains, but "went up from Gilgal all night;" and hence we are told he took his enemies by surprise, "coming unto them *suddenly*." (Josh. x. 9; xi. 7.) How narrow is the line that separates presumption from faith, and the right path from the wrong!

In reference to the growth of faith, it is interesting to notice Paul's remark about the Thessalonians, for whom he could thank God "always, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." (2 Thess. i. 3.) As surely as light begets heat, so surely does faith beget love; and if not, "it is dead, being alone."

The principles of his own life are now applied by Paul to those to whom he writes: "Let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded." And here we cannot forget the words in chap. ii.: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Paul was keeping his eye on his Master all his life through; and chap. iii. is but the result of that mind being in him which was in Christ Jesus. In seeking to advance in holiness of life, he sought to tread in the steps of Him who "emptied Himself," who "humbled Himself," who "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Imitation of Christ was Paul's safe and hallowed pathway. But all had not gone so far; all had not so taken up this discipleship of self-emptying faith; and therefore, as if to enjoin gentleness and grace, he adds, "If in anything ye be otherwise (*i.e.* differently) minded," (be honest with God in what you see, and then) "God will reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless whereto we have already attained" in this life of faith, "let us *walk steadily*,"* ever making advance, ever pressing forward to the goal that lies before.

* *στοιχεῖν*, the word used here, signifies to walk evenly, step by step, in a straight course.

The apostle now closes this important section of his epistle with a contrast between those who were "enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things," and those who have their citizenship (*πολίτευμα*) in heaven, and who are looking for the advent of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who will then change "the bodies of humiliation" into the likeness of "the body of His glory." And all this mighty transformation is "according to the working whereby *He is able* to subdue all things unto Himself."

This, then, is the fixed and certain consummation, towards which the yearning, the pressing, the fighting of the present, are tending. Then shall resurrection seal what regeneration has begun; and the Spirit, in whom we are sealed now (who is the earnest and the pledge of the future), shall quicken these mortal bodies, and conform them to the perfect likeness of Him to whom we are predestinated to be conformed. (Rom. viii. 11, 29.) "Therefore," concludes the apostle, "stand fast in the Lord" (Phil. iv. 1): be not discouraged; for surely faith can trust Him to consummate what His grace has begun. He began with "Rejoice in the Lord," and he ends with "Stand fast in the Lord," thus making the attainment of all he has been saying realizable only as we are abiding "in the Lord," the source at once of joy and steadfastness, of power, and of growth.

May these thoughts be helpful to any discouraged child of God; and may they serve as a warning to any who may be led to boast of attainments never reached, and of victories never won. May Christ and the heavenly life be a more intense present reality and joy to us all than ever, even though our tears and our smiles, our joys and our sorrows, may continue in very close fellowship, as they did in our blessed Lord, till we reach the haven of eternal rest, where sorrow and tears shall be no more. Amen.

H. G.

THE CHILDREN'S PLACE.

CHILDREN of God, chosen in His purpose, saved by His grace, kept by His power, and called to His eternal glory—how can we doubt His love?

We look back in wonder at the great mystery of godliness, the Word made flesh. We see the Father give the beloved Son in whom His soul delighted, the heir of all blessing and power, to be made a curse for us, that we might dwell in the bosom of His love for ever. We see Him give into the hand by which He made the worlds the sinner's cup of trembling, that He might drink it in the sinner's stead. God only knew what was in that cup of His wrath, which was full for us; and yet He spared not His own Son that He might give to us the cup of blessing, which shall run over more and more the more we drink of it.

But we want to get beyond the grave of Christ. He is not here, for He is risen. The mighty ransom price which alone could loose our eternal bonds has been paid down in blood. All the types and shadows of atonement have been filled up and finished in that one awful sacrifice. God does not leave us at the grave. Faith follows the risen One up to the throne, and there, accepted and glorified, sees Him who was once surety for our sin appearing in the presence of God for us. By the blood of our redemption He entered once into the holy place, taking thus His eternal stand in resurrection glory with His redeemed ones, and opening up for us a path of unhindered liberty and blessing to the throne on which He sits.

If we have been planted together in the likeness of His death in such entire oneness that God can say of the believing sinner, "He that has died is justified from sin," so shall we be also of His resurrection. Just as our fellowship with Christ frees us from condemnation, because we are in Him on whom the judg-

ment has already passed, so it brings us out on the resurrection side of His grave as those that are alive from the dead. As God once put the sinner's name on our Substitute, and reckoned with Him in righteousness for the sinner's debt, so now He puts Christ's name upon those that believe, and deals with them in grace according to the measure due to Christ.

The value of His name—not our faith or our attainment—gives us liberty of access to God; and because there is no limit to His estimate of the claims of that name upon Him, so there is no limit to our blessing. Yea, He has already blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, because our fellowship in the death of Christ puts us judicially out of the way for ever (there being nothing of ours that could be owned in resurrection), and brings us in solely on the ground of Christ's claim, and all He is to God. All God has given us is counted to a risen, glorified Christ.

Then, as made to sit in heavenly places in Him, everything concerning us is to be conformed to our calling. We are to walk in newness of life because Christ is risen. Every precept given to us is a divine promise: the power is always behind it. *Here* in the body as to the passing circumstances of to-day, *there* as to our hope and citizenship, we tread the path the Son Himself trod while yet in spirit in the bosom of the Father. As He is, so are we in this world; and just according to our life in Him above, is the provision made for our daily walk below, for *now* are we the sons of God.

Beloved trembling child of God, every claim upon you has been met and cancelled in the blood. God Himself is your justifier; and whom He justified, them He also glorified. Shall we not once for all take Him at His word? Shall we not live in some measure according to the dignity of our calling as born into the household of God; and if children, then heirs?

Satan never can alter our sonship; but he will seek

to beguile us to live below it, and thus rob us of our liberty and power; for the joy of the Lord is our strength. Let us remember we are not only delivered from the power of darkness, but translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Not only saved from wrath, but brought into a place of unlimited blessing as children in our Father's house. Shall we not cease, then, to dishonour the pledged promises of Christ? Shall we not for all His travail give Him the joy of trusting Him? .

A. E. W.

CONSECRATION.

THIS is a simple yet comprehensive term; solemn in its import, but happy in realization.

It is oftener used than understood, and sometimes misapplied. It frequently occurs in the Old Testament, and twice in the New. In both it is applied to persons and things.

It is the translation of different words employed in the original Scriptures, which taken together teach—

I. Separation, sometimes absolute and perpetual, to God.

II. Completion, perfection, filling the hands, as in the case of Aaron and his sons.

It is used in the New Testament—

I. In connection with the person of Christ in resurrection. He, the Son, Priest by the word of the oath, is *consecrated*, perfected for evermore. (Heb. vii. 28.)

II. In relation to His work, as consecrating, *perfecting*, newly-making the way into the holiest. (Heb. x. 20.)

A few remarks on each of the above may prove helpful to some readers of this paper, especially in connection with true, intelligent worship.

True worship is adoration of God, even the Father, revealed in His Son, the Lamb, by the Holy Ghost—adoration (1) for His personal excellence, (2) for the perfection of His ways, and (3) for His gifts.

As a matter of *experience*, we thank Him for His gifts, admire Him in His ways, and adore Him for His proper personal dignity and glory. This last is the highest point, and implies the lowest estimate of ourselves.

We bow the head, giving thanks for salvation from wrath. With fuller understanding and closer communion, we bow both head and knee. Closer still, and we prostrate ourselves before Him and the Lamb, not in confusion, but confidence; not to beg salvation, nor even to ask forgiveness, but, while conscious of what we were, and of our present imperfection, to adore Him, and make the ascription of sevenfold excellence and glory to the Lamb (Rev. v. 12), giving thanks unto the Father by Him.

Such worship can only be offered by those in and by whom the true idea of *consecration* is realized.

The people of the world cannot, do not worship. They may assume the name worshipper, learn a true creed, have and frequent a building said to be for worship, and have a man called a priest to lead the forms and perform ceremonies; but they cannot worship the Father until they are actually separated to God by the new birth, and by faith in the Son of God. Then they cease to be of the world, and are in that Church to which all acceptable worship is confined.

Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph. i. 4), sanctified by the blood of Jesus (Heb. xiii. 12), and by the Holy Ghost, through faith in Him (1 Peter i. 2), consecration is realized in them and by them in its *first* sense. This *separation to God* is essential, absolute, and abiding.

Circumstances may change, experience vary, service be interrupted, inconsistency in conduct may diminish joy and remove the bloom of communion, but *consecration* in this sense abides. It is God's act, and done for ever.

In such persons, holding their true place before God,

the *second* meaning of the term is also exemplified; viz., *perfecting, filling the hand*. Of this the typical ceremony described in Exodus xxix. is the happy illustration.

Redeemed and circumcised persons, as we see from that chapter, were first bathed, effectually cleansed; then on clean flesh were put the priestly garments; after that came the slaying of victims and ordering the offerings; then they were tipped, ear, thumb, and toe, with blood, sprinkled with blood and oil; and, lastly, their hands were filled with an offering to wave before JEHOVAH. Thus they were "consecrated," and they then fed on the offerings.

The answer to this is now produced by the Holy Ghost.

Sinners redeemed by the blood of the cross, and quickened, regenerated by the Holy Ghost, are enabled to realize their effectual cleansing, the bathing never to be repeated. (John xiii. 10.) They apprehend by faith Christ as their righteousness before God, and, anointed with the Holy Ghost, present Him to the Father. Their hand is filled with Him in all His fulness and perfection. They speak and sing of Him to the Father, and for Him they give thanks.

Once it was otherwise with them. Then they presumed to approach God in nature, in the flesh, having no better covering than their own righteousness, filthy rags; without blood and without oil, and their hand filled with their own religious performances; but they did not worship. Like Cain and the boasting Pharisee in the temple, they were rejected; but now, the Holy Ghost having convinced them of sin, and revealed to them Christ—having emptied their hand and filled it with Him, they are accepted worshippers; yea, such as the Father *seeketh* to worship Him.

This is true of all believers—of the babe as well as of the young man and the father. All are separated to God, and are all qualified, consecrated priests to God, even the Father.

That which was true of Levi is promised to the nation of Israel (Exod. xix. 6; Isaiah lxi. 6), and is realized in the election (1 Peter ii. 5-9) in earnest. The priesthood of believers now is universal.*

Could we all, beloved readers, see the beauty and glory of an assembly of such priestly worshippers gathered to the name of Jesus our Lord only, and understand the Father's estimate of their worship, I am sure we should prefer it to all other assemblies; nor should we suffer trifles, anything that could be overcome or set aside, to hinder our being there, especially as surrounding the Lord Himself at His table, to remember His death, in hope of His return. H. HEATH.

(To be continued, D.V.)

"FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING."

THE line was lately quoted in the *Golden Lamp*—

"Time and eternity are ours."

Time is ours, among other things, to quicken our steps for Christ, by the lesson of its flight; and *eternity is ours* to enrich our worship even here, as it will also be our home ere long with God and the Lamb.

"From everlasting to everlasting" is an expression to show us this. In each of the four places in which we find it, it occurs in the worship of the saints: all four are in the Psalms.

It is just one of those glorious Old Testament utterances which anticipate more definite New Testament doctrine. "Grace given us in Christ Jesus," says the apostle Paul, "*before the world began.*" (2 Tim. i. 9.) "The God of all grace," says the apostle Peter, "who hath called us *unto His own eternal glory* by Christ Jesus." (1 Peter v. 10.)

Here we are plainly taught that we were loved in

* Not even apostles, who ordained elders, ever ordained priests over others.

the eternity *past*, and that the eternity *to come* of life and glory is, by redemption, ours. Made to know this even *now*, what wonder is it that we utter our joy and praise in the above Old Testament blessed expression!

But each of the four times it occurs, it stands in a different connection.

Take, first, Psalm ciii. 15 to 17—

“As for man, his days are as grass :

As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone ;

And the place thereof shall know it no more.

But the mercy of Jehovah is *from everlasting to everlasting*
Upon them that fear Him.”

What joy to David to contrast this “*everlasting*” mercy with his own and others’ brevity of life here! And what joy and triumph to us to do the same!

Observe, it is “the *mercy* of Jehovah” that thus stretches from eternity to eternity. And the saved sinner, who is the subject of that mercy, knows this *now*, and worships even *now* with at least somewhat of that wondering, boundless reverence and delight with which he will soon worship before the throne. *Then* nothing will hinder our viewing the eternity of that mercy and love, whether in the past or the future, for the living creatures are “full of eyes *before* and *behind*,” as well as “full of eyes *within*” (Rev. iv. 6); and the boundless past and future of God’s love to us will be as much our study as will the thrice-holy purity of HIM before whose throne we shall then be standing. But Psalm ciii. gives us the utterance of this *now* by faith.

Take, next, Psalm xc. 1, 2—

“Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations :

Before the mountains were brought forth,

Or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world,

Even *from everlasting to everlasting* Thou art God.”

Here the believer’s soul worships the *power* of our God, as in Psalm ciii. it did His *mercy*; and the one is as eternal as the other. There it was Jehovah’s ever-

lasting mercy in contrast with David's experience of the brevity of the present life of even a child of God; here Moses is considering "all the *generations*" of the godly, and how they have, at God's bidding, returned again to dust (see v. 3 and Gen. iii. 19), but gladly he remembers, that God was by faith their "dwelling-place," and that they must *therefore* all rise again with joy; "for he is the God of the *living*, not the God of the dead," and "all LIVE unto Him." (Compare Mark xii. 26, 27.)

The thousand after thousand of years, in which they lie still unraised, cannot overthrow or weaken this belief, since the God on whom it is built is "*from everlasting to everlasting*;" and we, like Moses, have learned that "a thousand years in his sight" are but what "yesterday" is when it is past, or "a watch in the night;" and therefore we do not count the Lord "slack concerning His promise" (see 2 Peter iii. 9), though He keep His saints thousands of years in the grave waiting for their promised resurrection.

Sadducees deny the resurrection, and scoff at it; but our "hope maketh not ashamed," both because of God's *everlasting* love now shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, and because the waiting-time of "the dead in Christ," though it has been now some six thousand years—dating from Abel onward—is so brief in the sight of HIM who is our "dwelling-place;" for "from everlasting to everlasting thou art God!"

We get the same blessed expression in Psalm xli. 13—

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,

From everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen."

Thus closes the trust and triumph of what some have called "the sick man's psalm." The subject of this psalm is bodily sickness. Verse 3 of it has been again and again a comfort to sick ones on their beds, and especially when, like David in this psalm, they had enemies near, rather than sympathizing friends—

a form of trial bitter indeed! Job knew it; and still more did our grief-worn blessed Lord and Master, who quoted verse 9 as His own. (See John xiii. 18.) But both in Him, and in His people, faith triumphs when "heart and flesh are failing," and not only rejoices at its happy prospect (see v. 12), but begins even *now* a worship, and a praise, which draw their fulness from eternity itself, and says, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, *from everlasting, and to everlasting.* Amen, and Amen." And, blessed be God, it is thus in many a sick saint now!

One place of its occurrence remains (Ps. cvi. 47, 48):

"Save us, O Lord our God,
And gather us from among the heathen,
To give thanks unto Thy holy name,
And to triumph in Thy praise.

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel
From everlasting to everlasting:
And let all the people say, Amen.
Praise ye the Lord."

Here it is the same burst of praise from the whole assembly of God's released captives as it was from the sick saint's individual chamber; and the measure in which they have proved His goodness only makes them still more cry, "Gather us from among the nations," that we may "triumph in Thy praise;" for many remain still ungathered, and the theme of their worship reaches beyond all bounds of time, and stretches from eternity to eternity. "Man is of few days" it is true, "and full of trouble," and God's dear children are no exception to this rule; but whether it be David in Psalms ciii. and xli., or Moses in Psalm xc., or the re-gathered exiles of Psalm cvi.; all generations of saints, and still more we of these "last days," can and do "*joy in God*, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have *now* received the reconciliation."

"On earth the song begins,
In heaven more sweet and loud:

To Him who cleansed our sins
 In His atoning blood;
 To Him we sing in joyful strain,
 Be honour, power, and praise. Amen." H. D.

“ETERNAL PUNISHMENT” IN THE LIGHT OF THE ATONEMENT.

It is deeply instructive to notice how the doctrine of the future state has been gradually unfolded in the word of God, and that in exact proportion to the unfolding of the doctrine of Christ and of His atonement.

“In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” sounded no doubt darkly, but not uncertainly, in the ears of Adam, while as yet, in his innocence, he held his place as the head of an unfallen creation. What he understood of death we know not, nor do we know how intimate was his acquaintance with God and with His truth; but we must be careful not to assume that he knew nothing beyond what the history in Genesis would lead us to imagine.

Hebrews xi. reveals to us that the patriarchs knew a great deal more of the ultimate purposes of God than the Pentateuch unfolds. Abraham, we are there told, “looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker was God,” but of this Genesis says nothing.

In the Pentateuch there is very little of a future state at all, except in type and figure. The early and the later prophets gradually unfold the doctrine with an increasing clearness; but it is not till the Light comes into the world, the Son of God, the Light of Life, that we have revealed to us in their fulness what life and death really are. When, however, the eternal Life who was with the Father was manifested to us, then are we made to understand what death really signifies, but not till then.

Yet while the dispensation to Israel was outward, and had to do with things external and temporal, there lay underneath all this externalism that which un-

folded to faith, and through the believing few to the nation at large, a sense of a future existence of weal or woe, so clear and distinct that one cannot fail to see how deep and firm a conviction occupied the Jewish mind on this subject; clearer, one might almost say, than the simple letter of the law and the prophets might lead us to expect.

We allude to this because all deniers of eternal punishment, whether annihilationists or universalists, seek to support their opinions by reducing New Testament revelation to the Old Testament standard. But as God's revelation is a whole, and not to be divided, the later revelations in Christ and by His apostles form the only safe rule whereby to interpret the past revelations and past expressions and similes. The latter are not to be modified or interpreted by the former; but the former must be read in the light of the latter.

Paul touches a deep and solemn subject when he writes, "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one [*is**] the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life." Compare this with our Lord's words, "For judgment am I come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind." (John ix. 39.)

Life and death are connected with the person and work of Christ, and hence the terrible significance of the word "death." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John iii. 36.) Life is not existence, but a condition of joy, of blessedness, and of power; and death is not non-existence, but a condition of misery, of woe, and of destruction, and not of annihilation; for "all that God doeth, it shall be for ever." (Ecc. iii. 14.) When Christ has become a savour of death

* The "*we are*" is in italics, and has been supplied by our translators.

to any soul, what remains? What can change that which in Christ is sealed? What can open when He has shut, or shut when He has opened?

To deny eternal suffering (and suffering to be such must be conscious, for a lifeless object cannot suffer), is to deny every revelation of God given to us in the Word, whether in history, in prophecy, or in direct dogmatic teaching.

In the book of Revelation this solemn subject gets its clearest and its fullest unfoldings. It tells us of "the Lamb in the midst of the throne;" but also of the "wrath of the Lamb." It tells us of the heavenly city, and the Lamb the light thereof; but also of the lake of fire, and its everlasting burnings. It winds up its record with, "And He that sat on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto Him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be His God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. This is the second death."

When God says, "I create all new," there is a "BUT." He says, "It is done," and still the "but" remains—that awful "BUT!" And beyond it God gives not a glimmer nor a hope.

God winds up His history of His dealings with our race with these words; and here faith, hope, and love in the child of God bow and worship, and say, "All thy ways are judgment, and all thy paths are truth."

Christ and His atonement alone measure heaven, and alone measure hell; and whenever either is set aside, the atonement is in danger of being depreciated

and undervalued, as one, holding annihilation, said to the writer some years ago—"If I held your view of the atonement, I should hold your view of future punishment."

May God keep the feet of His saints in this solemn matter, and keep us all from giving any uncertain sound, when infidelity, spurious Christianity, and false philosophy seek to take away the wrath of God, and to separate between His righteousness and His mercy, refusing to hold together the goodness and the severity of God, which are alike borne witness to in every page of the word of God. H. G.

THE MIND OF CHRIST.

PHIL. ii. 5.

Most blessed Son of God!
 Leaving Thy Father's bosom, Thou didst give
 Thy life for us—didst bear our heavy load
 That we might live.

Fashioned in human form,
 Faithful alike through good report and ill,
 Thy meat, Lord, and Thy drink was to perform
 Thy Father's will.

'Neath Thine almighty care,
 The creatures of Thy hand are housed and fed;
 But Thou, their Lord and Maker, hadst not where
 To lay Thy head.

In pity Thou didst take
 Upon Thyself the burden of our woes;
 Didst bear our guilt; yea, even for our sake
 Endured the cross.

We worship and adore,
 And wonder, Saviour, that Thy love profound
 Should meet our need, and set us evermore
 On holy ground.

Lord, grant us of Thy grace
 That more and more Thy mind may in us dwell;
 And that we strive each day before Thy face
 To please Thee well.

S.

 NOTES AND REPLIES.

PHIL. ii. 10. "That *in* the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." The truth here brought out is, that every request presented to God in heaven or in earth must be in the one name of the Lord Jesus, as the One in whom all the creation of God finds its centre and its rest, and that every tongue shall own that the crucified Jesus Christ is Lord of all unto the glory of the Father. So will it be; but blessed and holy is he who confesses now, and bows now to the authority of that spotless Lamb of God. Alford remarks, that the preposition *εἰ* will not bear being rendered "at," as in the authorised version.

Isa. liii. 5. "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him." When the chastisement had been borne to the full, and the blessed sufferer had risen from beneath it, He came "preaching peace." "Peace be unto you" were His first words to those for whom He had "endured the cross, despising the shame."

John xiv. 19. "Because I live, ye shall live also." A living Saviour makes a living saint.

Eph. iv. 3. "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit." "By one Spirit ye ARE (OR WERE) all baptized into one body." "Now ye ARE the body of CHRIST." We are not told to *make* the unity of the Spirit, but to *keep* it, by walking in love, forbearing, and forgiving, with all lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, which are the fruit of the Spirit.

THE MEEK AND LOWLY ONE.

MATT. xi.

THE connection of the various incidents in this chapter with the invitations at the close is worthy of notice. The Lord invites the toiling and heavy laden to come to Him, and He will give them *rest*. He also invites them to take His yoke upon them, and learn of Him; for He is *meeke and lowly in heart*: and they shall find rest unto their souls.

In the previous part of the chapter He had been sorely tried. The special messenger sent to prepare the way before Him, who previously had borne full testimony to His being the Lamb of God and the Son of God, to his having seen the Spirit descending upon Him, and to His being the One to baptize with the Holy Ghost, now virtually retracts his testimony. He sends two of his disciples, who put the question to Jesus, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" They apparently deliver this message in public, while the Lord is surrounded by the multitudes.

John was at this time in prison, under the power of the violent and unscrupulous Herod. Faith is not always in lively exercise in any of the children of men. He hears of what the Lord is doing elsewhere, but for himself no deliverance appears. He trusted in God, and might expect to be set free, as the fathers of Israel had often been, and more especially as God's King, whose approach he had heralded, had already appeared. Moreover, it was expressly announced of the Christ of God, that He would proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. But in John's case this did not occur. The One to whom he had been so faithful did not set him free. Nothing short of this was naturally to be

looked for in regard to one so eminent as John, who carried with him the hearts of all the godly in Israel, and round whom a multitude of disciples had gathered themselves.

Perhaps the thought originated with the disciples through attachment to their teacher; but John adopts it. The message he sends reminds us of Israel's demand in the wilderness: "Is the Lord among us or not?" If He is, let Him fulfil our desires; if He fails to do this, we must look elsewhere.

In reply to this public insult and reproach the blessed Jesus, far from expressing any indignation, thinks only of what will restore confidence to John. Remembering his former faithful service, and full of commiseration for him under the circumstances that have shaken his faith, He lovingly seeks to restore him, mildly replying, "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see."

Those things which had been predicted of the Messiah, that the eyes of the blind should be opened, the ears of the deaf unstopped, the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing—such things were taking place before their eyes. Nay more, lepers were then being cleansed, dead persons raised to life, evincing the very presence of God Himself among them; and as a further characteristic, proving that God had indeed visited His people, it was to the poor, the insignificant ones of the earth, the meek, that the glad tidings of the kingdom were being announced.

No feeling of displeasure breaks forth from His holy lips. His object is to prevent John from falling further, to raise him up from his fall, in accordance with the deep thought of his heart—"Of them which thou gavest me I have lost none." He further adds a word of much comfort, yet conveying a solemn warning: "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

As soon as the two disciples were gone Jesus began to speak highly of John, drawing the attention of the

people to his steadfastness of faith, his self-denying character, and to his high official position as the immediate precursor of the King, the greatest dignitary in all the train of servants who had ushered in the approach of the Messiah. None was greater than John the Baptist, though clad in camel's hair, living in the desert, with locusts for his food; no, not Abraham, nor David, nor even Solomon. Though now imprisoned, and in the power of the tyrant, yet when the times of the restitution of all things of which God has spoken should arrive, it would be seen how far the condition of the heirs of the kingdom surpassed the highest that earth could present.

Could John have heard this testimony to his character and service, would it not have touched his heart? No word is here of reproach or disparagement. The loving Master speaks only of the good conduct of His servant, extolling him highly. How unlike this to the ways of men!

Carrying on this thought, our Lord further adds, that whereas the prophets prophesied about the future kingdom, John proclaimed it as at hand; and the very eagerness with which the people crowded to his baptism, to get ready for the coming kingdom, showed the eminence of his tidings beyond those of his predecessors. So great, indeed, was he, that if they (the Jews) would receive the testimony he gave as to the near approach of the kingdom, and to Jesus Himself being the Messiah, the Son of God, no other messenger would be necessary; the long-announced return of Elijah would be superfluous. Were they to receive Jesus, all would be well. The day of vengeance hereafter to be proclaimed by Elijah, the great and terrible day of the Lord, would pass by them, to fall only upon those who might still remain enemies of our Lord and of His Christ.

The Lord now records His estimate of the ways of Israel. Their fathers had already slain the prophets

who had foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom they themselves were about to become the betrayers and murderers. Nevertheless, divine wisdom sent them another prophet, John, who adopted the anchorite mode of living. This mode always tells upon the conscience of men, by investing him who practises such self-denial with a character superior to their own. Estrangement from the ordinary ways of mankind has everywhere been thus regarded. Yet, though the Pharisee was himself obtaining credit by this means, he is prepared to prevent John acquiring influence in the same way, declaring that he has a devil. Jesus, however, practised no such austerities, but wore the same garments and ate the same food as other men, so introducing Himself to their good-will. Yet for Him they had nothing better to say than, "Behold a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber." Still, the course which divine wisdom pursues is appreciated and submitted to by all who are taught of her, though rejected by her adversaries.

The Lord next announces the judgment impending over the places where most of His mighty works had been done, because they repented not. They had been exhorted to repentance because of the coming "kingdom of the heavens;" but they had not attended to the summons, though strengthened by the claim of God's own miraculous actings in their midst. They had disregarded all; and this cannot be done with impunity. Other places would have done better under the same advantages; but these cities of Galilee have to await a heavier doom than the Gentile cities, because of greater favour having been shown them.

Our Lord now bursts into an acclamation of praise to His Father for the way in which He had concealed these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes; corresponding with Isa. xxix. 14 as quoted in 1 Cor. i. 19. It had pleased the Father that so it should be, and the Son rejoices that it had

so pleased Him. But could any thing be more contrary to the desires of flesh and blood, and to the highest exercise of human judgment?

To find that the best tidings ever sent down from above—the reception of which secured eternal happiness, and their rejection left man exposed to eternal and unutterable woe; these tidings, moreover, corroborated to the full by miracles of all sorts wrought before their eyes—to find that they were accepted by none but the poor and unlearned! Most sorely would the heart of man be dispirited and dejected under such circumstances. The scorn of the wise, the contempt of the noble and intelligent, would weigh down the heart, and tend to raise the question whether after all the tidings could be true.

But so far was the Holy One of God from being thus cast down, that He exults in His Father's arrangement. "*Thou* hast hid; *Thou* hast revealed." He was content, because it was His Father's pleasure. The object of the Son ever was that His Father might be honoured; content Himself to accept whatever measure of honour or dishonour His Father might at any time think fit to bring upon Him. Could self-surrender go further than this? Being in the form of God, the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person, yet, far from asserting claim to an equality, He was, and is, pleased to become a servant for ever, though still the only begotten and beloved Son of God!

He was aware that all things were delivered unto Him by His Father, and that no one acknowledgeth the Son but the Father, neither any one acknowledgeth the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son reveals Him. In John v.-viii. much more is unfolded to the same effect. Even in the glory the unlimited power which God has given Him will be exercised by the Son in entire subservience to His Father's pleasure. (John xvii. 1-5.)

Having thus glanced at the purport of this deeply-interesting chapter, we are in some measure prepared to understand the loving invitation with which it closes: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

It will probably be allowed that there are two different descriptions of rest which the soul needs; one, the rest from the burden of sin, pressing heavily on the conscience. From this burden the blessed Lord Jesus delivers us by taking it upon Himself; He has borne our sins in His own body on the tree. He thus gives His people rest from the fear of God's wrath, judgment, and condemnation.

But after having obtained this, they need another, viz. rest from the cares and sorrows of life, from injustice and disappointment, from the hatred of enemies and the failure of friends.

Both these rests we obtain from our Lord. The first He gives; the second He teaches. The former we obtain by believing in Him; the last by learning of Him.

How qualified He is to teach this rest, we have seen in the course of this narrative. His chosen messenger might rise up and publicly unsay the testimony he had previously borne to His person and offices, tending to weaken the faith of many; yet neither anger nor impatience were excited. On the contrary, instead of disparaging, He praises him; instead of lowering the office and position of John, He takes occasion highly to exalt him, and to enhance the benefits the nation had been receiving through him.

Again, Israel was slighting the chosen Ambassador of the Most High who brought them special offers of *mercy and good-will*, *Himself stooping so low as to condescend to be their King*—the King of a false, ruined, degraded people—inhabiting an insignificant strip of country, the whole earth and the heavens also belonging to him; yet does He calmly proceed on His

appointed path, giving to them a word of warning, and resting Himself on the counsels of His God.

Who but Himself would have esteemed it a favour to have bestowed on Him only the basest portion of a community of sinners, all of whom had been pronounced beforehand to be worse than Sodom or Samaria, when no one inhabitant of this guilty earth was essentially worthy of His acceptance?

Yet so thoroughly, so entirely, does this blessed, this obedient Son rejoice in His Father, that whatsoever or whomsoever He is pleased to give Him He accepts with joy, heartily concurring likewise in the mode in which the gift may be bestowed.

His love to the Giver leaves no room for consideration as to the intrinsic value of the thing given.

Does not the heart of this meek and lowly One present us the model of loving obedience? Was any love like His love? any obedience like His?

The meekness and lowliness of His character is proof against all the indignities arising from man, while it accepts with unswerving filial love and joy all that His Father's wisdom decided to bring upon Him, demanding fortitude and endurance beyond conception.

Did any one ever bear so heavy a yoke? Was ever burden equal to that He bore? Israel, in Acts xv. 10, confessed itself unequal to the yoke. Yet to Him it was easy and light. Love to His Father made it so. What else could? What else could induce Him to link His destiny for ever with such as we are?

Could we by gazing upon His meekness and His lowliness obtain some transfer of these qualities into our own hearts, would not half the troubles of life be relieved? Pride, the cause of so very much of our sorrow, would be gone. All that arises from avarice and from ambition would be gone. All that springs from indulged anger would be at an end. The other sorrows incident to our present condition, sustained by the love that animated Him, would be so alleviated,

even the bitterest of them, that perhaps our poor hearts might be able to call them light.

This teaching we receive from our Lord. May we speedily learn the lesson. We are sure that He who has invited us to learn of Him will not leave us to do so unassisted. He Himself continues to bear the yoke, and is too much interested in our progress to leave us without efficient help. His Spirit has been sent from above to keep alive the flame of love in our hearts by pouring out into them the love that fills the heart of our God towards us, He also Himself interceding before our God in our behalf. R. N.

A THOUGHT ON MINISTRY.

MATT. xx. 26.

IN all true ministry Christ Himself ministers to His own, whatever their need may be. He came down from the bosom of the Father not to be ministered unto, but to minister. To this end all His earthly path tended, touching thus and sanctifying all the ministries of His saints; and in heaven itself He is for us a minister of the sanctuary, having His heart and His hands full of blessed effectual service for His weary and suffering members upon earth.

In Him all the body, by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, increaseth with the increase of God; all quickening, restoring, or comforting power flows from the living Head above. He may send it through what channel He will; it may or may not be accepted by the saints; but inasmuch as it comes from God, so it goes back to Him as a sweet savour, because of the incense of the Name that is above every name, *which rests upon it.*

A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven. We can only comfort one another with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God; we can only teach as the anointing we have re-

ceived of Him abideth in us; we can only help as of the ability that God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

Then, too, all *true* ministry must be exercised in fellowship with Christ. "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." As we have received, so let us minister in the communicating power of the Holy Ghost, with an abiding sense of personal need and emptiness, and yet as knowing something of the freeness and liberality of the grace we are permitted to use.

We should minister as *stewards*, remembering it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful, doing our Master's work as our Master's servants, and in our Master's spirit, as those entrusted with "manifold" grace, to be developed in the using; knowing that "a man shall be satisfied with good by *the fruit* of his mouth; and with *the increase* of his lips shall he be filled." That which God hath given us, which we minister in fellowship with Him to one another, redounds in fruitfulness to His glory, and blessing to our own souls, according to the unfailing principle of increase in the infinite riches of His grace; but that which is only laid up for ourselves, like the hoarded manna, breeds worms and stinks.

But there is one other necessity of true ministry. As Christ is the source and continuance, so He is the end and object of it all. We ought to discern Christ in His saints, and thus minister to HIM. If the Master writes "unto Me" upon our service, the cup of cold water is accepted by God as much as the alabaster box of ointment. The most precious ministry to our suffering Lord, rendered as His hour of deepest need was approaching, was misunderstood by the disciples. "To what purpose is this waste?" How full of rich encouragement as well as reproof the words of Christ: "Let her alone; she hath done it *unto me*."

Alas! how often we get out of sympathy with Him in our service, forgetting that He seeks the undivided worship and love of the hearts He has won to Himself at such a cost. May it be more increasingly and solely the object of His saints to refresh the heart of Christ, that thus, whatever else may fail, His joy in us may remain, and our joy be full. A. E. W.

JOSEPH: A TYPE OF CHRIST.

(Continued from page 35.)

IN the story of the prodigal, in Luke xv., it was "*when he came to himself*" that all his blessing began; *i.e.* when he came to a sound mind both about his own evil ways and his Father's goodness. And so with Joseph's brethren; they had, so to speak, to be brought to their senses; and it was only when the effects of the wine they had so indulged in at Joseph's table had left them, and the far worse wine of their self-will and pride, like "*drunkards of Ephraim*" (see Isa. xxviii. 1), was gone out of them, and they came as *guilty* ones, that Joseph could pour out on them his love, and embrace them. And how abundantly he did this the narrative shows.

"Come near to me, I pray you," was his word when they were troubled at finding it was Joseph, their long-ago hated and rejected brother, in whose presence they now stood; and tears with his words told how he loved them. Bitterly had he wept in other days while suffering under their hands (see chap. xlii. 21); but now that he is out of the pit, and raised to power, and wealth, and honour, he not only uses it all for their good, but hastens to dry any tears of theirs, and to make them sharers of his joy as well as of his abundance.

And so with Christ. "*Woman, why weepest thou?*" (John xx. 15) and "*All hail,*" *i.e.* "*Rejoice ye*" (Matt. xxviii. 9), are the first words recorded for us of the

gladdened heart and lips of the risen Lord Jesus; and when His Jerusalem brethren, according to the flesh, were pricked in their heart on the day of Pentecost with their guilt at having rejected Him, how instant was the answer He gave to them by the apostles—“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive *the gift of the Holy Ghost.*”

True, Joseph had suffered much at their hands, and at the hands of Egyptians through their selling him. Their own hands, as his brethren, had sunk him into the pit in which was no water, and they had witnessed “the anguish of his soul,” but had not “hearkened” nor regarded it. Egyptians had also put him into a *pit*, or “dungeon,” as it is called in chap. xl. 15, but the Hebrew word is the same as that rendered “pit” in chap. xxxvii. 24. In these two ways did Joseph know the sorrows of the pit, that he might more exactly prefigure Christ, whom Jews and Gentiles united to put to death at the cross.

The marvellous death of Christ has in it a fulness which often requires the combination of two objects in a type to represent it. In the cleansing of the leper for instance (Lev. xiv.), *two* birds were to be taken—one to be slain, and the other, the living bird, to be let go after it had been dipped in the blood of the slain bird. So, too, on the day of atonement (Lev. xvi.), one goat of sin-offering had to be slain, and the other let go alive, an expression of Christ bearing away the sins of His people to a place where they could not again be found.

Thus in Joseph's history, looked at as typical of Christ, there are two pits. The first reminds us of Him who sank for our sake, and, as it were, at our hands, into the thirst, and anguish, and agony of death. In the second pit (*i.e.* the dungeon) Joseph is seen helpful and gracious to others even while in it, and is *soon* brought hastily out of it (margin. “*made to run out of it*”).

He divests himself at once of all marks of the place he had been in; for he shaves himself and changes his raiment, and goes into the presence of the king. A blessed picture surely of Him who could say to the dying thief, "Verily I say unto thee, *To-day* shalt thou be with me in paradise;" and whose rising from His grave was so speedy and so glorious, and whose morning of resurrection was also that of His ascending and entering into the presence of the great King; "for I am a great King, saith Jehovah of hosts." (Mal. i. 14.)

In John iii. 16, Jesus delights to speak to Nicodemus of God as loving the world and giving His only begotten Son, and notices Himself *only as the gift*; and in Luke xv. He gives all the prominence to God's delight in receiving the sinner, while His own place in the picture is only that of supplying the way and means of the Father's welcoming the long-lost one. So Joseph in this narrative leads on his brethren's thoughts from himself to God. "Be not grieved," he says, "nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God *did send* me before you to preserve life." (Chap. xlv. 5.)

But while Joseph thus sinks himself out of view as being the author of deliverance and provision for them, he richly manifests to them the *heart* of God by his tears, and the tenderness of his ways towards them now they were humbled.

The *tears* of Joseph are a most touching and instructive part of the narrative, and give us a view of Christ which we should much love, and often study in these intensely secular and busy days. The hurry of life threatens to leave even God's children no leisure, and diminishes the inclination to observe the silent gushings of Jesus' love as we find it in the gospels, and also by the Spirit of Christ in the epistles. Hence another value to us of Joseph as a type.

Eight different times we read of Joseph's weeping.

No wonder, then, that the salutation of bystanders to him as his chariot went along was, "Tender father." (Chap. xlii. 43, margin.)

There were weepings of Joseph on behalf of his brethren *before* they knew him; there were weepings of Joseph in their presence and upon them at their *first* coming to him; and there were his weepings with them and because of their ways *after* they were his. It is a picture to us of the *tenderness* of Christ that should be much studied.

Twice he wept over them when they no more knew him than Jerusalem knew Jesus when He wept over her as He stood on the mount of Olives. (See Gen. xlii. 24; and xliii. 30.) The first time was over his brethren *as a whole*; the second was over a *single* one, Benjamin. In both instances he hid the tears from them, for they had not yet confessed their sin; but the tears were none the less real or deep because of his having to weep them by himself.

"All the night make I my bed to swim" (Ps. vi. 6); and again, "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law" (Ps. exix. 136); and many more such passages, tell us the depths of tender grief in Christ, and some measure of the same in His people, over thoughtless ones who know Him not. Oh that we of this busy time had more of it!

Three times Joseph weeps at his first revealing himself to them. (See Gen. xlv. 2, 14, 15.) First, at their distress of soul, brought on them by their sin; and then when he fell on Benjamin's neck, and Benjamin on his; and again, as he kissed *all* his brethren. The tears gave power to the kiss, and assured them that in the gush of his heart, and the touch of his person, Joseph was *for* them; "and after *that* his brethren *talked with him.*" And is not Christ's love to us the warm gush of His heart, and the touch, as it were, of His person? His loving salutation of "Peace be unto you," and His showing them "*His*

hands and His side" (Jno. xx. 19, 20), and His gracious words, "Handle me, and see; a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have," and His eating with them (Luke xxiv. 39-43), drove all guilty fears away. And it is so still—

"When free grace awoke me, by light from on high,
Then legal fears shook me—I trembled to die.
No refuge nor safety in self could I see,
'Jehovah-Tsidkenu' my Saviour must be.
My terrors all vanished before His sweet name.
My guilty fears banished, with boldness I came
To drink at the fountain life-giving and free;
'Jehovah-Tsidkenu' is all things to me."

Of the three remaining times of Joseph's tears two were the outflow of his ready and sympathizing heart in the ties of family life, and the expression of his reverence for relationship given him by God. (See Gen. xlv. 29, and l. 1.) The one at first meeting again his still living father; the other as, seventeen years after, he kissed the cold and lifeless face of that father, even when no longer able to give him any kiss in return. Again it was tears that the one wept over could not know. Thoughts of the *past* were in those tears of Joseph, and thoughts of future resurrection also perhaps; for he at once prepared for laying the dear dust in none of Egypt's tombs, but in the distant cave of Machpelah.

And in His sympathy with us in the joys and the sorrows of family life, is not our Lord Jesus Christ our "Joseph"? In the gladness of meeting living relatives, and the sorrow to us of losing removed ones, we know we have Him with us. He still makes our joys and our sorrows as truly His own as when He supplied the wine for the marriage at Cana of Galilee, and as when He wept at the grave of Lazarus. And it is thus we learn the warmth and perfection of His love. The same epistle to the Hebrews which tells us of His divine glory as Son of God, and of His throne being for ever and ever (see Hebrews i. 8), also tells

us that we have in Him one who can be "touched *with the feeling* of our infirmities." (Heb. iv. 15.) How much there is in our Jesus to endear Him to our wayworn hearts, as well as to inspire our confidence! And if we more remembered this His perfect fellow-feeling with us, we should be more strengthened under temptation, and saved from the snares of sin.

One instance of Joseph's weeping remains—to his brethren the most humbling of all, and to him the most honourable; for it was caused by their distrust of him, even after all his goodness to them. (See chap. i. 15–21.)

Their father Jacob was dead, and they had returned from his burial in Canaan, and were again in Egypt with Joseph *only*—he still the lord of the land, and they in closer contact with him than before—left, as it were, alone with him. Their new position woke up afresh in them the remembrance of their early treatment of him, and they distrust him without the slightest cause. They treat him as though it had been *family* kindness he had all the time been showing to them *for Jacob their father's sake*, and as though it would now be changed to retaliation. "Joseph," said they, "will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him;" and their distrust leads them to artfulness and falsehood; and they make up a pretended message to him from their father's dying bed, which Jacob doubtless had never sent.

Nobly does Joseph answer their messenger. His tears at being so cruelly distrusted are his reply. He "wept when they spake unto him." Once more they were at a distance from him through their distrust, and he had again to yearn over them, and say, "Come near to me, I pray you." And he succeeds, and draws them to himself *again* with the same "cords of a man, with bands of love" (Hosea xi. 4), as at the first. He assures them it was "the kindness of God" he had

been showing them, and not mere passing natural feeling; as did David also to Mephibosheth. "Fear not," is his word to them: "for am I in the place of God? . . . God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them."

Yes; but not without *tears* at being so distrusted after years on years of love for them, and benefits bestowed on them.

We all see but too plainly in this a picture of our distrust of our heavenly "Joseph"—our loving and glorious Lord Jesus.

Some change in our circumstances puts our confidence in Him to the test, and we detect in ourselves the lurking fears of wicked unbelief. We come to some *lonely* part of the path, and we find we had been making a fellow-creature more our trust than we thought: we had been in some degree making flesh our arm, and our heart had, in that measure, departed from the Lord; like Joseph's brothers, whose trust, it appears, had not been in Joseph *only*, but also in the aid to them of Jacob's being still alive.

It was when the disciples were left *alone* with Jesus in the boat without supplies—for "they had forgotten to take bread" (Matt. xvi. 12)—that their confidence failed, and they could not understand His doctrine because of the fears that filled them: they thought themselves straitened in Him, spite of all His recent goodness to them and to the multitude.

And even since the Holy Ghost has Himself come, and indwells us, stubborn, deep-rooted, evil unbelief has still again prevailed, and Christ has been wounded even in "the house of His friends." It was this which made Paul need to "travail in birth" again for the Galatian Churches, and to bid the Corinthians "awake to righteousness, and sin not: for some have not the knowledge of God" (1 Cor. xv. 34); and made him

entreat the "holy brethren of the heavenly calling," in the epistle to the Hebrews, "not to cast away their confidence." (Heb. x. 35.)

Blessed is it for us that our heavenly "Joseph" never disowns His "brethren," but meets all our distrust of Him with the tenderness of a wounded but still unchanged love, telling us that having been given to Him of the Father, we are to Him "His own," and "having loved his own which are in the world, He loves them to the end." Well may we say—

"Astonished at Thy feet we fall—
 Thy love exceeds our highest thought;
 Henceforth be Thou our all in all,
 Thou who our souls with blood hast bought:
 May we henceforth more faithful prove,
 And ne'er forget Thy ceaseless love."

Some remaining lessons from Joseph as an example must be left for a concluding paper, God willing.

H. D.

LIVING WATER.

"If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!" "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Such is the invitation of our blessed Lord—full, rich, and free! The water of life flows forth abundantly from Christ, the smitten Rock. It cost HIM much. His own life's blood must flow, His soul must be poured out, His body bruised, HIMSELF be made a sacrifice for sin, before one drop could reach the sinner's soul.

But now He sits enthroned upon the mercy-seat, the Prince of Peace, the mighty Saviour God, with open hand and loving heart waiting to meet the need of every faint and weary one.

"Thou wouldest have asked of HIM." No more is

required. Simply acknowledge HIM, believe in HIM as God's own gift of love, and ask of Him, and HE will give. Yes, He will freely give thee *all* thy soul requires—the living streams of peace, and love, and power; pardon for all thy sin; salvation, life, and glory; and His own arm of might to bear thee safely to His home above.

But listen again. “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.” Mark the words. Not the one who has merely drank it once, but he who drinks, and drinks continually. That one shall never thirst.

Dear child of God, hast thou thus learnt to draw continually from Christ? Is every care, and want, and woe spread out before His face? Is every longing of thy soul breathed out to Him? Is He thy constant spring of joy and strength? thy help in every time of need? Hast thou so learnt to drink, and drink abundantly, of His deep love, of His rich grace, that thou canst say—

“It is enough; I want no more:
My springs are all in Thee”?

If so, thou needest not fear affliction's fire. The flames will neither burn nor singe; for God, thy God, will pour the river of His love into thy heart, and quench their scorching power, and make thee glad amidst it all. *He* will “satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.”

But the promise is richer still: “The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life”—not merely enough to meet our own need, but a well springing up within us—a well from which the living waters may be drawn and dispersed abroad unto everlasting life.

The thirsty earth drinks in the welcome showers, and thus the hidden springs that fill the wells are fed. It is thus with the child of God. “If any man thirst,

let him come unto *me*, and drink," says Christ. Mark, "unto *Me*." It is to HIMSELF we must go; not merely to His word, blessed though that be, but to *Himself*, and receive direct from His own heart and lips the fresh outflow of His own love and grace. Thus will the hidden springs which He has formed within us be revived and fed, and we shall have wherewith to meet the thirst around. The supply is in Christ Himself, the Fountain of living waters; and it is only as we drink, and drink continually from Him, that our own thirst is quenched, or we have ought to give to weary, thirsty souls.

But read again. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Not only a well springing up within us, but such an overflowing fountain that from *us* poor barren sinners shall flow rivers of living water.

And on what condition does this glorious promise depend? "*He that believeth on me*, as the Scripture hath said"—believing in Him as He is unfolded and manifested in the blessed word of God. A living faith will act; for "faith without works is dead." And if we truly believe in Christ as God has revealed Him to us in the Scriptures, we shall be found habitually *using* Christ, not only as our Saviour from hell, but also as our full and all-sufficient supply for every present need—

"Our never-failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace."

It hath pleased the Father that in HIM should all fulness dwell. His fulness is the same; it never fails. Oh, then, how natural, how spiritually natural, that the soul that drinks continually of His rich streams should be so filled to overflowing that his fountains will be "dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets!"

There is no straitness with our God, no stint measure

with Him; the supply is full, and large, and free. The fountain is the very heart of God. The streams flow through the pierced heart and hands of Christ, and as we drink, our bellies—our affections—so polluted, so narrowed up in themselves, become enlarged and purified, and forth from them pour out the living streams to make the desert bloom, and cause the wilderness to sing.

Oh how great the folly of forsaking HIM, the fountain of living waters, and hewing out to ourselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water! Oh that we were wise, that we understood these things, and had learnt to drink waters out of our own cistern, even Christ, and running waters out of our own well, "the deep sweet well of love!"

L. T. S.

THE RIVER OF GOD.

"THERE is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High;"—a river which "went out of Eden to water the garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads." "He brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward. . . . It was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over. . . . Every thing shall live whither the river cometh." "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

"All the rivers run into the sea; . . . unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again." "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this

spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive)." "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." "Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it."

Its source: Eden, the temple, the throne of God and of the Lamb, the great sea. (Eccl. i.)

Its work: To water the garden, to bring healing and life wheresoever it flowed, to nourish the tree of life which was for the healing of the nations.

Its end: To return to the source from whence it came (Eccl. i.), to make glad the city of God.

"The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. . . . And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters."

The heart of God has been opened towards man, and Christ, as the River, floweth forth as the expression, the effluence of God's love. With Him is the fountain of life. In the crucified Son of God have we the deep waters of God's love—waters to swim in that cannot be passed over.

Unto every thirsty one that cometh God giveth living water, that he thirsts no more; and the water that God gives him becomes *in him* a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Then he in turn becomes, in Christ, a river of blessing; for "out of his belly flow rivers of living water:" for unto him is the Spirit given, now that Jesus is glorified.

And when the rivers have run their course, and fulfilled their allotted task, then do they return to the place from whence they came, and "make glad the city of our God."

Going forth from His Father's bosom to water the garden—the vineyard of God (Isa. v.)—He stretched forth on every hand to save, toward the four winds of heaven; and in every place where the river flowed did it uncover precious things. (Gen. ii. 11, 12; Job xxviii. 10.) Proceeding out of the sanctuary hath He become

a river to swim in, even God's "salvation unto the ends of the earth," "for the healing of the nations."

"O Christ He is the fountain,
 The deep sweet well of love!
 The streams on earth I've tasted,
 More deep I'll drink above;
 There to an ocean fulness
 His mercy doth expand;
 And glory, glory dwelleth
 In Immanuel's land."

A. O. M.

CONSECRATION.

(Continued from page 48.)

BELIEVERS are divinely constituted priestly worshippers of the Father. With adoring hearts and joyful lips they present that offering by which they have been both *sanctified* and *perfected for ever* (Heb. x. 10, 14), in which the divine counsels and operations centred, and the full Deity ever delights; for "CHRIST, through the **ETERNAL SPIRIT**, offered Himself without spot to God." That offering was a sweet-smelling savour (Eph. v. 3), and will ever be so. He, the great High Priest, is perfected for evermore, and the way into the holiest is newly made, consecrated for us.

Having thus far considered the term "consecration" in connection with worship, and its direct relation to God, I now wish to say a little on it in its practical and manward aspect, properly resulting from and again leading to the former.

In doing this I shall first refer to a few remarkable passages in the Old Testament in which the expression occurs, and, secondly, consider some of those in the New Testament which convey the idea, or teach this truth.

The earliest in the Old Testament is Exod. xxxii. 29. The sons of Levi, on the occasion of Israel's idolatry and fornication, *separate* themselves, and, at the command of Moses, *consecrate* themselves—fill their

hands by slaying every man his son and brother—firm, unflinching, full-handed obedience to Jehovah.

How sad and fearful the connection! But it was simple obedience. They had the warrant of the word of Moses as from Jehovah. We should never act without the guidance of the word of God; but having it, we should act, whatever may be the consequences to ourselves or others.

Blessed be God, He has not committed the sword to the Church (therefore it should not be found in the hand of any one of its members), although He has transferred it from Israel to the Gentiles. Nevertheless, the claims of the Lord Jesus through His word may, and often do, call for costly sacrifices and service, painful, yea, as death, to the flesh; nor should we be less true than the Levites were then.

The next passage I shall adduce gives us the term in a very interesting connection—that of the Nazarite. The Nazarite's vow is very instructive. It was not universal in Israel; nor was it generally commanded. It was not essential to the Israelitish character, nor to his standing in the land. It was a voluntary act of extraordinary, yet happy, devotedness to Jehovah—*separation* from the ordinary tastes and delights of nature.

It was consecration, involving both separation and completion; *i.e.* *fulfilling* the conditions of the vow of *separation*.

The Nazarite for the time was doubtless a type of Him whose whole life was one uniform exhibition of separation from earth's joys, and of devotedness to God—obedience to His Father's will. It does not in the letter apply to us, but in its spirit and principles should be realized and exhibited by us continually.

We find this word consecration again in 2 Chron. xxix. 53 and xxxi. 6 used in connection with the people's substance, their cattle. Hezekiah, like all godly kings, turned his attention to the temple and its service, to the law and to the priesthood; and finding that the Levites

had suffered want, he commanded the congregation to bring in their offerings, and those offerings were *consecrated* things, separated and devoted to Jehovah their God.

I will only notice one more passage in the Old Testament in which the term occurs, viz., Micah iv. 13. This Scripture presents to us Jehovah standing up for Zion, to avenge her wrongs and maintain her rights, when all her enemies shall be subdued, and the spoil, the gain, shall be *consecrated*, devoted to Jehovah. This is in agreement with the original ordinance in Israel, that the spoil of their enemies, when it had been tested and purified by passing through fire or water, according to the nature of it, was to be for Jehovah.

It will be easily seen that the Scriptures quoted here, taken together, teach full surrender to the claims of Jehovah of person and things. Israel was Jehovah's nation; their possessions were His gifts to them; and the spoil of their enemies was to be devoted to Him.

In meeting His claims, they found their happiness and wealth; withholding from Him brought sorrow and want.

There are many, many more Scriptures teaching the same blessed lessons, which my readers can search out for themselves, and will be richly rewarded in the search. My desire in writing this paper, as in all ministry of the Word, is to suggest, and lead believers to search the Word prayerfully in secret. Public ministry was designed to help Christians in private meditation; not to be its substitute; and it is a bad sign when it is otherwise.

This said, I pass on to consider the Scriptures of the New Testament for further instruction on this subject. As before stated, the word *consecration* occurs but in two passages, and in them only in relation to the person and work of the Lord Jesus, not in direct connection with our practice.

In the first passage, it is the act of God, with an

oath consecrating the Son. (Heb. vii. 28.) In the second, it is Jesus consecrating a new and living way into the holiest through the veil of His flesh. These, rightly apprehended, will, of course, affect our hearts Godward, and so indirectly affect our general practice; yet they do not directly apply to, nor does the Holy Ghost use the term *consecration* in the New Testament to enforce that which is now being pressed on us by it.

(To be continued, D.V.)

H. H.

"ENTER INTO THY CLOSET."

UNDOUBTEDLY a time of renewed activity in the Lord's work is a wonderful improvement upon the dull indifference that some of us may remember, when the language of each one seemed to be, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Looking around, and seeing the many activities that are stirred up, the many manifestations of zeal, we are indeed truly thankful, and wish God-speed to those who are going into the high-ways and hedges compelling men to come in, that His wedding may be furnished with guests. Yea, we recognise in all this the working of His Holy Spirit, and pray for yet more of its manifestation.

But wherever the Lord works Satan will also work, and we desire to warn of a certain danger peculiar to these outward activities of our day.

There was a time when saints were taken up with the consideration of their own state before God, and needed to be stirred up to proclaim abroad the glad tidings of salvation. Perhaps there may be those in our own days who, very busy in the outward things of the Lord's vineyard, may profitably be exhorted to look a little to their own vineyard. The home and the family have their duties as well as the world and the church; the closet and our own hearts have duties more urgent than all.

It has been well remarked, that many of those whom

our Lord denounced as "scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," were among the eminently pious of their day. Quite certain that they were the accepted of God, they needed no personal Saviour. And so it has been in all the history of God's dealings with His people; not always the openly profane and rebellious were declared to be farthest from the mind of God.

A largely-attended prayer meeting is a joyful, refreshing sight; but is it not possible, if we analyse that refreshment, to find in it something of the flesh? Can we harbour the thought, that God is more likely to hear and answer prayer going up from hundreds at once than from those who among the hundreds have real access to Him in prayer when in the secret of their closets? Our Lord, while encouraging us to united prayer (Matt. xviii. 19), has perhaps guarded us against this very God-dishonouring thought by fixing the numbers so low: He does not say if a multitude of you shall agree, but "if two of you shall agree."

If the child of God comes to these outward activities, expecting to be refreshed and strengthened thereby, instead of coming to Jesus for what he needs, is there not cause to fear that he will be disappointed? If young believers are urged to give themselves to work for which they may be but little fitted, with the idea that that work will build them up, will they not be disappointed? If anxious souls, pressing to these outward things, expecting in the crowded meeting to find peace in believing, rather than in individual closet-dealing with an ever-present Lord, may they not be disappointed or deceived by a vain show?

Jeremiah xxxvi. brings a solemn lesson before us. Not only had God's judgment been pronounced against His people by His prophets whom He had sent, rising up early and sending, but the execution of that judgment seemed impending at the very doors; for the army of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had come up into the land, had taken all the defended cities with

one or two exceptions, and had besieged Jerusalem. Surely they could not now choose but believe His word, and take warning. What accordingly do we find them doing? "They proclaimed a fast before the Lord to all the people in Jerusalem, and to all the people that came from the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem." (Verse 9.) This sounds well. And when Baruch is sent to read from the roll of the book, it is not to the scenes of business, or of pleasure, or to the haunts of vice that he has to go to seek the most numerous auditory, but to the temple, the house of Jehovah. Again, this looks well.

They might have said, What else can we do? You urge us to turn to the Lord; why, we are holding a great prayer meeting, a revival meeting; we have proclaimed a fast to high and low, and we have responded to the proclamation by gathering here in the temple.

But what were the facts? Were they at all willing to give heed to all the warnings of coming judgment? to acknowledge themselves sinners exposed to the wrath of God, and needing mercy? Were they ready to listen to His word? or was it not bound so far as they could bind it, and God's prophet Jeremiah shut up in the court of the prison?

It was grace in God that sent once more the warning to all this busy, fasting throng; and what was the hope expressed as to the result? "It may be they will present their supplication before the Lord, and will return every one from his evil way." (Verse 7.) What is this but the hope of *individual* heart-dealing with and heart-turning to the Lord?

If souls are to be brought out of the darkness of nature, it seems needful that those who do believe and are scattered abroad should go everywhere preaching the gospel; nor can we see how many souls are to be reached without those means which sometimes savour too much of fleshly excitement. May God indeed bless the outward activities of our day, and guard

us from the dangers that appear to accompany them, making us feel more and more our entire dependence upon Him. Really knowing the powerlessness of all *our* doing, let us rest in that word of the psalmist, "And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of *His doing*."

I. G. H.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

REV. v. 7. *When does the Lamb take the book?* From chap. iv. 1 it is evidently among "the things which must be hereafter," and consequently at the time when His session at the right hand of God comes to a close, and His enemies are made His footstool. (See Psalm cx. 1.) Till then God does not deal dispensationally with the earth. He is now acting in grace, and calling sinners into the church, thus forming the heavenly bride.

Col. iii. 24. The "*inheritance*" which is the free gift of God in Christ (spoken of in Eph. i. 14; Acts xx. 32) is not to be looked on as different in character from "*the reward of the inheritance*" promised here for faithful service to the Lord; but the latter seems to imply a difference *in measure*. The parable of the pounds (Luke xix.) explains this. God is our inheritance; but the measure of our enjoyment of the inheritance, as of our nearness to Himself, depends on faithfulness. To him that hath shall more be given (Luke viii. 18), is the Lord's word to him that hath ears to hear.

Col. iii. 25. Believers receive here in chastisement the reward of wrong and evil done, that they may not be condemned with the world hereafter. (Ponder 1 Cor. xi. 29-32.) Sickness, losses, darkness and clouds, should *often* contain a voice from God to arouse a sleeping conscience. The devil too often makes second causes a pillow to still the voice of God to the soul.

ON THE VALUE OF THE THIRD EPISTLE OF JOHN;

AND MORE ESPECIALLY IN THESE CLOSING DAYS OF
CHRISTENDOM.

THE writer of this paper, in his ninth lecture on the epistles of John,* has called attention to the peculiar place in the word of God which, by no mere accident of the period in which they were written, but by the design of the Holy Ghost, the *second* epistles occupy. He has there endeavoured to show, that whilst there could be no second epistle to the Romans, or to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, or Colossians, the second epistles to the Corinthians, to the Thessalonians, and to Timothy, and those of Peter and of John, have a definite and varied line of teaching in close connection with their several first epistles; and further, how singularly important to us living in these last days that added line of truth is. For not only is it found, upon examination of their contents, that these second epistles bear specially on these days, but also that they are the Holy Ghost's own instructions to God's saints, even in case they are surrounded by apostasy on every side. How many of us have been perplexed through the difficult character of these days in which our lot is cast—difficult through light being put for darkness, and darkness for light, and when Satan is himself transformed into an angel of light. Hence the overwhelming importance of these second epistles.

But, then, the *third* epistle of John reaches yet further. Whilst the second epistles are applicable indeed to all times since they were penned, but yet have a peculiar pertinency to the times of the end, so the third epistle of John specially concerns us who

* *Lectures on the Epistles of John.* J. E. HAWKINS, London.

live at the very extreme edge of the dispensation. The nearer the end we have come, the more timely will its prophetic aspect upon examination prove to be. So may we who are His children born, by this inspired appendix to the Word, be enabled, notwithstanding the confusion increasing all around us, to walk accurately in His light and in His love.

1. Thus, for instance, we may observe the wonderful emphasis thrown here upon the "*truth*." Short as this epistle is, no less than seven times do we find this alluded to. Can this be accidental? So full of the importance of this does John seem to be, that he makes mention of it four times ere he approaches his main point at all. Now, at a time when the term "love" is used as a plausible pretext for being negligent as to the truth, how suggestive is it that here, in the very first verse, we read of "love in the truth." Further on we read of walking in the truth; not once only, but twice. And the apostle testifies—oh, may we have ears to hear!—that he has no greater joy than that his children should walk in the truth.

2. Gaius is commended for his reception of "brethren, even* strangers," who had "come out"† "for THE NAME,"‡ and who took "nothing from the Gentilish ones."§ The force of his commendation is considerably weakened in our translation. Thus no name is mentioned as that by which these strangers had been attracted, and the savour of which they had sought to spread. The correct reading here is: "In behalf of THE Name they came out." The silence as to whose "Name" is meant is most expressive. It contains an appeal to the heart of the reader. So, too, in the Acts, wherein we have an account of the first believers, that "Name" stands out in like solitariness. Certain there were who rejoiced "that they were counted worthy to suffer

* αδελφους και τουτο ξενους.

† ὑπερ του ονοματος.

‡ εζηλθον.

§ εθνικων.

shame for THE Name." (Acts v. 41, Greek.) And likewise with these separated ones received by Gaius, that same Name was everything.

3. The measure of their separation from evil is marked distinctly. They took "nothing from the Gentilish ones." The adjective here, as it is found in the original, is much more forcible in this case than the noun. It implies that the multitude of professors has got back to paganism, even though that paganism be with a slight varnish of Christianity on its surface. Similarly, the picture of professors in 2 Tim. iii. 1-5 corresponds greatly with that of the pagans in Rom. i. Here, therefore, oh ye servants of God, test yourselves by the divine standard, whether your separation from such Gentilish ones be complete! Not only must there be separation from evil, and gathering unto the Name, but separation entire in this specified manner from the religious world.

4. Such separated ones are to be RECEIVED by those who would be fellow-helpers to the truth. But that word "receive" contains in it a prophetic hint, and a plain indication of the divine will as to our behaviour to each other. For let the following considerations have each of them their due weight upon the mind. First, we are to come to Christ, just as we are. He at once welcomes us to His bosom. (Matt. xi. 28.) But once saved by Him, we shall readily perceive that His love has drawn others besides ourselves. These all and ourselves, by coming to Him, become living stones, and by clustering round Him, are built up together. No elaborate organization is required in addition to this simple way of our God. By a necessity of our new nature we are drawn to one another, as we are drawn to Him. But then we must come *out* from all fellowship with the dead, and from all evil, according as the light of His presence makes it plain to us. (2 Cor. vi. 17; Eph. v. 14.) But in this habitual separation, Christ and God in Christ must ever be our one resort, our sole

centre. (Heb. xiii. 13; Acts v. 14, xx. 32.) For as His love has drawn others besides ourselves, so His light has purged others besides ourselves. Wherefore, congregating and persisting to congregate solely around Himself, His word is pledged to us that He is with us so assembled. (Matt. xviii. 20.) And again, as thus it is certain that the Lord is with us uniting us into one, so others similarly assembled gravitate towards us and we towards them. By this one divine Centre are assemblies welded into one. And because He is the attraction, whether Himself personally Who is in our midst, or Himself by His Spirit in each of our hearts, therefore the mutual drawing together, whether of individuals or of assemblies, will be of hearts first, and in body next. To reverse this divine order is to substitute a sham for a reality. Nor will it satisfy the requirements of the Lord, nor even the deep yearnings of our new-born spirits, that we should receive such separated, such gathered ones only in their *individual* character, and one by one. No; both here and in another wonderfully parallel Scripture to be compared with this presently the peremptory word is, "Receive US." (2 Cor. vii. 2.) On this pronoun in the plural an emphatic commentary is given by our beholding here John himself, and Paul in the other cited Scripture, associated with those seeking for recognition, and certainly the former of these seeking it in vain. We may not indeed sacrifice the truth to love. Far otherwise, as we have seen, are we taught in this very epistle. But verily there is no truth apart from the precious Lord Jesus. Eph. iv. 21 is often wrongly quoted, as if it were written "truth as it is in Jesus." This would imply that truth also might be found outside of Him. But the Scripture puts it thus: "As the truth is in Jesus." He Himself is THE truth. If we are abiding in Him, and clinging to Him alone, we must be walking in the truth. All error is caused by and consists in departure or distance from Him, and this

leads us to look at another wonderful point in this brief epistle.

5. Here only, of all John's writings, with the exception of the book of Revelation, have we any mention of the church. But here it is found no less than three times. There must be some reason for this. Yet the line of things in John's writings is, as is well known, not only distinct from, but in advance of that of *Paul's*. Here, whilst assuming the truth of the unique calling of the church according as Paul had unfolded it, John further shows the divine will as to our procedure towards each other, in view of this glorious truth. And this is here revealed to us, not by the separated ones being required to JOIN any section, or to *come in* to any party, but by the others, all who are walking in the truth, receiving *us* also. Obedient acquiescence in this way of the Lord is very necessary, for otherwise we shall surely drift into somewhat of the same position and state of mind as did those Jews living near the time of the close of the former dispensation, and who maintained, The temple of the Lord are we. (Jer. vii. 4.) The Lord Himself comforts those thus disowned in this vivid language: "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at His word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you outside for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." (Isa. lxvi. 5.) Whilst, on the other hand, of them that so held themselves aloof He thus spake: These "which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou; these are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day." (Isa. lxv. 5.) Add here that the Lord Jesus Himself impliedly admonishes us, that the non-recognition of Himself in His people and in His servants savours of the spirit of Judas Iscariot, who saw not God in Him; for notice the close connection of verses 18 and 19 with verse 20 of John xiii. Disobedience therefore to the will of the Lord, as indi-

cated in this third epistle, will lead us gravely wrong, and even into Pharisaism itself. So true is it that we may not allow ourselves to go one step beyond the Word, any more than to halt one step short of it; we must not turn aside, either to the right hand or to the left.

6. But Diotrephes will not follow in this way of the Lord. Albeit not a single text can be produced, directing believers to join or to come in to any party, whilst over and over again the way of the Lord is declared to be by our hearty reception of one another to the glory of God (Rom. xiv. 1; xv. 7), Diotrephes pursues his own self-devised way, and thus John and he are wide apart. But we ourselves, in the light of this very epistle, can see, if we will, who was in the right. Yea, Diotrephes proceeds even to the length not only of himself not receiving John, but also of forbidding others who were disposed to act differently. Surely independency is to be preferred to such a hollow union. Independency is far removed from the mind of the Lord. But accomplices in such wickedness one must not be on any account. As another (J. N. D.) has well written in his *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible*, "The unity of the church is so precious, it has such authority over the heart of man, that there is danger when failure has set in, lest the desire for outward unity should induce even the faithful to accept evil, and walk in fellowship with it, rather than break this unity. The principle therefore of individual faithfulness, of individual responsibility to God, is established and set above all other considerations; for it has to do with the nature of God Himself, and has His own authority over the conscience of the individual."*

But we have better corroboratory evidence as to the way of the Lord than this. The second epistle to the Corinthians is occupied largely with a long parenthesis

* "Synopsis of Books of the Bible," on 2 Timothy, in *Present Testimony* vol. xi. p. 133.

on the subject of true ministry. This parenthesis commences at ii. 13, and is continued unto vii. 4. Therein ministry is presented to us in divers aspects. Thus from v. 11 to v. 21 we have the subject of ministry to the unsaved or the unreconciled. Then in vi. to vii. 4 ministry to the saints is treated of. They are entreated not to receive the grace of God in vain, but in two specified ways to respond to the love of God, and to be also enlarged. One of these is for them to come out and to be separate, and not to touch the unclean thing. Then in vii. 1-4 the entreaty is continued: "Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man." In these two ways, then, of separation from the ungodly, and of reception of the godly, it is plainly shown to us who believe how we should not receive God's grace in vain—that is to say, the *modus operandi* of our being together, and of our being of one heart and of one soul, is not by separation from evil, with the joining or coming in to any special party, but by separation from evil, with our reception of each other to the glory of God. But a necessary preliminary of reception is our recognition mutually of each other. It is a great pity that the chapter is divided where it is; viz., just before that great parenthesis is closed, and midway between the two inspired instructions as to how the grace of God is to affect us. Had the seventh chapter been commenced at verse 4, as thus it ought to have been divided, the double entreaty to believers, or rather, the one entreaty in its two essential parts, would have been more easily perceived.

7. Accordingly here we have Gaius commended for his obedience and for his walking in the truth. He recognizes and receives the separated ones. Therefore he does "faithfully to the brethren even to strangers." (v. 5.) That word "faithfully" reminds us of the judgment-seat of Christ; for that is a word of commendation which the Lord will then utter wherever He

can. Notably He will do this in the above cases, however much and oft He will have to reverse the mistaken judgments of men; so true is it that this third epistle of John, in its prophetic glance, brings us to the very edge of the dispensation. Likewise when Gaius is enjoined, "Follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God." In all this the apostle is urgently recommending him to persevere in the course in which hitherto he has done so faithfully. The language at first appears obscure, and part of it perhaps somewhat tame. But when it is seen that the leading thought of the epistle is about separation and reception, the obscurity disappears. The wickedness of the action of Diotrephes, and the faithfulness of the way of Gaius, so impress the soul of the beloved disciple, that as if with difficulty can he dismiss the subject. Also in the last part of that verse he alludes to the general truth, that if we love God we must love the children born of God.

8. Finally, I may add that I still entertain the conviction which I have broached in my lectures on John's epistles, that the last two or three verses look onward designedly to the second advent of the Lord. Thus the word "I trust," or rather "I hope" (Greek), will perhaps be some evidence of this to him who recognizes the import of the word "hope" as used in the New Testament. Again, in the second epistle there is no such word as "shortly," or rather "immediately" (Greek), as is found in the third epistle, in connection with the writer's expectation of full communion with Gaius. The very word Gaius means "earthy," and Demetrius "one whose mother is the earth." As if the heavenly call being just about to be completed by the Lord's descent and summons of His own into His presence, His saints could not but admire the grace which from such a lowly origin had destined them to such a glorious inheritance. W. LINCOLN.

JOSEPH: A TYPE OF CHRIST.

(Continued from page 73.)

God graciously blends for us throughout His word lessons on *obedience* along with His great teachings of *salvation*, and nowhere do these so clearly shine forth as in Christ Himself—our divinely mighty Saviour, and our divinely blessed example; and we as truly need His example to guide us in our obedience, as we do His death and His precious blood as atonement and cleansing for our sins. “Behold the Lamb of God” comes twice in the first chapter of the gospel by John (the only place of that blessed title in the four gospels)—first, in verse 29, as “the Taker-away of our sins,” and next, in verse 36, as the Pattern for us of our walk.

In the history of Joseph the same combination of truth is found. Joseph is not only a type for us of Christ as “the *Saviour* of all men, specially of them that believe,” but we also see in him bright traits of Christ, as a *pattern* for us in our ways as God’s saints.

The grace of Christ is indeed found, more or less, in ALL believers, and ever has been, and, so far as it is found, they are all examples; but in some of them it shines much more brightly than in others, both on the pages of Scripture and in the living church around us.

The smallest chink will let *some* light into a dark place; and the tiny dewdrop reflects the sun, at least in some measure; and all saints are, more or less, a light to others, and a reflection of HIM in whom they have believed; but some do indeed “*shine* as lights in the world” (Phil. ii. 15), and some also, “with unveiled face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,” are blessedly “changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.” (2 Cor. iii. 18.) They tread that “path of the just which is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day” (Prov. iv. 18), and they reflect the Lord of glory

in the bosom of their loving and peaceful souls, and on the surface of their bright and godly lives, more like the glassy lake than the tiny dewdrop.

It is joy to know such in the Church of God around us now; and it is blessed and profitable to study the record of such in Holy Scripture. Such were Enoch, Abraham, Moses, Samuel, and David, and such also was Joseph, and all that list of Faith's "mighty men" in Hebrews xi; and this made Paul enumerate them till he found the number too many to be got through. And he takes care to tell us that it was "BY FAITH" each one of them was thus distinguished, in order that *every one* of "the household of faith" might aim to be like them, and might *expect* to be. As each type of Christ has its own special view of Him as a Saviour, so has each its particular pattern and example to guide us in our ways.

Joseph, for instance, is the Christ-like pattern to us of how to behave as *a younger member of a family*: he showed "piety at home" (1 Tim. v. 4), neither standing aloof from his brethren because of their sinful ways in any spirit of "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou" (Isa. lxv. 5), nor fearing to tell his father of those evil ways; for it says "he brought to his father their evil report."

Are you, dear reader, one young and newly blessed? May Joseph's grace in this respect be given you! And if, like Joseph, and like Christ Himself, you are disliked and hated by your own relations, may you no more give way than Joseph did, the light of whose testimony shone "more and more" before his own kindred; and younger one though he was, he did not shrink to declare to them the whole testimony of God (comp. Acts xx. 22), though dream after dream, as he told it, only awoke still more the hatred of their hearts against him. (See also what is said of Christ in Ps. xl. 10.)

But it is to those in positions of subjection, to servants, or even to slaves—sold, that is, into slavery—

that Joseph is yet more exactly a pattern and a guide. This was a numerous class in the church's early days, and in the apostles' times, if we may judge from the much space given to such in the epistles. Both Peter and Paul say more to servants than to either masters, or wives and husbands, or children and parents. (See Eph. vi. 5, 6; Col. iii. 22-25; 1 Peter ii. 18-25.)

To you, dear readers, who have in any way to tread the Christ-like, happy path of subjection, we affectionately say, Study Joseph's character and ways much and often. What help it will give you when you are most lonely, and when you are most neglected, or most unkindly treated!

What a change for him, from the home of his most indulgent father to the slave-market of Egypt and the house of Potiphar! But we read of no murmurs in Joseph, no sulky tempers nor proud ways or words, as if to let them know he had once been better off.

To judge from his diligence as a servant in Potiphar's house, and his good and trustworthy management of all that came to his hand to do, he might have been one *born* in the slavery in which he was, and who had never known easier or better circumstances.

The secret is in a single word, "The Lord was with Joseph" (ch. xxxix. 2); and no wonder it adds, "and he was a prosperous man." This armed him for the lonely moment of his wicked mistress's assault upon his soul. Alone, but not alone, for "the Lord was with Joseph." Be it so with you, tried and lonely fellow-saint, whatever be your rank of life; and if you are one not easily within the reach of pastors' visits, may the pages of the *Golden Lamp* especially help to endear to you your Bible.

And should you be ill-treated for your godly and conscientious ways, you will only be treated as Joseph was when thrust into the prison by Potiphar, the master he had served so well.

Yet here again "the Lord was with Joseph," not

only to prosper him in submitting to prison duties and doing prison work, but in enabling him to "suffer long and be kind" (1 Cor. xiii. 4), and to show only cheerfulness and thoughtful attentions, even to his fellow-prisoners, who, nevertheless, soon forgot him.

Truly Joseph's path was like his name—"Joseph" means "adding" (see Gen. xxx. 24, margin)—and he did indeed "add to his faith virtue," and all the other graces named in 2 Peter i. 5, at every step of his precious path of service and suffering. He seemed to lose, and he did lose, in outside things; but he added grace to grace out of that fulness which there was for him in God, and which there now is more abundantly than ever treasured up by God for us in Christ our Head.

The apostle Peter says, in his word to servants, "If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." (1 Peter ii. 20.) Three steep steps are these for us to climb, and closely following each other, with often little time to take breath between them. Too steep are they for our proud human nature to submit to. *First*, "do well;" *and then*, not rewarded nor even approved, but "suffer for it;" *and next*, not refuse to stay in the place of service, nor even resent the wrong done us by our manner or even tone of voice, but "take it patiently." How blessed to climb these three Christ-like steps in any single hour or in any passing occupation of lowliest service here!

We see all three of them in Joseph as a servant. In Potiphar's house he "did well," then "suffered for it," but by grace "took it patiently;" and surely the large space given him in the book of Genesis tells us it was "acceptable with God."

One would think the apostle Peter must have had such as Joseph in his mind as he wrote; for the very word he uses in verse 18, rendered "servants," is not the ordinary one, *δουλοι*, which might mean *outdoor* slaves, but *οικεται*, domestics—that class of slaves who are in *personal attendance* on their masters, or owners, and are

therefore the more subject to the passions and wickedness of *sinful* masters and mistresses. Joseph was just such an one, and we see in him a specimen both of the trials to which such are exposed, and of the grace God can give to them that they may, as Paul says, "*adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things.*" (Titus ii. 10.)

Yes, "*ADORN the doctrine*"—be, as it were, the very *ornaments* of it. Kings and nobles *may* be this, and so may the rich and the learned; for God "will have ALL men (*i.e.* all ranks and conditions of men) to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. ii. 4); but it is very instructive to find the highest honours put also on saints in the *humblest walks of life*, and the richest rewards that Christ shall bring at His coming held out also *to them*. As an instance, what name is there that shines with more honour in God's pages than that of Joseph, the domestic servant and household slave of Potiphar? And who of all Old Testament believers will, in the day of Christ, have a brighter or richer reward than he?

But Joseph is a Christ-like pattern for believers in their *prosperity*, as well as in adversity. From the first word and action in his day of honours and wealth to the last, he gives God the glory as the source of all, and "submits himself to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." (1 Peter ii. 13.) Like Daniel, when before Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. ii. 30), Joseph disowns any personal superiority, and meekly says, "It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace" (chap. xli. 16); and when made a governor over all the land of Egypt he still honours Pharaoh as the king over him, and who had appointed him, and showed it by riding always in "the second chariot," not the first, and by using apparently Pharaoh's signet, and not one of his own. Nor did he presume to appoint his own father and his brethren a place in Egypt when they came, lord of the

whole land though he was, but left it for Pharaoh to decide. (Chap. xlvii. 5, 6.)

Nor did his prosperity make him *indolent*. The same grace of God which enabled Abraham when rich still to confess himself to the sons of Heth as only "a stranger and a sojourner" (see Gen. xxiii. 4), enabled Joseph to be as active for the good of others when honoured and wealthy, as he had been when a servant and a slave. He arranges the storehouses of all the land, and it was he who "sold to all the people of the land" and of other countries, when the famine compelled them to come. (Chap. xlii. 6.)

What a godly example is this! "Charge them that are rich in this world," says Paul, "that they be not highminded, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come." (1 Tim. vi. 17.) Joseph as truly illustrates this command to the rich as he did Peter's words to the "domestic servants."

Matthew (*i.e.* Levi) made Christ "a great feast in his own house" (Luke v. 29); Joseph of Arimathea delighted to use his "hewn out" costly tomb for our *Lord's body*, and Nicodemus to bring his 100 lbs. of spices. Gaius's hospitable house was so filled that he was not Paul's host only, but also "of the whole church" (Rom. xvi. 23); and the apostle John delights to add, that what he did he did "faithfully" (3 John 5); and there are, thank God, not a few of similar Joseph-like grace in the Church of God now. May they still increase, and by helping forward others "after a godly sort," be preserved from being themselves "corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

These are but some of Joseph's teachings for us by the example of his life. His endurance, his wisdom, his firmness, his perseverance, his faithfulness, his truly Christ-like spirit of forgiveness of those who had so injured him, when he had it perfectly in his power to retaliate, and at the end his simple faith in a "resur-

rection of the just," and in his own share of that resurrection, shown by his commandment concerning his bones; all this, and much more, shines out from him as a pattern for us, and stands among the things "written aforetime," and "written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Rom. xv. 4), and be strengthened by "that blessed hope" to tread, like Joseph, a Christ-like path to the end. Be it so, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake. Amen. H. D.

DIVINE SYMPATHY.—Do we not often speak of the sympathy of Christ as if He took it up *from earth*, as if it were *human* rather than *divine*? Is not every little spark of sympathy in our heart caught from His own? If it is not divine, it is worth nothing. What our risen Lord *has* taken back to heaven that we may call *human* is the experience of our sorrows and infirmities, so keenly realized in His path below. It is this which especially fits Him for the exercise of a sympathy which, if it were not altogether *divine*, never could meet or satisfy our hearts. W.

THE FOUNTAIN-HEAD.

Jesus, our Lord, enthroned above,
 Thou Brightness of the Father's face,
 Thou Fulness of all truth and grace,
 We feel and own that Thou art Love.

O Love divine! O more than Friend!
 The length, and breadth, and depth, and height
 Of Thy compassion infinite
 We do but dimly comprehend.

Dimly indeed! Each living rill
 Of love by which our souls are fed
 We trace to Thee, the Fountain-Head,
 And find Thee brimming over still.

O Fountain flowing full and free!
 Well-spring of living water clear!
 Faint and athirst, we now draw near,
 And find our life, our all, in Thee.

THE AWAKENED EAR.

WE are commanded to "be swift to hear" (James i. 19), and deeply do we need the precept, so prone are we to forget that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hear (or hearken) than the fat of rams." (1 Sam. xv. 22.) In no respect, perhaps, is the life of our Lord more instructive to us than when we observe Him as the *hearer*.

There is nothing that more tests our lowliness, and our power to walk humbly with God, than our readiness to hear. Again and again do we read, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," whether it be the voice of our Master in the gospel, or the voice of the Spirit in what He says to the churches.

To be a hearer implies that we are under the will and guidance of another, of one who speaks and has the right to direct; so that the hearing ear implies the controlled will, and the subject heart. To hear is to be at the call of another; and hence the ever-obedient Servant of Jehovah, who always did those things that pleased Him, in unfolding His servant-character in Isaiah, says, "He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned;" that is, He was as one who was accustomed to listen, and who had learned to understand the voice of Him that "wakeneth morning by morning." (ch. l. 4.)

The "still small voice" in softest whispers was heard. There was no need of the thunder, the earthquake, the mighty wind, to arouse a slumbering conscience, as in the case of Elijah, who fled from the place of service and of trial, and who then heard the solemn question, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" Such a question was never put to the obedient Son of God. He only went where and when He was sent; and hence, when His brethren sought to hasten His steps towards Jerusalem, His answer was, "My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready." (John vii.

6.) As much as to say, "You go when it pleaseth you, I go when I am bidden. You do your own will, I do the will of Him that sent me." Thus, when the loved Bethany family were in bitterest grief, that grief could not move Him to go before the glory of God demanded it, and so He remained two days where He was, and Lazarus must die.

So here in Isaiah 1. 5 we read, "The Lord God opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back." What words of listening obedience, what setting aside of self, what submissive following of the will of Jehovah, even to the giving of the "back to the smiters," of the "cheeks to them that pulled off the hair," and of the face to "shame and spitting!" Thus the holy One of God came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him; not to speak His own words, but those of His Father in heaven. And thus does He set *us* an example; and by the indwelling of His Holy Spirit does He empower *us* "to will and to do," not according to the fleshly willing and doing of the carnal man, but according to "His good pleasure." (Phil. ii. 13.)

In connection with "hearing" there are two remarkable passages in the gospels to which we would draw attention. In Mark iv. 24 we read, "Take heed *what* ye hear;" and in Luke viii. 18 it is written, "Take heed *how* ye hear."

First, "WHAT" *we are to hear*. It is God that speaks to us. He spoke by His prophets; He spoke by His Son; He spoke by the apostles; and in the written word He speaks to us still; and as we read its sacred pages there comes, as from the throne of God, a voice that says, "Take heed *what* ye hear." It is a call to the awakened ear, a whisper to the soul to listen to what our God would say, and thus to have our conscience exercised as to the commands and precepts of that Word.

It is deeply important to remember that the exercise

of our conscience on matters of truth is not to be relegated back to God. Conscience is given of God to be exercised *by us* before Him; and under the teaching of the Spirit, and by the use of the Word, we should attain to the knowledge of what is good and evil in His sight. Alas that we should hear Christians excusing themselves for disobedience to the plainest precepts of the word of God, by saying that God has not exercised their consciences in the matter! forgetting that it is *their* business to exercise their own conscience on all the revealed will of God. Where this is done we shall find that God's word is a lamp to the feet and a light to the path; yea, that it is "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His (or in its) sight."

There is no ambiguity about the word of God, when wielded by the Holy Ghost; but the Spirit must be ungrieved by wilfulness and disobedience. "To him that hath shall more be given." Obey the light given, and more will be added. Refuse obedience, and then the light in thee will become darkness. The single eye will follow on as led step by step, and the path will become that of the just man, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day; that is, it will become brighter and brighter unto the noonday of a meridian sunshine. But how many, failing to take heed to what they have heard, have marred the brightness of their Christian life, and have mistaken a seared conscience for a good one, because it had become past feeling, and therefore unexercised.

Neither must we put a human estimate of great and small on commands given by God. The least command, wilfully ignored and set aside, will be as the "dead flies that cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour;" it will be a leaven of dis-

obedience that will mar the joy of our paschal feast, bringing darkness into the soul and trouble on the conscience, and it will lessen our reward in the day of the Lord.

Let each believer be found attentive to the voice of God in His Word; and though he may stand alone, if unmistakably he hears the word, "Go forward," let him call to mind the psalmist's word, "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments." Many delay so long after hearing the clear command, that the precept fades away from the conscience, and the darkened eye sees no longer what was at one time only too plain.

Secondly, "HOW" *we are to hear*. If the *what* we are to take heed to be important, the *how* is none the less so. The one points to the object towards which the attention of the awakened ear is to be directed, and the other points to the subject mind of him who is called to hear; and if this be wrong, no matter how clear the truth presented to the mind may be, it will be misread and misapplied. It is from want of knowing *how* to hear that men arrive at opposite conclusions regarding the word of the living God. That word, if rightly received, *is* a lamp and a light, and not a labyrinth of perplexities and uncertainties.

To secure the right manner of hearing the word, the eye must be single, the will must be subject. God must occupy His proper place, not only in the affections, but in the will. And these are not the same. The history of Paul, in Acts xxii., gives a striking illustration of this.

Paul had set his mind on going to Jerusalem. It had been his long-cherished wish to carry the charities of the Gentile churches to their brethren in Judæa, doubtless hoping it would tend to soften prejudices raised against him and his ministry. He had previously argued the matter with his Lord when told to depart out of Jerusalem, by saying, "Lord, they know that

I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee," &c. (Chap. xxii. 19, 20.) He thought his conversion would turn the current of Jewish feeling, and that the evidence before their eyes of a converted Saul would remove all opposition; and it was not till he got the Lord's imperative "Depart," that he went off on his mission to the heathen world.

Now again, at the end of his ministry, or nearly so, he seeks to return with free-will offerings to his people; but God withstood him in Tyre, and sent him a message "through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem." (v. 4.) This produced no effect. They "kneeled down on the shore and prayed," and Paul went on to Cæsarea. Here Agabus comes with a prophetic warning, and then his fellow-travellers and they of that place beseech him not to go any further. Had they sought to influence him in Tyre, under the direct prohibition of God, they might have succeeded. There they seem to have remained silent; but now that danger threatens, they all unite and beseech him not to put himself in its way.

This obstacle was readily met by one whose life had been through "deaths oft," and whose daily path had been a daily martyrdom; for with affections all on fire for the Lord, his memorable reply (which may well seek a place in all hearts) was, "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." Blessed resolve! nevertheless the hearing ear of the Master would have led him to tarry where he was, and to have committed the object of his journey to others, content to have come all that way apparently for nothing, rather than disobey a single command not to go up to Jerusalem.

The Lord Jesus went nowhere but as He was sent. He spoke and acted as His ever-wakened ear heard, and as His ever-watchful eye saw, the will of Him whom He came to serve, and in serving He left us an

example that reminds us of the promise, "I will guide thee with mine eye."

Too great importance cannot be attached to the will being in subjection; otherwise, as has but too often happened, the very rightness of the affections will lead all the more surely wrong; for we are prone to fancy that, with a godly motive and a holy resolve, the path we contemplate must be right. Hence let us ponder the words, "Take heed *how* ye hear."

Love led the three mighty men to break through the Philistines' host, and draw water for David from the well of Bethlehem; but while the love was appreciated, the act was disapproved, and David poured out the water before the Lord. Love's hardest lesson often is obedience. Paul could more easily lay down his life than listen to the Spirit's command not to go, when he wished to honour his Lord in going; and so he is led to disguise himself, like good king Josiah, before going into the contest. (Acts xxi. 23-28.) Any disguise is always a bad sign, and speaks of a conscience not quite at rest in God.

In this matter of hearing may we seek to be humble, child-like followers of our Lord; and ever remembering that our ear has been touched with blood and anointed with holy oil (Lev. xiv. 14, 17), may it be kept for Him who has made us His own.

Instead of the too oft repeated "I think," may it be ours to say, "I hear!" May we learn the reality of Mary's good part, which was to sit and hear what the Lord had to say to her, and then to be ready, when the time came, to anoint His sacred person for the burial; and we shall not, in love's over-haste, seek the living among the dead.

God is light, and God is love; and if we would rightly and wisely combine light and love, it can only be when, as listeners, we seek to walk in the light of all God's revealed truth, that so our love be not blind, but obedient; not self-willed, but subject. H. G.

CONSECRATION.

(Continued from page 81.)

WHAT, then, is the teaching of the New Testament on this subject?

Its instructions might be summed up in one word, a word with which children's ears are familiar, and which should be to every Christian one of most pleasant sound—*Obedience*.

Dear reader, had the Church of God from the beginning better understood its meaning, and steadily, habitually, walked in obedience, we should not now, I think, have heard of "consecration meetings," "higher life meetings," and the like. Such are *high sounding* words, but they prove the *low* condition of the church, the general ignorance, worldliness, and weakness of the professed followers of Christ, even as the fifteen or sixteen days occupied in cleansing the temple of old proved the neglect of *daily* cleansing. (2 Chron. xxix. 15–20.)

But I must proceed to cite a few Scriptures in which this truth is taught, although the term *consecration* is not employed. The first I shall refer to states the fact on which all the claims of God are based, and all the precepts of the New Testament enforced; viz., that we are "*redeemed*."

"Ye are not your own; for ye are *bought* with a price: therefore glorify God with your body and spirit, which are *His*." (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.) We belong to another, and He who has bought us has simple, absolute possession, and unquestionable right. We are accountable stewards of all we have. If we are bought, we are *separated* to Himself; if we are *His*, we should in all things be *devoted* to Him, having a settled purpose to be godly, and to live to God in all things. This is the import of the term consecration.

The next passage I shall notice is very similar to

this: "Yield yourselves unto God, as those who are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments (arms, for righteousness is armour) of righteousness unto God." (Rom. vi. 13.) "Alive from the dead;" yes, partakers by the Holy Ghost of the life taken up in resurrection by Him who laid it down for the sheep, we are to live our life unto God after the example of Christ; yielding ourselves to Him as "alive" (this is *separation* from a world of "death"), and our members—eyes, ears, tongue, hands, feet—in the *ordinary* matters of life, as so many instruments of righteousness to God.

Such must of necessity be the life of a *risen* one, *higher* than which cannot be lived here, *lower* than which the Scripture does not put before us; nor should we be satisfied with a lower.

Again, in Romans xii. 1 we are besought, by *mercies* received, to present our body as the servant of the renewed mind, "a living sacrifice;" so that the entire occupation of its members is to be for God, to please and therefore to glorify Him.

In 2 Cor. vii. 1, &c. we are appealed to by the *promises* of God to come out from all that with which Christ has no fellowship, and which does not agree with our character, walk, and worship; to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." How simple and plain is all this! Surely if we all were more diligent readers of the word of God as a whole, reading for *fellowship* with Him and *conformity* to Christ in all things, how natural and unmistakable it would appear. Paul and his companion were enlarged in heart, and their mouths were opened towards the Corinthian believers, who, being puffed up, were cold and contracted. He called on them for the answer, "Be ye also enlarged," in order to which enlargement they must come out and be *separate* from ungodly, un-Christ-like fellowships and practices, *perfecting* holiness.

Such are some of the passages of the New Testament which present to us our simple obligation (which is our privilege), to do the will of God who has saved us, of our Father who loves us. I will not enlarge, but again ask my readers to search the Scriptures for themselves; they will easily discover them, and be richly rewarded in *obeying* them.

I would add that I have quoted from the epistles, not because the gospels do not teach the same thing (see Luke xiv. 26, 27, 33, and elsewhere), but because the epistles are largely expositions of the gospels, and are moreover addresses to the church of God, to the churches of Christ which were not formed while the Lord Jesus was on earth. (See Matt. xvi. 18.)

I would also remind dear readers of the blessed fact that we are indwelt by the Holy Ghost, whose teaching and power are sufficient to enable us both to discover and do the will of God in all things. He will enable us to yield ourselves unto God as alive from the dead; to present our body a living sacrifice; to separate ourselves from all evil, cleansing ourselves from filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness; in a word, to *obey*, and so be godly, first in the closet; then in the family circle and walk; after that, in service in the church or in the gospel; and lastly, before the world in all our transactions with the people of it.

In such a path God will be glorified, Christ honoured, others benefited, and our own souls made happy. Thus may it be with us to His praise. H. H.

“Teach me to live! No idler let me be,
But in Thy service hand and heart employ:
Prepared to do Thy bidding cheerfully—
Be this my highest and my holiest joy.

“Teach me to live!—and find my life in Thee—
Looking from earth and earthly things away;
Let me not falter, but untiringly
Press on; and gain new strength and power each day.”

ENDURE HARDNESS.

2 TIMOTHY ii. 3.

“THE soldier’s life is full of toil. Absent from home, deprived of the luxuries, and even the comforts of life, he must endure what he cannot avoid, and seek to accomplish the work desired by him who has called him to be a soldier.

“But the hardships of the Christian warrior’s lot are far more desirable than the more coveted pleasures and indulgences which the world affords. There is safety in enduring hardness, in weariness, poverty, privation, and toil. Uriah in the camp of Israel was safer than king David was at home, where, while idling his hours away on the house-top, he was led into sins and sorrows untold.

“Many a man exalted, honoured, petted, caressed, adored, and envied too by those who walked in lowliness around him, has been ensnared, dishonoured and degraded, until in his secret heart he would gladly have changed places with the peasant at his toil, with the beggar on the dunghill, with the poorest, meanest, lowliest child of God, so that he might have the comfort of a quiet conscience.

“Man of God, endure hardness! The bowers of pleasure are not for you. Hard, busy, earnest, honest work is your best safeguard against sin and the sorrow it brings. Delilah’s lap may be a quiet place to lay a weary head, but poor blind Samson, shorn of his strength, mocked by his foes, clanking his fetters of brass, and turning the mill-stone in the Philistine dungeon, could tell you a tale which would spoil the pleasure of such gentle dalliance.

“Endure hardness. Get acquainted with economy, hardship, poverty, and toil. Lay out your strength in good honest labour for Christ. Spurn the baits, the luxuries, the phantoms, and the shams that are set be-

fore you for your ruin. The prophets were poor, the apostles were poor, the saints have been poor, and the Son of God was poorest of them all. Be content to share their lot.

“Endure hardness, and be strong in the grace of Jesus Christ. Count crosses, trials, and distresses, as a joy and a rejoicing to your soul. And remember that poverty, bereavement, hunger, thirst, cold, and nakedness, are all easier to bear than the secret guilt or the open shame, which sooner or later comes on all who, debased and enfeebled by luxury and indulgence, yield to sin, and are led away into forbidden paths. Well may we endure hardness, rejoice in trials, and suffer all sorrow, pain, and even death itself, rather than be led astray from God, and thus bring reproach upon Christ's cause, and guilt and sorrow on our own souls.”

NOTES AND REPLIES.

PSALM cxxxviii. 2.—What is the meaning of “*Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy Name*”?

The “NAME” is in Scripture the personal character of God as revealed to us, and the “word” is here the promise (אמרה in Hebrew); and the passage means that God has made His promises great (or magnified them) towards His people, not so much “above” as upon—that is, *on the ground of*—His Name, which is the basis whereon all the promises rest. The Hebrew word that is here rendered “above” is rendered “for” twice in the same verse. “I will praise thy Name for (on the ground of) thy loving-kindness, and for thy truth.” God's Name is praised as having such an eternal foundation as His mercy and His truth; and His promise rests upon His Name.

Heb. xii. 1.—What is “*the sin that doth so easily beset*”?

For the right understanding of this verse it is im-

portant to notice that there is but one direct command, "Let us run," and that this is preceded by the clause, "Laying aside every encumbrance, and the easily-besetting sin," which shows us what is needful in order to run. The whole passage takes its shape from the Greek and Roman games, with which the Hebrews had become familiar. They had a race (*αγωνα*, a conflict) set before them, which they were called to run. But *two* things were necessary in order to remove impediments: (1) the putting away the encumbrance of superfluous weight arising in the runner from stoutness or obesity (as the word *ογκος* here used signifies), which would induce slowness of motion and laziness of character; and (2) hindrances arising from surroundings, such as garments, &c. In the *first*, sin is looked at as the inward growth of fleshliness, whereby we are rendered "*dull*" (*νωθροι*) and heavy in hearing God's voice and understanding His truth (chap. v. 11), and "*slothful*" (*νωθροι*, the same word) and lazy in our walk and obedience. (Chap. vi. 12.) In the *second*, sin is regarded as an outward entanglement, drawing in the direction of apostasy from the truth. Against this "patient continuance" is God's remedy, which is maintained by "looking up unto Jesus," as in verse 2. The "easily besetting sin" of the Hebrews appears to be a going back to Judaizing teaching, which would bring them again under law, and be a virtual denial of Christ's redemption from its bondage and its curse.

Rev. x.—What is "*the little book*" mentioned at the close of this chapter?

The "*little book*" (*βιβλαριδιον*) has to be distinguished from the "*book*" (*βιβλιον*) with seven seals, spoken of in chap. v. The *latter* is the title-deed of the inheritance of the earth, which no angel and no man could lay claim to, save the man Christ Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, in whom, as the Slain Lamb, all

right and title rested; for it was by Him, as the Mighty Kinsman, that man's inheritance was redeemed. The *former* is a smaller book, its object not so vast, its contents not so important; and, comparing Rev. x. with Ezek. iii., it is evident that it is the roll of prophecy which John had to unfold "concerning ($\epsilon\pi\iota$) many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings" (chap. x. 11), embracing specially the rise and fall of Antichrist, and therefore, like the roll given to the Jewish prophet, having "written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe," such as the seven vials pour forth.

John xi. 9, 10.—To what "*day*" does the Lord here refer?

The Lord looks at His time on earth as a "*day*" appointed by God with its twelve hours of toil and labour. He walked during its continuance in the confidence that nothing could befall Him in the path of obedience till His day was run out and His work done. Death is likened to stumbling in the dark. (Comp. Jer. xiii. 16.)

Ex. iv. 24. Why did the Lord seek to kill Moses?

He had broken God's covenant in not having circumcised his child, and God's honour had to be vindicated in him before he was in a condition to go and carry out the purposes of the covenant in the deliverance of His people from Egypt.

There are three firstborns in this scene. First, God's firstborn, Israel (*v.* 22); secondly, Egypt's firstborn (*v.* 23); and thirdly, Moses' firstborn. (*v.* 25.) Egypt's firstborn is threatened with death if God's firstborn is not allowed to go; and now Moses' firstborn is brought in as illustrating a principle that Moses and Israel at large had to remember, that covenant obligations may not be broken with impunity; for the God who threatens Egypt is the same God who demands obedience to His covenant under penalty of death.

GOD'S EDENS.

GENESIS ii. 8; xlix. 20; PSALM xxxvi. 8; PROVERBS xxix. 17.

THE word "*Eden*" means "delight" or "pleasure," and in the Hebrew it is used in all the above passages. From them we learn the different Edens in which God Himself either has had pleasure, or now has pleasure, or yet will have.

God once had *pleasure* in the garden in which He put our first parents, for He planted it eastward in "Eden"—the place of "delight;" and Genesis ii. 8-14 shows us what it must have been. God Himself could rest in it! He beheld it, and it was "very good." (Gen. i. 31.)

But sin defiled, and therefore ruined it. *That* "Eden," *that* delight of the eyes and heart of God, has passed away, never to be recalled; the very spot where it was cannot be found. God no longer takes "delight" in this creation; it yields Him no "Eden." Dear child of God, remember this, and deeply ponder it, to help you against making earthly things in any degree *your* "pleasure" or "delight."

But Genesis xlix. 20 points us to "Edens" yet to come. Dying Jacob is declaring things that shall be true of his sons "in *the last days*," and says, "Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal *dainties*;" *i.e.* "royal delights" or "kingly Edens;" for the word in the Hebrew is the same.

Are we not thus reminded that, as He did at the first, so "the God of Jacob," the "God of all grace," will, ere long, yet bless Israel, and make to Himself out of that nation "pleasures" and "delights," even in a world in which His former "delight" in His creation-work is all blighted and gone?

But in Psalm xxxvi. 8 this happy word comes again, as if to tell us that even now, before the day of Asher's

and Israel's *future* "kingly Edens," the tried psalmist tastes the Eden-like pleasures of God's love to him. True, "the transgression of the wicked" is before his view, and fills his heart with pain; but from verse 5 onward the glorious grace of his God so *fills* his view that he cries out, "How excellent is Thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures;" *i.e.* "Thy *Edens*."

As if David would say, Our father Jacob's dying prophecy is not fulfilled yet; Asher does not yet yield "royal Edens;" but my faith, and the faith of all "servants of the Lord" (see title, Ps. xxxvi.), *does* drink of the river of God's Edens even now! And mark, it is "*Edens*." Creation, at its first and best, had but a *single* Eden; but when "grace triumphant reigns" it shall make *many* "Edens" for both God and man in the restored and blest Israel nation; and even now, before that day comes, the souls of patient saints and "servants of the Lord" do drink of the river of God's many "Edens," in spite of all the scene around them of sin and sorrow.

But Proverbs xxix. 17 shows, perhaps, a deeper lesson still. "Correct thy son," says Solomon, "and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give *delight* ("delights," "Edens;" see Hebrew) to thy soul."

And if this be God's law for human family life, is it not also His own way of getting to Himself "Edens" of pleasure and delight from *us* as HIS children?

What says Paul in Hebrews xii. 9-11? "We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might *be partakers of His holiness*. Now no chastening for the

present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth *the peaceable fruit of righteousness* unto them which are *exercised* thereby."

Yes, beloved fellow-saints, let us welcome God our Father's corrections, that we may give HIM "rest;" yea, that we may give HIM gardens of delight, and Edens to HIS soul.

Job gave God these "delights" when he *fully* bowed to the correction laid on him, and said (Job xlii. 2), "I know Thou canst do everything, and that no thought of Thine can be hindered. . . . Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

David's heart yielded to God these "Edens" of delight when he said (Ps. li. 12), "Restore to me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free Spirit."

So too Hezekiah, when, submitting to God's correction, he said, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." (Isaiah xxxviii. 16.)

And richly did Paul yield the same when he bowed to the correction and discipline of the "thorn in the flesh," and said, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (See 2 Cor. xii. 9.)

How blessed then is this! There is not a child of God anywhere who is under his God and Father's correcting hand, and is duly "exercised thereby," who does not yield to God's heart, even now, "Edens" of delight such as all creation cannot yield, and could not even at its former best estate; and such as Jacob's nation cannot give Him until the day when "it also shall turn to the Lord," and "ALL Israel shall be saved."

Cheer up, then, tried child of God, and ask for the north wind and the south alike to blow upon your garden, that the spices of it may flow out, in order that your Beloved may come into His garden, and may

eat His pleasant fruits (see Sol. Song iv. 16); and no sooner do you truly say it than the next verse (v. 1) shows you what an "Eden" of delights He has found in your love to Him; for He says, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved [ones]." H. D.

THE NAZARITE:

HIS ABSTINENCE FROM THE PRODUCE OF THE VINE.

NUMBERS VI.

AMONG the various injunctions given by the all-wise God to His people Israel, one of singular importance, viewed in its typical aspect, is the ordinance about the Nazarite.

Whilst Israel had to obey the precise instructions in their literal aspect, the Christian has to consider how far he has to govern himself by what is signified in those instructions.

In order to arrive at a correct understanding of what is so intended, it seems always requisite first to place before the mind the particulars of each enactment; then to examine their moral bearing upon the persons subject to those laws, with the results under the then times and circumstances; after which we may gain light upon what our God would have *us* learn thereby.

By following another course, that most usually adopted, of hazarding a conjecture as to the import before having grasped the details, or observed their influence upon the parties concerned, not only are we in danger of mistaking our path, but often fail also in obtaining the very guidance our God intends to communicate.

It will be noticed that the ordinance regarding the

Nazarite applied to any one, man or woman, whose desire was to be especially devoted to God. It was a voluntary act. Whereas all Israel were the servants of God, under the obligation to love, serve, and obey Him with the whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, there was yet in this way a door opened to them for a more distinct and express surrender, a special separation to Him; the God of all grace thus meeting the awakened conscience and the fond desire to be more thoroughly His.

We may not search into motives. Perhaps piety, zeal—perhaps compunction, contrition, or remorse—may have operated. But whatever may have induced the vow, it is most carefully to be remarked that the person so separating himself was not at liberty to follow the dictates of his own mind, or the directions of other men, as to the course he should adopt. This was marked out for him by his God.

In our day men prescribe for themselves, or for others, fastings, penances, pilgrimages, self-mortifications of all kinds; but these are wholly apart from God's arrangements—acts of self-will, not of surrender of that will.

Neither does it appear that the separation of the Nazarite was intended to be permanent throughout life; for otherwise the ceremonies at the completion of the vow could not have been performed—and these constituted a most important part of the enactment.

Although much valuable instruction has been already drawn from the subject, I am not aware that the specific character of the institution has yet been opened out to us.

I proceed then to notice the first of the three points specially enjoined, *abstinence from all the produce of the vine-tree.*

In thinking of the Nazarite, it is not unusual to regard the prohibition of wine as the chief if not the only restriction put upon him. This was far from

being the case. He was equally forbidden the use of vinegar, grapes, grape-juice, and raisins. Nothing made of the vine-tree, from the kernel to the husk, was to pass his lips. In our own cold climate, where the vine does not produce anything eatable, to be debarred from grapes would not be generally felt as a hardship; but in Judæa, where every man cultivated the vine, and where its produce formed a customary portion of their food, it would be far otherwise. Raisins too were prohibited. Such a restriction would be felt by ourselves, considering how largely they enter into our culinary preparations; how much more in Israel! (See 1 Sam. xxv. 18; xxx. 12.) The disuse of vinegar also would be a privation, from its constant demand in every household, and where, probably, no other means existed of procuring it except from the vine.

All these points have to be weighed in considering this subject; moreover, the special way in which they would affect the Nazarite.

Not only would he be deprived of a material portion of his ordinary diet, but in the preparation of his food he could not trust to his wife or to any one. He must himself scrutinise with care all that he consumed. If there should be in what he ate *one* grape, a single raisin, or one drop of vinegar, his vow would be broken, the days already completed must be cancelled, and he would have to re-commence the period afresh. And this, although it might even be the last day of his term.

Fearing such a consequence, what would be his course of life? He could not join with the family in their meals. He must eat apart. He could not venture to participate in any social or festive repast from the fear of endangering his vow. His vineyard might be yielding the richest clusters, himself toiling under the hot sun while they ripened; yet, however thirsty he might be, he must not taste one.

Cut off thus to a great extent from his family associations, he could not be regarded by them otherwise than as a *marked man*, having peculiar habits, excessively scrupulous as to diet, and so far not one of themselves.

Meantime, though his attention would thus be centered upon one point, and that a mere ceremonial observance, there would thereby be formed within him habits and qualities of no small importance. The need of watchfulness would be very apparent, inducing minute attention. Self-denial, self-control, a standing apart from ordinary influences, both domestic and social, a measure of independence of thought and feeling as regards the ways of his fellow-men—moral characteristics not easily acquired. Men, it is true, may acquire these qualities by self-imposed observances; but the whole force in this case consisted in that it was no dictate of man, but of God. Herein the Nazarite learns and practises obedience to God.

Though it might perhaps seem to him an unmeaning observance, depriving him of his natural food, of enjoying the bounty which his God had graciously bestowed, and even injurious to health and comfort, yet he submits. He may possibly never learn the motives of the injunction. His path is to OBEY. And he does obey; for HE IS SEPARATE UNTO GOD!

And is not the Christian likewise separated to God? Not for a limited space of time, but for ever.

From the moment when he sought salvation at the foot of the cross he virtually surrendered himself to Him who died, is risen, and is now at the right hand of God. THE RISEN JESUS IS HIS MASTER. He is separated unto Him. By His commands he must henceforth be governed. His own family must know of this separation. He must not hesitate to own it. Not, however, by refraining from meats and drinks. His new Master has loftier objects in view. Those were adapted to the state of infancy. The Christian is

delivered from the infantine position. He is a man; a new man in Christ Jesus. He has now to enquire what commands his new Master has left for his guidance, and to obey THEM.

Should the members of his household discern in him, or in her (for both sexes might become Nazarites), any departure from those commands, they cannot fail to notice that the separation to God has in this instance been forgotten. His God has likewise remarked it. If the husband, wife, children, or servants perceive their Christian inmate angry, selfish, proud, can it be concealed from them that he is indulging in forbidden things, and thereby has become, in the sight of God, defiled? (Mark vii. 20-23.) If the domestic circle see him vain, frivolous, earthly-minded, is it not plain that he is forgetful of his separation, and is defiling himself? If they perceive him actuated by no higher motives than their own, by none from above, must not the same conclusion be drawn?

We have one and all to confess and lament the defilement we daily incur. Deplorable is the dishonour we each bring upon our risen Lord. Were it not that we are redeemed by His blood, what hope could there be? Blessed be our God for this declaration of His counsel, "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. vi. 11.)

R. N.

STRANGERSHIP.—Our strangership is not caused by circumstances around us, but by the one great circumstance of resurrection; it is just because Christ is not here. The force of spiritual attraction, like the law of gravitation in the natural world, *must* draw us up where He is. Our life is there, our natural members down here. What wonder that we feel intensely out of place!

W.

NOTES ON 2 CORINTHIANS VI. 6-10.

“*In* pureness.*” The divine preservative of treasure in earthen vessels. The end for which God tests the fine gold of the sanctuary, just because it is precious. “Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer,” prepared by His own hand, according to His own wondrous skill. “The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart.” The only soil in which heavenly love can take root downward and bear fruit upward. “The wisdom that cometh from above is first pure, then peaceable.” Too often wisdom with us is peaceable at the cost of purity; then it ceases to be divine.

“*In knowledge.*” The first principle of all growth in grace is the knowledge of Him; not truth concerning Him, but HIMSELF personally loved and delighted in, because personally known. There is nothing perhaps in which we fail more than the apprehension of His love to us individually; and this only is the power to kindle a response in our souls.

It is precious given to us in type in Exodus xxviii., where Aaron, in his garments for glory and for beauty, as Israel’s High Priest, foreshadowed Him who for ever ministers for us at the right hand of God. Where it is a question of power, the names of the twelve tribes are placed together, six on either shoulder; but in the breastplate of judgment on his heart, every one has its own special place, graven as with the engravings of a signet, each upon a stone of distinct preciousness, set in its own border of gold.

Surely we only want to know Him in all that God has

* The word *in* is used here instead of *by*, to show that but one word is employed in the original throughout verses 4-7, and that the apostle is thus explaining his expression—“*In all things approving ourselves.*” (v. 4.)

made Him for and to us, to have our hearts wholly drawn out after Himself. And this, too, is the secret source of our growing in His likeness. We, beholding, are changed; not by our own effort, or according to our own measurement, but from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

“*In longsuffering.*” In this divine blending of patience and endurance the life of our Lord on earth was very rich. Consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, whose zeal consumed Him, because of the forgotten law of His God, and yet who could sit down and eat with publicans and sinners, because He came to seek and to save that which was lost.

• We can little understand what it was to the Holy One, who never knew sin, whose every thought was in fellowship with the mind of Him from whom He came, to dwell with those who hated Him, because they hated His Father also. We read in the psalm the utterance wrung from His heart: “My soul is among lions.” But who among men could read it in the meek and lowly One as He moved about in the quiet ministry of heavenly love, doing His Father’s business as the rejected Son of man?

“*In kindness.*” The “kindness of God,” of which Ephesians ii. testifies. Of this David’s kindness to Mephibosheth was a very incomplete figure, because there was a Jonathan in the house of Saul. It is in the exercise of this grace our sonship is to be especially manifested, because it can only flow from the heart of God. Love finds its richest self-indulgence in the blessing of its object; but divine kindness lavishes its benefits on the unthankful and the evil. Alas for our far-off following of our beloved Lord in this matter! Hence, perhaps, it is just here that Paul, as though faith trembled on the wondrous height, takes a fresh grasp of the power which *only* can sustain—“*In the Holy Ghost.*”

“*In love unfeigned.*” Christ has given us one pattern and one limit for our love one toward another: “As I have loved you.” There are two special points of contrast between this love of Christ and all other; first, as to its *objects*; and, secondly, as to its *strength*.

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;” but He gave His life for us while we were yet *enemies*, taking, as our Surety, the place of wrath, where the loving-kindness which is better than life could not reach Him, being made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Then as to its strength and devotedness, Jonathan’s love for David gives us a shadow of it, rather by contrast than by type; for we find that while Jonathan loved David as his own soul, the love of Christ as now revealed to us far exceeds. But faith fails to fathom such depths as these. We can but hold our empty vessels at the fountain’s brim to receive the overflowings of the grace that has not only made us the objects of such a love, but has also shed it abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us, and still does, and ever will!

“*In the word of truth.*” The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds within (2 Cor. x. 3-6), as well as for wrestling in the heavenly places. (Eph. vi. 12.) May we learn more how high is the honour of being allowed of God to be put in trust with the word of His grace, and take from His hand the banner to be displayed because of the truth, lifting it as those who remember by whom the banner was given, and to whom the truth belongs.

“*In the power of God.*” Here again, in connection with truth and righteousness, we get the power of the Mighty One brought in. It holds all things in its eternal grasp. We hear the echo of its thunders from Calvary, its quickening whispers in our inmost souls. We wait for its glories in resurrection; but who can

define its almightiness? "The thunder of His power who can understand?"

"*Through the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left.*" By and by righteousness shall reign and flourish; now it suffers. We have to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. Hence truth is given to us as a sword, and righteousness as an armour, because we hold them in a world at enmity against God. We have need of the whole armour on the right hand and on the left, because of the wiles of Satan, and the deceitfulness of our own hearts.

"*Through honour and dishonour.*" Blessed be God, honour *first*. If He fills the one scale for us out of His riches in glory, the other can be but light. If faith discerns the one within the veil, she will not be careful about the other. When Abraham was to be tried by the king of Sodom, God sent out Melchisedec first to bless him, as priest of the most high God. What was Sodom's wealth to a heart filled with divine riches? God's purpose is not so much to empty as to fill. If we knew more of divine fillings, we should know more of self emptyings. "So hard to give up the world," says one. Why? Because we live so little upon the grapes of Eschol, and the corn and wine of the land.

"*Through evil report and good report.*" The one is needed just as much as the other, because all things are for our sakes. Death as well as life, things present as well as things to come, all are directed by God for the eternal blessing of His saints. Yea, the very power of the enemy is used to subserve the unchangeable purposes of His wisdom and love.

"*As deceivers, and yet true.*" Christ Himself was called a deceiver when He testified of resurrection. Because He spoke the truth, they believed Him not. The disciple is not above his Master; neither is the spirit of the world changed. May God help us to live in the light of the judgment-seat and of the coming

day, giving man's judgment its true place, content with the fellowship of His sufferings and of His glory.

"As unknown, and yet well known." Known by God as children and heirs; known by Christ as brethren and friends. He calleth His own by name: "I know My sheep, and am known of mine." Known by Satan, by conflicts and victories through the blood of the cross. Pilgrims and strangers on the earth, because *as He is so are we in this world, waiting, as He waits,* for the manifestation of the sons of God. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory."

"As dying, and, behold, we live." "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." The one seems to be in measure as the other, the vigour of life in the spirit leaving the life of nature in the place of death; the outward man perishing, the inward man renewed day by day.

"As chastened, and not killed." The end of all chastening is more abundant life and growth. "Every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The husbandman prunes the living branch; the dead one he casts out. Every touch of His chastening hand has its own design of blessing, and will work out by and by the purposes of His grace.

"As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." Sorrowful, because absent from the Lord; joyful, because our joy is in fellowship with His, having its spring and source where sorrow cannot come. "That My joy in you might remain, and that your joy might be full." Joyful because of the great love wherewith He loves us, and because we wait and look for Him, and because already faith discerns the dawning of the coming day.

"As poor, yet making many rich." According to God's manifold promise to Abraham: "I will bless thee, . . . and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee." God wants us to be vessels,

not only to receive, but to overflow, according to John vii. 38; to be used as channels of His abundant grace, that by the very contact with that which is His our own souls may be enriched, whether in ministry to the saints or to the world.

"As having nothing, and yet possessing all things."
 Having nothing here, because Christ Himself is our portion; possessing all things as joint-heirs with Him who is Heir of God. E. A. W.

THOUGHTS ON CHURCH FELLOWSHIP.

THE SUBSTANCE OF A REPLY TO ENQUIRIES
ON THIS SUBJECT.

THE counsel given to Christians not to think about perplexing "questions" of church-fellowship is often more loving than wise; yet we can truly sympathize with the feeling that prompts it. But we need to get beyond *man*. If our faith stands in man's wisdom, we shall be continually drifting about; but if it is planted in the word of God, we have firm footing, sure anchorage.

Instead of taking time to wait upon the Lord, many unwittingly yield their conscience to others in this matter, though they see the folly of doing so in the matter of salvation. The pure light of God's word is not received direct into the heart, but passes through some coloured human lens, through which every truth afterwards assumes a peculiar hue.

We *must* agree with whatever of truth is urged upon us by other Christians. Not to concede *enough* is to weaken our stand; we ought not only to *concede*, but to insist upon all that is the truth of God. Yet while owning *all that is true*, we need especially to be on our guard against admitting anything false.

In proportion as any truth is important and vital, so do we need to take care that it is not misapplied. "Divine certainties" from the word of God may be so

misused as to lead into the mazes of error and superstition, as we see in Romanism. A man may believe that he is unerringly taught by the Spirit in his application of a certain passage, but we must not consent to be led by *his* impressions, but must *prove* all things from the Word itself.

It is far easier to contend against a false church-position than to prove the rightness of the only scriptural one. Failure is so stamped upon our efforts to carry out God's principles that there is no difficulty in finding much to complain of in practice. Still we can plainly *state* the position which God has commanded us to take; and notwithstanding all failure, we must not cease to contend for it with all earnestness.

In the command to Israel, in Exodus xii. xiii., not to eat unleavened bread for *seven* days, whenever they kept the Passover, we surely see the mind of the Spirit regarding ourselves. The word to us in 1 Corinthians v. is very plain—there must be *no respite* to the exclusion of leaven: evil should be truly abhorred by us, both in doctrine and in practice.

But though this may be adopted as a principle, it may be carried out in very different ways. *Grace and truth* will seek to gather every *unleavened* particle of the meal, and to purge out the leaven. On the other hand, where love is sacrificed, our zeal for *truth* may lead us to cast out good and bad together. Be it ours to *take forth* the precious from the vile, and whilst abhorring the *vile*, to gather every particle of the *precious*.

It is an easy thing, and often, alas! lightly done, to charge Christians with being *leavened*. But let us remember that "a little leaven *leaveneth the whole lump*." If an assembly of Christians be charged with having received the leaven of evil doctrine, and if after many years there be no spreading of it, and on the contrary no such doctrine be found, what conclusion must an unprejudiced person form? Had the

leaven been really received, the whole lump would have been leavened. But does not the absence of the leaven prove that it has been purged, and the sound meal alone received?

Though unwarrantable use may be made of Old Testament types and shadows, we need not fear to consider and apply them in the light of the preceptive teaching of the Scripture.

In 2 Chronicles xxix. 24 we read that the sin-offering was offered for "*all Israel*;" and so, in Acts ii. 44, it is said that "*all that believed* were together." Here are first principles.

In 2 Chronicles xxx. 1 "*all Israel*" are invited to the Passover. Many came who were "*not cleansed*," but had prepared their *hearts* to seek God (*vv.* 18, 19); and Hezekiah prayed for them, and they were healed; for how should God's Israel be prevented from partaking of the Passover by a ceremonial defilement? Any principle that is opposed to this lovely scene, when looked at in the light of the presence of God, should surely be *abhorred* by us.

Suppose Hezekiah, when sending out his invitation, had insisted on a pledge that they would not return again to folly, before he permitted them to eat the Passover, what would have been the result? Sufficient that in answer to his earnest entreaty *they came*. Grace knows its own charms, and trusts to these to keep the hearts it has wooed and won. Grace will pray for the failure of an evil day, and grace will meet the need.

The unity of the body is a blessed truth; but if *that* truth, or any other, be made the rallying-point instead of Him who is ever the object of attraction to every divinely-drawn heart, the unity resulting will be only one of *mind*, and not of *heart*. However attractive it may be by "*gifts*" and high professions of "*divine ground*" of association, it will still be a mere counterfeit of the gathering to Christ Himself in the bond of love and truth. It may be that a sifting-

time will yet come and develop the life and love of Christ in His people.

We read not in Scripture of any promise of a renewed manifestation of Pentecostal unity; but that does not affect our responsibility to be in the right place, where all Israel must be one with us the moment they discern the Head in heaven as the true rallying-point.

In Ezra and Nehemiah the truth is perfectly in harmony with the New Testament line of teaching. That was indeed a day of return to God's unchanging commands. In Nehemiah vii. 64 the lineage of some who claim to be priests is doubtful. But whether in Israel's days or ours, "the Lord knoweth them that are His." Those regarding whom there is uncertainty are to be set aside till God manifests them. In chap. ix. 2 we see that God's order is separation from the strangers unto the Lord, but cleaving unto their brethren, all who were *without doubt* the seed of Israel. The "mixed multitude" must be separated. (xiii. 3.) Ezra x. 3 shows that not only the wives, but the children born of them, were put away.

In all this we see the separation of God's people to God's word; but the result sought is the union of "all Israel." Oh for spiritual vision to act after this manner to the true seed of Israel, to all the children of God!

In 2 Timothy ii. 22 we are told to "follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord *out of a pure heart.*" This is an important word that has caused much earnest searching. How are we to know the heart? By what standard are we to test it? Titus i. 13-16 helps us: "To the *pure* all things are pure;" and the contrast is, "defiled," "unbelieving," "professing to know God, but in *works* denying Him," "giving heed to commandments of *men.*" From *such* we are to turn away.

Let us see to it in the presence of God, in the light and love that withers the flesh and all its pretensions,

that we do not accept any principles that would make us turn away from God's children, instead of *such* as are here described.

The "pure," then, are those who own God's commands, *not* man's; those who are not personally defiled or unbelieving; whose mind and conscience are exercised in the Word, and who *know* God.

We read in Acts xv. 9 of hearts "purified" by faith. These Gentiles had heard the word of the gospel and believed; and God, "who knoweth the hearts," gave them the Holy Spirit as the witness. What is the result of the sending of the Spirit into the heart? The cry of "Abba" (see Gal. iv. 6); communion with the Father about the Son. Christ is found to be dwelling in that heart—it is a pure heart.

Again, in James iv. 8, there is a purifying of the heart from "double-mindedness;" and from chap. i. 8 we learn that the double-minded man is "unstable in *all* his ways." He is like those described in Ephesians iv. 14, "tossed about with every wind of doctrine," &c.

In Matthew v. 8 the Lord Himself describes the blessedness of the pure in heart: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Are there not many who see God, who daily look upon Him by faith, and discern Him in their path, who are ruthlessly excluded from a fellowship that professes to own all that call on God out of a pure heart? Shall not such have to answer to God for playing the Diotrepes with so many who would not lightly speak evil of Jesus; nay, who hold His blessed person in all pre-eminence?

Other Scriptures might be mentioned; but these are enough to show that the restriction enjoined upon us as to those that "call on the Lord out of a pure heart" refers to those whose words and ways declare that they are of the true Israel.

If there is such parleying with the world that we have reason to doubt them, let them be set aside till made manifest by the Lord. If they are in associa-

tions that we cannot countenance, then the word is, "Return not thou *unto them*;" but if they would return unto thee, raise no barrier.

Nothing can be more easily comprehended by the flesh than a human principle of exclusion or excision. The most carnal are often the most forward in contending for it, and for this reason. It is not the body of Christ which is apprehended—this can only be apprehended in fellowship with God—but a sect which professes to be the body. This requires no spiritual discernment; it is as evident as the Church of Rome.

Only accept such a dogma, and all is clear; and the release from bitter exercise of soul thus gained at a leap is welcomed as "divine certainty." For this "certainty" some may be ready to lay down their lives; but nevertheless they are deceived, and rejoicing in a shadow instead of in the substance.

We may so highly esteem some as to think they could not err; but let us not allow *man*, whatever be his experience, to sway us a hair's breadth, to incline us a feather's weight, from the simple word of God.

One word more. The third epistle of John shows that we must never accept a church position which would hinder us from receiving such as have gone forth for "His name's sake," taking nothing of the unconverted.

The Lord stablish, strengthen, settle us in His own truth, and enable us to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace for His own name's sake. Amen.

ENLARGEMENT.—I must have

A WHOLE Christ for my salvation;

The WHOLE Bible for my soul's instruction and guidance;

The WHOLE Church of God for my fellowship;

The WHOLE of the Spirit's ministry in it for my participation; and

The WHOLE world for my parish—

That I may be a true Catholic, and never be nor become a Sectarian.

DISCIPULUS.

THE TREASURE, THE VESSEL, AND THE POWER.

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."—2 Cor. iv. 7.

IN the third and fourth chapters of 2 Corinthians, Paul unfolds to us the character of the ministry entrusted to the Church of God—entrusted pre-eminently to those whom God has given as ministers and servants in that Church, but by no means exclusively so; for "God hath set the members *every one of them* in the body, as it hath pleased Him; . . . that the members should have the same care [or anxiety] one for another." (1 Cor. xii. 18, 25.)

Let us consider, first, the TREASURE. This is summed up as in "Christ." God "hath shined in our hearts, to give the light* of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The treasure is "the glory of God," looked at directly in the light of Christ's life and suffering here.

The glory of God in the face of Jesus of Nazareth is that which no unenlightened sinner can see. To all such He is "the root out of a dry ground;" but faith can say with John, "we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John i. 14.) This knowledge flesh and blood cannot give, and cannot receive (see Matt. xvi. 16, 17); it comes as a revelation from God to the soul, and only faith can accept it. The knowledge of God's glory in a crucified Christ is so mighty a reality that it imparts a sufficiency, or rather competency, which is of God (chap. iii. 5), and "makes competent" those who possess it as "ministers of the new covenant;" they are not

* Or rather, "hath shined into our hearts *unto* (as its object) *the forth-shining* of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." φωτισμος, the forth-shining or illumination, is only used in 2 Cor. iv. 4, 6, and must not be confounded with the word elsewhere translated "light."

able in themselves, but competent in God. And what is their competency but the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, according to the promise, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost"?

How earnestly the Son of God longed for that Pentecostal day that should end the weakness and incompetency of His true and faithful disciples, and should finish that time of infancy and dependence on an outward and visible presence! How He longed for the advent of the Spirit, who should make coward hearts brave, feeble knees strong, ignorant minds full of wisdom and understanding, and weak and fainting followers able to turn the world upside down, and make its mighty ones tremble; making *them* ready to brave all danger, and endure all suffering, and exult in a martyr's crown! Then the letter would give place to the spirit, death to life, and man in his weakness to God in His Omnipotence.

It was this Pentecostal baptism that made "the ministration of the Spirit" and "of righteousness" so glorious; and those who knew its power might well use great boldness and confidence, for they had nothing to hide, as Moses had, who sought to hide a fading glory. They had nothing to fear, for they had not received "the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (2 Tim. i. 7.)

We should well consider the connection maintained through these chapters between the Lord and the Spirit. We are apt to separate them, and apt to confound them. On this subject 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18, is particularly important: "Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a glass [or reflecting as from a mirror] the glory of the Lord, are being transfigured* into the same image from (*απο*) glory to glory, even as from (*απο*) the Lord the Spirit."

What deep unfoldings of that glorious treasure are

* The same word as used of Christ in His transfiguration.

here vouchsafed, and what results follow when Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit dwells in the heart, unhindered and ungrieved!

In the first clause we have the Lord identified with the Spirit, and in the last we find the Spirit identified with the Lord. This identification we see in Rev. v. 6: "And I beheld, and, lo, . . . a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." This sevenfold Spirit of the living God is poured forth, and finds a home in every heart that turns to God by faith in Christ, and, being the Spirit of His Son, we cry, "Abba, Father!"

The result of the indwelling of the Spirit is *liberty*; for thereby does the Son make us free from the power of sin, of Satan, and of the world, even as by the blood of the cross He makes us free from wrath, condemnation, and guilt. The question before us here, however, is not of our acceptance as sinners, but of our service and ministry, and of our power thereunto; and this is what "liberty" implies. It is not to be considered merely as a liberation from captivity, but as the believer's high prerogative, the consummation of which is spoken of in Rom. viii. 21 as "the liberty of the glory of the children of God." Into this by faith those enter who look into the perfect law of liberty, and continue looking therein.

The liberty to which we are called is, to have the will and law of God so written on the heart by the new covenant of promise that it becomes the instinct of the new life. "His commandments are not grievous" then, and His will becomes as meat and drink to those who love Him.

The liberty of this Abba-crying spirit leads into the full sunshine of a Father's love, which in Christ Jesus beams on the "unveiled face" of the child of God, from which it is again reflected towards the world. We become transformed into His moral likeness and glory,

as hereafter we shall be changed into its visible manifestation. But this is a progressive transformation, from glory as seen in Him unto glory as manifested in us. This glory, which is Christ in us the hope of the glory, is the treasure given in the power of the Holy Ghost. On this ground, says Paul, "we faint not" through cowardice and fear, but commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God; for "the illumination (*φωτισμος*) of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (v. 4), hath shined into our hearts.

The illumination here points to the *glorification* of the Lord—that which Satan seeks to keep from the heart of the unsaved; as in verse 6, it points to His *humiliation*, which, as long as we are here, God seeks to keep ever foremost in *our* thoughts. Therefore Paul says, "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus [the suffering Son of man] might be made manifest in our body." (v. 10.)

Secondly, the VESSEL. It is called an "earthen vessel," and the contrast here brought out between the power and glory of the Treasure and the weakness and humiliation of the Vessel, is perhaps one of the most striking it is possible to conceive, and finds its counterpart in that glorious chapter of the resurrection, where we are told that what is sown in corruption is to be raised in incorruption; what is sown in dishonour, is to be raised in glory; and what is sown in weakness, is to be raised in power. (1 Cor. xv. 42, 43.)

The principle contained here is one which runs through the whole of God's dealings with man, from the fall in the garden till our redemption in the glory; and the reason of it lies in God's determination that no flesh shall glory in His presence. Man *sought* to be as God, that he might attain his own glory at the expense of God's glory; and now God *makes* man to be as God, that he may seek God's glory at the expense of his own.

How wonderfully God thus meets the craving of man's heart for the highest good and glory, even to be as God, yet in such a way as that God should get all the glory, and man his utmost realization of bliss! "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! . . . For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be the glory for ever." (Rom. xi. 33, 36.)

It was thus the apostle Paul wound up his contemplation of the dispensational dealings of God, and we may well use his words when we look at the earthen vessel filled with the heavenly treasure—a treasure richer far than Satan ever conceived of when he threw out the bait to our first parents: "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." God herein confounds Satan and his counsel, gives man in righteousness and in grace what Satan offered in unrighteousness and rebellion, and takes to Himself all the honour and all the glory.

The "earthen vessel" describes God's child and servant as taken out of the ground and standing before God in faith's ever-realizing consciousness of being only "dust and ashes." "Dust and ashes" can stand and plead with the Judge of all the earth (Gen. xviii. 27), where pride must tremble, and greatness quake. We are never too mean, or too poor, or too weak, for God to use, or for God to be influenced by; but we may easily be too noble, too rich, or too strong. If we would know much of the power and glory of the treasure, we must know much of the weakness and nothingness of the vessel. If we would know the baptism of power, we must know the baptism of blood; and the fellowship of death must precede the fellowship of life.

We see the same connection between Luke xii. 49—
"I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I? would that it were already kindled!" and verse 50—

“But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” The baptism of blood must precede the baptism of fire the Saviour came to send, and the earthen vessel has to be broken day by day (“I die daily”) if the illumination is to shine forth.

How strikingly this is illustrated in Gideon’s lamps and pitchers! The lamps may be in the hand, but as long as the pitcher remains unbroken there can be no shout for battle; no voice can cry, “The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.” The victory over Midian by the three hundred reveals God’s great secret of successful service, and the reason of His ways. God feared lest Israel should vaunt themselves, and our God fears lest our hearts should be lifted up; and therefore after He took Paul up into the third heaven, He gave him a thorn in the flesh—the messenger of Satan to buffet him—lest he should be exalted above measure.

The earthen vessel will be the earthen vessel to the end, till its humiliation is replaced by the likeness of the glory of Christ. There will be no fear of pride then; for there shall be no taint of sin to corrupt and defile; but till then let us thank God for the treasure, and let us also thank Him for the wisdom that has put it into a poor earthen vessel made of dust and ashes.

Thirdly, the POWER. This is called “the excellency of the power,” or the “exceeding greatness of the power;” that is, a power that is beyond all estimate or calculation, the very hyperbole (*ὑπερβολή*) of power. The apostle uses the same word in Ephesians i. 19 in his prayer for the Ephesians, where he measures “the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe” by the measure of “the working of the might of His strength, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand.” This, then, is the measure, the only limit of God’s power in us.

Now, this power is “God’s;” it is not only of God

as its source, but it belongs to Him as its object. It is a fire that burns, a sword that divides asunder, a hammer that breaks in pieces, an arm that carries omnipotence; and it is as much within the grasp of faith and obedience as was the rod of God in the hand of Moses, or as was the fire of God at the call of Elijah, to do, not what man wills, but what God wills; to accomplish not man's purposes, but God's. Great things were wrought by the hand of the blessed Lord; but there were greater things for faith to accomplish, when the advent of the Spirit should carry on the work that had the seal of its accomplishment in the blood shed on Calvary.

We have already referred to Gideon's history. There was not only the lamp and the pitcher, but the *sword* also; and it was this that was to put to flight the armies of the enemies. It is by the power of the Spirit's sword that the hosts of hell have to be defeated. It is the word of God, used by faith, that speaks to the rock, and the waters come out; that bids the sun and moon to stand still, and they go not down; that meets all temptations with, "It is written," and that silences all doubts and fears by, "God hath said."

But not only does the word of God, as the power of God, meet us in all our own need, it meets us likewise in all our service and ministry, and becomes to faith now what it was to Paul, a gospel "in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." (1 Thess. i. 5.)

Thus while Paul himself was "in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling," as he painfully felt in going to Corinth, his preaching was at the very same time "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power;" and "the weapons of his warfare were not carnal, but mighty *through God* to the pulling down of strongholds."

Thus with the earthen pitcher broken, and the light in one hand, and the sword in the other, the child of

God is led to certain victory; for the sword is the sword of Jehovah, and of His trusting servant. It is not Gideon without God, neither is it God without Gideon; and hence faith's humble but confident shout, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon;" for it was but one sword, whether in God's hand, or in Gideon's, or in both.

May the Lord teach us all the deep and humbling lessons of this verse—"We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." And as we remember the last clause, we shall sing with restored Israel, "*Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake.*" H. G.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

IN what sense is the word "*double*" used in Scripture?

The use of the word is, we think, explained by Job xlii. 10, where we read, "God added to Job all that he had before to the double." (See margin.) For the sense of the same word used in ordinary things compare Gen. xliii. 12; Exod. xvi. 5, "Twice as much." The following passages in the prophets are those to which the question refers: Isaiah lxi. 7; Zech. ix. 12; where the "double" represents the double blessing that sin repented of and forsaken brings, in the infinite grace of God, when under His discipline the flesh is judged; and thus do we learn part of the deep meaning of that precious word of promise, "All things work together for good to them that love God." In Isaiah xl. 2 the word occurs again in English; but though the word is different in Hebrew, the signification is the same. But while sin repented of ends in double blessing, sin unrepented of, and God's grace unheeded, brings in "double destruction," as we read in Jer. xvi. 18; xvii. 18. Connect this thought with the "second death" in Rev. xx.

What was "*the tabernacle*" that Moses pitched "without the camp, afar off"? (Exod. xxxiii. 7.)

We regard this tabernacle as the official tent in which Moses sat as judge among his people. It must not be confounded with God's tabernacle, which was never removed from Israel, either in its tent or temple form, till God cast His people out of His sight, and sent them to Babylon. The altar and its priestly ministrations met all the demands of the holiness of God; and neither sin nor rebellion drove God away, till God had to drive Israel into captivity. Much that is false in theory and unscriptural in practice has arisen out of a misapplication of this passage, on which account we are glad to call attention to it.

What does Jeremiah xv. 19 teach?

We must remember that Israel was in apostasy; reformation no longer possible. The command had been given, "Pray not for this people." The decree had gone forth, "Though Moses and Samuel (the great intercessors for their people) stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people." Henceforth the path could only be one of separation. The vile could no longer be separated from the precious; corruption had come in as a law; and hence the word, "If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth;" that is, one whom I can use as my messenger and servant. Then follows the solemn command, "Let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them. And I will make thee to this people a fenced brazen wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee." As we compare Christendom with Israel of old, may we all read and learn what this means, and act on it in the spirit of the weeping Jeremiah, who felt his "pain perpetual," his "wound incurable, which refused to be healed," because of Israel's sin, sorrow, and judgment.

THE NAZARITE:

II. HIS UNSHORN LOCKS.

WE have now to consider the *second part* of the injunctions of the God of Israel respecting the Nazarite. They are to this effect: "All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow."

We have already seen how the first part operated in respect to his every-day life in the household; not in the least interfering with his usual avocations, or impeding him in providing maintenance for himself and family. Now we have to regard him in relation to his fellow-men.

He shall cherish the long hair of his head, without cutting it at all. The consequence of thus letting the hair grow may be witnessed among one class of the devotees of India, who observe a similar practice. With them it reaches at times six or seven feet in length, is cumbersome, and is wound round the head in the manner of a turban, forming a conspicuous object, noticeable wherever the man is seen.

The Nazarite, whether wearing it thus or trailing behind him, was a *marked man* wherever he went. Along the high road, in the market, in all assemblies, he could not be concealed. It would at once be discerned by his head of hair that he was *separate unto God*. His God had commanded him thus to wear his hair, and he was obeying the command.

But the apostle Paul gives us a remarkable notice on this point in 1 Cor. xi. 14: "Doth not nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?" This, then, is the *natural* aspect. The Nazarite, in the opinion of his fellows, was degrading himself. He had become like a woman. That which

was given to her as a covering, an envelope for her head, he had adopted, and was thus abandoning his superiority as a man. It was a shame to him. It is to be noticed how in accordance with this innate natural feeling men everywhere, civilized or uncivilized, with few exceptions, carefully avoid long hair, either clipping it or shaving their heads. But why is it a shame to the man? It is the female mark of *subjection*. If it be a shame to a woman to have her hair cut short, or be shaven, it is because she thereby refuses the relative position in which God has placed her, assuming equality with the man.

Such is the view according to nature. But the Nazarite has counted upon this; he is willing to be so *disesteemed*. And why? Because he acknowledges *subjection to God*, unto whom he is separated. He does not shrink from this acknowledgment; he avows it. The hair upon his head indicates it wherever he goes. He cannot conceal himself, nor does he desire to do so. His fellow-men at once see who and what he is.

Does not this, by analogy, give us Christians a clear insight into what our position really is, and what our conduct ought to be?

We are indeed separated unto God from an evil world, brought out of darkness into His marvellous light. We own *subjection* unto God's dear Son Jesus. It is upon Him our safety and our hopes depend. We are not our own, but His. Shall we not boldly avow it?

Our Master has said, "If any one will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." The cross is the symbol of death—death to ourselves—far indeed beyond what we call self-denial. To be benevolent, liberal, is no sign of death; this, though involving self-denial, is not taking up the cross. Neither is it the standing up and preaching the gospel to an admiring audience; nor does it consist in assiduity in doing good. All such

acts, however admirable, attract the applause of our fellow-men; they do not crucify the flesh.

But let a man come out from the world, whether profane or religious; let him govern himself, not by his own fancies, prepossessions, or prejudices, nor by those of his fellow-men, but by the commands of the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will quickly perceive what the position of a Nazarite really is. One who surrenders his own judgment, opinions, and objects, at the command of God, not expecting in this life any recompense; one who becomes a little child sitting at his Father's feet, must needs be a fool. He does not conduct himself as his neighbours, and must therefore be beside himself, an *object of dislike or contempt*. He may abate their hostility by qualities such as they can appreciate; but he is a *marked man*, too decided; he is outside the pale of society. Neither chief priest nor Herod, the religious nor the ungodly world, could endure his Master, replete as He was with every quality that could attract, overflowing with love, wisdom, and *acts of divine power and beneficence*. The servant is not above his Master; it is enough for him that he be as his Master.

If the Nazarite should be indiscreet enough to clip his hair, then he is no longer to be distinguished from his fellow-men, and is welcomed back among them. He is no longer a standing protest against their ways. All his good qualities then become appreciable, and his religiousness—the poor remains of it—is valuable, inasmuch as it sanctions their ways and justifies them in not letting the hair grow.

The Nazarite was not debarred from any of the ordinary occupations of life, with one exception, to be noticed hereafter. He was at perfect liberty to buy, sell, and get gain; he might plough, sow, tend his flocks and herds, pursue the learned professions, science or art, examine the works of God, marry, and bring up children. One thing only he must be especially

careful about: he must not shorten his hair to accomplish any of these objects more readily or completely.

There is about the servant of God, or one who is considered a servant of God, something which excites awe in those around, proportioned to the real or supposed nearness to God. This awe is not allied to affection, but rather to alarm. On this account it is thought well, if possible, to propitiate the individual lest he should occasion some mischief. The eastern devotee is therefore treated with respect, and his wants are supplied. In Israel the Nazarite would be further cared for by those who were godly. From both these considerations it seems probable that in the Lamentations of Jeremiah he is spoken of in glowing language as surpassing in comeliness. In time of famine, however, there was deficiency in his supplies, and he shared in the general misery.

Nor is the Christian exempted from the sufferings of the human race, whether personal, domestic, or national. His part throughout all is to show to whom he belongs by close adherence to his Master's orders, whether he receives the praise or incurs the censure of his fellowmen. He bears in mind the words of the apostle: "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be disapproved." (1 Cor. ix. 27.) Should his neighbours discover in him any dishonesty, self-importance, irritability, or other vices, it is at once seen that more or less of hypocrisy mingles with his declared separation to God, by whom these things cannot but be disapproved. Yet though he may fall, he shall be held up. Satan shall not have him for his prey. He is the property of another, who will not let him perish. He shall yet sing the song of victory, of redemption through the blood of the Lamb; and though increasingly conscious of his own vileness, he will join in the eternal ascription of praise: "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously." R. N.

DIVINE CONSECRATION.

Read Exodus xxix.

IN this chapter the Holy Ghost lays down for us some very simple and deeply-important truths connected with consecration. It is a subject on which the minds and, we trust, the hearts of God's children are being exercised in these closing days; and it needs that we go back to the first principles of the word of God, if we are willing to take His counsel in the matter, and to see things in His light.

First we find that consecration, in the purpose of God, so far from being a thing attained to by Aaron and his sons, was done *for* them by divine instruction, and according to divine order; not as a result of their ministry in the priesthood, but as a necessary preparation for it. We find also that the bullock for the sin-offering, the unleavened bread, the anointing oil (Lev. viii. 2), and the rams of consecration, were all brought together by Moses, acting here for God; and that the atonement, the anointing, and the consecrating followed one after the other in distinct yet inseparable order; the one as it were being involved in the other, and with no pause between. This is very instructive as to God's mind, because we sometimes forget that the consecrating is quite as much His work as the atoning and anointing.

The "unleavened bread" shows us in figure the absence of sin as to its power, just as the shed blood of the bullock points to the end of its condemnation. The "cakes unleavened, tempered with oil," show the working of grace in the inner man, and here we get the larger measure from which the outward working flows. In the "wafers anointed with oil" we have the fruit of grace in the life. Both cakes and wafers are made of the self-same corn that had been subjected to the process of grinding, to produce the evenness and

purity of the flour. Both are put into one basket, because we never get the fruit without the germ, neither the germ without the fruit.

In verse 4 we have the washing, the putting off the defilement of the flesh. Verse 5, the girding, the putting on of priestly garments. In verse 7, the anointing oil is poured on the head of Aaron, upon the holy crown, prefiguring our great High Priest. Afterward we find it sprinkled upon Aaron and his sons *with the blood*; not before nor after it. Yet the consecration of Aaron and of his sons is spoken of as one act. (v. 9.)

The flesh of the bullock for the sin-offering is wholly consumed without the camp, and his blood poured out at the bottom of the altar; showing us sin put out of God's sight for ever. Yet a memorial of it is put upon the horns of the altar, because we shall never cease to remember, in the glory of the ages to come, that we owe every height and depth of blessing to Him whose soul was made an offering for our sin.

We get a double type in the rams. First, the aspect of Christ's consecration, to meet the perfection of which we have the inwards and legs of the first ram washed with water, and the whole ram burned—all accepted by God as an offering of sweet savour. The blood of the second ram is put upon the ear, and hand, and foot of Aaron and his sons. The order is instructive—first the *ear*: we sometimes reverse it. But why is the blood taken off the altar to be sprinkled on their garments with the anointing oil? Is it not to show us the double claim of Christ upon us, first by the purchase of the blood and then by the yielded lives, presented as a reasonable sacrifice to Him who has first taken away our hearts? (Cant. iv. 9, marginal reading.) *And here comes in our deep and solemn responsibility to God as consecrated ones*, because the anointing oil of our God is upon us, as a token that we are chosen, and purchased, and sanctified, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Therefore

every energy of spirit, soul, and body belongs to Christ, and must be not only withheld, but taken back from off the altar, if it be used for self or Satan. Surely while it is unspeakably blessed, it is also a solemn thing thus to belong to God. The power given to sustain us in this divine consecration is that which raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. Our responsibility is to take hold of it.

But we come to the second aspect of consecration—the filling of the hands, upon which the blood and oil have already been sprinkled. It is very precious to see the way in which everything is heaped upon them. The flesh and the fat of the ram, the unleavened bread, tempered cake, and anointed wafer, all are piled upon the hands of Aaron and his sons, to be waved for a wave-offering before the Lord. This brings us to one of the most important points connected with consecration. Everything in their hands is put upon them by Moses, acting in God's stead. They have but to hold their hands to receive what is placed there, which is then taken again "of their hands" (v. 25); here their fellowship in the offering is acknowledged, and accepted by fire on the altar. God could accept from them that with which He had filled their hands—nothing more. All this is fully and blessedly accepted.

Aaron and his sons feed upon the breast and the shoulder, identifying them with that which is consumed for a sweet savour.

The holy garments of Aaron were to be his sons' after him. "Of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." Here again the outward walk is touched upon, the white raiment of Rev. iii. 18, in which we are to walk before men. "*Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*"

The seven days show us perfection and continuance.

All this is too clear and simple to need comment, showing us by unmistakable illustration that our con-

secration is of God, the sprinkled blood and oil, and the filled hands, being as solely His act for us as the slaying of the bullock and the ram. W.

THE MINISTRY OF WEAKNESS.

“And many women were there beholding afar off, who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto Him: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee’s children.”—MATT. xxvii. 55, 56.

BEHOLD these feeble women, so powerless in their grief! Their hearts were sorely riven; their fondest hopes were crushed; and there they stood, and wept. No power had they to minister to Him they loved. Fain would their hands have loosed Him from that agonizing cross, and bathed His wounds, and soothed that throbbing, aching brow. But there they stood, helpless in mute despair.

No soldier’s jeer, no rude obscene remark, could drive them from the spot; no scorching sun could make them seek a shelter from its mid-day rays; no thirst, no hunger make them turn aside. Ah, no! With torn and bleeding hearts they watched that Holy One, and wrung their hands in hopeless misery.

And yet this was the very ministry His soul desired—the *only* ministry He could accept in that most solemn hour. “Put up thy sword within thy sheath,” was His rebuke to Peter’s haste. No fleshly arm must interfere to snatch Him from the soldiers’ grasp; no power of man be used to save Him from the dreadful lash. The hour was come, and willingly He gave Himself a sacrifice for sin.

How deep, how real the ministry of these poor feeble ones in those long weary hours of watching; and yet they knew it not. What would they not have borne or sacrificed to save Him from that cruel death? But no; in utter helplessness they stood, and they could only weep. And yet how precious were those tears! Those sighs, those groans, all reached the ear

of Christ. They were the fruit of love, deep heart-felt love to Him, and as sweet incense spread their fragrance round, and reached the very throne of God.

And is there no such ministry now? Are there not times of deep-felt utter helplessness, in which our hearts bewail some evil which we see, and groan because we have no power to help? In fellowship with Christ, we mourn with Him over some wayward, wilful saint; some foolish, heedless child; some source of strife and discord. We know not what to do; we feel we cannot act; we fear lest we might make the matter worse; and we can only groan before the Lord. And yet how mighty is such ministry! Its very weakness is its strength!

Each cry, each groan, each tear, is registered on high; yea, more, they are the groans of God's own Spirit in us, leading us out in fellowship with Christ, to grieve *with* Him, and then *with* Him to intercede for health and cure for those who make us weep. God grant that we may know far more of this ministry!

Nor is such ministry in vain. The ear of God is open to our cry. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might," no power to help, "He increaseth strength;" "He lifteth up all that are bowed down;" He heareth "the sighing of the needy." And "who is he that saith and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?"

But, alas! how prone are we to hide ourselves from troubles which we cannot help; to turn away, and think it is no business of ours; or, worse still, to say, "It is all their own fault; and they must take the consequences."

How different to the heart and ways of Christ! He has bought us with His blood, and made us one with Himself, that we might have fellowship with Him—fellowship not only in His glory, but also in His sufferings. He desires to drive out our natural coldness and selfishness by filling us with *His* bowels of mercies,

His deep compassions. He would have us mourn with Him over His people's sins, and wait on Him in earnest prayer until He stretch forth His hand to heal, or may be give to us the healing balm to cure their festering wounds.

There is no case too hard for Him; no deeply-seated evil which He cannot cure; no root of bitterness He cannot overcome. And did we truly watch with Him, what wonders might be wrought! But, ah! we need the patient gentleness of Christ to handle things like these. With rough and clumsy haste we oftentimes tear the outside evil off, and leave the root untouched, to do more mischief still; or else we stir the flesh, and fan the evil which we wish to cure.

And why? Because we do not watch with Him. Peter in fleshly haste could lift his sword and smite, but had no power to watch and pray. Like him, our wrath is stirred, our indignation roused, and we can smite. We need to drink into our blessed Saviour's thoughts about His loved and precious ones, and thus get patient grace and wisdom how to act. He would teach us to seek that which is lost, to bring again that which is driven away, to bind up that which is broken, to strengthen that which is sick, and to feed that which standeth still; and thus we should be oftener used as instruments to heal and bless.

Now mark these women's recompense. With bleeding, broken hearts, they stood and watched their Lord; but *early* on the resurrection-morn their eyes beheld Him once again. Yes, He appeared to them the *first!* To Mary in the garden first, and then, as Matthew tells us, "as *they*"—these very women—"went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him."

Oh, what a recompense! How full, how great their joy! Surely all through that happy day their feet were swift to run and spread the tidings round. Others

might doubt; but they had really seen and handled Him; and with ecstatic joy they could declare that He was risen indeed. In His hour of bitterest woe they would not leave Him; and therefore they were *first* to share His joy.

May we learn from them not to shrink from the fellowship of His sufferings. Let us seek so to learn of Him that we may drink into His affections, His compassions, His tenderness towards His weak and oftentimes wayward children; to grieve with Him over their sins, their mistakes, and shortcomings. True, this will cause us increased sorrow while we pass through this weary world; but the sorrow will be in fellowship with Christ, and we shall thus be prepared to feast with Him upon the first ripe fruit, to rejoice with Him over every victory over sin, and be apt and ready to strengthen every feeble, faltering effort to rectify what is wrong.

“Thou, our Saviour, from the throne
List’nest to Thy people’s moan;
Thou, the living Head, dost share
Every pang Thy members bear.
Full of tenderness Thou art,
Thou wilt heal the broken heart;
Full of power, Thine arm shall quell
All the rage and might of hell.”

L. T. S.

RESURRECTION.

RESURRECTION! One’s soul seems to spring at the sound of the word. It is as if a ray of coming glory pierced the present gloom, guiding eye and heart upward and onward.

Surely we are not sufficiently thankful that we live *after* the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and under the illumination of the Holy Ghost, the gift of the Father and the Son, indwelling every child of God.

Christ “has abolished death, and brought life and

immortality to light (rendered them lustrous) through the gospel." Our association is with *life*.

The *fact* and the *doctrine* of the resurrection are generally admitted, yet I believe many may be found, especially among recent converts, who have not considered the different connections in which it is presented in the New Testament. This conviction leads me to take up the subject.

In this paper I shall confine myself to its connection with the person of the Lord Jesus and His work on the cross. 1. As *His* hope. 2. As the testimony of the Father and the Holy Ghost to His being the Son of God. 3. As the testimony to the perfection of His work.

1. *Resurrection was the hope of Jesus.*

Here the great mystery of godliness meets us. He who is the immediate *object* of our faith and hope was the *subject* of both faith and hope. (Heb. ii. 13; Ps. xxii. 9.) It is in Him alone we see both in perfect exercise and power. He is the perfect pattern of confidence and expectation.

He came forth from the Father into this world through incarnation, with the glorious results of the cross before Him. On the cross He saw His seed, the prolongation of His days through resurrection, and the pleasure of the Lord prospering in His hand; in a word, all that will be effected through blood and by power. The possession of the Bride, of the throne of David and the kingdom, His Lordship and glory in the earth, with that which all these will subserve, viz., the glory of the Father—all these were objects of *hope* to Him, and He trusted God, even the Father, to give Him them.

Satan directly tempted Christ to take the kingdom from him without the cross, and again indirectly through Peter, but failed in both attempts; for He knew the conditions of possession, and trusted God to give it in *His* time.

This *we* say of Him : let us now hear what He says Himself in this connection.

He often indirectly referred to this hope, both by figure and parable ; but let us first and chiefly notice those direct references recorded in the gospels.

In the gospel of Matthew (chap. xvi. 21), having elicited from the disciples their thought of Him, which Peter expressed, He charged them with secrecy as to His Messiahship, and predicted His rejection and death, adding that He must be "*raised again* the third day."

In chap. xx. 18, 19 He foretold with perfect definiteness the events before Him and their order, saying, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem: and the Son of man shall be *betrayed* unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall *condemn* Him to death, and shall *deliver* Him to the *Gentiles* to *mock*, and to *scourge*, and to *crucify* Him: and the third day He shall *rise again*."

In chap. xxvi. 32, having foretold their unfaithfulness in leaving Him, He said, "After I am *risen*, I will go before you into Galilee."

Again in Mark xvi. 28 He predicts their dispersion and flight, and repeats His promise—"After I am *risen*, I will go before you into Galilee;" *i.e.* I will *gather* you again in resurrection.

Once more (John ii. 19), when He had purged the temple, and was questioned as to the sign given by that act, He replied, "Destroy this temple (this body), and in three days I will *raise it up*."

These and similar scriptures, read in the light of Ps. xvi. 9 and xxii. 9, prove that He endured the cross for the joy set before Him ; that He went down into death with the path of life present to His faith and hope ; and they moreover show the place and power they had in the soul of that blessed One amid His sorrow unto death. Of such an experience we may know *something*, but in Him it was perfect. Having said this much on the first point, I pass to notice the **second**.

2. *The resurrection was the witness by the Father and the Spirit that Jesus was the Son of God.*

Such a testimony was both natural and necessary. Love prompted it, enmity called for it, and divine justice was bound to give it.

It was natural; for the Father who sent His beloved Son into the world delighted in Him and in His mission.

The Holy Ghost, by whom He was incarnate and anointed, delighted in Him, and it was natural that He should witness to Him.

The Father had acknowledged Him at His birth by angelic ministry, at His baptism by a voice from out the opened heavens—"This is my beloved Son;" and the Spirit descending and abiding on Him acknowledged Him also. Again, on the mount of transfiguration the Father called the beholders from all else to Him as His beloved Son.

Jesus asserted it of Himself, but man disputed it, and rejected Him. The Jews charged Him once and again with blasphemy, because He said He was the Son of God, and tauntingly said when He was on the cross, "Let Him deliver Him: for He said, I am the Son of God."

When He bowed His head in death, man triumphed as over a deceiver; and Satan, although knowing who He was, doubly boasted.

When laid in the tomb, they sealed the stone and watched, determined to give the lie to His assertions, and exult among themselves.

It was therefore necessary that God, even the Father, should vindicate His Son, and settle this question; should confirm His words, prove His title, establish His claims, own Him whom man had rejected, and in conjunction with the Spirit of holiness determine Him to be His Son, as it is *written*, "Who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and *determined* to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, *by the resurrection* from the dead."

(Rom. i. 3, 4.) "Though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God." (2 Cor. xiii. 4.) See also Ps. ii. 7 coupled with Acts xiii. 33.

The Son of God trusted the Father to maintain His honour, to vindicate Him; and He did it by raising Him. He asked for that in hope of which His heart was glad and His flesh rested in the grave; viz., that the Father would glorify Him with His own self, with the glory He had with Him before the world was (John xvii. 4), and it was granted Him by resurrection, ascension, and enthronement with the Father.

3. *The resurrection was a testimony to the perfection of Christ's work.*

By the same act of resurrection God bore witness to the perfection of His atoning sacrifice, and declared His full satisfaction with it.

He testified to His work. This is its connection with our peace.

Such a testimony, although it added nothing to the value of the sacrifice which *made* peace, was necessary for the establishment of our souls through faith. The testimony to His Sonship confirms our confidence in Him as Son of God, and the witness borne to His work settles our soul's confidence in it, and so ministers to our peace.

His resurrection, truly, was the natural consequence of His personal excellence as the holy, harmless, undefiled One, the Prince of life, who could not be holden of the chains of death; but it was so in connection with His atoning work, apart from which He could not have died.

The warrant for our implicit trust and full rest in the sacrifice He made on the cross is, that God has by raising Him once for all declared His full acceptance of and satisfaction, yea, delight, in that sacrifice. To this the Holy Ghost witnesses in our consciences and hearts, and we have peace. "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."

Atonement was made *on the cross*, and was perfect; justification was effected by *His blood*, and was complete; reconciliation was made by *His death*, and was full; therefore He was raised. Believing this, we have peace.

This establishes our souls. We have the full value of a work perfected without us, yet for us—a work so perfect, that the faith which appropriates it adds nothing to its value. It was before we trusted it precisely that which we now find it to be.

In harmony with all this was the Spirit's testimony through the apostles and first preachers. They preached "Jesus and the resurrection," "Jesus" implying humiliation and the death of the cross, "the resurrection" God's testimony to Him and to His work.

For the same reason surely we read, "If thou shalt confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe with thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." In this way God can and does save sinners who believe, and that with an everlasting salvation; and in doing so He is a just God, as well as a Saviour.

In this way also He can and does, as a Father, forgive His erring but confessing children, and that in very faithfulness and justice. (1 John i. 9.)

Resurrection declares both the Substitute and the believing sinner *free*, freed by the very justice of God from all condemnation. He has satisfied God, and we have peace.

The value of an object for our faith out of ourselves, and not affected by anything in us, is indeed great, and we prove it. We are so prone to turn the eye inward to find the ground of our confidence, instead of upward to God's object, Christ; too often viewing Him through the medium of feeling, instead of beholding Him by faith, as revealed in the Word.

This error the Holy Ghost would ever correct, and teaches us that faith is the parent of all right feeling; that by believing we have peace.

H. H.

THOUGHTS ON THE PRIESTHOOD OF JESUS IN CONNECTION WITH THE BELIEVER'S WALK.

(From a letter, written some years ago by the late F. J. C., of Dublin.)

It is a blessed thing to know the fulness that there is in Jesus for us. He is the fulness of God—God manifest in the flesh. But we must never forget that we are under the government of God, *because we are His children*. His discipline is that of a *Father* with his family, and in general He deals with us according to our ways. God will never forsake us; but He may leave us to eat the fruit of our own ways—the most dreadful of all chastisements.

This government of God, and His manifestation of affection toward us, are made to depend on our acts and doings, as in John xiv. 23, xv. 10. God's love to us, we well know, cannot depend on our love to Him. As sinners He loved us *in grace*; and now as saints He loves us, and still ever deals with us in grace; yet as His children He takes notice of our conduct, of our walk, of the state of our hearts.

If we had an unruly child, we should not give it up, but patiently correct it in love, in hope of reclaiming it. I might see another's child go wrong, and leave it; but if it be *my own* child, I must go after it, and bring it back. Such is the patience of God's grace with us. At the same time, God can never give up His holiness, or suffer unholiness in His child. It would be to our infinite loss if He did.

It was needful that Christ should *die* for us as sinners; and now, so to speak, God is a debtor to Christ on account of *His* work, for the glory of His character. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, *that I might take it again*." "I have glorified thee on the earth." "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified *in Him*."

But the same thing is true of Christ's advocacy for us. If there is failure, God sees it; but through the intercession of Christ it is turned into an occasion of instruction, correction, and profit. Some say that we have to use the priesthood of Christ, that is, demand Him to exercise it; but it is not so. Christ exercises it *for us*. Why do I turn to God when I have failed? It is because Christ has used His priesthood, and fresh grace has been supplied, which has drawn me back to Him.

Therefore it is said, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." It is not said, "If any man *repent*." It is just as much *pure grace* now as when at the first He looked upon us in our sins. In the case of Peter, the Lord foretold what would take place—"Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for *thee*." He *needed* the sifting, and Christ did not pray that he might escape it; but before Peter sinned, or ran into danger, the Lord had prayed (precious Saviour!); His grace was in exercise, and at the moment when it was needed He "looked upon Peter," and grace wrought its work. Peter's weeping was the fruit of Christ's intercession and grace, not the cause or motive of it.

Our very failings are the occasion of more grace, grace abounding, grace reigning; but it is through righteousness. The righteousness is not called in question; it is not touched. God has a *holy foundation* for all His grace. If we do not see this, we get all astray; but knowing this, all the exercises of my heart about my failures, my evil thoughts, form so many links between my soul and God.

It does not follow that we *must* fail; God is faithful not to suffer us to be tempted above that we are able. The roots and principles of sin ought to be judged in communion before God. But if we do fail, through our wretched self-confidence, then comes in the priesthood. Moses smote the rock *once*, and this could not be re-

peated; but Aaron's rod budded and bare fruit, a type of the divine prevalence in priesthood. Thus does grace take away the murmurings of our hearts.

After two years in the wilderness Israel would not go up and take the land as they were bidden, and thus they made the way long, because they had not faith to go up and face the Anakims. If we would break with the world, and take up the cross daily, we should have the enjoyment of the full power of communion with God. If not, we must learn what the flesh is by its daily mortification in the desert. If we think to escape dangers by leaving the path of faith we shall surely get into sin and sorrow.

Israel found the Anakims in Canaan, when they got into the land at last, the same giants still there that frightened them and hindered their taking possession at the first. And when we hear of more joy in Christians' death-beds than all their life before, is it not because they never till then surrendered up *all* for Christ, and learned Christ to be everything, and everything else but dung and dross?

Yet during the forty years of wandering, Israel's raiment waxed not old, neither did their feet swell. The manna never ceased, and the patient grace of God never failed. So too when our foolish hearts will not trust Him, the Lord shows us the *patience* of His grace. He goes with us wherever we go, even in our failures, as He turned back with Israel in the wilderness. As our hearts experience the exercises of the desert, we learn the vanity of earthly things, and after all find it better to give all up and trust God, that *He* may be everything to us—the blessed lesson that we might have learned at first.

The constant exercise of Christ's priesthood is carried on in heaven in connection with our heavenly standing, and is brought to bear on our actual daily state down here. We are to be heavenly men on earth. As "joined to the Lord," we are to be like Him. What

was He? Not only the obedient man, the perfect man under the law, but there was in Him the perfect manifestation of the divine nature *in man*—all the effect that Godhead could produce in a *man*—patience, endurance, love, purity, holiness, and every other grace.

It is not that we can be as He was, because sin is in us, and there was none in Him; but we are called to walk as He walked, the power of His grace enabling us to walk in the spirit. But our *will* must be broken. So long as our walk does not flow from the word of God, the flesh is working, and there must be weakness in the ways of God.

“I am so young a Christian, and so weak,” one may say. But the question is not about age in grace, but of singleness of eye and of dependence on Him; for His strength is made perfect in our weakness. He cannot be the strength of *our will*. One born only yesterday may follow Christ as much as an old Christian, and Christ is as much for him. There may not be so much wisdom, but in the babe in Christ there is often more singleness of eye and more undividedness of heart: the great thing is that the *will* should not work.

The will of God was the spring of all Christ's conduct. He came to do His will. “Not my will, but thine, be done.” His Father's will was His one motive for acting. Where no word from Him was, Christ remained *still*. He might be hungry, but would not use His power by His own will. “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every* word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” He might love Martha and Mary; but He waits God's time and God's will to go to them. “The Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father.”

We are not only to act as Christ acted, but in principle and motive to walk in the *way* He walked. Right conduct does not suffice; there must be *obedient* conduct. Christ's obedience was put to the test in every-

thing and under all circumstances. "He was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and He knows how to sympathize with us. All the glory of the world was offered to Christ then; and it is offered to us in detail every day. And, alas! we see people hurrying after it with all their hearts.

To the obedient Servant of God a manifested Satan is a conquered one. "Get thee behind me." As the obedient Man, He keeps to the word of God—"It is written." *This is power.* Satan has power against pretension, against knowledge, but *no power against obedience*, if we but act by the Word, with no will of our own. Satan is baffled, the strong man is bound by simple obedience.

Christ passed through everything that could be put before Him to hinder Him in the path of godliness, everything that could test the divine life. He knew, in that sense, what it was to be tempted like as we are, sin apart; and all the exercises He went through prepared Him to be *our* High Priest.

One may say, He cannot feel what I feel of inward conflict. I answer, We need sympathy in the exercises of the *divine life* in our souls, not sympathy in our lusts; these we must practically kill, as we have a right to count ourselves *dead*. But everything that could try a *living man* He passed through, perfect in all (precious Jesus!); He learnt the application of His Father's love to His heart in it all, in the peace which He experienced; and now He says, "My peace I leave with you." "If the world has hated me, it will hate you." "But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." He who lived in it is become *our* life; and He strengthens our hearts in the pain and trial of living in it, all of which He *has felt*.

Do we want to be comforted when sin is at work? No; what we want then is that which is sharper than

any two-edged sword—the word of God, which judges the very thoughts and intents of the heart. For our infirmities we have our High Priest, who has suffered, being tempted, and can sympathize with us. He will strengthen the new man against the lusts of the old. As to sin's dominion, blessed be God, we are free; for we are “under grace:” if it still has dominion, we are “under law.” Strength against sin we do surely need, and that Christ will give, and sympathy in sorrow and trial.

The Lord knew what trouble was; but His first word was, “Father.” “Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour?” No, He would not say that. “Father, glorify thy name.” The deepest depths are for Him the occasion of the deepest submission, and all is light. Instead of looking around for comfort when trouble or sorrow comes upon us, let us turn immediately to God; and then, though the heart be cast down, yet in submission to the will of God, the sting of the sorrow will be removed. The instant there is perfect submission there is perfect peace.

Christ has taken His place in heaven as the High Priest who becomes us, “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made *higher than the heavens*,” He is exercising His ministry there for His own loved ones, His own flesh, His jewels, His glory. Oh how He loves us, how He watches over us, guiding us with His eye, feeling all our sorrows, knowing all our trials, saying unto us, “Fear not!” May He be increasingly the sole object of our hearts. Soon His promise, “I come quickly,” will be fulfilled, and we shall see our Beloved face to face, and be the reflection of Himself, “having no spot, nor blemish, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing.” May we be found watching for Him, waiting for Him.

THE FAMILY NAME:

“FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST.”

God has been pleased to reveal Himself in His word by different names, such as “God Almighty,” “Jehovah” (see Exod. vi. 3); and in the New Testament as “Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;” and He claims for His *Name* all the glory and all the majesty and greatness that are in Himself.

When “He loved the people” (Deut. xxxiii. 3), and proclaimed for them a law from Sinai, and judgments, God said of the Angel whom He promised to send before them, “Beware of Him, and obey His voice; . . . for my NAME is in Him” (Exod. xxiii. 21); *i.e.* all my *character* and *attributes* are in Him. And when later on Moses said, “I beseech thee, show me thy *glory*,” God’s answer was, “I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the *Name* of Jehovah before thee.”

God’s name, then, is His glory—the glory of His almightiness—the glory of His self-existence—the glory of His holiness and of His wisdom; and above all, the glory of all His ways of goodness and mercy and grace are in His name. And it is His delight to give to His people this His great name, and to unfold and magnify and hallow it before our eyes, and in our hearts, yet more and more.

This revealing of His name has increased from age to age, and in each age has been just suited to His people’s need. God tells Moses, “I appeared to Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.” (Exod. vi. 3.) Not that it was not mentioned in Genesis—it was—but the special *unfolding* of Himself as JEHOVAH, the self-existent, the unchangeable, and the covenant-keeping One (see Mal. iii. 6), was re-

served for the days of the "furnace of affliction," in which His loved Israel were as "the burning bush," about to be consumed, had not Jehovah their God dwelt in it.

And afterward, when they had been "brought forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt" (Deut. iv. 20), and were guarded night and day by their God, and the water from the rock and the manna supplied them, and "the Lord alone did lead" them, even then priestly blessing for all that journeying camp was to be in the Jehovah *name*. "They shall put my *name* upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them" (Num. vi. 27), was the command of God for Aaron and his sons. Even the very manner of uttering it on them was also prescribed. The name "Jehovah" was to be thrice repeated, but each time with a different connection. "Speak unto Aaron and his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them,

"Jehovah bless thee, and keep thee :

"Jehovah make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee :

"Jehovah lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

The first Jehovah name suggested to them their God as at once the source to them of all blessing, and their preserver in it. The second is in a more *human* form—"make His *face* shine upon thee"—and reminds us of the "Word made flesh;" while the third, which speaks of the *lifting up*, and of giving "*peace*," may remind us of the Holy Ghost as breathed upon the disciples by the risen Jesus when He said, "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." (John xx. 21.)

And yet there is but one JEHOVAH; for the closing word is, "They shall put my *name* upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them." "Let us make man in OUR image" (Gen. i. 26) was God's wonderful

word as Creator ; and now as Redeemer of Israel, and Israel's Holy One, He still shows them His threefold name as their blessing and their portion.

A godly Israelite may not have seen thus much meaning in the form of benediction commanded. Aaron himself may not. But it is our privilege to read Old Testament language in New Testament light ; and we may well connect in our minds this threefold name of Jehovah pronounced on the whole camp of Israel with the resurrection command of Christ, that all who thenceforth believed in Him should be baptized "into the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

Observe, it was immediately upon His own resurrection that He gave this command. It was with the triumphant resurrection-voice and breath with which He now is speaking in heaven that He gave it. It is as truly a *resurrection* utterance to us as the "Peace be unto you" of John xx. 19.

What joy to Christ to give us a command by which to set forth His burial and resurrection directly they were accomplished, since we by faith are linked with Him in it ! but what joy to Him also to have in it the threefold name named on us of "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost !" And well may gospel labourers with sympathizing joy carry out the command to the very letter ; and no wonder that new-born ones all around us delight to have it done. They well may. It is the one only time in a saved one's life on earth that this glorious family name is bidden to be named upon him. It is, as it were, the enrolling by *name* in the church here below the precious one newly gained as a trophy from the power of darkness, and "translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son" (Col. i. 13) ; and it is the naming amongst us of yet another child of the same divine and heavenly birth.

Every natural family has its new-born children *named*, and man's earthly kingdoms have their subjects enrolled.

Surely this is a glorious naming of God's children, and a blessed enrolling of His subjects; and great is the wrong done to any believers in the now risen Lord Jesus, or else great the wrong they do to themselves, if they are not, after they have believed, thus baptized.

Only consider the unspeakable privilege of having *THAT* name named on you, dear believing reader. Had the highest angel such a privilege—if Michael, God's archangel, had—we may be sure he would hasten and bow at God's throne to receive for himself, and to wear upon him, *THAT* name; nor would he forget ever after that it had been named upon him, and was his.

But it is to be named on none but the redeemed of God—sinners saved by the blood of Christ, and thus brought to God by Christ, and now His “sons and daughters.”

We dare not name the “Father” on any except they are, to be best of our belief, children of the Father; we dare not name the “Son” on any but such as are through faith in Him members of His body; nor dare we insult the Holy Ghost by putting His name on any except those whom we believe He has led to know the Father and the Son, and whose body He has made to be His own temple.

But when we believe the triune God of a sinner's salvation has made any one of Adam's guilty race to be His own by faith in the risen Lord Jesus, then it is the plain duty of the labourer in God's Church to put on that one by baptism that glorious, Christ-given family name, according to the command, Matt. xxviii. 19; and according to Mark xvi. 16, it is equally his part as a believer to desire it to be done.

The first two instances of baptism recorded in the Acts of the Apostles correspond to these passages in the Gospels. Peter was one of those to whom the newly-risen Lord gave the command in Matt. xxviii. 19; and he shows he had not forgotten his Master's words when a few weeks afterwards, in Acts ii. 38, he

bade the repentant and believing ones be baptized; and in Acts viii. 36 we see one answering to Mark xvi. 16; for as soon as the eunuch had believed, he of himself *wished* to be baptized.

Oh, may every occasion of our using in baptism this glorious triune family name be a time of richest blessing to all engaged in it, whether it be the one pronouncing it, or those on whom it is being pronounced, or others who stand by to sanction it! For, blessed be God, it is a name which is ours all our days, and for ever, when once we truly possess it.

In 2 Cor. xiii. 14 we are shown this. It is another place in the New Testament where this threefold name again appears. The saints at Corinth had sadly dishonoured that blessed name since their baptism. They had misused the grace of Christ and God's love, and had sorely grieved the blessed Spirit; but "God was faithful, by whom they were called to the fellowship of His Son," as Paul had told them in his first epistle. (1 Cor. i. 9.) As they had been baptized in acknowledgment of their salvation, and in obedience to Christ, the same "God of all grace" was still theirs; and, in spite of all their unworthy ways, Paul closes with the words, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." Yes, "with you ALL;" with the wayward ones to recover them again to the joy they had in that name when first they were baptized into it; and with the patient and faithful ones to uphold and cheer them still in their faithfulness.

And when pilgrimage, and testimony, and service below are ended, and we worship at the throne of God and of the Lamb, the never-ceasing praise, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come," will for ever tell that we ascribe to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost the glory of our salvation, both in the past and the present, and the blissful endless future.

H. D.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

NUMBERS vi. 20. To what does the fulfilment of the *Nazarite's* vow point, when he may drink wine?

The Nazarite is a type of Christ, in whom we are Nazarites to God, and by whose vows we are bound. The fulfilment of the vow will be when the glory will be reached, and then will the obligation to the vow cease; and Christ Jesus will then drink again of the fruit of the vine in the kingdom of God, as we read in Luke xxii. 18, which probably explains this verse.

Luke vi. 30. How is the command, "*Give to every one that asketh thee,*" to be carried out?

All such precepts are to be carried out in the light of God's own dealing. Thus God causes His sun to shine and His rain to fall on evil and good alike. We are called to do the same, making the wellbeing of man our object, and thereby we are manifested as His children. Their claim is their need, and not the consideration of their relation to ourselves. Act as God acts. His dealings while in grace are also "in all wisdom and prudence;" and therefore we are told, if a man will not work we are not to give, as God gives no harvest to him who neither ploughs nor sows. In all these precepts we must seize the spiritual meaning, or a carnal literalism will prove the greatest breach of the precept given.

1 John i. 7. What is "*fellowship one with another*"?

Certainly fellowship of saints among themselves, inasmuch as we nowhere find that God so links Himself with us as that the expression "one with another" could possibly apply to our fellowship with Him. Thus, when the Lord would join us with Him in a common relationship to the Father, He says not "our God, and our Father," but uses the beautifully appropriate and condescending phrase, "my Father, and your Father; my God, and your God." We need to be very solemnly on our guard against fleshly familiarity in speaking of our God, and of our Lord Jesus.

GOD'S SHADOWS.

“ Safe in the arms of Jesus,
 Safe on His gentle breast ;
 There, by His love *o'ershadowed*,
 Sweetly my soul shall rest.”

So runs one of the hymns newly sung amongst us that has edified and cheered many; and as we lately saw that God has “Edens” of delight for us in His word (see page 113), so has He *shadows* for us of protection and blessing with which His love overshadows us; for there is not an object in creation around us, nor a season of the year, nor an event of our lives, and especially not a want, nor a woe, by which He would not instruct us, and draw us nearer to Himself. And the time of year has now come when even in this temperate climate a *shadow* from the heat is welcome, and to some absolutely necessary. Let us profit by this summer heat; and as we seek the shady side of the crowded street, or the cooling shadow of the sea-side rock, or of the leafy trees, let us call to mind the emblem God has made *shadows* to be of His great salvation.

Let us remember then, first, The shadow of the *cloud* over Israel in the desert (Exod. xiii. 20–22; Ps. cv. 38, 39); second, The shadow of the *rock* (Isa. xxxii. 2); third, The shadow of the *wings* (Ps. lxxiii. 7); and fourth, The shadow of the *Bridegroom's love*. (Sol. Song ii. 3.)

The first of these may be called, The shadow of deliverance; the second, The shadow of everflowing supply; the third, The shadow of loving protection; and the fourth, The shadow of rejoicing love. Well may we say, “Oh the blessings of him whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered!” (Ps. xxxii. i. See Hebrew.)

1. The *shadowing cloud* over the camp of Israel presents a wonderful object for our instruction. Without

it, in the burning heat of an Arabian desert, that vast multitude must have perished. Their supposed number of three millions must have covered, when encamped, some twelve square miles of ground! In their tents were the aged, and also the feeble infants. How absolutely necessary to them the shelter of that cloud! as needful, one would think, as the very water they drank. And God raised it over them, and kept it there; for while we are told in Exod. xiii. that it was in the form of a "pillar" that guided them, Psalm cv. 39 tells us that "He spread a cloud for a covering." What an emblem of the sinner's need of a God-provided shelter from the burning wrath of God! What an emblem, too, was that abiding cloud of Him whom God has "exalted with His right hand a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins" (Acts v. 31), under whose shelter none can perish!

The "pillar of the cloud" which, as it were, bore up this welcome shade above them, stood at the tabernacle door—that tabernacle into which the blood of the sacrifice had been carried; and the cloud of God's saving care of them was thus one expression to them, among many, of His acceptance of the blood of the morning and evening lamb. And what joy to us now is Christ's shade over us of His abiding power as a Saviour, since His being thus exalted is the fruit of God's perfect rest in His one offering—His one redemption of us by His blood! for in Him "we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins," and are thus "blessed with all spiritual blessing in the heavenly places" in Him. No lapse of time, no burning sun of the desert, could remove that cloud, or deprive the Israelites of its wonderful protection; for it was given them by God, and He established it; and does not Christ "save to the uttermost them that come to God by Him"?

2. But there is the *shadow of the rock* as well as that

of the cloud. Shelter from the burning heat is in this shadow as well as in the former; but there is also shelter from the *storm* and from the *tempest*. It is an emblem to us of Christ as *King*, as well as Saviour. See Isaiah xxxii. 1, 2: "Behold, a *King* shall reign in righteousness. . . . And a *Man* shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; . . . as the shadow of a great *rock* in a weary land."

A rock will not give way when the wind is carrying all else before it, and the tempest beats. Such the dying thief found Christ to be—a Saviour King; and sheltering at His side, the storm and tempest of hell-deserving doom could not reach him. Nay, more, much more, the "great Rock" was not only his shelter from the "horrible tempest" (see Ps. xi. 6) which God must "rain upon the wicked," but he was speedily hidden in the cleft of that Rock, and was that very day in Paradise along with his Saviour King, as a pledge of being with Him when He comes in His kingdom. Such also Saul of Tarsus found Christ to be. The voice to him from heaven on the Damascus road might justly have been "hailstones and coals of fire"—"an horrible tempest;" but he sheltered beneath the mighty One as a "great rock," and "obtained mercy" (see 1 Tim. i. 13), and ever after delighted to say, "Now unto the *King* eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen." (1 Tim. i. 15.)

But in the shadow of the rock is *supply* as well as deliverance; for deliverance is not enough; there *must* also be supply. Noah, delivered from the flood, needed to have all food in the ark; and Israel, shaded by the cloud, or by the shadow of the rock, still needed constant supply; as Elijah did also when hidden by God from wicked Ahab: and from the rock the supply came. And, oh, what glory to God at each step of that supply! It was as contrary to nature as it was that the sheltering cloud should continue in spite of the burning

heat. Water from a *dry* rock! Wonderful, yet true! "Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord (Hebrew, Adōn, *i.e.* King), at the presence of the God of Jacob; which turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters." (Ps. cxiv. 7, 8.) And we know *how* it was, by God's standing on it in Horeb, and its being smitten. (Exod. xvii. 6.)

And thus is Christ our *supply* as well as our shelter. Nor of water only; the rock gave honey also, and even oil. So Moses reminds Israel: "The Lord alone did lead him And He made him to suck *honey* out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock." (Deut. xxxii. 12, 13.) Wondrous streams truly, from such a source! But God "is able;" and Paul tells us "that rock was Christ." No wonder, then, that God made it such as never any rock was before. Only then could it at all set forth the fulness of supply there is in Christ for us, and then but feebly. Those who pass through "the valley of Baca," with Christ as their rock, not only "make it a well," but also sing, "The Lord God is a sun and shield: He will give grace and glory: *no good thing* will He withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee." (Ps. lxxxiv. 11, 12.)

But God provided also "a clift" in the rock, that Moses being put there by God, and covered with His hand, might behold His glory. (Exod. xxxiii. 22.) Moses longed to behold it, as John in Patmos wept to have the book opened. (Rev. v.) "I beseech thee, show me thy glory," was Moses' prayer; and though it was but in part, only God's "back parts," and not His "face," yet Moses needed to be strengthened in the *clift of the rock*, and covered with God's hand, in order to bear it. But God's rock supplied this need also; and Moses by it anticipated, in some measure, our New Testament days of unveiled things, and, like John in Patmos, heard and learned what others did not. Water, honey, oil, and the strengthening clift for know-

ing more of God, are rich lessons to us of Christ as our Rock of supply, as well as shadow.

3. But there is also the *shadow of the wings*. This tells of tenderest affection. The parent bird uses all the strength and softness of its wings for the protection and fostering and growth of its brood. Thus hidden, the hawk does not even see them; and they are cherished and kept sensible of their parent's affection. How blessed that God should use such an emblem of His heart and ways of love to us! Old Testament and New both use it. "He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His *wings* shalt thou trust," says the Psalmist (probably Moses), in Psalm xci. 4. "Hide me under the shadow of Thy *wings*," says David (Psalm xvii. 8); and again, when "in the wilderness of Judah," "Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy *wings* will I rejoice." (Ps. lxiii. 7.) And when the Lord Jesus would express His yearning, but rejected, love for Jerusalem, He says, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her *wings*, and ye would not!" (Matt. xxiii. 37.)

The shadow of the *wings* seems especially for times and circumstances of sorrow and trial. Moses (as we suppose) gives assurance of it in Psalm xci., when the arrow was flying by day, and the terror by night; David, in Psalm xvii., when the wicked were oppressing him; and in Psalm lxiii., when he fain would have gone to the sanctuary if he could, but his enemies were "seeking his soul to destroy it." And when is parental affection and overshadowing care so sweet as then? Wayworn Moses and persecuted David could appeal to it; and so may all such now. Ruth also, had it stretched over her in the heat and toil of all her long gleaning through "barley harvest and wheat harvest." No wonder she did not leave the field of Boaz for any other, since it was *his* lips had said to her, "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee

of the Lord God of Israel, *under whose wings* thou art come to trust." (Ruth ii. 12.) Oh, may *workers*, then, as well as *sufferers*, abide under the shadow of the *wings* of the Almighty! and this they will surely do, if they dwell "in the *secret place*" of His love to them in Christ. (See Ps. xci. 1.)

4. But there is a fourth overshadowing of God's favour to us yet richer than these. It is the *shadow of the Bridegroom's rejoicing love*. "I sat down under His *shadow*," says the bride in Sol. Song ii. 3, "with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste." The scene shown us here is one of no fear, and no care. It is the repose of undisturbed enjoyment, though in a world of sin and sorrow, and with danger not far away. The "daughters of Jerusalem," the ensnaring things of "the city" and its "streets and broadways," are near—too near; but she is in His "house of wine," "His banner over her is love," and as long as she is delighting in "His shadow" over her, and finds sweet fruit in His love to her as well as shade, He charges none to molest her. This richest, sweetest shade of all is, therefore, our life-long proper portion, and can only be lost as we ourselves surrender it. Compare John xiv. 23: "Jesus answered and said unto him, 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."

Nothing here below can excel this overshadowing love of the Bridegroom over the bride. Well may we once more say—

"There, by His love o'ershadowed,
Sweetly my soul shall rest."

But what next?

"Hark! 'tis the voice of angels,
Borne in a song to me,
Over the fields of glory,
Over the jasper sea."

Yes, the best that even His love *can* give us here

below only points us to the fulness ere long at Jesus' speedy and blessed coming again. The home of glory will itself be an overshadowing. The transfiguration scene was given to Christ for us as a specimen of "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," and there we are told (Matt. xvii. 5) of the glorified ones, that "a bright cloud *overshadowed* them;" not indeed for protection, for danger and sorrow come not there, but as an answer to Peter's ardent wish to make the passing glory permanent, and to build tabernacles. No wonder it says that the favoured three in mortal bodies "feared as *they* (*i.e.* the glorified ones) entered the cloud." Heavenly things overwhelm our poor mortal faculties, but God reveals them even now to faith; and Peter makes good use in his second epistle of having been an eye-witness of the majesty of our Lord.

John also saw the countless multitude who had come out of the great tribulation, and the Lamb so dwelling "*over* them" (see Greek, Rev. vii. 15) "that they would neither hunger nor thirst any more; nor the sun light on them, nor any heat."

Yes, that is God's final and everlasting overshadowing of us. And if it is said of Jerusalem and Zion below, during the thousand years' reign, that God "will rejoice *over* her with joy, will rest (Hebrew, be silent) in His love, and will joy *over* her with singing" (see Zeph. iii. 17), how much more will He overshadow with the brightness of His infinite delight ALL the glorified redeemed in His eternal new creation? In glad anticipation we can sing—

"Joyful now the new creation
Rests in undisturbed repose;
Blessed in Jesus' full salvation,
Sorrow now nor thralldom knows.

"Hark! the heavenly notes again!
Louder swells the song of praise!
Throughout creation's vault, Amen,
Amen, responsive joy doth raise."

But there are *shadows to be warned of*, as well as God's shadows to be delighted in.

“Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of Me; and that cover with a covering, but not of My Spirit, that they may add sin to sin: that walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at My mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the *shadow of Egypt!*” (Isa. xxx. 1, 2.)

Wealth, and worldly wisdom, and human army-power, are not these the shadow of Egypt now as they were in Isaiah's days? Only now with more self-confidence and arrogance, and with hearts more hardened because of more of God's love resisted, and with a deeper darkness because of greater light sinned against. “I sit as a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow,” is Babylon's language up to her very hour of overthrow, and tells of how completely “the shadow of Egypt” is her trust; but “when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.” (1 Thess. v. 3.) No wonder He says, “Come out of her, my people.”

Nor must we, like Jonah, make for ourselves even the *shadow of a booth*. This is a special temptation to God's servants “who labour in word and doctrine.” Jonah wearied at the long-suffering of God's ways with the wicked, as Job did with the length of God's afflictions on him. But whether in suffering or in service, we must “let patience have her *perfect work*,” if we would be “perfect and entire, lacking nothing.” No sooner do we cease fellowship with God's pity toward an unsaved “Nineveh-world” than, like Demas, we love “this present world,” and make for ourselves some booth under which to sit and selfishly watch the scene.

Once more God had a shadow at hand; but this time it was one of mighty, yet gentle, reproof. In a

night the gourd grew sufficiently to give Jonah its shade; but *only for that day*: it withered the next morning, but left for Jonah a lasting lesson. May we so truly learn it as one amongst the many things "written aforetime for our learning," that we may all our days abide in Christ, whether in service or in suffering, and sit under no shadow but that of His love, even till the day of His coming and His kingdom. Amen.

H. D.

A CONTRAST.

THE ROD OF GOD'S WRATH
LAID UPON OUR SUBSTITUTE.

LAM. iii.

1 I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of His wrath.

2 He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light.

3 Surely against me is He turned; He turneth His hand against me all the day.

4 My flesh and my skin hath He made old; He hath broken my bones.

5 He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travel.

6 He hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old.

7 He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out: He hath made my chain heavy.

8 Also when I cry and shout, He shutteth out my prayer.

THE ROD OF HIS LOVE UPON
HIS SAINTS.

"Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." (Ps. xxiii. 4.)

"He hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." (1 Peter ii. 9.)

"God is for me." (Ps. lvi. 9; Rom. viii. 31.) "Thy right hand hath holden me up." (Ps. xviii. 35.)

My "youth is renewed like the eagle's." (Ps. ciii. 5.) "All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto Thee?" (xxxv. 10.)

"God is able to build you up." (Acts xx. 32.) "Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." (Ps. xxxii. 7, 10.)

He "hath quickened us together with Christ, . . . and made us sit together in heavenly places." (Eph. ii. 5, 6.)

He hath "set my feet in a large room" (Ps. xxxi. 8), and hath "loosed my bonds." (cxvi. 16.)

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him." (Ps. xci. 15.)

THE ROD OF GOD'S WRATH LAID
UPON OUR SUBSTITUTE.

LAM. iii.

9 He hath inclosed my ways with hewn stone, He hath made my paths crooked.

10 He was unto me as a bear lying in wait, and as a lion in secret places.

11 He hath turned aside my ways, and pulled me in pieces: He hath made me desolate.

12 He hath bent His bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow.

13 He hath caused the arrows of His quiver to enter into my reins.

14 I was a derision to all my people; and their song all the day.

15 He hath filled me with bitterness, He hath made me drunken with wormwood.

16 He hath also broken my teeth with gravel stones, He hath covered me with ashes.

17 And Thou hast removed my soul far off from peace: I forgot prosperity.

18 And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the Lord.

THE ROD OF HIS LOVE UPON HIS
SAINTS.

"Thou hast enlarged my steps under me." (Ps. xviii. 36.)

"I have led thee in right paths." (Prov. iv. 11.)

"As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." (Isaiah lxvi. 13.) "He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom." (xl. 11.)

He "maketh my way perfect." (Ps. xviii. 32.) "Thy gentleness hath made me great." (v. 35.) "Thou hast made me exceeding glad with thy countenance." (xxi. 6.)

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper." (Isa. liv. 17.) "I am thy shield." (Gen. xv. 1.)

"The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John iv. 14.)

"In the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me" (Ps. xxxii. 5)—"secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues." (xxxii. 20.)

"That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." (Eph. iii. 19.) "Be filled with the Spirit." (v. 18.)

"Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things." (Ps. ciii. 5.)

"He shall cover thee with His feathers." (Ps. xci. 4.)

"He is our peace." (Eph. ii. 14.) "My peace I give unto you." (John xiv. 27; Phil. iv. 7.)

"God is the strength of my heart." (Ps. lxxiii. 26.) "That ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." (Rom. xv. 13.)

THE NAZARITE:

III. DEFILEMENT BY THE DEAD.

WE have now to consider the third part of this divine ordinance. These are the words: "All the days that he separateth himself unto the Lord he shall come at no dead body. He shall not make himself unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die: because the consecration of his God is upon his head. All the days of his separation he is holy unto the Lord. And if any man die very suddenly by him, and he hath defiled the head of his consecration; then," &c.; "but the days that were before shall be lost, because his separation was defiled." The further detail of defilement by the dead is given in Numbers xix. 14: "This is the law, when a man dieth in a tent: all that come into the tent, and all that are in the tent, shall be unclean seven days. And every open vessel, which hath no covering bound upon it, is unclean. And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days."

This peculiar kind of uncleanness is incurred from touching or being in the vicinity of the dead body of a human being. Touching the carcase of an unclean animal, defiled for one day (Lev. xi. 28); this for seven days. No connection with principles pertaining to health is apparent; it was the same whether the person had died by natural causes, by a contagious disease, or by violence; and moreover, as regards the Nazarite, it was enacted that if one die near him, wherever he might be, not merely within a tent, he became defiled.

Now, as to the operation of this law, how would it affect him, and those around him? In the days of our pilgrimage death occurs in every household; sometimes suddenly, sometimes slowly. Israel in the wilderness

were a doomed people; every man above twenty years old had forfeited life, and had to die. Death also followed them into the promised land; none were exempt. The Nazarite was liable to this contingent defilement wherever he might be. He was incapacitated from bearing arms, and fighting the Lord's battles, because this would bring him into close contact with the slain. If one fell by his hand he would be defiled, must go through the prescribed ceremonies, and then recommence anew the period of his vow. These were incidental liabilities. But death would invade his home. Wife, children might die; parents also; brother or sister. What must he do? Shall he remain, tend the sick and dying, do the last offices of affection to them, and which they have a right to look for at his hands, and thereby become defiled? or shall he, in fulfilment of his vow, and recognising the claims of his God upon him, hasten out of the house, and so save the head of his consecration from the defilement? Heartrending to him either way would be the dilemma. One or the other he must do. Either the claims of nature must prevail, or the commands of his God. These were explicit. He shall not make himself unclean for his father, mother, brother, or sister. Whereas, by the orders from mount Sinai, he was bound to honour his father and mother, by this further order he is compelled to leave them at a juncture when it would be excruciating to himself, painful beyond measure to the parent, and disgraceful in the eyes of his kindred and neighbours, as having forfeited every title to their regard, whether as son, brother, or kinsman.

The only plea he could urge, the only defence he could make to satisfy his own mind or others, would be, that it was the command of his God, and obey he must. If the claims of father and mother are thus far to be disregarded, of course no other claims can stand.

The promise for honouring parents (Ex. xx. 12), and the penalties for dishonouring them (Ex. xxi. 15, 17),

seem strongly at variance with this Nazarite ordinance; for if there be any period when filial reverence, love, and service is more demanded and expected than another, it is surely at the dying bed of the parent; yet both these injunctions are issued by the same authority, the infinitely wise and holy Lord God. Both are compatible, both are equally obligatory; the first universally binding; the second only under the occasion of this vow, and the contingency of death happening during its continuance. And it must be carefully borne in mind that the terms of this vow are not of the man's choice or selection. God prescribes the terms; man only making the engagement to be separate to Him. On no other consideration would such disrespect be permitted.

But the all-wise God has not issued such an injunction without consideration or purpose. Our Lord has explained that all the law and the prophets are but the embodiment of two special principles. The first, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." This the great commandment. The second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The honour to the parent falls under the second division, subordinate to the first, to which the Nazarite injunctions belong. God has the first claim on the affections. To this all other claims must give way. And this demand is maintained, in a variety of forms, throughout Israel's history.

An incident in the New Testament casts a gleam of collateral light upon the subject: "And another of his disciples said unto Him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead." (Matt. viii. 21.) From the wording of the request, it is not to be inferred that the man's father was then actually lying dead. Had it been so, he would have been at home performing the funeral offices, and, as a Jew, ceremonially unclean. His desire is to remain at home till his father is no

more; after which, freed from parental control, he will be at liberty to obey the commands of Jesus. Critical was the danger. If he goes, home influence will presently overbear these new impressions. The Lord, knowing the peril of the young disciple, replies, Stay by me; let those who are dead towards God attend to the affairs of this life.

What will the dead towards God do in regard to a servant of God? Will they be likely to encourage him in the path of obedience, in a closer walk with God? Will they strengthen him in the faith, or remind him that, as one alive from the dead, his part is to yield himself unreservedly unto God? Surely all the efforts of the servants of Satan will be put forth the other way, to weaken, entangle, and destroy. To the child of God, home influence is fraught with peril.

What mean these words (Luke xiv. 26): "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple"? Can He who has enjoined the child to honour and obey his parents, at the same time direct him to hate them? Is it possible that He who commands us to love our enemies, orders us to hate our kindred? Is it not rather that, when obedience to Christ is involved, no human tie or consideration must be permitted to come between? Everything must give way to the commands of our God.

One word of caution however is necessary. They must be commands of our God, issued through His beloved Son Jesus, by His Spirit; according to the analogy of the faith once communicated to the saints. They must not be the teachings or commandments of men. Nor must they be little pet passages of Scripture taken out of their connection, and made to uphold some foregone conclusion or determination. Dangerous is the state of the soul so acting.

The question then at issue is this. Shall I, who

acknowledge subjection to Christ Jesus, defile the head of my consecration by falling in with the principles and ways of the dead around me, pointedly those of my own family? Our Master has forewarned us: “A man’s foes shall be those of his own household.” The disciples of Christ must not lose sight of this. Foes they will be, either secret or open; varying in shades of hostility, but still foes.

The injunctions in 2 Cor. vi. 14–18 are very explicit: “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye *separate*, saith the Lord, and touch not the *unclean*; and I will receive you; and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

The coming out here does not contemplate quitting the home or the family. It speaks of religious fellowships between the believer and the unbeliever, so customary in our day, that separation of the children of light from the children of darkness is scarcely known, or if known, is regarded with little favour by either believer or unbeliever, to the mutual injury of both, and the practical denial of the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ.

R. N.

“HIS INHERITANCE IN THE SAINTS.”

THE most precious promise given to the churches of the Revelation is that reserved for the faithful ones in the midst of Laodicean lukewarmness. “If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” We get here the reciprocity of mutual joy and fellowship in the one common gladness: Christ coming in to feast with the soul on His own fulness received and appropriated; and the soul, as a consequence, feasting with Him in the unhindered liberty of love. We find promises full of blessing to the overcomer in the preceding verses, but here we have a new thing—we have Christ

stooping to be a receiver from one to whom He has given all. "I will sup with him."

In John xiv. 23 we trace the same thought: "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." There is a twofold chord of sympathy of heart as the ground of this abiding: His love received, and His words kept. We can but give Him of His own, and He can but take from us of that which He has first bestowed. "Come unto me" is the gospel of His grace to the sinner; "We will come unto him," His richest promise to the saint.

Again, in the early part of the Canticles we see the bride brought into the banqueting-house to sit under the shadow of her Beloved, and to feast herself on His fruit—strengthened thus by divine food for the quickening precepts of chap. ii. 10-14. But in chap. iv. we find the King's heart ravished with the comeliness He had put upon her, delighting Himself in her fruits; and then, as though language fails to express His joy and refreshment in her, He twice changes the figure, bringing in "all trees of frankincense, with all the chief spices;" and again, "a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon." But it is *His* garden. (Chap. v. 1.) The myrrh, the honey, the wine, are all His own, and hence the invitation, "Eat, O friends," for He will eternally be the giver to His saints.

Alas, the fruitfulness of chap. iv., like the heavenly feasting of chap. ii., is followed but by enervating sleep and troubled waking, making us long the more intensely for the time when our Beloved shall see in us only His own image, when for all the travail and yearning of His soul, He shall find once and for ever unbroken satisfaction in His saints!

A. E. W.

Teach not young disciples to do *something* for the Lord, but to do *everything* for Him.—R. C. C.

THE ANOINTING.

THERE are subjects in the Word so solemn and so profound that one dreads almost to write of them, lest by profane touch one should desecrate the precious truth that one desires to hallow. Among these stand pre-eminent those truths which are connected with the Holy Spirit, either in His personality or in His operations. Among these mysterious operations we may mention the quickening, the indwelling, the sealing, the baptizing, and the anointing, in all of which God is the Author, through the Lord Jesus Christ, by the communicating grace of the Holy Spirit. That which God the Father purposed, and God the Son wrought out by His incarnation, death, resurrection, and glorification, is made effectual in the believer by the power of the Holy Ghost.

The subject we purpose to touch on here is the *anointing*; and while we seek the pen of a ready-writer, we pray for a heart penetrated with the solemn truth, that we have been made partakers of quickening grace, and therein possessors of a divine nature, which renders possible what were otherwise impossible, and which brings the believer into a position that would else be blasphemy to contemplate.

The apostle John tells us that we “have an anointing from the Holy One” (1 John ii. 20); and again (v. 27,) “The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him” (*i.e.* Christ; see next verse). Thus the great point in the Spirit’s teaching here is to *abide* in Christ. He taught us so to abide as His first lesson, and He teaches the same as the daily lesson of the believing soul.

This anointing is one of the grand distinguishing

marks of the wonderful dispensation under which we live, a dispensation far more wonderful than that of sign and miracle which have passed away. In order to form an adequate conception of what this anointing involves, we need to contemplate it as revealed to us in relation to Christ as the Head of the body the Church; and as we ponder, let us remember the Saviour's words, "As thou hast sent me into the world, so have I also sent them into the world." Thus shall we be prepared to understand that mighty promise, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."

His name was THE CHRIST, the Anointed One of God, and as such we read of Him: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him." (Acts x. 38.) He was God's CHRIST, and His people were divinely "called *Christians*,"* as the name whereby God wished His anointed family to be known (Acts xi. 26), to which Peter also alludes in his epistle; for the anointing is not only for service and for power, but likewise for suffering.

This anointing, as we find it described in the prophecy of Isaiah, has reference to character and to service. The passages to which we refer are in Isaiah lxi. and xi.: "The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me; because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind

* The word in Acts xi. 26, "called," is in the Greek from the verb *χρηματιζω*, which occurs only in Matt. ii. 12, 22; Luke ii. 26; Acts x. 22; Rom. vii. 3; Heb. viii. 5; xi. 7; xii. 25; and in almost every case has direct reference to God as the speaker. Compare also *χρηματισμος*, "answer of God." (Rom. xi. 4.)

up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance (retribution) of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." (Isa. lxi. 1-3.)

"The Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah; and shall make Him of quick understanding (*marg.* scent, smell; *i.e.* intuition) in the fear of Jehovah: and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears," &c. (Isa. xi. 2-5.)

The latter quotation shows the divinely-developed character of the man Christ Jesus, who, under the mighty anointing of which He was partaker, grew in stature, and in knowledge, and in favour. What comes to us in regeneration was *His* as the holy-born from His mother's womb, and as such we would contemplate what the anointing implies; what are its manifestations, and what its fruit, in those of whom it can be said, that they have been anointed of God, as Paul tells the Corinthians they were. (2 Cor. i. 21.)

In Rev. v. 6, the Lamb of God is described as "having seven horns and seven eyes," and these "are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." This description is the more remarkable as Isaiah xi. has special reference to the coming kingdom and to the glory of the advent, to which the vision in Rev. v. is preparatory. This connection, however, deserves special notice, as it has to do with the mission of the Spirit of God, who thereby prepares His agents for the work that has to be accomplished by them. We would also connect these passages with "the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne" (Rev. iv. 5), and this

again with the seven-lamped candlestick in the holy place.

The Spirit of the living God is the antitype of the oil for the anointing, and of the oil for the light. The connection between light on the one hand, and life, love, and power on the other, seems to embrace both sides of the truth of God; as the three branches on the one hand, and the three branches on the other, connected with the centre shaft, unite to form the seven rays of the one Light that burns before God, sending its rainbow glory around the throne, as the harbinger of an eternal covenant fulfilled in Christ.

Let us, then, consider the seven divine characteristics of the Spirit's anointing in the order in which they stand in Isaiah xi., which we will present in the following manner :

(1) The Spirit of Jehovah ;

- | | |
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| ⏟ | |
| (2) of Wisdom | and (3) Understanding ; |
| (4) of Counsel | and (5) Might ; |
| (6) of Knowledge | and (7) Fear of the Lord. |

These characteristics describe what the Spirit of God is, and what He gives to those anointed by Him, thereby to prepare them for their life, walk, and ministry, even as the Lord Jesus through the eternal Spirit accomplished the work given Him to do.

The first feature of this anointing is its divinity. It is the Spirit of the living God Himself. On this all hangs—all the efficacy and all the suitableness for the infinite need that has to be met, and the infinite work that has to be done. The work, whether accomplished *in* us or wrought *by* us, has to be done by the mighty Spirit of God, who worketh all after the counsel of His will. But it must not be forgotten that it is the Spirit of the covenant-keeping Jehovah; for that precious name has always a connection with God as the "I AM" of all that He has purposed and promised. Hence Genesis ii., which views creation in the

light of an eternal purpose, contains the oft-repeated designation, "Jehovah God;" while chap. i., which regards creation as the act of divine power only, has the single expression, "God," or Elohim. "Elohim" reveals God as the God of might and power; "Jehovah" reveals Him as the God of covenant and purpose. "Elohim," we read, "created man in His own image, in the image of Elohim created He him; male and female created He them." But when God's ultimate purposes and designs are contemplated, and to be unfolded, or rather enfolded in mystery to us, we read in chap. iii.: "Jehovah Elohim formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;" and further, after the rib had been taken from man, it is said, "And of the rib which Jehovah Elohim had taken from man, builded He a woman." (See marg. v. 22.)* Thus do we connect together the covenant-purposing Jehovah of Genesis ii. (who creates Adam and Eve each in a different way, and each in view of a revelation of Himself in Christ, to be made in the fulness of time), with the Spirit of anointing glory that rested on Christ, from whom it flows down to all His members. Thus the holy anointing oil on Aaron's head flowed down to Aaron's beard, touching the jewelled breast-plate with Israel's names engraven on it, and going down to the very skirt of his garment. (Ps. cxxxiii.)

Bearing in mind that the essential feature of the anointing is, that it is "the Spirit of Jehovah" that anoints, let us now come to the three pairs of branches. The first of these is said to be "the Spirit of *wisdom* and *understanding*." The connection between the two characteristics in each pair deserves particular attention; and it will be found that while one has an *inward* feature of height and depth, the other has an *outward* feature of length and breadth; and the

* Nineteen times in chap. ii. and iii. do we get "Lord God," and never once "God" only, except in the lips of the serpent.

mutual harmony and correspondence bear double witness that the anointing is *of God*. There is much that names the name of Christ, the Anointed One, that has not this double testimony. But God's foundation, and all that is divinely built upon it, "standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. AND, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."* This is God's foundation on which the Church of the living God rests in the midst of the apostasy contemplated in this second epistle to Timothy. This is the seal and this is the anointing wherewith God seals and anoints, and whereby He "establisheth us unto (εις) Christ." (2 Cor. i. 21.)

Wisdom is that inward spiritual faculty which James tells us comes from above (chap. iii. 17); and Prov. viii. is the great key-passage to this subject, unfolding to us what wisdom is. But here and elsewhere understanding is connected with it. Understanding has to do with the outward exhibition of wisdom, or the putting it into exercise and use. Thus wisdom, when of God, can say, "I am understanding." (Prov. viii. 14.) Without wisdom there can be no understanding; but without understanding wisdom would be useless. Like faith and works, they must not be alone; for that which is alone is dead.

Wisdom and understanding combined form the first development of the anointing, after its divine character has been unfolded. He who possesses it has an infallible guide that at once testifies to what is of God, and to what is not of God; for love is keen to understand, and is wise to know. Hence he who has the anointing needs not that any should teach him as to what is of God, and what is not of God. He carries

* This seal contains two truths, both of which are needed to prove the impression genuine. One refers to "*The Lord*," and the other to "*him that nameth*"—a double signature to the covenant bond.

the verdict within himself. He may be ignorant, and may need teachers to teach him; uninstructed, and need others to unfold hidden mysteries; but the power of detection of truth and error, of light and darkness, rests with those who are anointed with the Spirit of wisdom and understanding. Hence the most uninstructed saints may be the most divinely taught. They taste, they see, and receive, according as what they see agrees with the divine revelation. Hence wisdom is justified of *all* her children, if only the eye be single, and the heart and will subject to God. If otherwise, the glory of the anointing is lost; folly takes the place of wisdom, and misunderstanding leads astray.

1 John ii. 18–28 is of special value here. It shows how the “little children” (*i.e.* babes, *παιδια*) are raised above all the deceivers that may come in, and all those who may seek to subvert the truth of God; they have a prerogative of wisdom and understanding to detect all falsehood and unmask all deceit. They have it, because God and His anointing are with them; but on them lies the responsibility of *abiding in Christ*. All rests there; and only as we abide in Christ will the wisdom we have in Him (1 Cor. i. 30) become an understanding wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, making us truly wise and understanding in the ways of God. (To be continued, D.V.) H. G.

FRAGMENTS.

OUR Lord abundantly *lived* during thirty years what He preached in three. In this age of hurry, we greatly need that quiet preparation such as Moses had for the work of the Lord.

We never overwork ourselves in prayer, though often may-be in preaching; still less in obedient listening to the word of the Lord.

The rest of Christ was in giving fulness of delight unto the Father; ought not ours to be the same?

BE PITIFUL.

“Having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.”—1 PETER iii. 8.

ARE not these and other similar words of Scripture much overlooked or neglected by Christians in these days? Is it not too true that among saints there is a sad lack of *pitifulness*? Is there in the church that *mutual care* which the Lord demands in such passages as the following? “The members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it.” (1 Cor. xii. 25, 26.) “Put on bowels of mercies, kindness.” (Col. iii. 12.) Is there anything nowadays like that of which we read in Acts iv. 32, 34, 35? “Neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. Neither was there among them any that lacked: . . . and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.” Is there among Christians generally that *heart-compassion* for the needy which their kind Saviour enjoins? Is there that “distributing to the necessities of saints” which there ought to be? Is 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18 sufficiently obeyed? “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be . . . ready to distribute, willing to communicate.”

It has been said, that if rich Christians would be content to do without luxuries, there would be no poor Christians. Alas! there are very many poor ones; and yet how few are *forward to remember* the poor. (Gal. ii. 10.) How many, alas! quite *forget* them. How few *abound* in this grace of ministry to the poor saints. (2 Cor. viii. 7.) How few have their hearts exercised on the truths, privileges, and duties set forth in 2 Cor. viii. 9.

In 1 John iii. 16–18 we read: “We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this

world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." How few are willing to lay down even a few fleshly comforts for their brethren. Of how many might those words be said, "How dwelleth the love of God in him?" How many, from sheer thoughtlessness, do not even *see* that their brother hath need. How many, when they do see it, love only in word and tongue, saying, "The Lord will care for you," but showing no care themselves. How many fail in that tenderness and gentleness which so characterised the Lord Jesus.

The writer has heard of a Christian who, when his counsel was sought by a brother in difficulty, said bluntly, "Why do you come to me? Is not the Lord sufficient?" How unlike Jesus! *He* never broke a bruised reed. *He* never grieved an already wounded spirit. When any applied to Him for counsel or help, His *heart yearned* over them. His words were kind and cheering. *He* never sent one away desponding, who needed pity or comfort. Yet saints have gone away from their brethren's doors, weeping and wounded in spirit, because of the manifest lack of sympathy and pity shown by those who *ought* to be willing even to lay down their lives for them.

When Jesus saw the people weary, tired, scattered, and uncared for, He had *compassion* on them. And on another occasion, when the people had nothing to eat, He said, "I have compassion on the multitude, because they . . . have nothing to eat; and I will not send them away fasting." What a needed example in these days of selfishness—"I have *compassion* on them, because they have *nothing to eat*;" "*I will not send them away fasting.*" And at another time, when the disciples said, "Send the multitude away that they may buy themselves victuals," what did He reply?

He said, "Give ye them to eat." These are the Lord's words to His disciples now, and more especially to those who thoughtlessly leave their poor brethren to shift for themselves, "*Give ye them to eat.*" "To do good and to communicate, *forget not*: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." (Heb. xiii. 16.) "I have shewed you that ye ought to support the weak, and to *remember* the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts xx. 35.) "He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that showeth pity, with cheerfulness." (Rom. xii. 8.)

 ABIDING LOVE.

Jesus! Thou lovest still as tenderly

As when of yore,

Watching Thine own disciples on the sea

Toil at the oar.

Thy heart was with them when, amid the storm,

No help seemed near,

Till, walking on the water, Thy loved form

Stilled all their fear.

We need Thy presence, need Thy loving word,

As much as they,

To guide and keep us, O most blessed Lord,

From day to day.

Although unseen, teach us that Thou art nigh,

A present aid;

O Lord, still whisper through the dark, "'Tis I;

Be not afraid."

Saviour! in Thine own presence we would live,

And find alway

In Thee that peace the world can neither give

Nor take away.

S.

 NOTES AND REPLIES.

WHAT is the "*righteousness*" referred to in Eph. vi. 14?

The righteousness which is to form the breast-plate of a believer can be no other than the righteousness of

God, in which he stands in Christ, and in which he stands armed for the conflict; and hence this corresponds with the passage in Rev. xii. 11, where God's people ascribe their victory to "the blood of the Lamb," and to "the word of their testimony," *i.e.* their witness to its value; and the result of that witness is given in the clause, "And they loved not their lives unto the death." Their witness to the power of the cross led them to take up the cross. An objective truth *realized* has always a subjective power, and hence the objective righteousness in which we stand and in which we fight, becomes a subjective righteousness wrought out by the Holy Ghost. So, while the latter must not be forgotten, it is the former that is mainly to be regarded in the conflict. The soldier puts on an armour given to him and prepared for him. Compare this with the helmet of salvation, verse 17, and both with Isa. li. 5, "My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth;" also verses 6, 8, and other similar passages, where righteousness and salvation are linked together in God's purposes towards His people.

In Psalm viii. 2, what is the force of "*That thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger*"?

The design of God is to defeat Satan, and that defeat is of a double character; first, morally, through weakness, and then, judicially, through might. The first is what is being manifested now, wherein the weakness of God is found to be stronger than the enemy. This is the lesson of the cross, and of all the victories of the grace of God wrought out in every saved sinner. The second will be manifested when God opposes His might to the might of Satan; and then an angel from heaven is sufficient to lay hold on Satan, and to bind him a thousand years, and ultimately to cast him into the lake of fire. In thus now opposing weakness to might, God takes all the glory of that which is effected through babes and sucklings, and there is nothing for

the enemy and avenger to lay hold on. *They* are nothing, and Satan has nothing to triumph over. Thus God uses the babes, and silences the enemy. The avenger can make no reprisals there. Once however let the Christian leave his place of nothingness, and seek to be something, then he falls into pride and the snare of the devil; and well for him if blinded eyes and the Philistines' dungeon are not the reprisals made by Satan, to his great loss.

What is the bearing of Rom. xiv. 20, 21 on the "*total abstinence*" question?

Abstinence from any thing is justifiable, if conducive to the good of another, on the broad principle that no man liveth to himself, but to the glory of God. But wine, like any other "creature of God, is good," and in itself "not to be refused," but "to be received with thanksgiving of them that believe and know the truth" (1 Tim. iv. 3, 4), and "a little" is commanded to be used when the "stomach's sake" and "often infirmities" may render it advisable. The habitual use of stimulants by a Christian is not conducive to that bringing of the body into subjection to which he is called. In the use of all things he is commanded to exercise self-control; "for every one that striveth for mastery is temperate in all things." (See 1 Cor. ix. 25, 27.) In the presence of the terrible evil of drunkenness, it becomes us to avoid all encouragement to drinking habits and usages common amongst us, and the nearer Christians are to total abstinence, as a rule, the better. The question of joining in "societies" is quite another thing. There the Christian has to obey the narrow rule of not being "unequally yoked with unbelievers." Giving pledges or promises likewise does not consist with our calling. Let any purpose in their heart, and carry out their purpose as God indicates, remembering the gospel rule, "Whether ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God."

THE WIDOW'S POT OF OIL.

2 KINGS iv. 1-7.

“TELL me, I pray thee, all the great things which Elisha hath done,” was the idle word of Jehoram, king of Israel, to guilty, leprous Gehazi. Surely Gehazi's best answer would have been to point to his own whitened, leprous body, and be silent. But idle talk about God's wondrous works is too much still the way of both kings and uncleansed lepers. True, God overruled Gehazi's narrative to the king for good; for the Shunammite came in at that moment, and through it had her possessions in Israel restored to her—a lesson to Gehazi before his very eyes of how much better her godly liberality had been than his Judas-like covetousness.

But in these precious narratives of Elisha's life we see, not the “things which *Elisha* hath done,” but the great and gracious ways of God Himself, our God, and would so dwell on them as to glorify Him, and to quicken us all in living to His praise.

How many have been both cheered and humbled by the story of the widow's pot of oil!—a tale so often dwelt on, and yet so fresh still to all “the poor of the flock,” and to every hungry and longing soul!

Many a child of God, straitened in temporal things, has learned by this precious instance the truth of Jesus' words, “Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things” (Matt. vi. 32); for widows and needy ones are many in the Church of God, and not a few of them, like those in Elisha's time, are the loved ones left behind of honoured brethren who have departed to be with Christ. Oh may this narrative still cheer such to shut themselves in, with nothing to help them but their poverty and their ever-present and ever-gracious God! It is the privilege of the Church

to help such as are "widows indeed;" but Paul gives it as the mark of one that is such that she is "desolate and trusteth in God." Alas for us if we don't minister to the need of such! But meanwhile God makes them His special care.

Some again have used the narrative spiritually to illustrate the riches of that grace which meets the sinner in his need of salvation—Justice the creditor, whose demands must be met; and the gospel of God's grace, the undervalued pot of oil; and the Christ, whom the gospel reveals, the Oil, which not only paid all the debt, but supplied so much that it was said, "Live thou and thy children of the rest."

But it is in a still wider sense that this narrative has been so largely and helpfully used by saints. What an emblem the pot of oil has been to us of the "throne of grace," where we are bidden to "come boldly," "that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need!" And how encouraged some drooping soul has been to tell to Jesus,

"Not half thy story,
But the whole,"

by Elisha's command to the widow to borrow "empty vessels" "not a few," and expect them to be filled.

And that which helps the individual soul may help also the precious Church of God as a whole. Not that she can ever be actually a widow. "Married to Him who is risen from the dead," "espoused to Christ," she belongs to Him who is "alive for evermore;" but in her present desolateness, she is *as if* she were widowed; and it was to illustrate the wants and woes of His wayworn, tried saints that Jesus Himself gave the parable of the "widow," who so cried to the unjust judge that she prevailed with him. (Luke xviii. 1-8.) The widow is then a figure of ourselves, which we may well accept, and ought to understand; and with many a claim upon us also, as God's Church and as His saints, which of ourselves we cannot meet. We

are heavy debtors both as respects the gospel to the unhappy and perishing world around us, and as respects *all* saints, to whom we owe it to serve them for Christ's sake. "I am debtor," said Paul, "both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise." (Rom. i. 14.) And again of his fellow-saints he says, "Though I be free from all, yet have I made myself *servant* unto all, that I might gain the more." (1 Cor. ix. 19.) And again, "Owe no one anything, but to love one another." (Rom. xiii. 8.) But *this* we do owe, even to the largeness in which we have been ourselves loved. (See also Matt. xviii. 21, *et seq.*) Ours are indeed heavy debts; but we owe them to a gracious Lord, who will Himself supply us with the power to pay them, if we but bring our poverty to Him.

"Thy cross is charging me to care
For saints and all mankind;
Grant me to spend myself, nor spare,
With patient, heavenly mind." *

But then we *must* first own the reality and the justice of those claims upon us, and cry to God (as the widow did) in the sense of our utter poverty.

As another of the same hymns says—

"Our God and Father hear the cry
Of poverty unfeigned;
Oh keep our mind and conscience pure,
Our garments all unstained!

"In Jesus glorified with Thee,
Our high estate we learn;
And hear a Father's voice, which asks
The children's kind return.

"Then let the Spirit of Thy Son
Raise up our thoughts from earth,
To dwell in Christ, the Lord on high,
As suits our heavenly birth."

Our hearts faint sometimes at such claims as these upon us from both the world and the Church, and,

* Hymns by R. C. Chapman.—J. E. Hawkins.

like Jonah, we turn aside from the gospel testimony which we *owe* to a Nineveh-world, and make ourselves some booth of selfish ease; or grow weary of the new commandment, to love one another as Christ has loved us, and cease our lowly, patient work of washing feet, while there still are stains not cleansed away from precious fellow-saints, to whom we owe it to seek still their cleansing.

"Thine handmaid hath not anything in the house, save a pot of oil," said the desponding widow, as she felt the force of claims justly made on herself and her children; and we too may have our moments of discouragement.

But what wants have we, or what wants of others around us can we lovingly make our own, that Christ's overflowing fulness cannot supply?

Only let us bring all the empty vessels we have made ours to Him as our "Pot of oil;" let us honestly "shut the door," cutting ourselves off from all other source of supply; let us say with the psalmist, "My soul, wait thou *only* upon God; for my expectation is from Him. He *only* is my rock and my salvation, my defence; I shall not be moved" (Ps. lxii. 5, 6), and we shall find the riches of His grace flow out for all our need in a way not known before.

The *limit* of the widow's pot of oil for her debts was no more reached than the "cruse of oil" in Elijah's time ever ceased to supply the widow of Sarepta. The one outlasted all the days of the famine, and the other not only outstood all the debts she owed, but gave also to her and her sons a portion to live upon. Blessed, blessed types of the *unsearchable* riches of Christ!

But two things were necessary to the flowing of the oil. First, the door *must be shut*; and next, there *must be an empty vessel* to bring to it. Our trust must be nowhere but in the living God—the God of ALL grace; and we must be still bringing to

Him all the wants and the woes both of His precious Church and of this poor doomed world. It was the *poverty* of the widow's house which (unthought by her and by her sons) was its real wealth, as long as ever that poverty was brought to God's source of supply; and only while that poverty continued did the riches keep increasing. What a lesson to us! "The life that I live in the flesh," said Paul, "I live"—by no resources of my own, but—"by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.) And in 2 Cor. x. 3, 4, "We do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty *through God* to the pulling down of strong holds," &c. And again, "For we also are weak in Him, but we live with Him *by the power of God* toward you." (2 Cor. xiii. 4.) Oh for more of this life of dependence on Christ's fulness, whilst, like Him, we seek to take the lowest place, and to gather to ourselves all wants and woes of others as if they were our own!

But this precious "pot of oil" may serve to bring Christ Himself yet more definitely before us. Oil is the type to us of the Spirit's grace—that Spirit of Christ which we receive from Him to bring us into fellowship with Him, both in His sufferings here below and in His joy now above.

Jesus at the mount of Olives is to us our "Pot of oil"—our supply of the "Spirit's holy unction," both for sufferings and for resurrection joy.

The mount of Olives was of course the place of oil. The very word "Gethsemane" means "olive press"—a place for pressing out the oil of the olive gardens. How fitting a name for the place where all the load of our heavy doom, felt by Him in awful anticipation, only drew from Him the willingness of those words—"Not my will but thine be done." And thus flows to us from Him, as God's precious vessel, that oil of the Spirit's grace which alone can strengthen us to "watch

and pray," and to overcome, whatever may be the trials and temptations which befall us in our service, whether in the world or the Church.

- "If our heavenly Father's kindness
 Bitter waters bids us drink,
 To Gethsemane resorting,
 There on Jesus let us think;
 Looking on Him,
 Who did e'er in trouble sink?
- "Watching with our Lord and Saviour,
 Hearn'ing to His earnest prayer,
 Jesus' meek submission pondering,
 We perceive that God is there;
 To this Garden
 We would oft with Christ repair.
- "How shall God's adopted children
 Any bitter cup refuse?
 Shall we charge the Lord with folly?
 Or of cruelty accuse?
 He was pleased
 His dear Son for us to bruise."

We shall not weary of declaring Christ and God's message of love to a cavilling world while the fatness of such oil still enriches our souls; nor shall we think ourselves better than the most slumbering or wayward disciple, as long as we make His need, and our own, to be our empty vessel for this rich oil of "Gethsemane" love to supply.

But there is "the oil of joy" flowing from Jesus for us now, as well as the oil of an obedient, suffering grace. In resurrection we are one with Him, blessed be God; but as the risen One, He is anointed "with the oil of gladness *above His fellows*" (Ps. xlv. 7), that we might in this also still draw from Him; and this is the oil for our life in and by the risen One, as the other was oil wherewith to meet the claims on us, and the debt we owe of serving and sympathizing with such as suffer.

The widow's oil not only paid her debts, but was enough also for her and her sons to live upon; and such also is the grace of Christ for us. Enriched in

Him, we can pay all debts, and “*live* of the rest.” Abiding in Him, we can, like Paul, “very gladly spend and be spent,” “though the more abundantly we love” our fellow-saints, the less we be loved. (2 Cor. xii. 15.) Yes, not only do it, but do it “very gladly,” “being strengthened,” as Paul prays for the Colossians, “with all might according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering *with joyfulness*.” (Col. i. 11.)

And the mount of Olives also may teach us of this oil of joy; for, as if in remembrance of the “one hour” of His woe in that garden, it was again to Bethany, a village on the mount of Olives (see Luke xxiv. 50, and Acts i. 12), that He led out His disciples, and with resurrection footsteps dipped in an oil of joy, which His woes of death supplied, He walked on it with them, and from it ascended in their sight to heaven, still blessing them as He rose.

Naturally enough, the disciples still stood gazing up into the heavens where they last had seen Him; but they were not to mourn nor grieve; for “the joy of the Lord was their strength,” and in the power of this mount Olivet “oil of gladness,” they were shortly to go as anointed ones of the risen Christ, and be His witnesses “to the uttermost part of the earth.” And thus Christ’s desolate yet trusting Church has still her strength to live by Him and for Him, till He comes to call her to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

And Zechariah teaches us, that when the Lord our God shall come, and all the saints with Him, “His feet shall stand in that day upon the *mount of Olives*, which is before Jerusalem on the east” (Zech. xiv. 4); for He then comes in richest grace to the remnant of the Israel nation, as we have already known Him on that mount in sweetest mercy and grace to us. Solemn and awful judgments will attend His footsteps then; “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 move toward the north, and half of it toward the south." (Zech. xiv. 4.) For He *must* "wash away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purge the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning" (Isa. iv. 4); but it will only be that He may be gracious to them, and may make them "as green olive trees" of His mercy (see Ps. lii. 8), and even their little ones "as olive plants around their tables." (Ps. cxviii. 3.)

Oh, may we, Jew and Gentile, in God's Church now made partakers "of the root and fatness of the olive tree" of God's grace to us in Christ, have our bough green and our fruit rich until His coming and His kingdom! Amen.

H. D.

THE NAZARITE.

PART IV.

WE now come to the fourth part of this remarkable enactment—the ceremonies to be performed when the vow has failed of completeness.

And first of the failure. In the event of any one dying very suddenly by a Nazarite, he becomes defiled. The law of Numbers xix. requires that an Israelite, defiled by the dead, should be accounted unclean for seven days. And this necessitates, according to Numbers v. 2, 3, the being put outside the camp. Consequently he was shut out from worship and service of the Lord, from his own home and family, and from intercourse with others. He could not be restored within a shorter period than seven days, and then only by being on the third day and on the seventh sprinkled with water wherein the ashes of the red heifer had been mixed. When this had been done, he was on the seventh day to shave his head; removing therefore all trace of the performance of his vow hitherto, the whole past interval being lost. On the eighth day he was to bring

two turtle doves or two young pigeons, and present them to the priest at the door of the tabernacle, who was to offer one as a sin-offering, and the other as a burnt-offering, thus making reconciliation for him. At the same time he was to recommence the performance of his vow. Further, he had to present a lamb for a trespass-offering.

All this plainly marks his position before God. The sin-offering indicates that he was regarded as a sinner. If he takes the place of one separate unto God, he must incur all the liabilities, whether arising from remissness, or from causes beyond his own control. Control indeed in its full sense he could not possibly exercise; for who can keep alive his own soul? (Ps. xxii. 29.) Much less can he compel circumstances to arrange themselves at his bidding, so as to justify him in undertaking to render a service unto God. What can dust and ashes do unless upheld by the power of the Almighty? How, therefore, can he justifiably pledge himself to fulfil such a contract? "Better that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay." (Eccles. v. 5.) James, noticing that life itself is but a vapour, reminds us that we ought to say, "If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that." But man must understand that if he vows, and, from whatever cause, fails, he must be regarded as a sinner, and must acknowledge his guilt before God by presenting a sin-offering. Then only can a burnt-offering be accepted. The trespass-offering of the lamb, perhaps, had to do with failure in regard to the first or second parts of the enactment, as already noticed, corresponding with Lev. v.—a class of offences for which such offerings were prescribed. The student in the laws of Moses will find interest in this presentation of turtles and pigeons, as harmonizing with Lev. xv. 14, 29, where the offerings are the same; and also in Lev. xii., after childbirth in the event of poverty.

Hence it will not be difficult to perceive the extreme

danger into which sincere and zealous Christians may unconsciously plunge themselves by mistaken views as to "consecration." However laudable the motive, the consequences have not been foreseen nor taken into consideration. Each person must of necessity have an horizon of his own, within which his purpose is to circumscribe his allegiance, beyond the limits of which he has no thought of passing. But, as we have seen, the thoughts of God are totally diverse from this. When the Nazarite had engaged himself to become separate unto God, he is no longer at liberty to choose his path or to decide in what way he will carry out his surrender. This path is already marked out for him beforehand. To this he must conform himself. If he neglects to follow the prescribed course, his engagement is not relaxed, it still binds him; and if over and over again he fails to fulfil each minute particular of the divine orders, he must again commence, and so continue, as long as he lives, till the whole is completed. He is not at liberty to substitute one thing for another. He may not debar himself from the pomegranate or the fig under the impression that self-control was all that was intended, and that if he restrained himself from these he might indulge himself in respect to the vine. Nor would the cherishing his beard, or letting his nails grow, be admissible as a substitution for the hair of his head. Nor would the most stupendous acts of service, performed at the long-continued hazard of his life, compensate in any way for disregard of any one of these merely ceremonial observances. He must do what his God had directed: less would not satisfy; more was inadmissible.

He who now designs to become a devotee, one separate to God, would do well to gather up in his mind all the precepts of the Lord Jesus contained in the epistles, specially pondering within him whether he is both able and willing to perform them; for nothing short of this is adequate. If he considers himself in-

capable, or not quite willing, it would be better for him to give up confidence in the flesh; for all votive engagements have their origin in self-confidence. Let him rather, without pledging himself to anything, remember that by grace he is already set apart for God by virtue of his union with Christ Jesus; that inasmuch as God's beloved Son is consecrated both King and Priest, every one trusting in Him is likewise a consecrated king and priest: not so appointed in consequence of any merit in himself, nor by any human agency, but by God, because of his being one with Jesus.

For such a one to say, 'I will devote myself, consecrate myself,' is to ignore what God has already done for him; an act of unbelief equally offensive with that noticed in 1 John v. 10, being of the same class. But were he to say, 'Because my God has shown me such unspeakable favour as even to separate me from an evil world unto Himself in Christ Jesus, therefore I yield myself unto Him, spirit, soul, and body, to be governed henceforth by His pleasure,' all would be well. Such becomes the humble, grateful child. Herein is no self-importance, no assumption of giving to the Creator what the creature supposes he has it in his power to bestow. The words in Jer. vii. 22 are very appropriate: "For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices: but this one thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people."

All that the servant can render to his Master is merely what is due to Him; no merit attaches to the payment of a debt. But if the child of the dust imagines that he can do more than pay his ten thousand talents, he is little cognisant of his own guilt and helplessness, and of the redemption so mercifully wrought out for him by God's beloved Son.

R. N.

MEEKNESS SUFFERING AND REIGNING.

MATT. xi. 29; Ps. xlv. 4; EPH. iv. 1, 2.

WHILE every grace found its full completion in our beloved Lord during His brief earthly course, *meekness* was the one necessarily in most continual exercise, as He endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself; and yet there is perhaps no grace so little known in the Church of God, though she is called to be Christ's epistle in her short hour of testimony to a doomed and dying world. We sing about it, and talk about it; but what do men see of it in our lives, as the fruit of a living grace wrought in our souls by the Holy Ghost? This is a solemn question for each of us in the light of the coming judgment in which we shall shortly be manifested. (1 Cor. iv. 5.)

Do we not often seek in vain for the *spirit* of meekness which so richly dwelt in Jesus, and from which only could outshine the glory of grace in which God's heart so delighted? John could say of Him, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." It was a glory not of creative light, nor yet arising from redemption, but the glory of His moral nature shining through the veil of flesh, and shining that it might be communicated; for "of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."

Each time that the voice from heaven acknowledged Him as the beloved Son of the Father, it was in connection with suffering obedience.

First, when He who baptized with the Holy Ghost went down into the waters of the baptism unto repentance, saying, "Thus it becometh *us* to fulfil all righteousness;" and being baptized, and praying, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit descended like a dove upon Him; and, lo, a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Next, on the transfiguration mount, while He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered; and as Moses and Elias talked with Him, not of the glories of His coming kingdom, but of His decease, which He should accomplish at Jerusalem, again the voice from heaven bore witness, "This is my beloved Son;" as though God's delight in Jesus, as He humbled Himself, must find its overflow on earth.

Once more that voice was heard when in the anticipation of His coming anguish He poured out His soul unto God for the glory of His name, and got the fullest answer to His cry, "I have both glorified it," (in the perfectness of His obedient life,) "and I will glorify it yet again" (yet more fully in His obedience unto death).

But there is another aspect of suffering obedience. Christ indeed once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God; drinking the cup of wrath and trembling to the very dregs. But He likewise suffered being tempted, that He might be able to succour those that are tempted. Who can measure the anguish of those forty days' contact with Satan, when the claims of nature were unthought of? "When they were ended, He *afterward* hungered." And yet there was no atonement here. The question of our redemption was untouched until God's Lamb by the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot as our Substitute.

Again, He suffered at the hands of men, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps, learning in Him to do well and suffer for it, and take it patiently, committing ourselves to Him who judgeth righteously. Here we get the finely-ground corn of the meat-offering in its perfect evenness and purity; the sweet incense of precious spices beaten small, of each a like weight.

But as He bore the buffeting and smiting of men, as He heard their bitter words as One in whose mouth

are no reproofs, what was the Father's purpose? Did He look unmoved on the anguish of His only One? Ah, beloved fellow-saints, when we trace in the manifold sufferings of Jesus God's rich provision for our example and our succour, should we not hide our faces in the dust that so far off we have followed Him? that so lightly we have esteemed the honour given us on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake? that so little we have reflected in our little hour of testimony the glory of grace which made Him the light of the world, though its darkness comprehended it not?

Blessed be our God, *He* is not unmindful of the claims of a risen Jesus. We see Him who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory; not the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, but the glory of One who made Himself of no reputation, who took upon Him the form of a servant; "wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." Yes, we get the secret of His highest exaltation in His obedience even unto death. He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens. Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

The key-stone of his redemption glory is the cross; of His priestly glory the suffering; of His kingly glory His obedience. Not as the eternal Son of the Father, nor yet as the Lion of Judah's tribe, but as the Lamb of God's sacrifice, He takes the book out of the right hand of Him who sits upon the throne: worthy, because He was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And when He goes forth crowned with many crowns, in righteousness to judge and make war, still the vesture dipped in blood points back to the obedience of His cross as covering all His glory.

Again, in millennial days, we are told He shall ride in majesty because of truth, and *meekness*, and righteousness, in wondrous remembrance of the lowliest grace of His most lowly life; the Spirit of God preciousy linking in between the very pillars of eternity that which caused Him to be despised amongst men, and doubted by the loving but mistaken hearts who looked for an earthly kingdom.

But how does all this speak to us? Are all these riches of grace portrayed for us by the Holy Ghost only that we may wonder and adore, or that we may also seek to follow, though it be with failing footsteps, in the very path He trod, being imitators of God as dear children? If we are to walk worthy of God, who hath called us unto His kingdom and glory, then must we learn to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, "*with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love.*" "Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, *unto all patience and long-suffering.*" This is to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing.

Alas! how readily we run into service with unbowed, untrained hearts, forgetting that we are called to be reflectors of the grace of which our lips testify; and thus the Lord has to send us back again and again, to learn at His feet the lessons so easily forgotten because so little practised.

A. E. W.

THE ANOINTING.

(Continued from page 191.)

WE now come to the second pair of characteristics of this blessed anointing, whereby we are prepared for our priesthood to God, and for our service here—"The spirit of counsel and might."

It is important to note the combination here, and to observe how it corresponds with the character of God, of whom it is said, that He is "wonderful in

counsel, and excellent in working." What would counsel be without the might to carry it into action? And what would the might be without the counsel to direct it? It is the union of these that consummates the excellence of the divine counsels and workings; and it is the want of it that so often frustrates our plans and purposes. Hence the importance of this divine combination in the anointing of the Spirit of God, whereby the servant of God becomes neither barren nor unfruitful.

What a consolation, amidst the perplexities of life, to have in the anointing a counsel of divine wisdom that need never fail, and would never fail if faith but laid hold on that which is freely given to us of God! For as Christ is given by the Father, so is the Spirit given by Christ. Christ is the gift of God, the source out of which the living water, the Spirit of the living God, flows unto us. *He* is the fulness out of which we have all received, and may be always receiving.

He who is "the Counsellor" is also "the mighty God," the Son that is "*given*" unto us. (Isa. ix. 6.) Oh, could we only thus realize the gift of God, and make use of the gift by faith, we should never be in uncertainty when called to act, and never be powerless in execution! He is the "Wonderful," upon whose shoulders rests the government of all our little concerns, as well as of all the greater ones of the Church and of the world. What is ours in Christ is ours personally and subjectively by the anointing and inworking of the Holy Ghost.

The full realization of this would enable the trusting soul at once to be content to wait as long as any uncertainty lasted, knowing that when the time for action arrived, the needed counsel would necessarily be forthcoming, if only there were the readiness to obey. He who desires to do shall know (John vii. 17), is a promise of unlimited application, and he who believingly lays hold on it can afford to wait, knowing that "in the

end," at the right time, "it shall speak and not lie;" and therefore God's word ever is, "Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." (Hab. ii. 3.) What rest this assurance conveys to the heart! what peace! when otherwise all is restless confusion.

God will not leave an obedient, willing child of His in the dark, *when* the time for action comes. Till then patient, peaceful waiting on God is required of us, in the calm conviction that in due time God will point out the way. What lessons of dependent grace would thus be learnt! We may often have to remain, as our Master had, two days in the same place (John xi. 6), even though life and death may seem to hang on our delay; but we should then never be too late, and never too early.

As, however, the anointing secures to us counsel, so does it secure might. The anointed one learns by faith to say with Paul, "I can do all things in Christ who strengtheneth me." We should hear nothing of the impossibilities of the Christian life in anything to which we are called of God, for all would be found to be possible to him that believeth. Faith says with the psalmist (for in the Psalms Christ tells us His experiences for the comfort of our souls), "By thee I have run through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall." (Ps. xviii. 29.)

Hebrews xi. gives us a witness to the power of faith in the lives and deaths of those mighty men of God who had both counsel and might for the life of faith and all its issues, whether of conquest or of suffering, of life or of death; whether, like Abel, to bleed by the side of his altar; or, like Enoch, to be translated without seeing death.

Faith places itself at the absolute disposal of another, and triumphs in His will, whether to escape the violence of fire, or to fall under the sharpness of the sword. Faith finds counsel and might under all circumstances,

as a part of its anointing and consecration, triumphing alike in deliverance or in death. God's anointed ones stand before Him, and if they live, they live unto Him; and if they die, they die unto Him. And let us remember the apostle's word, "Quit you like men, be strong."

The last pair of characteristics is "*The spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.*" Here again it is of the utmost consequence to notice the combination and also the order in which knowledge and fear stand. The tree of knowledge has taught us what knowledge without fear can do; and all around us we see daily proofs of what unsanctified truth can accomplish, puffing up the mind of the creature, which, like the cold light of night's moon, speaks of death rather than life. In sunlight we have light and heat; and all knowledge that comes from God combines both to the believing soul. We look around in the Church of God, and we see the withering effect of light that lacks warmth, of knowledge that lacks fear.

The essential element of our life is godly fear, a fear that trembles at God's word, a love that fears lest it disobey. When God singles out the man with whom He will dwell, it is not the man who has the deepest insight into His truth, not the man who understands all knowledge and all mysteries, not the man of the highest intellect, but the man who is of an humble and contrite spirit, and who trembles at His Word. When pride gives place to trembling, and self-assertion to meekness and lowliness; when love trembles and godly fear seeks to obey, then and then only are knowledge and the fear of the Lord linked together, as they were in their full perfection in the person and in the anointing of the Holy One of God.

These combined form part of the holy anointing oil wherewith we are anointed; and in the measure in which we manifest these gracious gifts and operations of the Spirit of God, in that measure is the anointing abiding in us. Man can counterfeit many parts of

the anointing; many of its separate features can be imitated by man in the flesh; but the combination here given never can be found but in the really anointed of God. (See Ex. xxx. 22-33.)

What terrible shipwreck has been made of some of the most precious truths of God's word by knowledge and fear being displaced in their relation the one to the other! When held together, they will always humble and lay in the dust the one in whom they co-exist. If this were remembered, it would bring down many high pretensions, and many high claims of superiority would crumble into dust. He who is the humblest is the highest, for One has said it who cannot lie; and he who has most of the divine knowledge will be the lowliest and the meekest. The devil *knows*; but with him knowledge is combined with subtilty, and not with fear; and this distinguishes knowledge from above and from beneath. He cares not how much we know: if only the heart be filled with pride, he has gained his object; for he has marred the beauty of the divine reality. God's truth has lost its life; God's light has lost its love.

Every step in the life of Christ shows the blending of all these varied features of the anointing, and we need to seek special grace that we fail not in the entirety of this most perfect description of the anointing of Christ, which, like the precious oil on the head of Aaron that came down to the very skirts of his garment, flows down from our Head to the least and lowest of His members.

Such, then, are the characteristics of our anointing; and now for a few words as to the result of the anointing in the anointed ones. It will make them "of quick understanding" (*i.e.* of good scent) "in the fear of the Lord," and the bright intuition of a living knowledge will raise above the sight of the eyes, or the hearing of the ears. There will then be power in service to preach the gospel to the meek, to bind up the

broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God.

Such is the life and ministry for which this holy anointing prepares; it is not given to all to be manifested in the same way, but is given to all for one end, to meet the miseries, sorrows, and darkness of a ruined earth, and to minister to every needy soul God's only remedy—CHRIST as presented in the power of the Holy Ghost.

Those thus anointed are priests of the inner sanctuary, and are enabled by reason of it worthily to fulfil their place as priests. Thus we read: "And Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein, and sanctified them. And he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all his vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them. And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him." (Lev. viii. 10-12.) And further on (v. 30) we read, "And Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments with him; and sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him."

Leviticus viii. shows the effect of the anointing as preparing for priestly service to God; Isaiah lxi. shows the power of the anointing in the service to be rendered in the world.

Prophets, priests, and kings were all anointed with holy oil; so was Christ for this threefold ministry; and so are His people now anointed for the same; and hence our responsibility to maintain anointing power as priests, prophets, and kings; for thereunto have we been called.

H. G.

RESURRECTION.

(Continued from page 156.)

THE Lord Jesus was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father; He has ascended and is seated with the Father in His throne in the heavenlies. In all this we are one with Him: that which is declared of Him is true of us in Him. (Eph. ii. 5, 6.) To this the indwelling Spirit of sonship bears witness, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

But we are in a body of humiliation, and we groan, being burdened; we know our sonship, yet we wait for the adoption—the redemption of our body. We are bought entire, body as well as soul; redemption's price has been paid—"the blood of the Lamb." On the ground of this, our souls have been delivered from the power of Satan and of sin by the *power* of God, and we know our deliverance—"In whom *we have* redemption through His blood" (Eph. i. 17); but we wait for the deliverance of our body from humiliation to glory by the same power of God.

This last act, the finishing touch of divine power, conforming us perfectly to the image of the risen Man, the Lord Jesus, is connected with resurrection at the coming of the Lord. (Phil. iii. 20, 21.) Of the resurrection of sleeping saints, that of Christ is the pledge; therefore *resurrection* is connected with our hope—it is our hope. "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept."

Christ's resurrection, the pledge of ours, is the subject now before us.

It is of the utmost importance that believers should perceive and believe the fact implied by this; viz., the union of the members of Christ, of His body, with Him as the head—Head and members constituting the perfect man, the mystical Christ of God. Our many

members constitute our body, "so also is the Christ." (1 Cor. xii. 12.)

It was essential to His being anointed with the Holy Ghost, for the body, that He should thus present Himself to the Father. It was necessary for the priest, in order to his being anointed, that he should be a perfect and unblemished man, not having anything superfluous, nor lacking anything. So also Christ, risen and ascended, appeared before God, even the Father, Head and members perfect and unblemished; and having received of Him the promise of the Holy Ghost, He shed forth on the assembled members that which was then seen and heard. "The Church is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all," and "without blame before Him in love." This precious truth it is *our* privilege to know, acknowledge, and rejoice in.

The righteous of Matt. xxv. may in their day be ignorant of this union, as also was Saul of Tarsus, when, in answer to the question, "Why persecutest thou ME?" he said, "*Who art thou, Lord?*" but we, through the teaching of the indwelling Spirit of truth, know that believers and the Lord Jesus are so truly one, that whatever is done to one such believer is done to Him.

The knowledge of this gives joy; ignorance of it robs of much comfort and blessing, as we see in various passages of Scripture in which this truth is used for practical purposes.

In 1 Thess. v. we find Paul meeting and refuting an error which had been brought in by Satan among the believers at Thessalonica; viz., the annihilation of their friends who had fallen asleep in Christ, a denial of the resurrection. They sorrowed for such as men without hope. Satan acted then, as he now often acts, on former opinions and habits, as though there was no escape from annihilation but by living unto the coming of the Lord. They were surprised by the death of their brethren, and tempted to think they were perished,

Deep was their sorrow; but it was met, and how? By this blessed truth, that believers, whether alive or sleeping, are one with Christ, in such wise one, that what is true of Him in this connection, will be true of them that sleep in Him. "If we believe that Jesus died *and rose again*, even so them that sleep in Jesus will God *bring with HIM*."

Their knowledge was defective, and their faith and hope inactive on this point, and sorrow was the result. Had they apprehended this union, they would have known that the resurrection of Christ ensured that of their departed friends; that death and the grave could no more terminate their existence than they did the existence of Christ, but that the dead in Him would as certainly rise as He rose; moreover, as if fully to assure them that their friends were not perished, he proceeds to declare that the sleeping will be acted on by resurrection power before the living will be changed, "that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (take precedence of or go before) them that are asleep."

Thus we see that the resurrection of the Lord Jesus ensures ours, and that at His return He will raise the dead in Christ before He changes the living.

In this way, by such words, did Paul comfort them, and bade them comfort one another. Thus did the risen Head of the body in His grace and tenderness minister to His sorrowing members, giving them, through Paul, a prophetic word to meet their need; not a quotation, but a communication direct from Himself for the occasion, to meet not only *their* need, but subsequently that of all saints similarly situated.

The Lord Himself shall descend to the air and speak; then that which slept shall awake (*i.e.* that which was buried shall be raised—the body, of course). This done, the living shall, in the twinkling of an eye, be changed, and all shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air.

Another example of this connection of resurrection is found in 1 Cor. xv. In the assembly at Corinth there were some who said, "There is no resurrection of the dead;" not considering what such a statement implied, not imagining that it would affect the very foundation of their faith and hope. To correct their mistake and refute the error, the apostle proves that such must be the result, because the union between the Head and members is such that if the dead would not rise, *He* was not risen; having before his mind the converse, If *Christ is risen*, then the dead *shall rise*.

He reminds them of the gospel that he had preached, and they had believed. The death of Christ for sin, His burial, and His resurrection, according to the Scriptures. He names those who had seen Him after He was risen, himself among them, although last of all as to time; and then shows them the just inferences from their misstatement. 1st. Christ is not raised. 2nd. Preaching is vain, and their faith also; they were yet in their sins. 3rd. Preachers were false witnesses of God, of whom they testified, that He raised up Christ. 4th. That those who had fallen asleep were perished. Then, as if his soul was stirred within him, he takes, in the energy of the Spirit, the high ground of faith, asserting, with proper dignity and power, that *Christ is risen* from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. Yes, He is risen, and the dead shall rise. God is faithful, and the preachers of resurrection are true witnesses of Him. Believers are the happiest of men, and those who have fallen asleep are safe. Believers are justified from sin, and faith is proved to be effective to salvation. All this is proved and assured by the resurrection of Christ.

But not only is His resurrection the pledge of ours, but He, in resurrection and glory, is the *pattern Man* of the resurrection image of believers. The members will be conformed to the Head; "we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." "As we have borne

the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." With this the sleeping shall awake, and into this the living shall be changed, and all will be satisfied therewith.

This mighty change from mortal to immortal, from corruptible to incorruptible, from weakness to power, dishonour to glory, can only be accounted for by the power of God; and the revelation is made to *faith*. "Who shall change our vile body, that *it* may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to *the working whereby He is able* even to subdue all things unto Himself." Of this almighty working God has given an example, and that is *resurrection*.

This leads me to present this subject in another connection; viz., as *the demonstration of divine power*.

In the epistle to the Ephesians we have two prayers of Paul; the first in chap. i. 10-21, the second in chap. iii. 14-21; the one for light, the other for power.

In the first he asks for them, that they might know their dignity, wealth, and glory, the hope of His calling, their preciousness to Him, also the power securing them, and all these blessings to them; and then he points to the RESURRECTION of CHRIST as the example of the exceeding greatness of that mighty power.

Dear fellow-believer, think of this; contrast the present exaltation, dignity, glory, and power of Christ as in the Father's throne with the humiliation and helplessness of death and the grave. Then ask yourself, What power could have effected this, short of Omnipotence? Who could have done it but He with whom nothing is impossible? That power, which God wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand, far above all principality, power, and name, is toward *you*, upholding, encircling, sustaining, strengthening you with all might by His Spirit in the inner man (chap. iii.), routing and subduing your enemies; in a word, giving

you the victory over all that is against you, and preserving you unto His heavenly kingdom.

There are many instances of the display of divine power on record, but that was the most glorious manifestation, and to it the Holy Ghost points us whenever we would know the power which accounts for every thing blessed to be wrought in or for us: a strength made perfect in weakness. Yes, dear believing reader, the abiding proof to faith, that God will effect in us and for us all that He has called us to and promised us, is, that He has "raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." This being true, we should indeed rejoice; for "if God be for us, who can be against us?" Only let us despair of our own imagined strength, and He will strengthen the feeble against the mighty, and the lame shall take the prey.

(*To be continued, D.V.*)

H. H.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

WHAT is the relation of the judgment on the nations at the advent, to the judgment before the great white throne?

The judgment on the living nations seems to partake of the character of the judgments on the old world at the flood, and on the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah; for we read in Rev. xix. that while the beast and false prophet are cast alive into the lake of fire, the armies are slain, "and all the fowls are filled with their flesh." The slain therefore await the *final* judgment of the white throne, when "the dead, small and great, stand before God." (Chap. xx. 12.) We do not read of any of the living standing there. The general statement of 2 Thess. i. 8, 9, must be explained by the more explicit ones in Rev. xix. and xx.

On what day of the month did Christ rise?

Doubtless on the 17th, the Thursday being the 14th

of Nisan, from which we must date the three days and nights of our Lord's subjection to death; for He could not have been crucified till the day after the Passover, as He could have eaten it only on the appointed time, on the night following the 14th of the month. From the time when the Paschal Lamb was slain, till the morrow after the Sabbath when the wave-sheaf was waved, is probably the time designated by our Lord as "your hour and the power of darkness." Satan, death, and darkness reigned while the Lord of life was delivered up to the power of man and Satan. Hence virtually, though not actually, was our Lord three days and nights in the heart of the earth; for there Satan planned to place Him, and there He lay till in resurrection He triumphed over Satan and death, and for ever set aside the dominion of death and hell, of which henceforth He alone holds the keys. This 17th day of the month, the day of resurrection, has long been identified with the 17th day of the seventh month (Israel's old style) on which the ark rested on mount Ararat.

How are we to understand 1 Cor. x. 27, when compared with 2 Cor. vi. 14-17?

Our Lord's example gives an abundant answer to the above. We never hear of His refusing an invitation to the table of an unbeliever. He sat down with Simon the Pharisee, as well as in the house of the loved ones in Bethany. But He went for God, and carried God's salvation with Him. It would be no pleasure oftentimes to accept invitations that involved what His faithfulness to God and man led Him into. We find Him faithful to God as the God of forgiving grace (Luke vii. 36-50), and at the feast submitting to the sinner's touch. We see Him faithful to His host on another occasion (Luke xiv. 12-14), telling him to invite the poor, and not the rich; and faithful to His fellow-guests at the same feast (*vv.* 7-10), when

He reproved their pride. To all disposed to go, as in 1 Cor. x. 27, we would say, "Go and do likewise;" and nothing but a sense of the will of God will lead any where their loyalty and obedience may be tried as His were, who did all to the glory of God, and made all feel the presence of God in His words and ways, whether approved or disapproved.

What does Heb. vi. 1-6 teach?

The epistle to the Hebrews presents the Lord to us as the Beginner and Perfecter (for the words Author and Finisher in chapter xii. 2 are better so rendered), and these two aspects are presented to us in chap. vi. 1, "Leaving the word of the *beginning* of Christ" (see margin), "let us go on to the *perfectness*" (of Christ). The former refers to what Christ is to us in our capacity as sinners, and the latter to what He is to us in our need as saints. Now, all that is connected with our wants as sinners we have in the following foundation-work of repentance, faith, baptism, laying on of hands (substitution), resurrection, and judgment. These truths form God's foundation, and verses 4, 5, show the means by which they are made subjective realities. But there may be an enlightening that does not illuminate the soul, a tasting of the heavenly gift that does not satisfy, a participation in the word of promise and the miraculous powers of the coming world, and yet no vital union to Christ. So was it with Judas, whose history and end explain all we read in these verses, which are left on record that dead faith may tremble, and that living faith may cling all the closer, and by God's immutabilities have strong consolation when it has fled for refuge to lay hold on Christ. Hebrews vii. viii. ix. x. are the unfoldings of God's provision in the person of our High Priest to meet all our need as saints. Hence the solemn connection between Heb. vi. 1-6 and x. 26-29, which has but to be closely pondered, and the meaning will become plain.

THE LIBERTY OF SONSHIP.

BONDAGE and liberty are figures very frequently used in the word of God. By nature man, created in the image of God, enjoyed the liberty of a creature in the presence of his God; but when sin came into the world by man's disobedience, he passed under "the bondage of corruption." He was free no longer. Sin was the master; he was the slave. Death was the tyrant; he was the bondsman. Satan was the murderer; he was the victim.

Man of himself never learns this. The Holy Ghost alone reveals it; and when it is revealed, the sinner knows what it is to be lost. Satan's grand deception is to make man think he is free. This flatters his vanity; but behind self Satan is ever hid. He has usurped God's place, and reigns, perhaps unsuspectedly, in a corrupted will and depraved affections.

In order to break this bondage, the Son of God has come, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem from the bondage of Satan, to save from the power of sin, and to deliver from the fear of death. Christ has come to destroy (*λυση*, unloose or untie) the works of the devil, which in man have resulted in a *threefold* bondage; viz., of the *will*, of the *mind* (which includes the intellectual faculties), and of the *affections*. The Lord says, in Jeremiah, "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which executeth lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth." Jehovah has provided a remedy from this threefold bondage and threefold apostasy. Freedom has been procured by the Son, who says, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

(John viii. 36.) This is "the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free" (Gal. v. 1), in which we are told to "stand fast," that we "be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage."

The old nature, the flesh, loves its chains still; "it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;" and therefore, as long as we carry about "the body of death," we shall need the redemption-power of the Son of God, through the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, to be continually exercised on our behalf. We too little remember this. We have not sufficiently learnt the lesson of our weakness. We realize not the danger of becoming again entangled with the yoke of bondage. We are prone to act as if the flesh were dead in us, because in Christ we are dead to it; and to imagine that its influence is gone, because its mastery has been set aside in Christ.

Yet, though groaning within ourselves, we are the sons of God, and it will soon be manifested that we are such; but in the meantime redemption must be laid hold on with a firm grasp, if we would really and practically know what LIBERTY means and what it involves. Redemption-price is the precious blood, and redemption-power is the Holy Ghost.

The water from the smitten rock illustrates the latter. The rock could be smitten but once, and that by the rod of the holy God, who cried, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow: smite the shepherd, saith the Lord of hosts." (Zec. xiii. 7.) Henceforth and evermore the command to us all is, as to Moses, "Take the rod, [the symbol of divine power] . . . and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock." (Num. xx. 8.)

It is this that fainting souls need. This it is which gives liberty from the bondage of wilderness circumstances and wilderness trials. This will make the

wilderness and solitary place to be glad, and will cause the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. We are told, "It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: . . . they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." We may well read and ponder over this glorious chapter of liberty and joy (Isa. xxxv.), if we would enter into the real liberty wherewith the Lord makes His people free. This is the liberty which the gospel proclaims to the captive, to whom God would give "*beauty* for ashes, the oil of *joy* for mourning, the garment of *praise* for the spirit of heaviness." (Isa. lxi. 3.) Yes, truly the liberty of Christ *gives* beauty, joy, and praise; and, whether we have stood fast in our liberty or not, it *is* our portion—the very first-fruits of the gospel to every one that believeth; for "all things are ours," because we are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

The ashes, the mourning, the heaviness *belonged* to us as convicted sinners under the teaching of the Spirit of God. They were our proper portion while in the flesh, and again become our practical condition when we fall under the power of the flesh. Then the fallen one needs again the gospel of liberty to be re-echoed in his hearing, and the presence of the mighty Advocate again to proclaim liberty.

This liberty is not only deliverance from "the *corruption* that is in the world"—from which the cross once and for ever has separated those who are "partakers of a divine nature"—but also from "the *pollutions* of the world" in daily life. (Compare 2 Peter i. 1-4 with ii. 18-22.) The liberty of "the divine nature" is according to a "divine power," which "has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness;" while the so called liberty of the old nature is but the bondage of corruption, that returns like "the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." In the one, the human has been made partaker of the divine, that is, is born again; in the other, the human has

been washed, but left unchanged in the bondage of its inward corruption.

But to return. We have observed that in a three-fold sense the Son of God is proclaiming liberty from the thralldom of sin over the *will*, the *mind*, and the *affections*. This He accomplishes by making God the centre of all three, giving to our will His law, to our mind His wisdom, and to our affections His love; and this law, wisdom, and love find their embodiment in Christ, and their communication in the Holy Ghost. They are objectively presented to us in Christ, and they are subjectively wrought out in us by the Holy Ghost. In God is the essence; in Christ is the manifestation; and in the Holy Ghost is the impartation. The Father gives the Son to reveal Himself, and the Son gives the Holy Spirit (who proceedeth from the Father and the Son) to communicate Himself; and thereby He brings many sons unto "the liberty of the glory" of the family of God.

Liberty knows of no external coercion. Where that is there can be no real liberty. All its restraints and constraints are with its full consent. Of His own will God loved us, and begat us through the word of truth; and when begotten again, we love Him because He first loved us. There is no fear in that love; for there is no bondage in it. We love, *not* because we ought to love, *not* because it is consistent with law and right, but because we cannot help loving. It is the intuition of the new life. It needs no law; for it is a law unto itself, just as wives are not *commanded* to love their husbands. Love must flow down before it can flow back; and the way to increase our love to our God and Father is, to remove the hindrances to the inflow of His love into our hearts, and then it will of necessity rise again to Himself, whence it sprang. This is the liberty of Christ that influences the whole man, and sanctifies wholly spirit, soul, and body.

Sin brought in fear, and fear truly has torment. Love drives away fear, and fills the soul of him who loves with joy and peace.

Let us now say a few words on this liberty in the three aspects already named :

First—*The liberty of the will* over the power of sin. The heart is, we believe, figuratively regarded in Scripture as the seat of the will. It is that which in animal life gives energy and power to the organs of our body. It would be a most instructive study to trace out in Scripture all that is placed in connection with the heart, that great depth in man which God only can search out, which He only can fathom, and whose streams He only can turn. We are taught to say, "*Thy will* be done," and when this is said in truth, it proves that God has regained His place in the heart of him who utters it, that He has fathomed the mighty springs of the human will, and brought that will into harmony with His own; and this *not* by an act of coercive power, but by such a manifestation of Himself that we believe He has no will towards us except for our blessing, and therefore we can have no will but His pleasure.

This is where implicit faith and unhindered trust would place us, and our joyful assurance then would ever be that all things were working together for good under the all-wise guidance of our God and Father. There would then be no will but God's. This would be our yoke, and we should find it easy, and the burden light.

Thus it would be if the liar, the old serpent, did not beguile us with his whisperings and his lies, even as he beguiled Eve. It was this that excited Paul's fears for the Corinthian converts, and it is this that may well excite our fears for ourselves, and for one another. Satan beguiles, and though we are not ignorant of his devices, we often disregard them. "My son, give me

thine heart;" that is, give over to me thy will, place it under my guidance, subject it to my will. This is God's requirement from us, and then the full response will ever be, as with the blessed Lord, "Not my will but thine be done." Had it not been so with Him, what would have been the result? Because it is so seldom thus with us, what are the consequences? Loss here and loss in eternity. May our hearts utter their loving "Amen" as we say, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

Second, *The liberty of the mind* from the influence of man's falsely-called science; for the foolishness of God is wiser than man. "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," was Satan's temptation to Eve, and ever since the wisdom of the flesh has exalted itself against the wisdom of God—a wisdom that makes a man a fool that he may be wise. We say, "God *only* wise;" if we believed it more we should more easily learn the lesson—"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom."

We must not confound wisdom with reason. Wisdom may transcend all our reason, for reason necessarily has a creature limitation which is too often lost sight of, and the highest reason is to bend to a wisdom that often it cannot understand. It is but reasonable that a child should defer in things beyond its reach to those wiser than itself, and it is but reason that in matters beyond our consciousness we should bow to the wisdom of God. But here also Satan has come in, and as he has made man self-willed, so has he made him proud in his unreasonable claim to a right to judge of all by a measure of his own.

God is wiser than man; yet God requires not of us faith in what is contrary to reason, but only in that which is above our reason. That which now *appears* contrary to reason is only so because of the limitations that necessarily surround us. Man by searching cannot

find out God, and nothing but the apostasy of the mind from God would lead the creature to exalt itself against the knowledge of God—a knowledge given by God, and not to be found out by the wisdom of the creature.

In contrast with this wisdom which comes up from beneath, welling up out of the depths of the darkness of the natural mind, is that which comes down from above—Christ, the wisdom of God. In the contemplation of the wisdom of God's ways in Christ, Paul exclaims: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever." (Rom. xi. 33-36.)

None had gone deeper, and none had soared higher, than Paul, who was taken up into the third heaven; but he who had sat at the feet of Gamaliel was now sitting at the feet of Christ, and all his wisdom became foolishness in the presence of His cross. His mind found its liberty; for he could say, "We have the mind of Christ." The uncertainties of opinions passed away, and the certainty of divine fact occupied their place. Once he could say, as Naaman of old, "I thought;" but now he can say also with him, "I know."

Theories in the mind lead to thoughts that rise like mists and fogs from the swamps and quagmires of unbelief; but realizations of life and health in the soul (the effect of the sevenfold dipping in the Jordan) lead to a knowledge that no human wisdom can touch, and no scepticism assail with success. Infidelity is God's engine to lay low ungrounded theories. However right those theories may be, they are unreal to the doubting soul; however good the material may be, the house is built on the sand, and it falls.

Third, *The liberty of the affections and desires.* Sin has come in, and polluted every affection and every desire. We read, "All that is in the world, the desire of the flesh, and the desire of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 John ii. 16.)

The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shines into this moral and spiritual darkness, and the tempest of man's affections and desires is brought into a great calm before Him who walks over its troubled waters, and says, "Peace, be still." After casting out the demon from the demoniac, who was so exceeding fierce that no one dared pass by that way, He presents the maniac to us sitting at His feet, clothed, and in his right mind. He was enslaved once, and tyrannized over by Satan; now he is at liberty, and sitting at his Deliverer's feet. He once went as he was driven, as man in the bondage of corruption; he now goes in the impulse of a newly-found freedom, and tells what great things Jesus had done for him, and had had compassion on him.

So was it with us when in our affections and desires sin ruled, and "the works of the flesh" manifested themselves; but now Christ rules in the liberty of love, and "the fruit of the Spirit" occupies the place of the works of the flesh. That fruit is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against which there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified *the flesh with its affections and desires.*"

Thus, instead of those affections and desires which produce the works of the flesh, those new affections and new desires have come in which mark those who live and who walk in the Spirit, and its precious fruit is brought forth spontaneously through the fruitfulness of living fellowship with the Living Vine. Fruit is not made; it grows, like the lilies of the field, which toil not and spin not; and so the sweetest affections

and desires of the soul grow, "fruit of His toil," not of ours.

What fulness of liberty there is here, of well-pleasing fruitfulness to God, that springs spontaneous, as flowers in the wilderness and roses in the desert, through the living waters that flow there!

Thus all is the most perfect liberty; His service is perfect freedom. The *will* is redeemed and brought into liberty, that only finds its freedom in the will of God; the *mind* is redeemed, and finds its liberty in unfolding and in drinking into the infinite wisdom of God; and as the child of wisdom justifies wisdom in all His ways, the *affections and desires* are also redeemed, and find their outflow and their enjoyment in that fruitbearing unto God, wherein He is glorified, and whence is yielded the wine that rejoices the heart of God and man.

The principle of all heavenly freedom is *obedience*; and hence we read, "I will walk at liberty; for I seek thy precepts." There can be no liberty elsewhere; all outside it is bondage.

But do we *stand fast* in the enjoyment of the liberty wherewith we have been made free? Are we in any measure entangled with the ill weeds of Hagar's bondage, and of the mind of the flesh as typified in Ishmael? Have we cast out the bondwoman and her son? It will cost much heart conflict; and unless we rise up early to do it, we shall find them so firmly settled in the house that the probability is we shall never get them out of the house at all till the house itself be taken down, and "we fly away," and shall never know how much the spirit of bondage has marred our spiritual life, dishonoured God, and injured our usefulness, until we stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. Then the whole-hearted, who have walked in the liberty of the gospel, and the half-hearted, who walked in the footsteps of Ishmael that mocked, shall alike know what they have gained and what they have lost.

May God give us all grace to walk in the truth that makes free, and, standing fast therein, see to it that we become not again entangled in the bondage of the flesh.

H. G.

THE NAZARITE :

THE COMPLETION OF HIS VOW.

WE now approach the fifth part of this institution—the ceremonies to be observed on the completion of the vow, and the successful accomplishment of all that was enjoined. The directions are contained in Num. vi. 13–21.

The engagement is now at an end. The dread of failure is over; the mind is no longer harassed as to the doubt of success. The man has been faithful to his engagements; he has honoured God by obeying His commands. May he not now repose in the quiet enjoyment of what he has accomplished? No; not yet. It remains to be ascertained whether He, to whom the service has been rendered, is satisfied with what has been done; whether He approves, and in what light He regards His servant and the service rendered. Not till this has been decided may the man return to his usual course of life. He must wait for the expression of his Master's thoughts about his conduct, as becomes a servant, more especially a servant of the Most High.

He has not long to wait; the decision is expressed beforehand. He is directed to appear before the Lord's tent. He must not come empty-handed, as if to receive a reward for what he had done. On the contrary, he must bring with him certain specified gifts to be presented to his God; and which, if the man were poor, would be no small burden upon him. There were to be two lambs, also one ram, bread, cakes, wafers, and wine; the expense altogether approaching perhaps £4 or £5 of our money. Rich or poor, there was no differ-

ence. Besides which, something more was expected according to his circumstances in life. All this outlay must have been anticipated before he became a Nazarite, and need not have been incurred at all had he not pledged himself by this voluntary vow. And all this in addition to the self-denial, inconvenience, and shame he had undergone while the period of the vow continued.

What, then, was the benefit accruing from all this self-surrender? Clearly nothing in the way of worldly advancement. All was outlay; no profit. Some measure of peace of mind might be gained from the consciousness of having done a meritorious act, sanctioned by God though not enjoined by Him, especially if the motive for undertaking it arose from a guilty conscience. But such peace could only be temporary, and unsatisfactory to the soul, like all other descriptions of penance.

But any such self-complacency is presently dissipated, brought down to the dust. One of the lambs so presented is taken by the priest and offered before God as the man's sin-offering. What! a sin-offering on having fully discharged his obligation? For having done his duty thoroughly? Yes, such is the demand of God. A sin-offering must first be presented before anything else can be accepted. The Nazarite must stand before God as a culprit, one who has forfeited his life to divine justice. He must lay his hands on the head of the lamb. It must yield up its life in order to ensure the sparing of his life. It dies in his place. Had he foreborne to vow, this would not have been requisite; but having vowed, and having performed his vow, it is indispensable. Such are God's thoughts respecting the best doings of man. Sinner he ever is. Sinner he ever will be as long as he remains in the body. Nothing he can do will divest him of the position of sinner. Reconciliation must be made for him by the substitute yielding up its life in his stead. When this has been done, and accepted by God, as indicated by the blood

and fat on the altar, the pardoned sinner is now capacitated to offer his burnt-offering through the instrumentality of the divinely-appointed priest.

This, the highest of the offerings, can be offered only by a cleansed worshipper, against whom no charge of guilt remains; the fire on the altar displaying God's acceptance of the gift. With this the flour and cakes pertaining thereto are presented, and the drink-offering poured out. Hereby the Nazarite sees and knows that he stands well with God, who would not otherwise have accepted anything from him. And this is no small satisfaction to his soul, intimating as it does that the performance of his vow has been noticed with complacency by his Maker.

Further, he now presents, still through the priest, his peace-offering, with its accompaniments. These are likewise accepted by Jehovah, the fat of the ram and the cakes being consumed on the altar by fire. To the priest is assigned the shoulder and the breast, with a cake and a wafer, that he may partake of what his Master is accepting. The remainder of the animal is assigned to the Nazarite, who is thus privileged to participate with his God and with His servant the priest, a privilege of wonderful significance and importance, since it for the time obliterates the enormous distance between the creature and his Creator, the sinner and his God.

Meantime, while the fat of the peace-offering is yet burning, the person, male or female, has to undergo the process of being shaven at the door of the tabernacle; that is, still, as it were, in the sight of the King and of the attendants about His court. This, in the case of the woman, as we have seen from I Cor. xi., is disgraceful to her (also Isa. iii. 24); and in the case of the man not less so, since it deprives him of the distinctive badge and appearance of manhood. It deprives them both of their natural grace and comeliness, and of that which in Absalom contributed so much to his

personal beauty. Moreover, it removes from both the only permanent vestige of their having been Nazarites; so that neither of them in the after day could point to any outward sign of their having been separate unto God. To lose all trace of this would be to forfeit any respect they had previously obtained, and until the hair again grew, would depress them even lower than their fellow-Israelites who retained their hair—a further humiliation for them. There must be no glorying in the flesh, neither in its natural advantages, nor in its acquirements, nor yet in its zealous acts of service.

To compensate, however, for all this loss, the hair is received by the priest—for none but the sons of Aaron could, under penalty of death, approach the altar—and by him placed on the flames consuming the fat of the peace-offering; so it partakes of the acceptance of that oblation. It is placed along with and accompanies that which in Lev. xxi. is spoken of as the bread or food of his God. Thus it was the God of Israel sealed His approval of the homage His servant had rendered to Him, dignifying him with this high honour. No other such mark of divine estimation is found in any of the Mosaic enactments. The more this point is dwelt upon, the more amazing does the condescension of the High and Holy One who inhabits eternity appear, and the more was it calculated to gratify the Nazarite.

Now as to the hair. Can we find any parallel in the internal, corresponding to the place it occupies in the external frame? What qualities of mind and heart present themselves as analogous to the way in which the hair adorns the outward person? As regards the woman, must we not seek for them in those capacities with which God has endowed her in order to fulfil the offices for which she is designed, and is so eminently qualified, as the wife, the mother, the sister, the friend? She guides the house, and under her gentle and wise control it prospers. Were it not for her tenderness, all would go wrong. In the exercise of these qualities,

when yielded unto God, she is accomplishing her path of life, "serving her generation." The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit in the sight of God is of great value. The more these qualities grow, like the hair, the more ornamental are they.

As regards the other sex, have we not in the Old as well as in the New Testament repeated injunctions to exercise the characteristic with which he is endowed? How often is "Be strong" addressed to him? Manliness is expected of him, comprising uprightness, truthfulness, sincerity, boldness, and many other admirable qualities which Satan has marred and perverted to his own use. Yet all the moral as well as mental endowments are created and entrusted to him by his God. To Him they belong. Man, as a steward of his Master's property, has to cultivate and employ them for the glory of the owner. When yielded as instruments of righteousness unto holiness, they are legitimately employed. When man listens to the voice of his Maker, obedient to His commands, then only is displayed the purpose for which he was created, and is thus largely endowed. Then is true manliness seen; not till then. David before Goliath, Elijah on mount Carmel, the three youths before Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel before Darius, were all grand illustrations of true manliness, fulfilling the purpose of their Creator, and rejoicing His heart; inadmissible, however, as we have seen, without the sin-offering, and the other offerings as directed.

But when the hair of the Nazarite is accepted and appropriated to Himself by God, the man has been divested of it. He no longer retains it; he has voluntarily surrendered it to Him who has deigned to accept it. No flesh must or can glory in His presence, for this all-sufficient reason, that "of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things." The whole has originated in the counsels of the Father and the Son, has been brought about, not by man, but by God Himself, and elaborated for His own glory and gratification.

Happy the soul that has been brought to acknowledge, acquiesce, and rejoice in this! He is in fellowship with God.

R. N.

RESURRECTION.

(Continued from page 222.)

Resurrection is also connected with the promises of God.

As so much of our comfort is derived from the experience of the truth of the promises, it is important that we should perceive this.

All the promises of God are *in* Christ; for they are the expressions of a purpose, even the purpose of grace; and grace can only flow to us through Him.

There was no promise to the *first* Adam until he had sinned and needed the *last*, the second Man, the Lord from heaven. He had commandment, "Be fruitful," &c.; prohibition, "Thou shalt not eat;" and threat, "Thou shalt surely die;" but no promise. The first promise therefore was made in connection with Christ; and He and His work was its substance.

Moreover the law, seeing it could no more *give* than it could *forgive*, had no unconditional promise connected with it. It would pay wages to a *perfect* workman, but it could not *give* life; therefore righteousness is not by it. The promise is of faith, that it might be by grace, and so be sure. (Rom. iv. 14-17.) Whether, therefore, it is the promise of life made before the world was; that made to man in his ruin to meet his need; the special promises made to the Jewish fathers, or that made to individual believers for the present; or of the coming of Christ for the church—all are made *in* Him, and can only be rightly presented in His name.

God, who is love, purposed and promised to show grace to the undeserving, and mercy to the guilty and miserable, bringing them into peace and unto Himself,

the God of peace; but all in Christ. As the promises are made in Christ, they are made to believers as in Him; not as in the flesh, in nature, in the first man, but as new creatures. Man by nature is a stranger to the covenants of promise, even as he is without God in the world. Both promises and precepts are given and addressed to the new creature, or creation; not to the natural man, but to the man in Christ.

Judas, who was excluded from the bathing (John xiii. 10, 11), was also excepted in the exhortation. (vv. 13-19.) He who will not have the Lord Jesus as His Saviour, cannot have the privilege of serving, of obeying Him as Lord and Master, but must yet stand before Him as a Judge. The promises are the heritage of believers, and are confirmed to them in *resurrection*.

It is an interesting fact, that Jehovah's oath was introduced in connection with typical death and resurrection. He had made *promise* to Abraham, both of the land and of a son; but the *oath* was reserved for the scene of Moriah, when Abraham had in purpose slain his Isaac and received him back as from the dead. Jehovah stayed the father's hand, and speaking a second time, said, "By myself have I sworn, that in blessing I will bless thee." Thus through the trial Jehovah was better known, the day of Christ beheld, the promise confirmed by the oath, and Abraham's faith strengthened. When he raised his hand to slay Isaac, he threatened to cut off all his hopes built on the promise of a seed; but in receiving him back, hope revived, and the promises were grasped the more firmly.

The cross of Christ was to human reasoning and unbelief the death of everything—it cut off for the time the hope of the kingdom from the disciples; for they said, "We hoped that it had been He who should have redeemed Israel." But when the cross and the resurrection were understood, Peter could say, "Blessed

be God, who hath begotten us again to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." All revived with Him. This proves the connection there is between resurrection and the promise of God; and yet there is a more direct reference to and definite presentation of it in the Word.

In Acts xiii. 32, 33, Paul declares to the Jews glad tidings, "that the promise made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again." The fulfilment of this promise in resurrection was the virtual fulfilment of all promises; therefore said the same apostle, in 2 Cor. i. 20, "All the promises of God in Him, *Christ Jesus*" (as risen, of course), "are yea, and in Him Amen." Hence the simple and sure ground of confidence in God for the fulfilment of His promises is, that He has raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.

Shall I say that this is even surer ground than our experience of their truthfulness? I think so. I judge we are more likely to be misled by that which is within ourselves than by the contemplation of Christ, and faith in Him through the Word. Experience of God's faithfulness to that Word is indeed blessed; but it is safer, better, to regard the transactions of God with His Christ for us, than ours with Him. The first is the source of the second. Let us then keep our eye fixed on Christ.

Thus far we have considered, or I have suggested, our subject in relation to the believer, as presented to faith for its steadfastness and intelligent action, and for our common joy until we know resurrection to be to us what it has proved to be to Christ; viz., the fulfilment of promise. I shall now present it in its relation to the world.

Resurrection is connected with judgment.

How little do the people of the world think of the resurrection of Christ in this light, as the assurance

given by God that He will judge the world! And perhaps we as Christ's servants fail so to present it.

That all judgment is committed unto the Son, that Son Himself declared. (John v. 22.) To Him is given authority to execute judgment, as well as to give life (v. 27); and yet, when here in humiliation, He said, "I came not to judge the world, but to save;" and again, in John iii., it is written: "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn (or judge) the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." He came to save, and that by dying on the cross, bearing the judgment of God against sin for others.

Unknown by the world, He came to His own things, yet His own people did not recognize Him, and would not receive Him. Around His cross gathered Jews and Gentiles, noble and ignoble, rich and poor, wise and illiterate, religious and profane, differing widely among themselves, yet agreed on one point, and on that in agreement with hell; viz., to reject and crucify the Son of God, Israel's King, and to kill the Prince of life.

If, as noticed, all judgment is committed to Him, and He is the appointed Judge of the world, yet when He was here He did not judge it, but died to save—then of necessity He must be *raised* from the dead in order to judge. By referring to Acts xvii. 31, we find that God has determined the judgment of the world, that He has appointed the day and ordained the Judge, "THAT MAN" the Lord Jesus; and of this He has given "assurance to all men, in that He hath *raised Him from the dead.*"

The righteous judgment of the world is *certain*; for Christ is risen. Of the judgment itself we have a striking and fearful description in Rev. xx., evidently the judgment of the world; not the judgment-seat (Bēma) of Christ, nor the judgment of living nations, Christendom, at the close of Antichrist's time and reign, but that of the dead who died in their sins, raised from

the dead in order to be judged, convicted and sentenced to everlasting destruction from before the throne, the judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennium, when death and hell, and “all whose names shall not be found written in the book of life, shall be cast into the lake of fire, the second death, even the lake of fire.”

Whether, therefore, we consider the promise of God, the promises of grace, of guidance, preservation, deliverance, and exaltation, when He shall fulfil the promise of Christ’s coming for His Church, or the awful subject of the judgment of the world in righteousness, when God shall be justified in His sayings, and the wicked be silenced in darkness and misery, the evidence of each and of both is the fact, that He who died has been raised from the dead. H. H.

“THE BONES OF JOSEPH.”

“THE resurrection of the just,” or “the resurrection from the dead” (*i.e.* from amongst the dead), a distinctive and prior resurrection of the righteous only, is plainly taught in God’s word, as a paper in *The Golden Lamp* has lately said. But many Christians have no such belief or expectation; but, like Martha, in John xi., say to themselves, when thinking of the departed saint, “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection *at the last day,*” while Jesus’ mind was to link resurrection with *His own presence*, and not to leave it to any “*last day.*” “*I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. . . . Believest thou this?*”

But before entering on the New Testament passages which definitely teach this soul-stirring truth as part of our “blessed hope,” let us learn a little of how God’s Spirit taught, in the days before Christ came, God’s purpose of resurrection of the righteous, and put into the hearts of His people the faith of it.

It was by their care over the bodies of their fellow-saints, and the provision they made for their own remains, that they expressed this faith, as well as by their patient looking on for the promised Messiah through so many generations.

In the case of Sarah, Abraham showed his faith in the resurrection of the righteous, as truly as he did his affection for her, by his care as to where and how he buried her. (See Gen. xxiii.) Joseph did the same concerning his own body. "By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones" (Heb. xi. 22)—a faith that surely must have gone beyond the reaching of an earthly Canaan, and looked to resurrection.

Thus the bones of the righteous dead had rich lessons of a resurrection faith and hope to even Old Testament saints. The same Israel who had to use such care over the bones of the passover lamb (see Ex. xii. 46) that not a bone of it should be broken, next had to carry with them on their journey the bones of Joseph (see Ex. xiii. 19)—a voice to them, as they went along, of the faith of their departed ancestor, that God, their God, would keep His covenant with them as His people. In later and sadder days of their history God again spoke to them from the bones of the righteous dead, when a slain Israelite, being hastily let down into Elisha's sepulchre, came to life again as soon as he touched the prophet's bones." (2 Kings xiii. 21.) Let us gather up, then, some of the lessons taught us from the bones of the passover lamb, the bones of Joseph, and the bones of Elisha.

For small items in Old Testament pages may convey to us great lessons. Our Lord Himself rebuked the Sadducees for their philosophic infidelity, and rested the whole truth of the resurrection of the dead on this single point, that it was to Moses *at the bush* (Ex. iii. 6), and not when the honoured patriarchs were living, that

God said, “I *am* the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;” *i.e.* I *am*—not I *was*, but I still *AM*—their God, lying in the dust though they are; thus showing, said our Lord, “that the dead are raised.”

One of the items of Old Testament pages is this law as to the bones of the passover lamb. What care would be required to kill and roast and eat all the flesh of the lamb in that night, and yet not break a single bone of it! and with what watchful, reverent hearts should we remember Him of Whom, though not a bone was broken, yet there was not a bone that did not suffer. On the passover-table of the Israelites lay every bone of their lamb when their feast was over; “his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof,” had all been eaten, and yet there lay every bone to remind them still of how the victim had suffered in their stead. “I am poured out like water, and *all my bones* are out of joint;” and again, “I may tell *all my bones*: they look and stare upon me” (Ps. xxii. 14, 17), are words of His own to express how fully He gave *Himself* for us, and are words which remind us that “Christ our passover was sacrificed for us,” and help us the more fully to *remember* Him.

But what joy to us also that every bone of Him now rejoices in mighty and glorious resurrection-life. The Son of Mary, the Babe of Bethlehem, the baptized One in Jordan, the agonized and slain One upon the tree, lives again, and as He now sits at God’s right hand *every bone* in Him rejoices. He knew it would be so. “My soul shall be joyful in the Lord. . . . *All my bones* shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him?” (Ps. xxxv. 9, 10) was His believing cry in the time of His woe, and now it is fulfilled to Him.

Hence it was to His *side*, as well as to His hands and feet, that He pointed us on His rejoicing resurrection-day. The malefactors’ legs were broken; but the spear-

wound of the rude and careless soldier in His side had been inflicted instead of breaking any bone of Him; and by God's skill and power in raising Him from the dead, the mark of it remains in Him now and for ever, as a token of the perfectness of His death for us once, and of His glorious perfection for us as the Captain of our salvation now in resurrection.

But if resurrection-thoughts of Him we love are thus linked with the bones of the passover lamb, how naturally this is followed by the mention of "the bones of Joseph" when they set out upon their journey; for a living, raised, and ascended Jesus is not only our joy as Lamb of God for us within the veil, but is the assurance to us also of the resurrection of the saints in His image ere long. Christ's coming, and their rising from their graves, and our being joined with them to meet Him in the air, are linked together; they are but different parts of our one "blessed hope." The same epistle which speaks of "Christ our passover sacrificed for us," and bids us remember Him in the Lord's Supper "till He come," authoritatively teaches us that "by man came the resurrection of the dead . . . Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming" (1 Cor. xv. 23); so closely linked is the faith and the worship of a risen Jesus with our hope of the resurrection of the saints.

Each token to us of the nearness of His coming is equally a token of how soon *they* will be raised, and of our "*all* being changed." Hence we carry with us in our hearts and thoughts the dust of the sleeping saints as we journey

"Onward, upward, homeward,"

to that looked-for, longed-for coming of our Lord. We are not to be "ignorant concerning them which are asleep," neither actually so by mistaken thoughts about them, nor virtually so by forgetfulness of them; and it is this last to which we are so prone. Solomon says

about the dead, when describing what he saw “under the sun,” “The memory of them is forgotten.” And is not this too true of even us as saints of the heavenly places?

But let it not be so. Israel was never to journey or to rest without having with them “the bones of Joseph.” The carrying them was a perpetual voice to them of how surely they would reach their promised land, and that beyond it there lay also before them “a better country, that is, an heavenly.” The “bones of Joseph” were, like the “grapes of Eshcol,” a voice to them to press on to the prize that lay before them, just as the “first-fruits of the Spirit” are given us now in our hearts; and we also have the memory of the guides who once spake to us the word of God (Heb. xiii. 7; see Greek), whose faith we are to follow, considering the goodly end of their lives amongst us. Joseph’s bones in their midst spoke, like Abel’s dust, not only of a God-given faith, but also of a most godly life and a believing end. He might have been buried in one of the costliest tombs of Egypt, and no doubt would have been, but for his command to the contrary; and thus, as he cared for Israel, and nourished them and their little ones while living, he helped their faith and hope even by his sleeping dust.

So now; never was the Church of God so rich as it now is in the dust of the sleeping. Each year the number thus at rest, and waiting for the same shout and trump for which we are waiting, exceeds yet more and more the number of us who are alive and remain, and amongst them not only Joseph himself, but how many, many such as he! In “the house of God, which is the church of the living God,” its sleeping chamber of the grave gets fuller and fuller every year of precious ones who rest from their labours. Patriarchs and seers, apostles and prophets, our honoured first parents themselves, and martyrs and ransomed ones without number, are there. Let us not forget them. The coffin of

Joseph's bones rewarded Israel, as they carried it, with many a lesson to them and their little ones of God's grace in the past to him then at rest, and with a pledge of the future; but what might not we learn in our later day if we more carried with us, in our present pathway of faith and hope, the dust of sleeping fellow-saints!

But "the bones of Elisha" are a lesson to us also. (2 Kings xiii. 20, 21.) By them we learn that God's resurrection power is with us now in all present conflicts, even as it was in Israel's saddest days.

Jehoram was but a feeble king, and had but little learned the courage for fighting "the good fight" which dying Elisha had sought to teach him. (See *vv.* 14-19.) And the people were feeble also; for, as they were burying one of their number (slain, perhaps, in the war), they see Moabites approaching, and, in their fear of the invaders, hastily invade the sanctity of Elisha's tomb.

But the God of Israel was there—the God that quickens the dead and raises them—and He must show Himself unchanged still towards His failing, timid people. No sooner did their dead companion touch Elisha's bones than "he revived, and stood up on his feet," taking his place again, it may be, in the ranks of Israel's host. What a voice to them, and also to us! As if God would say, as in Isaiah li. 12, 13, "I, even I, am He that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass; and forgettest Jehovah thy Maker; . . . and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor?" Oh for the answer to this appeal, both in Israel's heart and in ours—"If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Paul writes in 1 Cor. xv., not only of the hope of the resurrection of all saints ere long at Christ's coming, but speaks also of those who so knew in themselves

the *present power* of that hope that they were "baptized for the dead;" *i.e.* to occupy the place of those just killed for confessing Christ; and says also that it was by this same "knowledge of God," as quickener and raiser of the dead, that he himself "willingly stood in jeopardy every hour," and "fought with beasts at Ephesus." Of himself and his fellow-soldiers for Christ in that Ephesus scene (see Acts xix.) he also says, "We despaired even of life: but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God *which raiseth the dead*" (2 Cor. i. 8, 9); and invites all the Corinthian saints to join him, and to help him in "fighting this good fight."

Such was the faith, and such also the conquering warfare of the early church. We have lost many an Elijah and Elisha—departed ones who finished well their course—and are in days of Jehoram-like feebleness and failure; but God, our God, is still the same, and we are commended "to Him, and to the word of His grace."

Oh to know then, better than we now do, resurrection's teachings, and its mighty power, whether in the glory and grace of Jesus, the already risen Lamb of God, our Passover, or as it speaks to us from the still slumbering, unraised "bones of Joseph," and arms us afresh for the fight by God's voice to us from "the bones of Elisha." Amen.

H. D.

THERE is a great difference between "The Lord God hath opened mine ear," in Isaiah l. 5, and "Mine ears hast thou opened," in Psalm xl. 6. The expression in Isaiah is, as it were, the enlarging the capacity of the ear for instruction, and is the preparation for the opening spoken of in Psalm xl., which is nothing less than the piercing through the fleshy part with an awl. (Exod. xxi. 5, 6.) The awl of affliction is thus oftentimes applied to the Lord's servants.

"SONGS IN THE NIGHT."

JOB xxxv. 10.

We thank Thee, Saviour, for the hand,
 So tender yet so strong,
 That guides the pillar'd fire and cloud
 Our pilgrim path along.
 We thank Thee for the falling steps
 Thy strength alone can stay,
 For the cloud that sheds the rainbow light
 Of promise on the way.

We thank Thee for the chastening love
 That marks us sons of God ;
 We learn obedience in the path
 Thine own dear footsteps trod.
 We thank Thee for the wound Thy hand,
 And Thine alone, can heal ;
 For the precious sympathies of God
 Our deepest needs reveal.

We thank Thee for the conflict sore,
 With mighty foes around ;
 For the whole armour of Thy strength,
 Which else we had not found.
 We thank Thee for the weakness felt,
 That drives our souls on Thee ;
 For the promise, in our darkest hour,
 Of more than victory !

Soon shall we praise Thee in the light,
 When earth's last cloud is past,
 And the gladness of Thy presence
 O'er all the future cast.
 But we would hush e'en now the song
 Our ransom'd lips shall raise,
 When in Thy likeness evermore
 We sing Thy perfect praise.

A. E. W.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

2 COR. v. 19.—What is the meaning of "God was in Christ reconciling the world"?

In the cross God has on His part removed all cause of judgment, reconciling thereby the world to Himself.

The consequence is that sin is not being now imputed, but God, instead of executing sentence on sinners, is entreating them to be reconciled to Him. Reconciliation accepted is pardon secured; reconciliation rejected is condemnation sealed.

God's aspect towards man is love. "God so loved the world," &c. Man's aspect towards God is enmity; for "the carnal mind is enmity against God." Love heaps coals of fire on the enemies' heads, which ultimately proves either altar fire for pardon and salvation, or hell fire for condemnation and wrath, according to whether the reconciliation effected by God be received or rejected. The *general* statement is universal, "God was in Christ *reconciling*" (present participle), showing God's object in the cross; the *particular* statement, which we find in v. 18, "Who *reconciled*" (past tense) "us unto Himself," applies to the believer only. It does not say, God reconciled the world; nor does it say, He was reconciling the believer.

[This question is sent by a brother in Norway, who finds mistaken doctrines built upon the Norwegian translation that "God *reconciled* the world;" and it shows the importance of carefully following the word of God.]

Matt. xxviii. 19.—"Go ye therefore, and teach all *nations* (*ἔθνη*), baptizing *them*" (*αὐτοὺς*). What is the force in the original of the masculine pronoun *them* after the neuter noun *nations*?

The reason of the change from the neuter to the masculine would seem to be, that while *nations* as such were to be instructed, and have the gospel preached to them, the *individuals* among them only who received the gospel were to be baptized. The command to preach was to extend to all. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," we read in Mark xvi. 15; and then follows: "*he* that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

What is the testimony of Scripture about woman's preaching or teaching publicly?

Scripture is plain. 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35 says: "Let your women keep silence in the churches," &c.; 1 Tim. ii. 12, "I suffer not a woman to teach." She may prophesy; but that is to speak under a supernatural power, and is not preaching. The subject cannot be treated in a brief reply, but we would refer our readers to a small tract, *Female Preaching*, published by Hawkins, Welbeck Street.

THE LORD'S-DAY.—We do not think the great truth that every day is the Lord's need be weakened by the special application of this term to the first day of the week. It is to be observed that the peculiar form of the word "Lord's" in the Greek of Rev. i. 10 (*κυριακη ἡμερα*) occurs in one other passage, 1 Cor. xi. 20 (*κυριακον δειπνον*), "*The Lord's* supper;" and it would seem as if the day on which He rose were in a peculiar sense His own, as was the supper which He instituted before His death. The expression "*on* (*εν*) the Lord's-day" seems inapplicable to the future "day of the Lord," as what immediately follows has reference not to that day so much as to the then existing condition of the seven churches. Some weight is due to the expression "man's day" (*ανθρωπινη ἡμερα*) in the margin of 1 Cor. iv. 3; but we would refer our correspondent to Alford's note on the passage in his Greek New Testament, vol. iv. p. 554, "It really is astonishing how any, even moderate Greek scholars, can persuade themselves that the words can mean that which these commentators (Drs. Maitland and Todd) maintain," and "to interpret the words of the day of the Lord's coming."

“THE BUNDLE OF LIFE.”

1 SAM. XXV. 29.

“BUT the soul of my lord shall be bound in the *bundle of life* with the Lord thy God,” were Abigail’s precious words to David at a moment when he had yielded to unholy anger, and was walking “as carnal and not as spiritual.” The expression was both true and beautiful; and it is precisely at such sad moments of our sin and failure that, as children of God, we need to be thus reminded of what we are in the mind of God, and what is true of us as one with Christ—“*bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God.*”

Abigail herself may not have understood the deeper meaning of her own words. Very likely her thoughts did not reach beyond her assurance of David’s life being preserved, and his reaching the throne at Saul’s death, and in this sense her words were fulfilled; but “the Spirit of Christ which was in her was testifying beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow” (1 Peter i. 11), and was, through her, calling on David to bear meekly the wrong done him by Nabal’s treatment and words, and was strengthening him to do so by words which point beyond this life and tell the believer of his present and eternal union with Christ, and of the coming doom of the mere professor.

To bring these highest truths to bear upon our walk in all the incidents of life is indeed the blessed way of the Holy Ghost, and especially also when we have yielded to some sinful temptation, and are dishonouring the name we bear and the grace that has called us.

Our blessed Lord knew Peter was about to be tempted, and forearmed him with the words, “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art

Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the *gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*" (Matt. xvi. 17, 18.) And again (Luke xxii. 31): "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that *thy faith fail not.*" And when, spite of all this, Peter denied his Lord, and became angry with Nabal-like churlish servants of the high priest's court—who can tell how much these lofty words to him of his nearness and preciousness to Christ, and the security of his blessing, helped to heal his wounded spirit, and to strengthen him again for "the good fight of faith"?

So again Paul with the Corinthians. So much had they sinned and sunk in their walk, that he said he could not speak to them "as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal." They had allowed the leaven of the flesh, and were even glorying in it; but Paul thus tells them what God had made them in Christ: "Of Him (*i.e.* of God) are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, even righteousness, sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. i. 30); and again, "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. iii. 23); and, "That ye may be a new lump, as *ye are unleavened;*" also, "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God;" and the result is, that they "sorrow after a godly sort," and have "indignation" and "zeal" and "revenge" wrought in them, not against others, but against themselves, and against their own ways.

So with Abigail and David. She was indeed the "wise reprove" (see Prov. xxv. 12), and David had the "obedient ear," and esteemed her reproof to be to him "as an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold." Oh for more such wise reprovers in our time, and for more obedience—such as David's—in those who are reprovèd!

But only those who "walk by faith and not by

sight” can possibly render such service to erring saints as Abigail did to David, and Paul did to the “carnal” Corinthians.

Look at Abigail’s case. Outwardly she had everything against her speaking and behaving as she did. She might have excused her husband on the ground that his goods were his own, and he could give them, or refuse to give them, as he pleased; but she does not, she mourns over him as a “man of Belial.” She might have joined herself with Saul, as the then reigning king, whom God Himself had placed upon the throne of Israel; but she only speaks of him to David as “a man who is risen to pursue thee and to seek thy soul,” and as one of the “enemies” of David, whom God would “sling out as out of the middle of a sling.” (Compare Prov. xxvi. 8.) She drinks of the “fountain of life,” and therefore in “God’s light sees light” (Ps. xxxvi. 9), and in that light rightly discerns the evil even in her husband and the king.

But she *walks* in that light, as well as sees in it; she understands substitution; she puts herself in her guilty husband’s stead; she fell at David’s feet, and said, “Upon *me*, my lord, upon *me*, let this iniquity be. . . . Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal;” and she rescued him from man’s anger, though she could not from the wrath and just judgment of God.

Nor could David’s poverty and fugitive condition, no, nor even the revengeful and unholy temper he was then indulging, dim her eye, as she journeyed to meet him, to his preciousness to God; on the contrary, her thoughts of this doubtless had sped on her hastening steps.

“Now therefore, my lord, as Jehovah liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing Jehovah hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood,” &c., are words to show the light in which she still saw David; viz., his life linked with that of the ever-living Jehovah, and his

steps held back by his God, even at his most "foolish, ignorant, and beast-like" moments. (See Ps. lxxiii. 22.)

Nor does she forget that David's *character* was not of the carnal, self-avenging kind he was now showing. Usually he was very different. The humbling view of him in this chapter lies between two other chapters, in both of which he nobly spares the life of Saul, his enemy, when voices very opposite to Abigail's were urging him to revenge. So she skilfully says, "My lord fighteth the battles of Jehovah (*i.e.* as a rule), and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days." Paul's wise words to Philemon, in order to soothe his anger against Onesimus, are a rich New Testament parallel to this skill in Abigail.

And she points David to the *future* also: "Jehovah *will certainly* make my lord a sure house." As through a glass she bids him see the crowned one he soon will be, to cure him of his present lordly anger and pride. "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us," wrote weeping Paul to the Corinthians, who in their anger and their quarrels were going to law one with another before the ungodly. "Do ye not know," says he, "that the saints *shall judge* the world?" And again, "I would to God ye did reign (*i.e.* I would the reigning day were come), that we might reign with you." (See 1 Cor. vi. 2; iv. 10.)

One thing more completes the "soft answer" with which she "turns away the wrath." (See Prov. xv. 1.) She points him onward to the day "when Jehovah *shall have done* to my lord all the good that He hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel," and entreats him so to walk that none of his present steps shall *then* be any pain to him to look back upon—"that this," says she, "shall be no *grief* unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself." How fully she believed in David's one day reigning! and how wisely and

tenderly she dealt with him as an *heir* of the coming kingdom!

And the Holy Ghost is ever seeking that we, who are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ," should not only count "the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," but seeks also that, as the "dear begotten ones," we should so "abide in Him that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." (1 John ii. 28.) Paul so knew that "*God was faithful*," by whom the Corinthian saints had been "called to the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ" their Lord, and that, spite of their ill ways, they would live and reign with Christ, that he entreats them to build on the foundation thus laid only "gold, silver, and precious stones;" that is, such ways in Christ, and such service to Him, as would stand the fiery day of Christ's coming, and concerning which they would not in that day have to be ashamed, or "suffer loss."

Abigail modestly closes with asking to be remembered by David in that day of the kingdom and the reigning. David blesses God for sending her, and blessed her for her advice, and she returned. Little did she think how soon she would be tested as to whether she was prepared to follow out *practically* the precious truth she had been teaching.

Nabal dies, and Abigail was now left a wealthy widow, and "of a beautiful countenance." "The rich have many friends," and Abigail would naturally have a circle of her own; and if her deceased husband had a brother, he would be no way unwilling to add to his possessions by marrying the widow, according to Hebrew law. But David too much valued the grace of God in her not to wish her for his "helpmeet," and he "sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife." He had no home to offer her, not even a "certain dwelling-place" to which to bring her; he still was

what Abigail had herself described him—one whom Saul was pursuing, and whose life Saul was seeking; but her choice was made at once, and agreed with the words she had uttered. She bowed herself to ground with joy at the opportunity of rendering the humblest service to David, as the chosen and beloved one of God; and with the same "*haste*" with which she had before gone to serve him with her *lips*, she now goes (compare *vv.* 18 and 42) to give *herself* to him, to share his rejection and his sorrows, that she might the more fully share with him his joys when at last he reigned.

"Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised," is a text that seems written on such a narrative, and more deeply still it suggests our Lord's own words—"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." Be this your happiness and mine, dear reader.

H. D.

THE LOVE OF THE SAINTS.

How sweet is the love of saints one to another. It brings to remembrance the love of Christ Himself. It is the fulfilling of His last command to His own, His *new* commandment, the fruit of the "other Comforter" whom He promised as He was going away Himself. With what delight must He look down when He sees His saints following His own example, washing one another's feet! Though Lord and Master, He took upon Him the form of a servant, and now He lives eternally to serve His own, having all power in heaven and in earth. He sits on the throne of *grace* to meet all our need by the way, till we awake up with His likeness, when He will present us to His Father glorious like Himself. Oh that we could enter into all the fulness of it: how happy should we be, how gracious, how tender to one another, with His tender mercy!

F. J. C.

THE VESSEL AND THE THRONE.

“Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer. Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.”—Prov. xxv. 4, 5.

THESE verses contain a weighty and authoritative saying—an inspired proverb, with its application.

It is one of three thousand proverbs spoken by the wisest man of his day—the divinely-taught Solomon, the greatest king of the most distinguished nation, Jehovah’s nation, Israel.

Solomon was a typical character, and his names were significant. Viewed in connection with and immediately following David, we have an apt illustration of the “sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow.” Humiliation, suffering, and exaltation to the throne in David; in Solomon rest, and the reign of comparative righteousness and peace. David, “the beloved;” Solomon Jedidiah, “the man of peace,” “the beloved of Jehovah.”

Who shall fully answer to this? He alone in whom the Church, Israel, and the nations will find that which they need and desire—the Messiah, the Son of God, the Church’s Head, the King of Israel and of the nations. He is the one in connection with whom the proverb before us will have its perfect answer.

The figure employed was well known in olden times, and is familiar to us now—that of *refining*.

Its direct application is to the king, with reference to the wicked before his throne; but as the Holy Ghost has used the same figure in other connections, I purpose noticing—

- (1.) Its application to individual children of God and the Church.
- (2.) To the remnant of Jehovah’s nation.
- (3.) To the King and the throne as above.

I. *The application of the Proverb to individual believers and to the Church collectively.*—This can be traced in the past, recognised now, and will continue to be true during the Church's existence on the earth, after which the remnant of Israel will prove its truth.

To prove its application in the past, I will select the man who is supposed to have lived even before Moses; viz., Job.

Job was acquainted with the process of refining, and employed the figure to describe the Almighty's* dealings with him, and the result, saying, "When He hath tried me I shall come forth as gold."

Here we have the Almighty as the refiner; His pre-eminent servant Job as the metal to be refined; and Job's ignorance of himself, and consequent self-complacency and conceit, as the dross, the removal of which was God's object in the trial; and purification was Job's expectation: "I shall come forth as gold."

The painfulness of the trial to Job is abundantly proved by his own words. Tested by Satan, through circumstances, his wife, and his friends, both the gold and the dross were made to appear; yet in it all we see, that as the metal is not thrown to the fire, but in the crucible subjected to its heat, so God, who subjected His servant to the trial, guarded him, and carried him through it; and "*we* have seen the end of the Lord;" viz., Job's exaltation of God, after his humiliation and self-abhorrence; also the double blessing, honour, and wealth bestowed on him by God. Surely he did come forth as gold.

Thus did God deal with His servant Job; and thus also has He proved and blessed many since, even down to the present time. Surely our own experience will

* This was the name of God for the time. He was not known as Jehovah (see Exod. vi. 3), nor as Father. The writer of the book of Job (Moses, as is supposed) brings in the name Jehovah toward the end; but "God" and the "Almighty" were the names used by Job and by his friends.

supply an answer to it. Has not God our Father, by painful discipline, freed us from the power of some evil and folly, causing us to shine a little more brightly in the image of His beloved Son? He has; and in the end we have approved His ways; and so we will again, and yet again, until there shall be no longer need of the discipline.

God's children, the members of Christ, are as gold; they are not *in* the flesh, yet the flesh is *in them*; they are not *dead in sin*, neither is sin dead in them, but they are *dead to it*; they have to contend with it, and are expected to conquer through the power of the indwelling Spirit of God.

With all our self-knowledge, we are still ignorant of many things which may secretly defile and unconsciously manifest themselves. These dishonour Christ, and damage us as believers, and from these the Lord graciously purposes to deliver us; and often by means of trial, through the light of His Word, He brings the evil to light to ourselves in order to deliver us from it. Thus he removes the dross, and brings forth the vessel better fitted than ever for His own use.

He watches the process, regulates the heat, preserves His child, and secures the end.

As with the individual Christian, so with the entire Church. The result of all her trials will be her perfect conformity to the image of her Lord, a vessel to the eternal praise, and honour, and glory of the refiner, that is, Himself. (1 Peter i. 7.)

From this we pass naturally to consider the application of the proverb

II. *To the Remnant of Israel.*—This reserved company of God's ancient people are deeply interesting to us; interesting for their father's sakes; interesting as exemplifying the faithful love of Jehovah their God, and His wisdom and power in their preservation; and interesting also because of the important and blessed

results of their future position in the world, and in their land.

They are, and will yet be seen to be, as the substance of the oak, which remains after it has cast its leaves, causing it to flourish again. (Isa. vi. 13.) They are as the few olive berries on the topmost and outmost branches of the tree. They are the holy seed, the nucleus of the future nation, which will yet be pre-eminent, the first of the nations of the earth, through which all other nations will be blessed; and for disowning of which the unsubject people, Egyptians or any others, will bring upon themselves the judgment of "the King, the Lord of hosts." (Zech. xiv. 16-20.)

Jehovah's future dealings with this remnant are predicted in several passages in the prophets, under the figure of refining. I will refer to a few.

In Isaiah i. 25: "I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin." Again: "Behold, I have *refined* thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." (xlviii. 10.)

In Zech. xiii. 8, Jehovah predicts His judgments on two-thirds of the people to cut them off, and in the next verse describes His dealings with the remaining third part, saying, "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will *refine* them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried." The result will be, "I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, Jehovah is our God." The dross having been removed, they will be as a vessel for the refiner.

The prophet Malachi, when predicting Messiah's return to the people, says: "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord a sacrifice in righteousness." (iii. 3.)

Then, in Ps. lxvi. 10, the people acknowledge such dealings of Jehovah with them: "Thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried;"

the result of which will be the removal of the dross by subduing their ignorance, pride, and unbelief, and bringing them to Himself.

Such Scriptures as the above abound in the Psalms and in other parts of the Word, but these may suffice for our purpose.

We now come to the third and last application of the proverb, which is indeed the direct one.

III. *To the King and the Throne.*—The throne of Solomon, the type; that of Messiah, the antitype.

We have already noticed Solomon as a typical man. As his father's successor to the throne, he had the executive, the power to carry out his will, both by the execution of judgment, and also by building the temple of Jehovah. The father had decreed the building of the house, had chosen the site, made provision for it, and given instructions to Solomon respecting it; but Solomon, his son, built it. David did not execute judgment on certain offenders, but committed them into Solomon's hand to be punished.

The Son of God has done, is doing, and will do the Father's will in all the exercise of grace and blessing; and to Him the Father, who judgeth no man, hath committed all judgment.

Solomon, being seated on his father's throne, began to act according to David's charge, and for Jehovah. He began to take away the wicked from before him, that *his* throne might be established in righteousness.

Adonijah, Joab, and Abiathar the priest, the three confederate rebels against the Lord's anointed, David, and against the throne, were removed. Shimei also, who had cursed the Lord's anointed, violating the oath with which Solomon in his wisdom had charged him, was put to death, the king adding, "King Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before Jehovah for ever;" and again, "Their blood [Amasa and Abner] shall return upon the head

of Joab: but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from Jehovah."

This done, Solomon commenced building the house of Jehovah. He finished it, and dedicated it. He reigned in peace, and under him Israel reached the highest point of honour and glory, an earnest of their yet future position of blessing and power, to which Messiah will bring them when He shall be their King; when the wicked shall be taken away from before Him, and His throne shall be established in righteousness. Then the proverb before us shall be seen as applying without qualification to Christ the Son of God and Son of man.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the Church's Head and Lord, is also a King. He shall reign as King of Israel and of the nations—"A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel." He was born a King. "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" said the wise men when searching for the babe. The throne of David was promised Him by the mouth of Gabriel, who said, "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke i. 32, 33.)

In this character, and with this title, He presented Himself to the people when He rode into Jerusalem, and was hailed by some as such. He acknowledged Himself to be the King of the Jews to Pilate; and Pilate, doubtless under divine control, gave Him His title on the cross.

In resurrection God thus acknowledged Him, and by exalting Him to His right hand gave the pledge of His future act, described in Ps. ii.: "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion," giving Him the throne of David His father.

The resurrection of Christ was effected in spite of combined effort, force and fraud, to prevent it (Acts iv.

25-29); and in spite of the subtlety and power of Satan, the antichrist, and the deluded nations, God will set His King upon the hill of Zion and on the throne of David.

This is Jehovah's purpose, and to this end all things are now working. All the upheavings and overturning of nations and powers are leading on to that point. God is preparing for His own determined act—to "give it Him;" viz., the headship and the kingdom; for "in the dispensation of the fulness of times He will head up all things in Christ."

Into this secret the Church is admitted, and we look beyond all existing evil and confusion, and also that which is coming on the earth, to the blessed issue. Yes, He will come, and come to reign. His coming and reign shall be as the light of the morning—as a morning without clouds. (2 Sam. xxiii. 1-8.)

When the terrible scythe of judgment shall have swept over the field of Christendom (the Church having been previously removed), He, the King, shall "come down like showers upon the mown grass: as rain that watereth the earth," and the after-springing shall be blessing, unprecedented blessing, on the earth, to the Jew first, and also to the nations. (Ps. lxxii.)

He shall come with the day of vengeance in His heart, the vengeance of Israel's God, to prepare for and usher in the year of His redeemed. He shall avenge their wrongs, and maintain their rights. He shall dethrone the usurper, the oppressor (antichrist), and so cast down the man of the earth that he may no more oppress. The angels of His might shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

These acts of Jehovah in judgment and mercy are the grand subjects of prophecy and of song. It is His purpose to bring Israel to prominence and pre-eminence in the earth and in their land, and whoever opposes this will be set aside.

Prophets have pointed to this, Evangelists have treated of it, and by far the greater part of the book of Revelation is occupied with prophetic descriptions of God's acts of fearful judgment by which He will take away the wicked from before His King, and then establish His throne in righteousness. With this the conduct of the King Himself will perfectly agree. (See Ps. ci.)

A King shall reign in righteousness, and righteousness shall prevail. The sceptre of His kingdom shall be a righteous one, and in His day the righteous shall flourish. Satan being bound and remaining evil restrained, peace and prosperity shall abound.

"Jehovah shall hear (affect) the heavens, the heavens affect the earth, the earth the corn, and wine, and oil, and these shall affect Jezreel," the multitude. (Hosea ii. 21-22. Compare Zech. viii. 12.) Then shall the song sung at the Saviour's birth be more fully answered to—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

Blessed time! happy condition! favoured people!

A mighty onward move toward the final state, the new heaven and the new earth, the time and place of absolute perfection—perfection of person, condition, and place, when righteousness shall dwell unresisted, unmolested, for ever and for ever!

The Lord Himself hasten both in His time.

H. H.

God may communicate vast knowledge to a saint, but it does not sanctify him unless accompanied by an obedient walk. Our fight is for obedience and the maintenance of communion, not for possession of the land.

It is not so much the disobedience to such conscience as we have that makes us transgress, as the lack of desire to make *pleasing God* our first object.

“MY FATHER WORKETH HITHERTO,
AND I WORK.”

THE Lord Jesus is emphatically the great, the master-workman; the perfect, willing servant of the Father; *His* arm, by whom His mighty deeds are wrought; *His* mouth, by whom the secrets of His heart are opened out; *His* right hand, by whom He brings salvation.

By HIM He made the worlds, and “without Him was not anything made that was made;” but it is especially in the grand and glorious work of redemption that the blessed Jesus stands forth as the mighty workman, Jehovah’s servant, His elect, in Whom His soul delighteth.

We hear Him say of Himself, “Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.” And again, “My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work.” And, blessed be His name, He *has* finished the work, and brought in *an everlasting righteousness, in which* both God and man can rest for ever.

We read in Genesis that God “rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made;” but quickly, alas! that rest was broken. Sin came in and marred all, and that which had been so fair and lovely became one mass of corruption and evil.

But still His grace abounded, His love could not be quenched, and His hand was again stretched forth to work and remedy the mischief sin had wrought. He might have swept the world away; but no, with patient persevering love He laboured on, leaving no means untried to reach the sinner’s heart; rising up early and sending His servants forth with most beseeching words; counselling, instructing, warning, each one in turn; holding out rich and precious promises; dealing in grace and judgment; training in various ways in the

school of affliction, or in the lap of prosperity. Well might our blessed Jesus say, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

He proved our utter badness, and yet He laboured on. What treasures of patient grace those four thousand years of wondrous toil unfold! And yet, unwearied still, He gave His Son, His only Son, a ransom for our guilt. "He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore His own arm brought salvation unto Him; and His righteousness, it sustained Him." Yes, God Himself became the Saviour, the Almighty Saviour-God. He took the mighty work in hand, and though the ransom was the precious blood of Christ, and God Himself must smite and bruise His well-beloved Son, His love prevailed, the price was paid, the mighty work was done.

"His be the Victor's name,
Who fought our fight alone;
Triumphant saints no honour claim;
The conquest was His own.

"He hell in hell laid low;
Made sin, He sin o'erthrew;
Bowed to the grave, destroyed it so,
And death by dying slew!

"Bless, bless the Conqueror slain;
Slain in His victory!
Who lived, who died, who lives again,
For thee, my soul, for thee!"

In one sense the Lord Jesus is now *resting* in heaven, seated upon His Father's throne, and joying in the great salvation which He has wrought; but in another sense He is *still serving*. He is verily the perfect willing servant who plainly said, "I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free." All power is His in heaven and in earth; yet in His rich and abounding grace He is ever waiting upon us, seeking to minister to our varied need, and using

all the treasures of His love, and wisdom, and power to enrich and satisfy our souls.

He is our Great High Priest in the presence of our God; the Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle; and as such He is continually occupied *for us*.

He meets every charge of sin which the accuser brings against us. He comes forth to meet each returning soul, and makes it meet for the presence of the holy God. He cleanses, clothes, and leads us in, and Himself presents us before His Father's face. He unfolds and reveals the Father to us. "I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it." "His eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew Himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." He hears the cry of the poor and needy, and delights to "succour them that are tempted." And then, to crown it all, we read, "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." What debtors we are to that unwearied and effectual intercession! What streams of unasked for blessing flow down because of it!

He is even now the Great Shepherd of His sheep,

"Who tends with sweet unwearied care
The flock for which He bled."

Well may He say, "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them." How tenderly He feeds the lambs; how gently He deals with the sick, and those diseased through sin and folly; how patiently He seeks the wanderers; how graciously He bears with the pride and folly of His oftentimes wilful, wayward people! Oh the wonderful labour of our great and glorious Shepherd! Surely, surely His gentle love and forbearance should constrain us to walk softly and humbly before Him. The time past of our lives should suffice us to have gone astray like lost sheep, and henceforth our souls should say, with a deeper and fuller meaning,

"But now I love my Shepherd's voice,
I love, I love the fold!"

Let us ponder over His grace and patience in bearing with us, and in proportion as we enter into it, all harshness towards the sheep of His pasture will be melted out of us, and we shall learn in some little measure to love them and bear with them, even as He does.

Again, He is the great Burden-bearer. We read, "They shall hang upon Him all the glory of His Father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons." He forbids us to carry burdens. (Jer. xvii. 21-26.) He would have us cast them *all*, whether great or small, upon Himself; and thus, freed from burdens, our souls will be at leisure to enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and capable of bringing in sacrifices of praise and free-will offerings to the Lord our God. Instead of groaning beneath our burdens we should ride in the chariots of salvation, and triumph in the strength of those everlasting arms, which are bearing us up and carrying us in safety to His own habitation.

Yes, the Lord Jesus is working still. His heart is still occupied and full of one grand object. He desires to provide an eternal resting-place for God, a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob (Ps. cxxxii. 3-5); a dwelling-place for His affections, where His love can find full scope and liberty; vessels large and many, capable of receiving out of His fulness, and pouring it back again to gladden the very heart of God.

This was the work which He had in hand, when dwelling upon this earth a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. For *this* He toiled and bled; for *this* He gave Himself a willing sacrifice; poured out His soul unto death, and bore the wrath of God. It was *this* that nerved His heart with power to bear, and kept Him firm and immovable amid the fiery

darts that pierced His inmost soul. He would not, could not, rest until He had made provision to build this glorious and eternal house for God.

He sat down, He counted the cost, He measured the labour which it involved, and, blessed be His name, He has sufficient to finish it. Sufficient value in His precious priceless blood to make atonement for all our sin. Sufficient love to bear with all our black ingratitude. Sufficient grace to meet our every need. Sufficient patience to bear with all our folly, all our wandering, all our base returns for love like His. Sufficient power to take us safely home; yea more, to mould and fashion, subdue and soften every heart, and make each one a vessel meet for Him to fill and use to all eternity.

His hands have laid the foundation of this glorious house, this temple of the living God, and His hands shall finish it; He will bring forth the topstone thereof with shoutings of "Grace, grace unto it"; and He will have His full recompence of reward, when His Father takes up His abode in it, and says, "This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it."

Then indeed shall "His priests be clothed with righteousness, and His saints shall shout aloud for joy;" and *He*, the beloved of our souls, shall be anointed with the oil of joy above His fellows, and delight in the fruit of His own love, and the work of His own hands.

And now, while waiting for that blissful day, let us gird our loins and yield ourselves to Him, and seek to be fellow-labourers together with Him in this great purpose of His heart. In days gone by, the Lord gave wisdom to every one whose heart stirred him up to come to do work for the tabernacle; and now, if our hearts desire to do *His* work, He will not fail to give the needed grace and wisdom. "Be strong" is still His gracious word to us: "Be strong and work: for I am with you my Spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not."

L. T. S.

THE NAZARITE :

THE RESULTS OF HIS TRAINING.

A FEW thoughts suggested by the previous considerations may not be out of place.

In common with all the ceremonial part of the law, the three divisions of the Nazarite injunctions were all ritualistic; *i.e.* outward observances.

The first has to do with the bodily appetite, bringing it under a certain description of control.

The second controls the mind, bringing the individual under the constant gaze of the community; demanding firmness and isolation from their ways on a special point.

The third concerns the affections, requiring the exercise of restraint on the tenderest natural emotions, under certain special circumstances.

The two first were constantly in operation; the last was only incidental.

Surely the wisdom and the kindness of God are distinctly noticeable herein. As a loving parent, He desires to educate the heart so surrendered to Him. The child knowing nothing, entirely ignorant of its Father's pleasure, yet willing to submit, learns three most important lessons. Unconsciously, while practising these outward forms, moral restraint was to be acquired through ceremonial restraint; moral firmness through that which is merely ceremonial; the highest class of moral feeling through controlling that which is natural, and therefore inferior; "the first and great commandment" being superior to the second, though this is "like unto it."

Separation unto God is the substance of the whole. With this it begins, and in the progress this is heightened and deepened. Should the pupil acquire any self-importance by perceiving he is exerting a control

over himself which others cannot or will not practise, it is speedily dissipated by failure which may be beyond his power to guard against, or, when he has done all, to find himself regarded as a sinner, and his service needing expiation.

This solemn lesson underlies the whole of the Mosaic institutes. Whilst it was said to Israel, "Do this, and thou shalt live," the result, as disclosed in the psalm and repeated by the apostle, was, "There is none righteous; no, not one." Boasting of being superior to the Gentiles, they hear out of the mouth of their Psalmist King the record of their own shame. They had to unlearn confidence in the flesh, a bitter and most unwelcome task, lowering them to the same lost position as the dogs they despised.

It may be that God was teaching them this lesson through the Nazarite formula. We call to mind how frequently the vine is made mention of as the emblem of the house of Israel. Ps. lxxx., Isa. v., Jer. ii., Ezekiel xv., all speak of it in this light.

Abstinence from the vine, from every one of its productions, is here the first point insisted on. This vine, though a right noble plant, had in it no inherent life. It could not communicate life eternal. It must therefore be forsaken. Since eternal life was not there, the separated one must seek it elsewhere.

The badge of the hair having, as we have seen, several aspects, indicated this in addition, that the one separated from the vine continued to bear this avowed indication of his subjection to God, as the characteristic feature, until for pardon brought to the Great Sacrifice for sin, and for acceptance to the Great Burnt-offering.

The defilement by dead parents, brother or sister, in like manner appears to teach the house of Israel that however eminent Abraham and Sarah were, however important the patriarchs, Moses, and the whole family, the separated one, far from trusting in all or any of

them, as we know they were and are prone to do, must turn his back upon them all. Like Paul, he must account the whole economy, with all its renounced advantages, as only fit to be cast away, that he might gain Christ, and be found in Him, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

R. N.

HEIRS OF GOD.

THERE is only One that never changes—JESUS, “the same yesterday, and to-day; and for ever.” “I will *never* leave thee, no, *never* forsake thee.” Faith’s reply is, “We may *boldly* say, THE LORD is *my helper* : I will not fear what *man* can do unto me.”

Beloved, now are we sons and heirs; we have the joys of children and the dignity of heirs. The blood has redeemed us from the present evil world, and gives us a title to reign over it by-and-by. We should walk here as strangers and pilgrims, as Christ walked. The *character* of His life here was shown in His walk, the *power* in His resurrection. Angels lay down their honours at His feet, and they are now the willing servants of all the heirs of salvation. After His ascension, the Holy Ghost came down as the witness of our acceptance in the Beloved, and of our union with the risen One—members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones; His Eve, *Himself*, the Christ, the eternal object of God’s purpose, love, and glory. The Holy Ghost is to us *now* the *earnest* of the glory, the *certainty* of the love.

The poor Jew must wait till the High Priest *comes out*, to know of the offering being accepted; then will they look on Him whom they pierced and mourn; but the days of their mourning shall then be ended. Their eyes shall see the King in His beauty, the Lord, our Lord, with all His saints in the same glory. They will

then believe that the Father sent the Son, and loved the saints as He loved Jesus.

Beloved, what a portion is ours! If saints realized it, they would not be striving about questions *to no profit*. Oh for more grace, more meekness, more self-judging! What a plague this miserable flesh is! I don't see happy saints disturbed in mind. "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." What a resting-place from the strife of man!

We must be *convicted*, or we should not know ourselves; we must be *confiding*, or we should not know God. When we get puffed up in mind, we become *judges*. If our sin is not ever before us (Ps. li.), though it is put away from God's sight for ever, we shall cease to have communion with one another. It is in the light we see ourselves, but "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth," is always keeping us clean from *all sin*. This sin is *our nature*, not our acts. Our acts are *sins*, transgressions, and iniquities. The priesthood, when we confess, meets these. Blessed be God, all is safe in His hands! F. J. C.

CONFERENCES AT LEOMINSTER.

[Last year the beloved servant of Christ who then conducted this paper sought to gather together some forty fellow-labourers for a few days of prayer and quiet conference at Leominster, as mentioned in our January number. These meetings proved so valuable, by God's grace, that they have been continued this year. No record is kept of them; but a friend from Ireland sends some notes, from memory, of the conference he attended from July 12th to 15th. They may give some idea of these meetings; but it is impossible to describe the joy of the Lord's presence, the profitable intercourse, and gladness of seeing one another for a little while face to face, the effect of which was truly found to be like "as iron sharpeneth iron." May the Lord continue His blessing to these and all similar meetings.—Ed.]

ON Monday, July 12th, 1875, brethren assembled at Leominster from Scotland, various parts of England and Wales, and some from distant lands. The evening of this day was given to prayer.

Tuesday was specially devoted to prayer, humili-

ation, confession, and thanksgiving. From 10 a.m. till 4 p.m. was one prolonged meeting. A brother read 2 Chron. xxix., and this chapter gave the tone to the meeting. There was deep, heartfelt acknowledgment to God of failure, weakness, grieving the Spirit, shortcoming as to owning and walking in the power of the truth of the one body, one Spirit. There was also thanksgiving for the great work of conversion which the Lord has recently spread over the land, and earnest prayer that the Lord would raise up pastors to feed and build up the newly-converted.

Wednesday was chiefly occupied with the consideration of two passages of Scripture, the prayers in the epistle to the Ephesians, i. 15-23 and iii. 14-21. Regarding the former passage as setting forth the privileges of saints, and the latter passage as developing the results in life and walk, it was asked, What was the connecting-link between the two? If the privileges of believers remain unchanged, what are the causes which hinder the manifestation of spiritual power in the assemblies; for instance, in meetings for worship? As regards Eph. iii. 14, &c., the divine order was noticed. The Spirit in the inner man revealing Christ, Christ thus dwells in the heart by faith. But in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Thus as the knowledge of Christ increases, believers are filled with all the fulness of God. Among some of the chief hindrances to the manifestation of spiritual power in the assemblies the following were noticed:—Sins of the tongue, neglect of such portions of God's word as 1 Peter ii. 1 ("evil speakings" which include even statements that may be true in fact, but are to the injury of the person spoken of), Col. iii. 15-17. By giving license to the tongue in speaking evil one of another, of brethren who separate from us, or of others, the heart is often hardened before one enters the assembly; and the one who has thus erred has rendered his ear heavy, so that he cannot hear the

voice of the Spirit in the assembly, and may come away complaining of the want of power in the meeting. Another cause which was allowed to be grievous to the Spirit of God, and which is widely prevalent, is the pride of knowledge. A third point noticed, in which God's servants often fail even to aim at complying with the mind of God, was that they do not work together *in fellowship*. How different, it was observed, would be the character of Acts xvi. 25 if, omitting the name of Silas, we read thus: "At midnight Paul prayed, and sang praises to God."

The afternoon meetings each day were occupied in considering questions, which on this occasion chiefly related to discipline. A few of these questions may here be briefly noticed, and the answers given to them :

Should a stranger coming to a meeting for the first time be received without letters of commendation? In the absence of testimony (especially needful in these days), love would point to his being received provisionally, if we could discern the spirit of Christ in him; but it would be on *his* responsibility.

How far in the present state of things should a person be received from one meeting in another without personal investigation? This would be a question of confidence in the assembly from which anyone comes.

Is it inspiration or semi-inspiration that should direct the course of meetings? Neither; but the Spirit's *guidance*. The word "semi-inspiration" should be disallowed, as not found in Scripture. "Inspiration" is applied *only* to Scripture in the text, "All Scripture is given by inspiration," &c. *All* words uttered should be judged by Scripture. The Holy Spirit dwells in believers to guide them in all matters relating to soul and body, in all the affairs of this life as well as in spiritual things. The ordinary guidance of the Spirit in every-day life is the more excellent thing. The extraordinary guidance of the Spirit on special occa-

sions is more rare. In meetings *worship* is the most important object; edification is secondary to it.

On the last day of the conference, Thursday, the brethren met at 10 a.m., and continued the consideration of the Scriptures—Eph. iii. 14, &c. Among the points brought out the following may be mentioned:

1st. All consideration of the condition of the church at large, or of believers, must be faulty unless we begin with considering God's delight in Christ, and then His delight in His blood-bought ones as one with Christ.

2nd. God's children, instead of beginning to cry for a greater manifestation of grace and power, should begin with *hearkening* to the voice, the entreaties of their heavenly Father; then would the floodgates of grace and power be opened to them, which would be shown in more earnest and believing prayer.

3rd. Whatever be the condition of believers or of the church at large, the believer's rest by faith in Christ as his head at God's right hand should never be disturbed. We should not for the space of ten minutes allow ourselves to be guilty of the sin of hanging our harps upon the willows.

4th. It is much to be regretted that the ministry of "exhortation" has so much fallen into disuse. Perhaps there is no kind of ministry so powerful as this in bearing on the conscience. It would be well if God's servants made it a matter of self-examination why there is not more exhortation in meetings, and made it a matter of prayer that it might be more generally exercised.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

WHAT is the difference between "being in Christ" and having "Christ in you"?

Being "in Christ" refers to our *standing*. God places the believer in Christ, and sees him always in Him, as in creation God sees all men in Adam. The

expressions "*in Christ*," "*in Him*," &c., occur nearly one hundred and forty times in Paul's epistles, and about ten times in other epistles. *Christ in us* refers to our life and walk, and is the result of the operations of the Holy Spirit on the soul of the believer. On this point we would refer to the following passages, of which nine are in Paul's epistles—Rom. viii. 10; 2 Cor. xiii. 3-5; Gal. i. 16; ii. 20; iv. 19; Eph. iii. 17; Col. i. 27; 2 Thess. i. 11; and six are in John's first epistle—ii. 14; iii. 24; iv. 4, 13, 15, 16. In John xv. our blessed Lord Himself uses and combines both expressions. Here, however, both are used subjectively: "Abide in me, and I in you;" for the question is not one of standing, but of communion and fruitfulness. God has placed us in Christ; that is, as to vital union, which He maintains, for our life is "hid with Christ in God," and therefore the command is, "Abide in me" in living, continued fellowship, and then shall we know the "I in you" in abiding power and fruitbearing.

Acts vii. 51.—What is meant by "*Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost*"?

This resisting refers to Israel's rejection of the work and testimony of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, when, according to the promise in John xvi. 7-11, the Spirit came to convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. As their fathers, from Moses until Christ, had resisted the testimony of the Spirit in the prophets, so, but much more, did the Jews in Stephen's day. The advent of the Spirit in the new dispensation has brought Him into more direct prominence, and we have now the fuller revelation of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; but the Spirit's relationship toward man was ever the same, as many passages in the Old Testament prove. The character of the Spirit's operations may differ at different times, but the Divine Agent remains the same.

Heb. vi.—Further remarks on the teaching of the opening verses. (See also page 224.)

In the first place we know what the passage does not teach. It does not teach that one born again, and made therein a partaker of eternal life, can ever lose that life, or cease to be a child of God: regeneration is perfect, and it is absolute. But it teaches a deeply solemn truth, well deserving to be pondered in these lax and evil days—days of profession and little reality, of assumption and little power. It teaches how far an individual may go, how much he may receive, and yet never be born again. We would not, however, take verse 6 as an absolute statement of the impossibility of repentance to any, but as relative, and would read the verse: “If they did fall away, to renew again unto repentance those who are crucifying afresh to themselves the Son of God, and are putting Him to an open shame.” That is, that while thus acting, repentance is impossible. The present tense seems to mark this. Chap. x. 26–29 speaks of the same subject; and the use of the present tense in the expression “if we sin (or are sinning) wilfully,” shows that the force of the passage lies not in the act of committing a wilful sin, but in the living in wilful sinning. God would not shut out pardon from one repenting, when the sin is repented of as against Him. This subject is illustrated perfectly in Judas Iscariot’s history; and when in the end he is said to have repented (Matt. xxvii. 3), a different word altogether is used in the Greek. There was no repentance, that is, change of mind (*μετανοια*), in him; but we are told, that having regretted (*μεταμεληθεις*) what he had done he brought back the money. The use of the word “repentance” is again rather ambiguous in Heb. xii. 17, where Esau is represented as finding no place of repentance; but then it is in his father that it was not found, and not in himself. He regretted the loss of the blessing, but he valued not the birthright grace on which it rested.

THE PHILISTINES:

LOOKED AT AS A TYPE OF THE CARNAL MIND.

1. *Their origin.* Descendants from Mizraim or Egypt. "And Mizraim" (the second son of Ham) "begat Casluhim, out of whom came Philistim." (Gen. x.; 1 Chron. i.)

2. *Their locality.* Within the promised land, by the great sea, bordering on Egypt. Abraham moved there (Gen. xx. 1), and dwelt there. (Chap. xxi. 34.) It is remarkable that he first denied his wife in Egypt, and then in Gerar, in the land of the Philistines; and *there* Isaac also did the same. The flesh in the believer is like that of the world; and to make peace with it, and get rest from it, he must deny his heavenly calling. (Gen. xii. 10; xxvi. 1.)

3. *Their character.* They envy, fight, contend. (Gen. xxvi. 14.) God leads Israel about from them, lest, when they see war, they go back again. (Exod. xiii. 17.) So with young converts, God spares them much of the evil of their own hearts at first; "He carries the lambs in His bosom," and by degrees opens up to them their foes. *First* it is Egypt, or the world; *then* Philistines, or the carnal mind (the minding of the flesh, Rom. viii. 7), at enmity with God *within* one's self, like the Philistines within the territories of Israel. Were *these* encountered *first*, we might despair. But Amalek, an outward enemy, is let loose *first*; then other surrounding foes—Edom, Moab, Ammon—*relations by birth*, but enemies of God and His people; *then* Sihon and Og, with the nations of Canaan. Abram's *first* hindrance was from Terah his father. (Gen. xi. 31; xii. 5; Acts vii. 4.) Gross habits, a bad temper, swearing, evil-speaking (*open* enemies), may be conquered one by one; but the Philistines, the old nature, the fleshly principle, remains, however

hidden. Pride and self, which constitute the natural man, can only be kept down by a constant trust in the Lord's grace and power. (Rom. vi. 11; Gal. ii. 19, 20.)

4. *Their contentions and varying fate.* They were not amongst the nations God promised to cast out. (Gen. xv. 19-21.) Was it Isaac's oath to Abimelech (Gen. xxvi.) that exempted them and saved them, as with Gibeon in Josh. ix.? As we do not find them named in Gen. xv., and yet they were included in the land (Josh. xiii. 2, 3), we may conclude that they were fore-appointed of God (Rom. ix. 17) for His glory (1 Peter i. 7), and for the ultimate blessing of His people; just as for similar reasons we may account for the existence of Satan and sin. But they remained to be a plague to Israel (Judges iii. 3, 31), like the carnal mind in the believer, which keeps him in constant strife, and teaches him war (Rom. vii. 23), and casts him upon God for victory, that He may have the glory, and be more trusted in daily.

A frequent law of this struggle is found in Matt. xvii., where, at the foot of the mount of His transfiguration, the Lord Jesus meets with a special instance of Satan's power. After special communion with God, and a time of special blessing to the soul, let us beware of the reaction, and be ready for the adversary at the foot of the hill, and triumph *still* in Him who is mighty to save. (Compare 1 Kings xix. 2, 3, with the two preceding chapters; and note God's remedy for Elijah, chap. xix. 9-21.)

The Philistines' gods were the snare (Judges x. 6), and the men the scourge, of Israel. "And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and He sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon," until He was grieved at their sorrows, and repented for their misery. Jephthah delivered them from Ammon, but did not smite the Philistines. Forty years of oppression bring out

Samson (chap. xiii. 1), but only to prove how incomplete are all victories not carried out according to the mind of God. The word to us is, "*Abide in me,*" and, "*Walk in the Spirit*" (as the *habit* of the soul), "*and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*"

In Samuel, Jonathan, and David we see real power against the Philistines; in Saul continued warfare, and his final overthrow with Jonathan by them. (1 Sam. xxxi.) David's truce with Achish, a Philistine lord, was a sad lack of faith and forgetfulness of God's power with the sling and the stone. (1 Sam. xvii.; xxiii. 5.)

When David became king, his conquests were uniform, by himself and his servants, till his final victories. (2 Sam. xxiii.) Then came his song of praise, his settlement in the kingdom, and reward to his servants.

The last of the Philistines' triumphs we find in the days of Ahaz. (See 2 Chron. xxviii. 18, 19.) In Ps. lxxxiii. 7 they confederate *only* for their destruction. In the antitype this will be fulfilled at the Lord's coming. (Titus ii. 11-14.)

In the Prophets we find frequent mention of the Philistines. In Isaiah ii. 6; ix. 12, their sins are mentioned; in chap. xi. 14 they are used to advance Israel's glory. Their punishment is recorded in Jer. xxv. 20; xlvi. 1-7; Ezek. xxv. 15; Amos i. 8; Zech. ix. 5, 6. They are used to judge Israel for their ways, Ezek. xvi. 27-57; Israel's final victory and possession of their land, Obad. 19; Zeph. ii. 4-7; Zech. ix. 5-7.

IF we are to take our place *in heaven*, we must be broken off from *the world*. Christ gives us everything here in the *way*, but never presents it as our *end*. It is neither Canaan nor Egypt, but *a wilderness*. By clinging to it we are not in the wilderness, but in heart have turned back to Egypt. If we would make a Canaan of it, then we shall need chastening; and it will become Egypt to us.

THE DEFILED NAZARITE.

HAVING considered the various circumstances connected with this ordinance of the God of Israel, let us now turn our attention to two most remarkable instances illustrative of the carrying out of the Nazarite vow. And first of Samson, who in Heb. xi. is classed by the Holy Ghost among those who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, &c.

In order to comprehend the teaching involved in Samson's history, it is requisite to glance at the state of Israel at that time.

The nation had long and deeply sinned against their God, *despising His commands, rebelling against His authority, serving other gods.* They had been sorely punished; for 111 years they had at different periods been under the hand of their enemies. Again and again they had returned to the Lord, and as often obtained mercy. He had raised up for them as many as thirteen different deliverers in times of their distress, and had given them 200 years of rest. But their repentance was short-lived; they speedily relapsed into their guilty courses.

At this juncture they had for forty years been groaning under the Philistine yoke, and without a thought of returning to Him who had so often heard and as often already rescued them. Yet "in all their affliction He was afflicted;" "His soul was grieved for their misery." Unsought and unsolicited, He again comes forward in their behalf. A new instrument is to be raised up, one as yet unborn, the fourteenth of their deliverers.

But of what tribe? Of all the tribes of Israel, none had sunk so low as Dan. At the entrance into Canaan they had been, with one exception, the most numerous of all the tribes; but, far from exhibiting the boldness of the others in taking possession of their allotments, Dan had done but little. He alone remained in a camp,

while the others had taken cities and possessed houses and territory. Shortly afterwards part of the tribe, deserting the inheritance the Lord had given them, went out of the land to the extreme north in search of an easier conquest. Settling themselves there, they established idol-worship, and remained apostate till the captivity. (Judges xviii. 30.)

Of this tribe was the appointed deliverer to be born. His parents were God-fearing people. He is to be a Nazarite from his birth. His mother is partially to become such; and when they know not the way to bring him up—such their ignorance of the law—the angel is again sent to instruct them.

Either the parents failed to teach, or the child refused to learn; for when grown there is no instance given of his obedience to any one of the divine precepts, either applying to the Nazarite or to the Israelite generally, save and except the preservation of the hair; this alone was attended to.

There is no moral portrait in his favour, but very much of an opposite kind; no record of his going up to the tabernacle at the appointed feasts, nor of sacrifice or worship. He is described as living what we should call an abandoned life. His whole intercourse is with the Philistines, the dominant power, the enemies and oppressors of his nation.

His first effort is to intermarry with one of them. His parents remonstrate. He heeds them not; parental control is set at nought, as well as the command of God that Israel should be a separate people, dwelling alone.

What took him to the vineyards of Timnath? And did he withhold wine from the guests at the seven days' feast which, after the custom of the country, he gave on the occasion of his marriage? In a wine-producing neighbourhood this would have been most unusual. His character in other respects does not indicate such abstinence.

Again, the honey taken out of the carcase of the

lion was, according to Lev. xi., unclean as food; yet he not only partakes of it, but induces his father and mother to do the same, thereby rendering them unclean, though unconscious of the fact. He not only does this, but makes a riddle of it.

From the expression in Judges xiv. 4—"His father and his mother knew not that it was of the Lord, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines," &c.—it might seem that the Lord approved of his taking a Philistine wife. But the Scriptures noted below* present a different view. Things forbidden by God can never meet His approval. He may make use of man's sin to bring about His own glorious purposes, as in the case of Adam's transgression and Abraham's lying; but this does not change the character of the act, nor make that justifiable which was previously condemned. Moreover, the apostle James furnishes an explanation which we do well to bear in mind: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evils, neither tempteth He any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

To this dark picture there is however a brighter side. Samson's name occurs in Heb. xi. among those who showed faith in God. On two occasions was this displayed: when he had slain the Philistines with the jaw-bone of an ass, and was dying of thirst, he acknowledges that the victory was due to God, and pleads his necessity; the other instance is, when blind, he asks for strength to be avenged on the Philistines for his two eyes. Nothing beyond personal motives induces him to call upon God; and this apparently unaccompanied with any confession of sin, or evidence of repentance. And so he dies.

I do not enter into the further details of his life, nor mention these except for an object which will presently be seen.

* Num. xxiii. 9; Neh. xiii. 23-27.

For what purpose was this man raised up and endowed with superhuman strength, so that he was able to accomplish feats of prowess such as no one has ever performed; strength to crush a lion, break ropes as thread, tear down the gates and gate-posts of a fortress, and carry them to the top of a hill thirty miles off? And yet in himself so demoralised, and so desultory in his acts of valour that, though judging Israel for twenty years and possessing faith, it seems to have had no effect upon his private character.

There was no consistent effort to accomplish the deliverance of Israel: all was incidental and fitful. His dying act alone brought down terrible destruction upon the enemies of his nation.

What, then, was the special motive for recording this sad history, and making it occupy four whole chapters in the Book of God?

The object, if I understand it aright, is this: The whole is descriptive of something else, which in position, conduct, and prowess, corresponds with what has been noticed. *Israel is this Samson!* Separated unto God before birth (Isa. li. 1), not by voluntary action on their part, but hewn out of the rock, digged out of the pit, Israel was appointed to be the head of all other nations—the Nazarite witness for God. They were to subdue all other nations; nothing was to stand against them. And in the counsel of God the same purpose remains unaltered. They are still to be the war-horse (Zech. x. 3) and battle-axe (Jer. li. 20) of the Almighty God of heaven and earth.

But this dignity is for the present in abeyance. They must first come unto the Father through His well-beloved Son, Jesus of Nazareth, Son of David, whom they betrayed and murdered, their legitimate Monarch. He alone can give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins.

The nation is now, and ever has been, in the Samson condition, the defiled Nazarite. Their history, written

by the hand of God, points this out clearly. Ever following the desires of the flesh and of the mind (Eph. ii. 3), they were children of wrath, even as the Gentiles. With an inheritance allotted, but never possessed (Judges i.), they still remain as it were in the camp of Dan (judgment), their continual desire to be as the other nations having been baffled by an overruling hand.

The only external and noticeable rite still retained is the observance of the Sabbath-day. This is peculiar to themselves, no other nation having adopted it; the Mahomedan selecting the Friday, and Christendom the Sunday. The Sabbath, however, is the peculiar and ordained sign between God and His people Israel (Exod. xxxi. ; Ezek. xx.), no other nation being authorised to adopt it.

To this outward sign they still cling, though probably not discerning either its literal or figurative import. It is well for them that they do so; for when the King of fierce countenance shall come, who shall *think to change times and laws, then the last link of connection between them and their God will be broken*; the hair of the Nazarite shaven, the strength departed, they will become as other men. Yet not entirely as other men; for the eyes, long partially blinded (Rom. xi. 25), will then be utterly destroyed, and a miserable grinding in the prison-house their unhappy lot!

Even then, however, they are not forsaken; there is hope in the further prospect. He who gave them that word of comfort in Haggai ii. 5 still remembers His covenant. The hair begins again to grow on the blind and shaven head. A remnant of Israel, in its last agony of distress, calls once more upon its God. For the fathers' sakes it is heard. Its death struggle brings down the idol house of its enemies, involving them in the ruin. (Zech. xiv. 3; Joel iii. 12; Rev. xix. 17-21.)

The nation, awakening up to life on receiving their own long-rejected King, is born again from above. (John iii.) It has now become as a little child, and enters the kingdom (Matt. xviii. 3); it is born at once (Isaiah lxvi. 8); it is called by another name. (Isaiah lxv. 15.) Having received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins (Isaiah xl. 2; Jer. xvi. 18), she is about to have double blessing bestowed on her. (Isa. lxi. 7; Zech. ix. 12; Job xlii. 10.) Rachel no longer weeps. (Jer. xxxi. 15.)

Let the Christian also beware. "God is not mocked." "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." He is separated unto God, and must maintain his separation, or rue the consequences.

R. N.

NOT OF THE WORLD.

"A LITTLE while," says the Lord, "and the world seeth me *no more*." For Him it is entirely done with. He puts a distinction between Himself and the world; and if we take HIM, we cannot have the world; we cannot have both. "If *any man* love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Men are everywhere playing into the infidel's hands, thinking to make the world better by brotherhoods and social intercourse, making themselves happy *without God*. There may be an acknowledgment of God as to the skill and ability He has bestowed upon man, but the object is to exalt *man*; they will not have God *in Christ*. Christ was rejected by the world, and its day is over. God is gathering out sinners; but as to the world, "it seeth me *no more*." May the Lord preserve us from all the deceptions which, by His side, close to Him, we shall soon detect: *He has taken a heavenly place*.

CORPORATE TESTIMONY.

God's purpose in bringing many sons unto glory is, that they might be "conformed to the image of His Son," that He might have thousands like that blessed One continually before Him. This was the eternal purpose which God purposed concerning us in Christ Jesus; but even *here* that purpose was to have a fulfilment, and the conformity of God's people to His Son should be manifested in an unmistakable manner to the world. Individually, as believers, we should be to the praise of the glory of His grace who hath made us accepted in the Beloved, and in our collective capacity God designed us to be a testimony and witness for Him.

God meant that Israel of old should be His peculiar *nation*, and that they should ever present such an appearance to the other nations as to constrain them to own that there was no such kingdom as Israel, which had such laws and such wisdom, and had God so near them at all times. (*Deut. iv. 7, 8.*)

In like manner God's purpose concerning His people in this dispensation was, that by the *Church*, that is, all believers, should be known the manifold wisdom of God. Its unity was to be the mark by which the world was to be convinced that Jesus was really sent of the Father (*John xvii. 21*), and our being made perfect in one, was to prove to the world that

"The love wherewith He loves the Son,
Such is His love to us."

Yet how little has God been glorified in His people collectively in any dispensation! Our gracious God, instead of being rejoiced with the ways of His "nation" in the past dispensation, or of His "Church" in this, has had, as it were, to "suffer our manners in the wilderness" as He did theirs.

Individuals, no doubt, God has had from time to

time who walked before Him in uprightness and truth, and who mourned over the corporate failure they witnessed around. Enoch walked with God, and had the testimony that he pleased God, before being translated. Abraham walked before God, and was perfect, and was called the friend of God. David was a man after God's own heart, and in the power of God succeeded in consolidating Israel, and healing for a time its divisions and dissensions, so that he reigned as king over *all* Israel. Daniel was a man greatly beloved, because he realised the captivity and sins of his people, and waited upon God in sackcloth and prayer for the blessing and restoration of the house and people of his God. In Ezekiel's days there were a godly few who sighed and cried for the abominations and uncleannesses going on in the house of the Lord; and in Malachi's time there were also a few who felt the shame of the robbery practised upon God in the tithes and offerings, and who stood aloof from it all, and met among themselves often before the Lord to think upon His name, and speak one to another.

Faithful individuals such as these serve to throw into stronger relief the entire failure of the nation of Israel in occupying the position for God which He intended. They stand out, in the pages of sacred history, as God's worthy ones; but Israel as a whole is said to be a "gainsaying" nation, to whom He had all day long in vain stretched out His hands.

Many of us may perhaps be very ready to condemn Israel, and to say, that if we had been in their place we should have acted differently. But how have we believers of this dispensation acted? With superior light and privileges, has not the failure to maintain the chastity of the Church of Christ for the last eighteen centuries been much greater? Where is the Church now? Where is that one body indwelt by that one Spirit? Where that pillar and ground (stay) of the truth? Where is the whole Church "come together

into one place" to be found? (1 Cor. xiv. 23.) Alas! what confusion exists! These very questions in themselves bring a blush to the face. The true Church is, of course, still in the world; but its captivity and removal from its pristine and proper position is greater and more shameful by far than Israel's captivity and removal to Babylon.

Dear fellow-believer, do we sufficiently lay these things to heart? Do we sigh and cry for the abominations of that which now calls itself Christianity, which is all that the world knows or sees of the Church of God? Verily, we are guilty, and should confess it as our common sin, and own that to us belongs confusion of face. (Dan. ix. 5-8.)

The student of Scripture, while not daring to excuse or palliate the failure of the Church from almost its infancy, is however, in a measure, prepared for what has happened, since he knows that man has invariably marred everything that God ever entrusted to him, and since also the blessed Jesus Himself while on earth foretold the present state of things; just as God plainly warned Israel of what would come upon them as a nation in case they refused to walk in His ways. (Lev. xxvi.)

Many important and helpful principles and truths relating to the history of God's people upon earth are to be learned from the seven parables of Matthew xiii.

From the first parable we learn the general effect of the preaching of the gospel to mankind. That effect is fourfold; but in one case only out of the four is there real conversion; a fact that should make us avoid being hasty in pronouncing upon professed conversions.

The second parable dispels the idea of the world at large being converted by the gospel; far from that, we learn that there will always be tares in the field; that is, children of the Evil One in the world; and that no persecution or inquisition is to be resorted to to remove

these wicked ones, who are reserved to the day of judgment to be punished. It need hardly be pointed out that the *field* in which the tares and wheat grow together is the "world," not the Church. There are no tares in the body of Christ; all are redeemed and blood-washed ones. Our blessed Lord prayed, not that we should be taken out of the world, but that we should be kept from the evil. The fact of there being evil and evil ones around us, necessitates that our loins be continually kept girded, and we always watchful.

The third parable touches more closely the subject of this paper, and is prophetic, showing the course and history of that which resulted from the preaching of the gospel. The least of all seeds becomes in time a great tree in the earth, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in its branches. Nebuchadnezzar in his kingdom was compared to a great tree that was cut down; but here a grain of seed grows into a great tree, and becomes an institution in the earth. Gentile supremacy was to commence great, and in time become broken up; Christianity was to commence small, and in time become great and corrupt.

It is a remarkable circumstance, that the early Roman emperors persecuted and tried to crush out the infant Church; but failing in this, and Christianity having grown in spite of all their efforts, their successors embraced Christianity, nominally at least, and took it under their caresses and control. The world was here let into the Church, and has remained in possession of it ever since, and makes use of it for its own purposes.

God's people should refuse this unholy alliance, remembering that they never will be anything else than a "little flock" while down here. The idea of greatness or worldly power is altogether inconsistent with God's idea of His Church on earth. The time for us to reign has not yet come.

Christendom, with its widespread influence, and ramifications, and sects, and ungodliness, and worldly

show of piety and worship, is the great tree before our eyes which has grown from the grain of mustard seed. Christendom is the world, and the world is Christendom.

It is most important for us as Christians to get thus clearly a panoramic view of existing things as they are seen by God; for many are so hedged in by the nooks and corners in which they are spiritually located, that their view of things only extends to the particular place to which they belong, or to the ecclesiastical groove in which they may be moving. Thus it often happens that if believers are *happily* circumstanced in their Church-fellowship, they do not regard the condition of the Church of God at large as being so very bad at all, while on the other hand, if believers are *unhappily* circumstanced and surrounded by dissensions and discord, they are ready enough to conclude that the whole Church has become hopelessly corrupt.

This third parable however gives us a general and, as it were, bird's-eye view of things, and shows them to be in a condition very far from what God would have them. Let us, however, not forget that it is Christendom, or Christianity in general, that is the subject of this parable, and not "the Church, the body of Christ, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all," though, of course, Christendom contains within it that body, or at least that portion of it now on earth.

The fourth parable shows us that the evil allowed in Christianity works gradually; that it first came in without attracting much notice, but that once in, it spread itself over the whole, and that now there is no part that has escaped; all is leavened. Like Ezekiel (viii. 8), we may now dig in the wall, and "behold, through the door, the wicked abominations, and every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about."

Of the remaining parables, those of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price are calculated to

give us much comfort, especially after the disheartening view of things given us in the preceding ones. These parables look, as it were, at the other side of the picture, and shew us the estimation in which Jesus holds those who are truly His own.

The foregoing observations may be thought familiar, but what are the practical lessons they teach?

1. That individually we are cast upon God, to walk before Him in holiness, in spite of all corporate failure.

2. That it is not put before us to reconstruct the Church, or to make a new one; but to be alive to the present ruined condition of things, and to walk circumspectly in the midst of them, taking a stand outside the unclean thing itself, yet cherishing and maintaining all that is of God, and according to His word.

How many reformations and revivals that commenced by being merely a protest, or separation from that which was seen to be wrong, eventually settled down into a regularly organised system, calling itself a Church. Let us beware of this, and of all "church making;" for as numbers and organization increase, the danger of the admixture of human legislation and opinions becomes the more certain. Let us take heed of drifting from being the two or three meeting in weakness, to imagining ourselves in any way the one Church of God upon earth.

Many Christians, it must be admitted, have been seriously stumbled and retarded by disappointment in church arrangements or organizations. Thinking they had restored or found the church in its purity, they allowed themselves to forget the broken condition of things, and legislated for their particular fellowship, as if it were, in truth, the actual and complete church of God.

In the midst of the confusion, blessed be God, the path of His obedient children is plain. God has given us in His word abundant principles and directions as to how His people should meet together and worship and

deport themselves under every condition of things. It needs only a subject heart and will, and God will teach us and lead us in a plain path, because of the enemy.

Now that the Church of God, as such, no longer presents a corporate testimony, the first thing (as has already been said) is for each one to be a fruit-bearer, thereby glorifying the Father (John xv. 8), and to walk holily and unblameably before God, shining as lights in this present evil world. It is significant that those in Malachi's time are not commended for trying to restore temple-worship and excel in correctness of ritual, or even in proper and acceptable offerings, or anything of a national character. As individuals, they accepted the state of things as they were, and the form of godliness without the power as inevitable; they feared the Lord, each for himself, thought often on His name, and forsook not the assembling of themselves together. And what was the consequence? Why the Lord hearkened to *them*, while disregarding all the rest. May we be imitators of them, so far as they thus pleased God. In proportion as these characteristics are developed in us, so shall we be well pleasing to God, and not in proportion to the orthodoxy or fancied perfectness of our church fellowship. Not that we are for a moment to be careless or unscriptural in church matters, but we are not to put them in the place of Christ.

R. E. S.

A SOUL not walking in the light with God becomes blind, and forgets that he was purged from his old sins. Through this blinding power of sin his speech to God is that of an unconverted man. He judges God by *his own thoughts*; he goes to God as a criminal deserving condemnation, denying thus the value of the blood of the one offering which perfects for ever. All this is the sorrowful result of sin and unbelief. We do indeed need to "give diligence" to make our calling and election sure.

FAITH'S RESOLVE;

OR, MICAH'S RESTING-PLACE IN A DARK DAY.

“Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me. Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him, until He plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold His righteousness.”—MICAH vii. 7-9.

SUCH was the resolve of the man of God in the cloudy and dark days in which his lot was cast.

God will never disappoint; nor shall we ever be disappointed if we deeply learn His lesson, which is to wean us from all but Himself, and to find Himself sufficient for all our need. We are not to look to any thing here on which to rest, either in self or in the church, but only to the Son of man. That resting-place never fails, whatever else may.

In the garden there was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and as long as obedience to God lasted evil was unknown. Now evil is known, and God makes it the sorrowful medium through which good is to be learned; and thus is God avenged of the enemy, triumphing over him in Christ. There is a deeper need for the presence and power of evil than we can fathom; and therefore there is “a needs-be that offences come,” a needs-be which, when unfolded in eternity, will cause us to understand life's apparent failure, and God's mighty success in accomplishing the counsel of His own will just in that way in which it has been brought about. God's triumphs will be seen in the midst of man's defeats; God's glory and might made manifest in the midst of man's weakness and dishonour.

It is hard not to be discouraged, and when surrounded by failures to be able to join with Paul in saying, “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom

and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33.) But faith can search the deep things of God; for "the Spirit searcheth all things," and by Him God reveals them unto us.

In the past dispensation the *seer*, the *prophet*, and the *watchman* were names given to the men of God who, under the leading of the Spirit, could *see* that which to the ordinary eye remained unseen; could *unfold* the purposes of God; and could *look out*, as a watcher from his tower, for that which was coming in the distance.

These three positions are more or less occupied by the man of faith now, who can look into God's dealings in the past, the present, and the future, and in the light obtained therefrom guide his feet and direct the steps of others, not by the light of the seen and the uncertain, but by the guidance of the unseen and eternal, and therefore certain.

Micah and Isaiah prophesied about the same time, when idolatry and apostacy were stamped on everything; and even though in Hezekiah's reign there was much outward reformation, underneath there was a seething corruption that made the heart of the godly sad, and foretold a coming judgment.

Yet, as the purpose of God could not fail, Micah spoke of an "Heir," the "glory of Israel" (chap. i. 15); of a "Breaker" and "King" (chap. ii. 13) who would restore Israel's last dominion; and of "the mountain of the house of the Lord" (chap. iv. 1, 2) that should be established above all hills; of the "Ruler in Israel whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (chap. v. 2); and to this glorious future his heart turns in joyful, patient waiting, come what may. This is ever faith's prerogative.

In the beginning of chap. vii. we see the condition of things around, in the midst of which the faithful soul cries out "Woe is me!" Instead of finding God's

people around him as first-fruits to God, he stood alone, as the solitary fruit of an autumn gleanings. The good man had perished—none could be trusted—the most upright was as a brier—friend and kindred had turned aside; and his foes were they of his own household. It is at such a time that he gives expression to *faith's resolve* in the words already quoted.

Let us ponder them a little. They will help in the darkest circumstances. They will teach us much, and unfold some of the secrets of God's dealings which we need to learn, that we may not be discouraged on the one hand, nor rendered careless on the other.

How encouraging to hear the prophet saying, "*Therefore will I look unto the Lord;*" as if drawing his strongest argument from the very circumstances of darkness and discouragement by which he was surrounded. There is no doubt as to the resource—no question as to the quarter whence help is to come. God can meet it all, and faith can triumph, let appearances be what they may. The day of the watchmen—that is, the time of visitation of which the watchmen had spoken (*v. 4*)—had come, but as a watchman he would "look out"* unto the Lord.

He not only kept the eye of his faith looking on the visitation sent, but on the God from whom it came; not only on the sin and failure around, but on the God of power and grace, who, when man has proved his impotency, will Himself work, and then none shall hinder it. (*Isa. xliii. 13.*)

But not only will he "look out;" he will also wait for the God of his salvation with this assurance, "My God will hear me." God often seems to tarry long. He has much to work out in expectant hearts that they little think of; purposes to accomplish in them of which they know nothing, and for which they have patiently to wait, as day by day, here a little and there

* The word in the Hebrew for watchman is from the verb here rendered "look," as one who looks out.

a little, patience is having its perfect work. The tribulation that works patience is preparing the way for enriching, beyond all conception, those brought within its sphere. Hence the importance of Habakkuk's word: "The vision is yet for an appointed time, but in the end it shall speak, and will not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not delay."*

Faith's eye thus sees visions that are not immediately realized; they await an appointed time, and such a preparation in the soul as alone could make the realization a blessing. But the answer is sure, for God hears; and therefore faith, looking at the triumph of the enemy, says, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: though I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord is light about me." The prophet could not only say with Paul, "He *hath* delivered, He *doth* deliver, He *will yet* deliver;" but even in the very time of darkness, God was light to him. Darkness may be all around, but he who has God dwelling in him has light dwelling in him, and therefore cannot abide in darkness; he carries his sunshine within him.

To one exercised in soul about the condition of things in the church of God, there is in all this a mine of untold consolation. The word is here an individual one, as it is in the epistles to the seven churches. There it is, "He that hath an ear to hear, let *him* hear;" and the promise is also "to *him* that overcometh;" and so here it is, "*I* will look." God remains the light of each one who walks in the light as He is in the light.

But there can be no selfish isolation as if the *condition of things around* concerned not the soul thus individually enjoying the presence of God. It is just when the soul goes out in sympathy with the heart of God over all that grieves Him, and dishonours His

* This is not in the original quite the same word as that previously rendered "tarry."

holy name, that His presence is the most enjoyed. Hence we read further, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him, *until* He plead my cause, and execute judgment for me." Micah here identifies himself with his people in the confession of sin, as Daniel and Nehemiah did after him. He does not proudly cast it upon them, as if he were not one of them, but he penitently bears and confesses it as a common sorrow, because a common dishonour to God.

This subject must find a deeper place in our hearts if we would really know our true place of consecration to God. It is easy to complain of sin and failure; it is quite another thing to bear the indignation of the Lord in connection with it. It was this that led Daniel to say, "I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplication, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: and I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, . . . We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly. . . . O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us shame of face, as it is this day," &c. (Dan. ix. 3-8.)

God's name is unhallowed now. Those who call Him Father bite and devour one another; and those who own a common Saviour present to the world a divided Christ. Personal shortcomings and collective failures are spoken of and dealt with as if there were no common shame, in the common disgrace heaped on that Holy Name by which we are all called.

Yes, truly we have sinned against Him; and this He seeks we should better understand, and then a ministry of tears and sackcloth will effect more for harmony and love than ever will be produced by a spirit of self-vindication and self-exaltation that says, "Stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou"—a word said then, as now, by those who have least title to say it. Daniel never said it. On all sides the

judgment of God is felt in the general weakness and feebleness that marks everything in the assemblies of God; for children come to the birth, but there is little strength to bring forth. We need personal confession. Daniel began alone with God, and so must we.

There are many Daniels, known only to God, who sigh and cry for the abominations that are done in His holy name by those who know not what they do. They bear the burden of these things before the Lord, and "the care of all the churches" rests on their hearts; and they can say with Paul, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" But for the most part "the affliction of Joseph" rests too lightly upon our careless spirits, and neither the dishonour of God, nor the impoverishment of His people affect us as they ought. It is this double aspect of sin in the people of God, that has ever exercised the hearts of the faithful. Thus Moses mourned over the reproach brought on God's name while bearing uncomplaining a forty years' endurance of "the indignation of the Lord" in the wilderness, because he would not separate himself from his people, and be made a nation greater and mightier than they. Unselfish, Christ-like Moses!

There is, however, a *limit* to God's indignation, blessed be His name! There is an "*until*," when God will plead the cause of His servants, when the wanderings of the wilderness shall cease, when the power of the Assyrian shall be broken, when the captivity in Babylon shall end, when the sorrows and the discords of the present shall cease. There is a time coming when God will fulfil all His promises, accomplish all His purposes, and bring to light the deep designs of His own heart of love, and this time is waiting for the footsteps of our faith.

To this time the prophet alludes when he adds, "He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness." Observe the difference

between God our light in the midst of our darkness, as faith's present portion, and hope's promise for the future—"He will bring me forth to the light." These two must not be confounded, or we shall rob either the present or the future. God wants us to rob neither, but in faith to enjoy the present, and in hope to enjoy the future.

Thus Paul was sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; bearing the burden of the church's sorrow and weakness, but rejoicing in a mighty Saviour, to whom he committed the present with its failures, and to whom he entrusted the future with its untold promise and glory. Hence Paul was not discouraged at all he saw, nor at all that was prophetically revealed to him. He knew the Arm on which he leaned, he knew the One on whom he had believed; and he could commit all, whether for himself or for the church, into His hands "*until* that day." He knew all was in safe keeping, and he knew with whom to leave it.

In like manner John in Patmos looked for the "*until*" of the revelation of the Son of God, and in the meantime saw the mighty One walking amidst the seven golden candlesticks with eyes like flames, feet as burning brass, His mouth as a two-edged sword, and His face as the sun, and yet it was He "that had loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God and His Father."

His word of comfort to John was, "Behold, I come quickly." It will not be long before the "*until*" is reached; and faith responds, "Come, Lord Jesus."

Then will the light be seen—a morning without a cloud—a day without a sunset—a glory with nothing to dim or darken it. To this we are looking forward. God will bring us forth to the light, even into the eternal sunshine of the heavenly city which the glory of God doth lighten, and of which the Lamb is the Light.

And even more. We shall then behold His RIGHTEOUS-NESS. What a thought! He is righteous, and so are all His ways; but we cannot often see it now; we shall then. In the meantime we trust in the Righteous One, and know that that which is here too wonderful for us will be made plain, and the deep and dark mysteries of the past six thousand years will be revealed, and the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God be made known.

Then will the taunts of the enemy be silenced as the prophet adds (*v.* 10), "Shame shall cover her who said unto me, Where is the Lord thy God?"—her on whose forehead is written the name, "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of harlots and the abominations of the earth." She will become "the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit," judgment will overtake her, the smoke of her torment shall rise up for ever and ever.

The enemy is trodden down, and God our God has gained for Himself the victory; and well may we close with those verses at the end of our prophet, "Who is a God like unto thee, that *pardonest* iniquity, and *passeth by* the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will *subdue* our iniquities; and thou wilt *cast all* their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old." Yes, truly we may say, "Who is a God like unto thee?" H. G.

IN John xvii. we are first taken out of the world, and then sent into it. God does not give us work to do till we have enjoyed His love. "Let me see thy countenance" precedes "Let me hear thy voice." (Sol. Song ii. 14.)

FOUR EPOCHS.

IN the history of this world, as revealed in Scripture, we find four great epochs.

1. Man falls, and is driven out from the presence of God. A change, both moral and physical, takes place. Man's heart is alienated from God, and unconsciously devoted to Satan. The earth comes under the curse.

2. By the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus a great change has taken place, as yet only *moral*. When He rose, conqueror over Satan, sin, and death, another Lord was proclaimed, even He who is "Lord of all." His kingdom is announced now *in a mystery*; but His claims are owned by very few. The god of this world still successfully blinds the minds of them that believe not. Yet Christ's claims are *real* to faith.

3. The rejected King of kings and Lord of lords will come forth through the opened heavens, riding on a white horse, with the armies of heaven (His confessors during His rejection) following. His claims as universal King will be acknowledged professedly by all; the curse will no longer weigh down creation; the wilderness will blossom as the rose; enmity will cease; peace and plenty will abound. The "times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Judgment will be administered in righteousness and truth.

4. The last epoch will be when the Son shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father. A further change will then take place. As at the fall, a change both moral and physical was introduced, so will it be at the close. "Behold, I make *all* things new." There will be "a new heavens and a new earth, wherein *dwelleth* righteousness." In the millennium it was righteousness *reigning*, and evil kept down by the power of the Lord; but in this final epoch evil will exist no more in the earth, and God will be all in all. F. J. C.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF GIVING.

How few understand the meaning of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

It is a paradox to the natural heart, which loves to get, and to have, and to keep; but to the new-born, the God-begotten soul, it is an injunction which carries with it its own reward; and truly the giving ones find they are more blessed in the giving than ever they were in receiving.

The words of the Lord Jesus Christ are our commands: "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." And in the pathway of His commandments there is ever great reward.

As the new-born one begins to walk in the ways of God, no longer living to himself, but to Him who died for him and rose again, many things arise that he is bidden by the word of God to do which are directly opposed to his preconceived notions, to his habits, to the customs around him, to the principles of the world, and even to the ways of many called Christians. As he meets them, the question arises, What am I to do? Satan suggests expediency, and the world and the flesh conjoin in advising, if not disregard of the commandment, at least but the partial fulfilment of it, according to circumstances. The Spirit, even the Holy Spirit, given to be the guide into all truth of the new-born soul, lovingly and plainly enjoins implicit obedience, and gently leads and attracts thereto.

In the commandment before us we have, as it were, a casual remark as to the happiness of the giver over the receiver. To many the thought of giving conveys with it anything but pleasure. This is natural. In the renewed soul God would reverse this, and cause it to be accounted a delight, a positive source of enjoy-

ment. In the early days of the church (see Acts ii. 44, 45; iv. 33-37) this grace flowed forth freely, and the benefits resulting were great.

The apostle Paul, writing to Philemon, appeals to the grace in him: "That the communication of thy faith may become effectual *by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in thee in Christ Jesus.*"

So now appeal is made unto the God-given grace that *is* within every believer, by virtue of his being in Christ Jesus, that he may cause his faith to show itself effectually by the acknowledging of this grace of liberality which *is in him*, since he is in Christ Jesus—in Him, that is, whose life showed the blessedness of giving.

I speak not on the consequent enlargement of heart, on the abundant thanksgiving unto God made by the recipients of the bounty, but simply on the effect produced on the giver.

God's gifts always *do* good, besides being good. God gives to us of His Spirit, that we may manifest it. He giveth to us, and liberally, "good measure, well pressed down, shaken together, and running over," that we may not only be depositaries of His grace, but channels to enrich others; for "God is able to make all grace abound toward you; *that* ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound unto every good work . . . being enriched in everything *to* all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God." (2 Cor. ix. 8, 11.)

It is not the amount given the Lord looks to. "God loveth a cheerful giver." The Lord loveth to recognize the fruit of His own toil, and to see the new-born one giving joyfully out of his stores to those who have need.

Simple are the Lord's commands: "Do good unto all men, especially unto them that are of the household of faith." "Give to him that asketh of thee." "To do good and to communicate (share thy portion) forget

not." "Lay by in store, as God hath prospered." We should not be impulsive givers. "The poor we have always with us." And we should regularly, in a business-like fashion, put our portion into the Lord's treasure-chest (which, so to speak, always stands at the door of His temple), that the Lord's deacons may distribute it for His work.

In Numbers xviii. 26-32 we find the Levites, who lived on the tithes of the people, commanded to set apart the tenth part of all given to them for the Lord; thus acknowledging Him as the giver. So on every one of us, even on the very poorest of the flock, is it enjoined by the Lord to give, yea, even as the Macedonians (2 Cor. viii. 2) out of "deep poverty," that faith may triumph over circumstances, and our souls learn to exult in God, who will not fail to supply *all our need* according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

"Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich."

With obedience will come joy. If the way has not been trodden by some before, let them enter on it, laying up for themselves treasures in heaven, "where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal." A. O. M.

MATT. xi. 26: "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Is there not something truly precious in these words of the submissive Servant? Let us remember that they occur at the close of a chapter that speaks of our Lord's forerunner having doubted Him, of His people refusing to dance to His piping strain of *grace*, and of the cities in which His mightiest works were performed remaining unmoved in their pride, instead of repenting in dust and ashes. What a precious Master have we in the meek and lowly One, the despised Nazarene, the "carpenter's son!"

THE TRUE NAZARITE.

“Holy, harmless, undefiled.”—HEB. vii. 26.

THE subjects that have already passed under our notice prepare the way for the consideration whether, in the ordinance of the Nazarite, there was a deeper design in the mind of God than anything connected with external rites, or even with His people Israel. We have already traced some indications of such a design, but have not hitherto reached higher than man’s actings, nor beyond the limited range of this world’s history.

We have now before us the course of the Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of man; for in Him alone is the full counsel of our God to be discovered. In Him alone is to be discerned what it is to be wholly SEPARATED UNTO GOD. Leaving the region of symbols and shadows, we behold in Him the realities they signified—their permanence, and their acceptableness with the Most High.

At the time of our Lord’s appearance on earth every thing had failed. Not only were the Gentiles in utter darkness, wandering on in darkness, midnight darkness, but Israel, the favoured portion of the human race to whom special communications had long been made from heaven, had extinguished the light. Prophet, priest, and king, nobles and people, had all failed. Not one had been found righteous; no, not one.

The Son of God comes forth from the bosom of His Father to exhibit before the eyes of angels and of men what, in the estimate of heaven, righteous conduct is. Equal with God, the brightness of His glory, He did not think the maintenance of that dignity so high an object as the accomplishment of the desire of Him whom He loved; and before the world was, the settled purpose of His heart was embodied in these words, “Lo, I come to do thy will.”

Forsaking the glory He had with His Father before

the world was, surrendering His own will entirely, He took upon Him the position of servant, and as such prepared to obey, to the fullest extent, whatever His Father's pleasure might be; setting Himself thus apart, sanctifying or separating Himself in the largest and most complete sense of the Nazarite vow.

Part of that pleasure was, that He should be born into this world as a man; not as Adam, in the full stature of mankind, but as a babe.

Another part of that pleasure was, that He should be born of the house of David, a lineage highly favoured, yet disgraced by every crime, their delinquencies being recorded by God Himself, and published throughout the world.

None of the accompaniments of royalty were to attend His entrance into the world; no palace, no house, nor even a bed, but only a cattle-trough. In His early days, exposed to the sword of the merciless Herod, His life was preserved by flight into a foreign land.

The town of Nazareth, where almost the whole of His life was spent, was so contemptible that a godly Israelite said, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" The occupation of carpenter would seem to us little befitting Him who is the Heir of the world. Yet in all these particulars there was no remonstrance, no hesitation. It had been decided ages before; Nazarene and Nazarite being closely related, if not identical.

The herald, sent before to announce His approach as King, was not of noble birth, with pageantry befitting so great an occasion; but a strange, solitary, poor man, dressed not in grand apparel, but in the coarsest of clothing, living on the poorest of food, proclaiming his wondrous message not in the royal city, but on the outskirts of civilisation.

Then, after the fearful ordeal of the forty days in the wilderness, when our blessed Lord began to announce the near approach of the kingdom of the heavens, so

long foretold, and to prove that He was the appointed Sovereign, by acts of power such as had never been seen, opposition presently arose. Not only were His own townspeople against Him, but everywhere the fiercest enmity sprung up against His title and against His person.

In vain He sought to commend Himself to their good-will by displaying both creating and restoring power. In vain were multitudes fed by His hand, diseases of all kinds cured on the instant, whatever their intensity. Gentleness, tenderness, beneficence, were all unavailing. Even raising to life one who had been dead and buried, only brought the hatred of His enemies to a climax, so determined were they that they would not have this man to reign over them. In all these events the reply of His soul ever was, "I opened not my mouth, because Thou didst it."

The points hitherto noticed have to do with our Lord's separation to God, as in the case of Samson, from His birth; but also long antecedent to His birth was the voluntary surrender made; they likewise have to do with His public position and outward life, corresponding with the *second part* of the Nazarite injunction. (See page 272.)

We can now touch upon some of the features of the inner life, as more allied to the *first part*—those of the mind and the affections.

The adoption of the Father's will, as contained in Psalm xl., was not a mere acquiescence, nor even limited to a thorough surrender. It was vastly more. "Thy law is within my heart." The whole heart was occupied therewith. The words, "Lo, I come, I delight to do thy will, O my God," appear to be the title of the Book, a book long antecedent to the Psalms; and we look back beyond the promise to Adam and this world's history to trace the marvellous purpose.

It was no child of man that could devise the

thoughts or utter the language of that wonderful Psalm cxix. No one but the Son in the bosom of His Father could even comprehend, much less have the whole soul absorbed in the contemplation of the law, statutes, and commandments as there exhibited. Their beauty, wisdom, and excellence could justly be appreciated by Him alone. From no other eyes could those rivers of waters have flowed down, "because men keep not thy law." Moses might feel indignant at their failure, David charge his son with its observance, Jeremiah bemoan the fatal consequences of departure therefrom; but none of these, no one save the Son Himself, could enter into its perfections, and be wholly engrossed therewith, as shown in this psalm and in the nineteenth, meditating therein day and night.

It was Himself alone that fulfilled what was required of man, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; and thy neighbour as thyself." Yes, better than Himself did He love His neighbour! The perfection of meekness and lowliness of heart, of gentleness, tenderness, and good-will, His amiability attracted all, even the children.

Still Satan was near. Those who sat in the gate spake against Him; drunkards made Him their song; reproaches broke His heart. He gave His back to the smiters, His cheeks to them that plucked off His hair; yet when reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not.

Far from being ascetic, our gracious Lord mingled with all classes, ate and drank like those around; assisted at the marriage feast of the poor, and partook of the Pharisee's hospitality. When, however the work of His Father was before Him, hunger and weariness were forgotten. His meat was to do the will of His Father, to finish His work. This was His sole object.

And when the last, the long-anticipated, the dreadful

season of passing out of this world arrived, with what unswerving fidelity does He meet it. Not all the taunts, insults, and mockery of His enemies, not all their bitter hatred and refined cruelty can induce Him to swerve from confessing His Father's name by holy obedience to His will, though it would have been easy to come down from the cross, and with a word reduce His murderers to ashes. "Not my will, but Thine be done!"

All, whether friends or foes, could see that the one object of His life was to fulfil the desire of His Father's heart, cost what it would to Himself.

In relation to the *third part* of the Nazarite performance, do we not hear Jesus saying, "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?" His relatives were at the door, sending a message to speak with Him; but in reality they came to carry Him away on the plea of insanity. Always obedient to His parents, it is needful on this occasion to make known that there existed a higher relationship: "Whosoever will do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother." The earthly relationship is disallowed; it yields precedence to the heavenly.

In the same light we are to understand the declaration, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, his wife, and children, brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." So wholly was Jesus separated to God, that the new, the eternal relationship was ever before Him.

In regard to this separation, can anything be more astonishing than the idea conveyed in the words, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No one taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father"? The sacrifice, therefore, was voluntary even at the last juncture, with all its excruciating agony.

Bearing in mind His Father's desire to surround Himself with a new, a resurrection family, the Son of God willingly parts with the present life and all its rightful claims, that He may receive it on another footing. "Wherefore God hath very highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and upon earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess Jesus Christ Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

But this great, mighty, only Potentate, to whom the Father has committed the government of the heavens as well as of earth, the One alone who is worthy to reign, does even then by no means lay aside His subjection. His language still remains the same, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God."

Psalms *xxi.*, *lxxii.*, and *ci.* may be especially noted as containing declarations to this effect. And when, after the full exercise of this unlimited authority for a thousand years, He shall have subjugated everything, far from asserting independence, He lays down the sceptre at His Father's feet, still acknowledging His own subjection and His Father's supremacy throughout eternity.

Having thus before us the true, the undefiled Nazarite, shall not our hearts be filled with admiration and praise to our God and Father for having spared from His presence His only-begotten and well-beloved Son, to pass through all these scenes of unutterable woe, in order to accomplish the marvellous and excellent counsels of mercy towards us that filled His heart? Shall we not adore and praise Jesus, Son of God and Son of man, who willingly has taken for ever the position of subjection in order to have us, whom He has redeemed by His blood, associated with Himself as sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty, to partake of His subjection and to share His glory? Shall we not bless and praise the Holy Spirit of our God

who came to reveal to us these divine wonders, to press them upon our attention, lead us to accept and rejoice in them, and keep us in subjection to our loving Lord?

May our adoration, praise, and gratitude be ever exhibited by a surrender of ourselves, corresponding with that of Jesus our Lord. R. N.

THE MAN OF GOD.

THE term, or title, "Man of God" is of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament, and is generally given to prophets or special servants of Jehovah; but in a sense it is true of all God's children.

It is used twice in the New Testament, once directly given to Timothy (1 Tim. vi. 11), and again, more generally, as a title of those who, rightly using the holy writings, become thoroughly furnished unto every good work. (2 Tim. iii. 17.)

The question then naturally arises, *What is a "man of God"?*

He is one beloved of God, and who, as a consequence of the new birth (1 John iv. 7), loves God in return; redeemed with the blood of the Lamb, Jesus the Son of God, he by grace yields himself to God, and owns his Saviour as his Lord; born from above, he is God's child and heir, and bears His image; by faith in Christ, he steps out from the men of the world, and declares himself for God. Such is God's man, or a man of God, a reflection of His moral glory.

He is God's child and servant, His friend and witness. As a child he loves, and as a servant he obeys; as a friend he walks with God, and as a witness he testifies for Him.

This is true of him in the *closet*, the *family*, the *church*, and before *the world*. In each of these he is an interesting and important person both to God and to his fellows. Let us for a little consider him in each sphere or circle.

IN THE CLOSET.

“When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.” The closet is the place for direct intercourse with God. That which characterizes the man of God here, and distinguishes him from the mere nominal Christian, is *reality*. Yes, direct close-dealing with God is, as it ever has been, a reality.

It was a blessed reality to Adam when in innocence he was alone with Jehovah-God—heard His voice, traced and admired His hand, responding, doubtless, with joy of soul. Was it not also a reality to him when with guilt, darkness, and shame he had to do immediately with Him? when the mighty voice uttering those fearful words, “Adam, where art thou?” thrilled his soul, and he could not but obey? It was a sorrowful reality; but the sequel was blessed.

It was a blessed reality to Abel when he brought his lamb to Jehovah, confessing his sinnership, and professing his faith, and was accepted, and knew it.

It was often so to Enoch in his walk with God, and to Noah during his day of testimony in the prospect of judgment coming on the world.

When Abraham, called by Jehovah, severed himself from kindred and friends, and from place and associations enjoyed from youth, and walked with Jehovah, following His leadings to an unknown land, the struggle between such claims and those of Jehovah must have been a reality.

Was it not also a reality when the same voice called for Isaac, and required his father to offer him up for a burnt-offering? to cut off all his hopes at a stroke, and do violence to his feelings as a man and as a father? and all this alone, in the secret, the closet, of his soul with Jehovah! It was indeed a reality such as no one out of the circumstances can possibly estimate.

Moses, the first who bore the title "Man of God," also found it a reality to be alone with Jehovah. Witness the scene at the back side of the desert. Approaching the burning bush, to learn the secret of its preservation in the flame, a voice forbid him to advance, and with authority demanded worship, for the place was holy. In the dust he found his proper place, and bowed to listen. The result was blessing and honour; he was commissioned to deliver Israel.

Was it not a reality also when, met by Jehovah in the inn, he came under the judgment of the word as to circumcision, which he had compromised with his wife Zipporah for peace' sake, but who must now obey, or lose her husband? It was.

So was it also to his successor, Joshua, when, having discovered his mistake in taking the Captain of Jehovah's hosts for a common soldier, he loosed his shoe from off his foot, bowed, and inquired, "What saith my Lord unto His servant?"

Isaiah found it a solemn thing when in the temple he saw Jehovah of Hosts, and heard the cry of the seraphim, "Holy! holy! holy!" It drew from his soul the lamentation, "Woe is me!" but in the end he was comforted and honoured.

Daniel too, when, left alone, he saw the vision of the Blessed One, felt it a reality to be strengthless before Him, and to have his comeliness turned into corruption.

No less did Ezekiel when he saw the likeness of the glory of Jehovah, and fell on his face.

Again, who can read the Psalms without feeling the reality of the utterances, whether in confession, supplication, intercession, or praise?

I might multiply examples, and enlarge on each; but my reader can do this, and I pass on to consider the perfect illustration of deep reality, Jesus the God-man, the Son and Servant of God His Father.

His was not a life with intervals of reality, nor one

of comparative earnestness, but one continued course of simple and absolute reality.

Who has a scale to measure, a line to fathom, the deep and holy experiences of His soul? What were they during the thirty years of comparative retirement with Joseph and His mother? what at His baptism? and what during the forty days' temptation in the wilderness, of which we read only the close?

And what in Gethsemane, when, stationing His three disciples to watch and pray, He went alone with the Father, as that dread hour drew near which had ever been before Him? when He contemplated the cup as *close*, and apprehended the bitterness of its contents—unmingled wrath? when even He fell on the ground, prostrate in agony, sweating, as it were, great drops of blood, while He said, "If it may not pass from me except I drink it, Thy will be done"? Say, was not this reality? Other examples are bright and blessed, but this is perfect.

And do not *we* know from experience the reality of closet intercourse and direct dealings with God our Father? We do.

We know the blessed deep reality of communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ; the blessedness of joy in God Himself above all His gifts, and that joy again deepened by expressing it to Him.

We know also the reality of being searched by the Holy Ghost, when He has taken and used His sword, the word of God, and made us feel its point and edge, "piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit (for they are distinct), joints and marrow." Has not our flesh writhed, and have not our souls bowed, as we have weighed spirit, thoughts, words, and actions in the perfect balance, and measured all by the divine scale, and found nothing perfect, but much to confess? Yet withal we have learnt afresh that He brings low in order to strengthen, and wounds that He may heal, and that our perfectness is in Another. This is real;

and as we get nearer to Him it will be more and yet more so.

From this we pass to consider the man of God

IN THE FAMILY.

It is here that the blessed result of closet intercourse with God is first seen. In this narrow circle of outward life the influence of the man of God is first felt; and here he is, *save to God, best known, and should be most highly valued.*

Each sphere has its peculiar tests. The closet has its trials, but of a different form from those experienced in the family. In the closet they are direct from Satan or from the flesh; but in the family we have to do with others through whom Satan can act on the flesh; there are provocations through persons and circumstances not met with in the closet; yet the grace of God is sufficient for both. The difficulties here are *real*, and so is the blessing.

Of the possibility and power of such family godliness we have examples in the word of God, of parents, children, masters, and servants.

The earliest mentioned is Enoch. Of him it is recorded that "he walked with God," and that too after he "begat sons and daughters." As a man, and as a family man, he "walked with God." This is the short but comprehensive and telling description of his life; and the mark of honour put on it by God was his translation.

Abraham, the friend of God, so walked with Him in his family, that God could say of him, "I know Abraham that he will *command* his children and his household." On this ground God treated him as His friend, and communicated to him His purpose respecting Sodom.

Abraham trained his servants, and watched over his son Isaac even to his marriage, directing his choice of a wife. A bright example this to Christians of this

day, to *command* their children and their households, especially watching their sons and daughters in their choice of companions and formations of friendships, out of which may and probably will arise their choice for life.

Isaac too, although not in an equal degree, walked before God. He grieved over Esau's course, and guided that of Jacob.

Even in Jacob, although, sad to tell, he came short even of Isaac's measure of obedience, we yet can trace the influence of a man of God, when right with God, on those around him. When bidden to go again to Bethel, having been brought to consciousness of his ways of forgetfulness of God and ingratitude, also of God's faithfulness and mercy, he searched the tents, gathered his household, collected the idols and ornaments, and buried them under an oak. The *grave* is the proper place now for idols and worldly trinkets; out of it believers at their baptism profess to have come up, and should leave such vanities behind them.

Jacob and his household put them away, and they all worshipped Jehovah; while the improved condition of Jacob's soul was intimated by the title he gave to the place, "El-Beth-El"—the God of Bethel. Before it was "the house of God;" now it is "God, of the house of God," who fills his soul.

From this point the patriarchal testimony gives place to the national in keeping with the change of dispensation. Instances of family life appear on record afterwards; but they are mostly of a sad-character, as those of Eli, David, and others.

From this, then, we pass to the New Testament to learn from its varied instruction the importance of a godly walk in these relationships of life, and we commence, as Scripture does, with husband and wife.

In this relationship, the *husband's* pattern of love is Christ, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church." The place of the *wife* is subjec-

tion, even as the normal condition of the Church is one of entire dependence and subjection, "as the Church is subject unto Christ." The Scripture presupposes her love, and enjoins subjection to her own husband in everything, he being accountable to Christ for his conduct. The Man of God walking with Him will hold this his place, and the holy woman also will keep hers.

If *parents*, they will together own God in everything, bringing in His word, and bowing to its authority; their children, seeing this, will honour them and it, and be influenced by it; servants also will feel the power of such a life.

Children, in their turn, will be guided by the same Word, which says, "Children obey your parents in the Lord." Affection and subjection, implicit, unquestioning obedience will characterise them, and God will bless them. They will have before them the example of the Lord Jesus, and by grace imitate it.

In the capacity of *servants* also, male or female, such characters will take the word of God for their guide. Scripture not only speaks honourably of service but speaks largely, frequently with direct reference to the Lord Jesus, who honoured the position of a servant by becoming one. (See Eph. vi. 5-9; Col. iii. 22; 1 Tim. vi. 1-3; Titus ii. 9-14; 1 Peter ii. 18-23.)

In connection with these passages the *master* will also find his instruction, and, as a man of God, will bow to it and be godly, godlike in his behaviour toward his servant. Thus he will glorify Him who, as his Master, is his pattern.

Real godliness in the closet and in the family will, without fail, manifest itself

IN THE CHURCH OF GOD.

By the term *Church*, I do not mean merely the assembly, although his conduct there will be guided by the Word, as to his spirit and ways, both towards God and his fellow-believers; but also, in *all* his con-

nections and communications with the children of God, whenever and under what circumstances soever he may find them, he will know them as those who fear the Lord and honour them; will love them as children of the same Father-God, as fellow-members of the same body of Christ; he will think of and *consider* them, rejoice over, pray, and give thanks for them, seeking to love as Christ loved, and, if occasion for forgiveness arise, will forgive as God for Christ's sake forgave him. (Ephesians iv. 32; v. 1, 2.) Lowliness and meekness, patience and faithfulness, will characterise him; in a word, his walk will be an exhibition of love in its varied beauties, according to the divine pattern. (1 Cor. xiii.) His aim, as one saying he abides in Christ, will be so to walk even as He walked, a reflection of the moral glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Such a life and walk will be to his own joy, to the true edification of believers, and, above all, to the glory of God. It will result in consistency

BEFORE THE WORLD.

A Christian right before God in secret, careful of his behaviour in the family circle, and circumspect toward and among his fellow-Christians, will also tell on those who know not the Lord, in the midst of whom such an one may live, and have matters to do, in the ordinary transactions of business and life.

Neighbours will not only *hear* that such an one is a Christian, but they will *feel* it. Yes, Christians ought to cause the unconverted to *feel* the weight of their holy conduct, to be sensible of their presence as such.

This would, and where it exists does, bring glory to our God and Father, and blessing and honour to the Christian; while the contrary is dishonouring to Him and a shame to the believer.

As examples of either, and of both, witness Abraham and his nephew Lot.

Lot first pitched his tent toward Sodom, then lived

in it, and sought a place of distinction and power among its inhabitants, wicked though they were; conforming himself too much to their ways, he mixed with them, and unkindly helped them on in their evil by countenancing them by his presence. When the day of their doom drew near, and Lot acted as a warner, they thrust him from them, saying, "This one came in to sojourn, and will needs be a judge," and they despised him.

Alas! when the world can make light of Christians on the ground of their inconsistency, and despise their profession.

How different, indeed what a contrast, is the case of Lot's uncle!

Abraham had walked with God, kept out of Sodom, as far from its ways as he was from its coming judgment, its true friend, and Lot's also.

He moved among the inhabitants of the land in which he dwelt with the dignity of a man of faith, a man of God; and when the hour of his trial came, and sorrow bowed his head before God, the *princes* of the land *bowed* before him, and owned him as a mighty prince among them. They felt the weight of his character, saw the manner of his life, and respected him.

The world may hate the child of God, the consistent Christian; but they will acknowledge consistency.

As I said at the first, I might have enlarged on each division of my subject, but I have only suggested, and now ask my believing reader to trace out and apply these principles more minutely, and to reduce them to practice. Even so I pray.

H. HEATH.

DIVISIONS.

I SEE plainer than ever the dreadful sin of the division of saints. "Not a bone of Him shall be broken." They could not break His bones, though they broke His heart. We are of His flesh and of His bones,

members of His body, and *all* members one of another. The finger may be diseased, but it is still of the body; and that sick finger has the sympathy of the whole body, caring for it, nourishing and cherishing it. Satan puffs people up, as having what they call "superior light," to cut off and separate from other Christians as true and devoted to the Head as themselves. Had this spirit of pride and impatience been in Paul, alas for the Corinthians, Galatians, Colossians, and Thessalonians! But he was gentle among them as a *nurse* cherishes her children, and as a *father* he exhorted them. Though he stood in doubt about the Galatians, he did not leave them; his bowels were moved about their state. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you;" but, said he, "I would they were cut off that trouble you." The works of the flesh are variance, strife, seditions, heresies. Love never divides one saint from another. Discipline is not the cutting off from Christ, but from the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. To Paul the Lord gave power for edification, not for destruction (2 Cor. xiii. 10); and he could say, "We do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying." Separation *from the world*, its lusts, its pride, its wisdom, is separation *to God*; but separation *from saints*, because of failure or infirmity, is a denial of our High Priest's work.

"VISIT" AND "VISITATION."

"This I say, brethren, the time is short."—1 Cor. vii. 29.

"TIMES and Seasons" was the subject of a brief paper in the January number of this year's *Golden Lamp*, to show how God our Father has marked for us the swift and silent flight of our ransomed time, that we might take it by its forelock, and use it for His glory. The December number may well repeat the lesson; for our God and Lord, who is now also "the King Eternal"

(see 1 Tim. i. 17), speaks to us as loudly and as lovingly by the close of the year as by its beginning.

Let us look, then, at the words “visit” and “visitation” in some of the places in which they occur in the New Testament,* and the Holy Ghost’s use of them will be found to teach the same lesson of the *brevity* of the Church’s sojourn here below, and, as a consequence, the diligent and heavenly mind she ought to show.

First, our blessed Lord’s birth amongst us, and all His life and work, are spoken of as but a *visiting* of mankind, not a dwelling among them. Inspired Zacharias said, when his son, John the Baptist, was born as Christ’s forerunner, “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath *visited* and redeemed His people” (Luke i. 68); and when his newly-loosened and enraptured tongue went on to tell of the Christ Himself, he spoke of “the tender mercy of our God, whereby the Dayspring from on high hath *visited* us.” (v. 78.) Compare also John i. 14: “The Word was made flesh, and *tabernacled* among us.” (See Greek.) And surely a visiting of men is the very expression suitable; for two things are implied in a *visit*—one, that it is the arrival to you of one from another place; and the other, that it is only for a little while, and not for a life-long stay. And how true were both these things of the “sunrising” that shone from the Bethlehem manger on both Judæan and Galilean darkness!

Nor was this expression used only by the tongue of prophecy at His birth; but when He came forth anointed by the Spirit for public ministry, and Isaiah’s words were fulfilled—“The people that sat in darkness saw great light” (Isa. ix. 1, 2)—our blessed Master so

* In the Old Testament the words “visit” and “visitation” are solemnly used of the judgment and wrath of God, as they are of His mercy in the New. See especially Jer. vi. 15; viii. 12; ix. 25 (margin); x. 15; xi. 23; xxiii. 12, &c.

hasted on from town to town, and village to village, like the sun in its daily course, that the very people themselves used concerning Him the same expression, after He had raised to life the widow of Nain's son: "A fear came on all, and they glorified God, saying, . . . God hath *visited* His people." (Luke vii. 16.)

Yes; the light from on high shone at Nain, and sent its life-beams into the eyeballs of the dead, and into the sorrow-darkened heart of the widowed mother; but as, like the sun in the heavens, "He could not be hid" (Mark vii. 24), so also, like the sun, He could not be, and would not be, held back in His course, nor even delayed. Death, with its arrows, its scythe, and its unsparing foot, was moment by moment advancing and at work; and HE, "the Light of Life," must not be idle. All is movement in the scene at Nain. Death had been busy—had before made the mother a widow, and had now carried off her son, and he was being borne to the grave. But Jesus was on *His* way. He had just left Capernaum, and as the One "who *went about* doing good" (see Acts x. 38), He left at Nain this footprint of power and blessing as He passed on.

Once more in Luke's gospel this kind of word occurs: "Thou (O Jerusalem) knewest not the time of thy *visitation*" (see Luke xix. 44)—a most affecting passage! The light that had shone out from Jesus "in the days of His flesh"—"the Dayspring from on high" which dawned at Bethlehem, and had shone over Galilee and Samaria and Judæa—was now sinking to its west; the brief day of their Messiah in their midst was about to close, and it was shadowed already by the dark intercepting cloud of their murderous hate. Calmly and sorrowfully does He tell them they had not known "the time of their *visitation*."

God's "righteous Servant" had ever had a "single eye," and His body had always been "full of light" (Luke xi. 34-36), and this light had shone out. Jesus had Himself said of His own steps below, "Are there

not twelve hours in the day?” (John xi. 9) and not an hour nor moment of His appointed course had He ceased both to move and to shine. “Yet a little while is the light among you,” had been His cry; “walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you” (John xii. 35); but all had been in vain as regards Jerusalem and the nation as a whole, and Christ’s affecting lament over them points to what the *onward* character of His ministry amongst them had been. It was, says He, “the time of thy *visitation*.” Their scribes had said, “Elias must first come” (see Matt. xvii. 10); and, like “children sitting in the marketplace”—mere idlers—they had willingly listened to the dreams of these false dreamers, and had taken no warning from the diligent haste of the Son of God in their midst. In vain had Zacharias prophesied that “the Dayspring from on high” would, like the sun, make but a *visit*—in vain had the admiring crowd themselves once said, “God hath *visited* His people”—Israel had taken no warning, and the shades of evening were on them, and they were indeed without excuse; for HE who had untiringly journeyed and wrought and preached amongst them, now wept over the city as He beheld it, saying, “If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this *thy day*, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.”

But these same two words, “visit” and “visitation,” are used by the Holy Ghost of the CHURCH’S life here below, and of *her* ministry, as we have seen they are of our Lord’s. It was when the Church was assembled at Jerusalem to take counsel as to her work in the earth for God and for Christ (see Acts xv.) that Peter told of the blessing of Cornelius’s house by his means, and James added: “Simeon hath declared how God at the first did *visit* the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name.” This one expression marks out the Church’s present work among men. It is not to set up anything national, nor even to tarry, or to loiter

amongst men at all; but to accomplish the "*visit*" on which she is sent to the nations, somewhat as our Master accomplished His to Israel as His own people. "He came unto His own [things], and His own [people] received Him not." We are sent by God on but a *visit* to the nations of the earth, for His glory, and to gather a people out of them. Did we but more remember this, as evangelists, how separate it would keep us from the world in which we are labouring! and also, how it would even more hasten us than the flight of time does to do diligently our heavenly business of proclaiming to men the blessed gospel this "*little while*" we have for it!

The pastor and teacher's work is to have this same thought of brevity and heavenly haste in it as the evangelist's; for Paul said to Barnabas in the same chapter, "Let us go again and *visit* our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do." (Acts xv. 36.) We know in their *visits* of business, or of friendship, or of sightseeing, how much men exert themselves and do, warned by the shortness of their opportunity. If we more saw that "now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation," how like them we should be in this respect!

But the word "*visitation*" also is used to show the brevity of our time on earth as saints and witnesses for Christ. The very Peter who spoke in Acts xv. says in his first epistle (ii. 11, 12): "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest" (*i.e.* conduct befitting) "among the Gentiles: that . . . they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of *visitation*." Peter, as a Jew, was once looking for an earthly kingdom with Christ, and for things established here, and made permanent; but he now sees himself and his fellow-saints as "begotten again unto a living

hope,” and both houseless and nationless on earth (“strangers and pilgrims”), whose business is, to give such a testimony “amongst the Gentiles” as that in this brief “day of visitation” they may be led to “glorify God;” and to this end, says the apostle, “I beseech you, abstain from fleshly lusts”—first, because they war against your own souls; and second, that your good works and pilgrim ways may be manifest, and show men the brevity of their present day of gospel grace, and thus win them for Christ.

Such testimony is the most powerful of any. Bunyan says that the *passing on* of Christian and Faithful through Vanity Fair, as those who could not be detained in it, together with their unworldly gear and ways, set all the fair in a hubbub. Oh for a like testimony in us as God’s Church and God’s saints, in this world and in these days! God Himself is not ashamed to be called the God of such; for they declare plainly that they seek a country (a fatherland; see Greek); and the country they desire is a heavenly one, and to it they are hastening. The haste of the waiting saints to fulfil their mission, and to reach their home, and to reign with Christ, should be such as to warn men of the brevity of their gospel season, even more loudly than does the flight of time.

True, ours is but a borrowed light; it is not like Immanuel’s, a “sunrising.” (See Luke i. 78, margin.) But in His absence we should, like the moon, draw our light from Him, and should shine it on men’s darkness “till He come.” The moon, as Job expresses it, “walking in brightness” (Job xxxi. 26), gives “light upon the earth;” and though the “lesser light,” it nevertheless “rules the night” (see Gen. i. 15); and such should the Church of God be among men. But in order to give her light to all, the moon no more loiters than does the sun. Course after course she keeps, her movement as punctual as his, though not as swift. Oh that it had been thus with past suc-

cessive generations of God's waiting saints! Oh that it might yet be thus with us who are alive and remain!

Moses, ere he departed, pronounced on the Joseph tribe the blessing not only of "the precious fruits brought forth by the *sun*," but also of "the precious things put forth by the *moons*" (see Hebrew), as if he would say, In Joseph's tents let there be no moon that does not "walk in brightness," and "rule the night" by "giving its light upon the earth." And though the loving eloquence of Moses failed to preserve Israel as a light for God, because she forgot her Nazariteship, and defiled it, let us be waked up as "the Israel of God" (Gal. vi. 16) of this present time; for "moons" won't wait for the sleepers, nor yet for the drunkards, of the night. We must as much use them while we have them as our blessed Master did the "twelve hours" of the day given Him by His Father and our Father, and His God and our God; and to this end may the close of the year 1875 instruct us!

H. D.

"FAIR AS THE MOON."

"When I consider . . . the moon."—PSALM viii. 3.

WHEN late I saw the moon at dead of night
 In perfect beauty of her fulness rise,
 I watch'd her steps, and, as she climb'd the skies,
 Ponder'd the glory of her placid light.
 Musing, I said: A fountain out of sight,
 Ever the same, yon silver orb supplies
 With all her peaceful beams, that cheer mine eyes,
 Until the sun display his power and might.
 Then pour'd I forth my prayer: So may thy Bride,
 Blest Lamb of God, till Thy appearing shine;
 And in this world of unbelief and pride
 Let her who is by threefold title Thine
 Walk in the Spirit, in Thy love abide,
 For Thee, her Lord, a witness and a sign.

R. C. CHAPMAN.

NOTES AND REPLIES.

Heb. xiii. 10.—What is the force of “*We have an altar,*” seeing there is no emphatic “*we*” (*ἡμεῖς*) in the Greek?

The apostle does not draw a contrast between the *we* and the *they*, but between the altar of the Christian, which is Christ, who was once slain on Calvary outside the city, and the altar of the Jewish ritual which was within it. He gives that note of warning against going back to the law and its ceremonies which characterises the whole epistle. Paul says, that they who serve the tabernacle have no right to our sacrificial altar, nor to the benefits of its atonement. Not only so, but even of those sin-offerings of their own altar, which were of the highest character (*i.e.* those whose blood was brought within the veil), no Jewish worshipper could partake. Then carrying on the thought of the place “outside the camp,” where the sin-offerings were burnt up, he speaks of Christ suffering “outside the gate”—rejected by the Jewish priesthood and people; on which account they, as a priesthood and people, were rejected by God, and their house owned of God no more; and “*therefore,*” concludes the apostle, “*let us go forth* unto Him outside the camp.” The Hebrew believers were not to return again to the Jewish camp, out of which they had gone, but to remain outside it, in fellowship with a crucified Christ, “bearing His reproach.” This contains a solemn warning to those ritualisers who would turn a living Christianity into an effete Judaism.

Jude 20.—What is it to *pray in the Holy Ghost*?

Notice, first, the connection with what has preceded, involved in the words, “*But YE.*” Of those who had crept in unawares, we read that “their mouth speaketh great swelling words;” and in contrast with this we are exhorted to pray in the Holy Spirit. Further,

connect the passage in Jude with Eph. vi. 18: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." The key to the passage, however, is probably contained in Rom. viii., where we find the Spirit represented as *helping with us* (*συναντιλαμβάνεται*) in reference to our infirmities, in the first place; and in the next directly making "*intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*" Our praying in the Spirit is therefore the result of His helping with us, and of His intercession for us, and means not only spiritual prayer, but prayer led by the Spirit of God, who knows our need, and who knows what "according to God" (*κατα Θεον*, v. 27) really is. The prayer is thus divinely breathed and humanly inwrought, and becomes what James calls an "effectual fervent prayer" (*δεησις ενεργουμενη*, an inwrought prayer); that is, one wrought into the soul of the righteous man by the Holy Ghost, and therefore like Elijah's prayer for famine and for rain, alike answered. We would call special attention to Eccles. v. 1-7, where rash words and hasty utterances before God are re-proved, and man is reminded that because God is in heaven, and he on earth, his words are to be few; and the exhortation is given, "Be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools." *Let us, then, commit ourselves to the guidance of the Spirit, waiting on our knees*, remembering that we know not what to pray for as we ought, and seeking therefore the help of the Spirit in our ignorance. Let us avoid preaching in prayer, or making "fine orations;" and let words be few and simple, if our prayer is to be in the Spirit. What fervent utterances, what union of heart in prayer, what power in our assemblies, should we witness, if instead of noisy and wordy prayers we were found "lifting up our voice to God with one accord" (Acts iv. 24), and "praying in the Holy Ghost!"